Handel und Internationales Marketing
Retailing and International Marketing
Bernhard Swoboda · Thomas Foscht
Hanna Schramm-Klein *Hrsg.*

RESEARCH

Carolina Sinning

International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms

Essays on Perceived Brand Globalness, Endorsed Branding, and E-Commerce Firms' Internationalization

MOREMEDIA

Springer Gabler

Handel und Internationales Marketing
Retailing and International Marketing

Die Schriftenreihe fördert die Themengebiete Handel und Internationales Marketing. Diese charakterisieren – jedes für sich, aber auch in inhaltlicher Kombination – die Forschungsschwerpunkte der Herausgeber. Beide Themengebiete werden grundsätzlich breit aufgefasst; die Reihe bietet sowohl Dissertationen und Habilitationen als auch Tagungs- und Sammelbänden mit unterschiedlicher inhaltlicher und methodischer Ausrichtung ein Forum. Die inhaltliche Breite ist sowohl im Sinne eines konsumentenorientierten Marketings wie auch einer marktorientierten Unternehmensführung zu verstehen. Neben den Arbeiten, die von den Herausgebern für die Schriftenreihe vorgeschlagen werden, steht die Reihe auch externen wissenschaftlichen Arbeiten offen. Diese können bei den Herausgebern eingereicht und nach einer positiven Begutachtung publiziert werden.

The book series focuses on the fields of Retailing and International Marketing. These two areas represent the research fields of the editors—each of them as a single research area, but also in combination. Both of these research areas are widely understood. Consequently, the series provides a platform for the publication of doctoral theses and habilitations, conference proceedings and edited books, as well as related methodological issues that encompass the focus of the series. The series is broad in the sense that it covers academic works in the area of consumer-oriented marketing as well as the area of marketoriented management. In addition to academic works recommended by the editors, the book series also welcomes other academic contributions. These may be submitted to the editors and will be published in the book series after a positive assessment.

Carolina Sinning

International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms

Essays on Perceived Brand Globalness, Endorsed Branding, and E-Commerce Firms' Internationalization

Springer Gabler

Carolina Sinning
Trier, Germany

Dissertation, Fachbereich IV, Trier University, 2021

ISSN 2626-3327 ISSN 2626-3335 (electronic)
Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing
ISBN 978-3-658-38049-6 ISBN 978-3-658-38050-2 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2

Responsible Editor: Marija Kojic
This Springer Gabler imprint is published by the registered company Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden GmbH, part of Springer Nature.
The registered company address is: Abraham-Lincoln-Str. 46, 65189 Wiesbaden, Germany

Foreword

The increasing interdependence but also specificities of countries, radically changed the international business environment throughout the last decades. The country differences are addressed in this dissertation. From a consumer perspective, the role of country differences for particular topics is examined: the effects of corporate brands and those of product or endorsed brands as well as the internationalization paths of e-commerce firms. The objective of Dr. Carolina Sinnings thesis is to gain a deeper knowledge on such issues in three studies:

- *Paths of Perceived Brand Globalness Across Nations*: Multinational corporations are perceived as global brands with advantages in influencing consumer behavior. However, whether the advantages of perceived brand globalness hold across nations or depend on country-specific context factors remains unknown. This study applies accessibility-diagnosticity theory and multilevel structural equation modeling to study the paths from globalness to repurchase intention and to identify important country-specific moderators. The results rely on hierarchical data from 22,055 consumer evaluations of a multinational corporation in 31 countries and underline an indirect-only path from perceived brand globalness to repurchase intention through functional and psychological value. However, the path changes with the degree of country development and national culture. Country development weakens, whereas the degree of embeddedness, mastery, and hierarchy strengthen the globalness-value links.
- *Endorsement of Global Product Brands by Global Corporate Brands*: Many multinationals use their corporate brand to endorse their products but thereby attract international consumers differently. Therefore, it is important to analyze whether corporations profit from endorsed branding strategies across nations or whether they must rely on country-specific factors. This study proposes a

theory-based framework and applies multilevel mediation structural equation modeling with cross-level interactions to analyze the typical direct and indirect effects of global corporate brand image and global product brand image on product purchase intention across nations. The empirical results across 35 nations show that the product brand is most valuable. Importantly, the results provide insights into country-specific moderators, i.e., the degree of country development and national culture, and the respective country portfolio.

- The study "*Effects of Internationalization Rhythm and Speed on E-Commerce Firms' Growth*" addresses the increasingly digitalizing economy and analyzes how e-commerce firms benefit from time-based internationalization decisions and whether they are still limited by institutional distances that are said to lose relevance. This study also applies multilevel modeling with cross-level interactions to provide insights into the role of institutional moderators, i.e., regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive distances. Based on data from 228 e-commerce firms that are operating Europe's leading online shops and 1,702 market entries over 21 years, the results show that firms exhibit stronger growth due to their irregular and fast internationalization process. However, these relationships change depending on certain institutional distances, and different explanations regarding country-specific variances are provided.

With her work, Dr. Sinning makes a significant contribution to modern international business and marketing research. Two studies were accepted for publication in Top-Journals and all were nominated for "Best Paper Awards" at annual conferences of the Association of International Business or the European International Business Academy, and two were awarded. Dr. Sinning also received two other awards for "Best Reviews" and she was involved in several other article publications. She presents the nineteenth dissertation at my chair for Marketing & Retailing at the University of Trier. I am extremely happy with her work. Besides an extremely good research and teaching, she was moreover involved in three book projects and has organized several practical projects and two conferences. I therefore thank her for these intensive four years in which she was working as a research assistant at my chair. I got to know her as a very proactive, prudent, productive and always reliable person and I wish her warmly all the best for her future career and for her private life. I very much regret that she decided against the offer to stay at the university.

Professor Dr. Prof. h.c. Bernhard Swoboda

Acknowledgements

This doctoral thesis was written during my time as a research assistant at the Chair of Marketing and Retailing at the University of Trier. With the completion of my thesis, this time has now come to an end, which gives me the opportunity to look back and thank everybody who accompanied me along the way.

I would like to thank my supervisor Professor Dr. Prof. h.c. Bernhard Swoboda for his dedication, constant support and constructive feedback on every single paper and my entire thesis. When updating lecture materials, writing papers, replying to reviewers, reworking books, writing practical articles, or organizing conferences and meetings, he taught me how to structure myself and always stay on top of things. He has encouraged me to grow both professionally as well as personally. I also thank him for the opportunity to attend many conferences in Germany, Europe, and the USA. Presenting my work in front of an expert audience has always motivated me to work harder and given me the necessary understanding of researching. I am very grateful for all the people I have met, dis-cussed with, and become friends with at these conferences. At this point, I would also like to thank the *Forschungsreferat*, *Referat für Gleichstellung*, and *DAAD*, which often financially supported my conference attendance.

I would also like to thank my second advisor PD Dr. Christian Fisch (University of Trier) for evaluating my thesis, especially in such a short time, and Prof. Dr. Jörn Block (University of Trier) for agreeing to chair the defense committee.

Moreover, I would like to thank my colleagues who have accompanied me during my journey: Dr. Nadine Batton, Nils Fränzel, Magdalena Klar, Dr. Amelie Winters, and Lukas Zimmer. Over the years, we have gone through many ups and downs together. Even though times have almost always been stressful and challenging for anyone of us, I look back to many fun moments we shared. I will not deny that this was also due to our always well-stocked refrigerator.

Special thanks go to our secretary, Ursula Fassbender. I would like to express my gratitude for her open ear, her honest words, and her support. Thank you for always reminding me of my abilities and strengthening my confidence.

Thank you to all the student assistants who helped me either with data collection for my thesis or with the organization of the ERASMUS+ program. Taking responsibility for the ERASMUS+ program was made much easier for me by the many helpful contacts in the international office, especially Anne Freihoff, Janina Kröner, Jan-Patrick Proost, and Anne Schneider. Further, I would like to thank my contacts in other administrative positions, especially Katharina Seigert who immensely facilitated the organization of our conferences and Margit Berens who always had an open ear for questions about our High Potentials-Program.

Finally, the biggest thanks go to my family and friends. I thank my parents, sisters, godfather, and grandparents for always believing in me. I am very grateful to see how proud I made you guys. Thank you to all my friends inside and outside of academia. You have made these years unforgettable! Most importantly, thank you to my better half, without whom this journey would have been so much more difficult. From proofreading my papers and thesis, to patiently listening to all my challenges and providing respective advice, to finding the right distraction at the right moment, you were always there for me. Thank you for supporting me by encouraging me!

Carolina Sinning

Contents

Part I Introduction

1 Focus and Relevance 3

2 Literature Review and Research Gaps 11
2.1 Overview 11
2.2 Literature on Perceived Brand Globalness 11
2.2.1 Similar Constructs to Perceived Brand Globalness 11
2.2.2 Perceived Brand Globalness 15
2.3 Literature on Endorsed Branding 20
2.3.1 Horizontal Image Transfer 20
2.3.2 Vertical Image Transfer 27
2.4 Literature on E-Commerce Firms' Internationalization Processes 35
2.4.1 Internationalization Processes from a Traditional Manufacturing View 35
2.4.2 Internationalization Processes of Commerce Firms . . . 36
2.5 General Research Objectives 41

3 Structure and Contribution of the Studies 45
3.1 Cross-National Differences in Perceived Brand Globalness Effects 45
3.2 Cross-National Differences in Endorsed Branding Effects 47
3.3 Effects of E-Commerce Firms' Internationalization Processes 49

4 Further Remarks 53

Part II Study 1: How Country Development and National Culture Affect the Paths of Perceived Brand Globalness to Consumer Behavior across Nations

5 Introduction 57

6 Conceptual Framework 61

7 Hypothesis Development 65

8 Empirical Study 71
8.1 Sample 71
8.2 Measurement 72
8.3 Method 80
8.4 Results 82

9 Discussion and Implications 87
9.1 Overview 87
9.2 Theoretical Implications 87
9.3 Managerial Implications 91

10 Limitations and Further Research 95

Part III Study 2: Endorsement of Global Product Brands by Global Corporate Brands – A Consumer Perspective across Nations

11 Introduction 99

12 Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis 103
12.1 Definitions 103
12.2 Theory 104
12.3 Hypothesis Development 106

13 Empirical Study 111
13.1 Sample 111
13.2 Measurement 112
13.3 Method 120
13.4 Results 123
13.5 Alternative Models 128

14 Discussion 131
14.1 Overview 131
14.2 Theoretical Implications 131
14.3 Managerial Implications 136

15 Limitations and Further Research 139

Part IV Study 3: Effects of Internationalization Rhythm and Speed on E-Commerce Firms' Growth and the Role of Institutional Distances

16 Introduction 143

17 Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis 147
17.1 Definitions 147
17.2 Theory 149
17.3 Hypothesis Development 151

18 Empirical Study 157
18.1 Sample 157
18.2 Measurement 158
18.3 Method 166
18.4 Results 167
18.5 Alternative Models 170

19 Discussion 179
19.1 Overview 179
19.2 Theoretical Implications 179
19.3 Managerial Implications 182

20 Limitations and Further Research 185

Part V Final Remarks

21 Discussion and Conclusions 189
21.1 Core Results 189
21.2 Theoretical Implications 194
21.3 Managerial Implications 198

22 Limitations and Further Research 201

References 205

Abbreviations

AAU	Affective Autonomy
AGP	Attitude toward Global Positioning
AIC	Akaiki Information Criterion
ALP	Attitude toward Local Positioning
ANCOVA	Analysis of Covariance
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
B	Between (Country) Level
b	Unstandardized Coefficient
B2B	Business-to-Business
B2C	Business-to-Consumer
BF	Brand Familiarity
BIC	Bayesian Information Criterion
CA	Corporate Ability
CAGE	Cultural, Administrative, Geographic, and Economic
CB	Corporate Brand
CD	Country Development
CE	Consumer Ethnocentrism
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CI	Corporate Image
CLC	Country-Level Control
CLV	Country-Level Variable
COO	Country-of-Origin
CPC	Consumers per Cluster

CR	Corporate Reputation
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CULDIS	Cultural-Cognitive Distance
DOI	Degree of Internationalization
ECC	E-Commerce Company
e.g.	Exempli Gratia/For Example
EGA	Egalitarianism
EMB	Embeddedness
et al.	Et Alia/And Others
etc.	Et Cetera/And So On
FCC	Foreign Consumer Culture
FGLS	Feasible Generalized Least Square
FL	Factor Loading
FV	Functional Value
GBA	Global Brand Attitude
GCC	Global Consumer Culture
GCCP	Global Consumer Culture Positioning
GCI	Global Competitiveness Index
GCO	Global Consumption Orientation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEN	Gender
GLS	Generalized Least Square
GNI	Gross National Income
H	Multilevel Maximal Reliability
H	Hypothesis
HAR	Harmony
HDI	Human Development Index
HIE	Hierarchy
IAU	Intellectual Autonomy
IB	International Business
i.e.	Id Est/That Is
ILC	Individual-Level Control
INV	International New Venture
ItTC	Item-to-Total-Correlation
IV	Instrumental Variable
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
LCC	Local Consumer Culture
LG	Language
LT	Lettering

MA	Mastery
MANCOVA	Multivariate Analysis of Covariance
MANOVA	Multivariate Analysis of Variance
MC	Multichannel
MNC	Multinational Corporation
MNE	Multinational Enterprise
MS	Market Size
MSEM	Multilevel Structural Equation Modeling
N	Sample Size
NORDIS	Normative Distance
ns	Not Significant
OLS	Ordinary Least Squares
p	*p*-Value
p.	Page
PB	Product Brand
PBF	Perceived Brand Foreignness
PBG	Perceived Brand Globalness
PBL	Perceived Brand Localness
PC	Product Category
PI	Purchase Intention
PLS	Partial Least Squares
pp.	Pages
PPI	Product Purchase Intention
PV	Psychological Value
REGDIS	Regulative Distance
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
ROI	Return on Investment
RPI	Repurchase Intention
SD	Standard Deviation
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
SME	Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises
SNI	Susceptibility to Normative Influence
SRMR	Standardized Root Mean Square Residual
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index
TMT	Top Management Team
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
USD	US Dollar
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

vs.	Versus
W	Within (Individual) Level
α	Multilevel Alpha
λ	Standardized Factor Loading
ω	Multilevel Composite Reliability
2PLS	Two-Stage Least Square
%	Percent
χ^2	Chi-Square
Δ	Differenc

List of Figures

Figure 1.1 Examples of MNCs' Endorsed Branding Strategy 6
Figure 2.1 National Studies on Similar Constructs to Perceived Brand Globalness 13
Figure 2.2 International Studies on Similar Constructs to Perceived Brand Globalness 16
Figure 2.3 National Studies on Perceived Brand Globalness 19
Figure 2.4 International Studies on Perceived Brand Globalness 21
Figure 2.5 Selected National Studies on Horizontal Image Transfer 24
Figure 2.6 Selected International Studies on Horizontal Image Transfer 28
Figure 2.7 Selected National Studies on Vertical Image Transfer 31
Figure 2.8 International Studies on Vertical Image Transfer 34
Figure 2.9 Selected Studies on Internationalization Rhythm and Speed as Dependent Variables 37
Figure 2.10 Studies on Internationalization Speed as Independent Variable 39
Figure 2.11 Studies on Internationalization Speed as Dependent Variable 40
Figure 2.12 Studies on Internationalization Speed as Independent Variable 41
Figure 5.1 Literature Review 58
Figure 6.1 Conceptual Framework 62

Figure 8.1 Conditional Indirect Effect for the Degree of Country Development 84
Figure 8.2 Conditional Indirect Effect for the Degree of Embeddedness 84
Figure 8.3 Conditional Indirect Effect for the Degree of Mastery 85
Figure 8.4 Conditional Indirect Effect for the Degree of Hierarchy . . . 86
Figure 9.1 Country Overview of Conditional Indirect Effects for Country Development 89
Figure 9.2 Country Overview of Conditional Indirect Effects for Hierarchy 92
Figure 11.1 Literature Review 101
Figure 12.1 Conceptual Framework 104
Figure 13.1 Conditional Indirect Effect for the Degree of Country Development 127
Figure 13.2 Conditional Indirect Effect for the Degree of Embeddedness 128
Figure 14.1 Country Portfolio 135
Figure 16.1 Literature Review 144
Figure 17.1 Conceptual Framework 147
Figure 17.2 Regular vs. Irregular Internationalization Process 149

List of Tables

Table 1.1 The World's Most Valuable Brands 2020 4
Table 1.2 Largest E-Commerce Firms Worldwide 7
Table 8.1 Sample Characteristics 73
Table 8.2 Reliability and Validity 75
Table 8.3 Discriminant Validity 76
Table 8.4 Correlations 77
Table 8.5 Multilevel Reliability and Validity 78
Table 8.6 Comparison of Factor Scores 78
Table 8.7 Comparison of Consistent and Proposed Model 79
Table 8.8 Results of Measurement Invariance Test across 31 Countries 80
Table 8.9 Results 83
Table 13.1 Sample Distribution 113
Table 13.2 Reliability and Validity 116
Table 13.3 Discriminant Validity 117
Table 13.4 Correlations 118
Table 13.5 Multilevel Reliability and Validity 119
Table 13.6 Comparison of Factor Scores 120
Table 13.7 Comparison of Consistent and Proposed Model 121
Table 13.8 Results of Measurement Invariance Test across 35 Countries 122
Table 13.9 Results 124
Table 18.1 Sample Distribution 159
Table 18.2 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations 163
Table 18.3 Comparison of Consistent and Proposed Model 165
Table 18.4 Results 168

Table 18.5 Results for Five-Year Growth 171
Table 18.6 Results for Internationalization Rhythm Solely 172
Table 18.7 Results for Controlling Home Country Dominance of France, Germany, and the UK 173
Table 18.8 Results of Alternative Measure for Normative Distance 174
Table 18.9 Results of Added Institutional Distances 176

Part I
Introduction

Focus and Relevance

1

Globalization, in terms of an increasing interdependence of countries, radically changed the business environment throughout the last decades (Mandler, Bartsch and Han 2020). Worldwide competition rose and multinational corporations (MNCs) as well as e-commerce firms are more and more challenged when operating internationally. In this vein, MNCs have recognized their corporate brand to be an important intangible asset to differentiate from competitors (Hanssens and Pauwels 2016). Following the trend of globalization, especially strong global corporate brands were built to achieve awareness across nations and attract consumers (e.g., Swoboda and Hirschmann 2016). A global brand is defined as "a brand that uses the same name and logo, is recognized as available, and accepted in multiple regions of the world, and shares the same principles, values, strategic positioning, and marketing throughout the world" (Steenkamp 2017, p. 3; Steenkamp 2019b).

For example, Coca-Cola switched from its "think local, act local" marketing strategy to a "One Brand" global branding approach (Coca-Cola Company 2016). Further MNCs promote their global corporate brand by putting global elements to their slogans or mission statements (Mandler 2019). Nike, for example, has the mission to "bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete in the world" (Nike 2021). Such global corporate brands are ranked among the most valuable brands worldwide (see Table 1.1). Apple tops this ranking with a brand value of 241.2 billion USD and a revenue of 260.2 billion USD. Sparked by, for example, the Chinese government, even emerging market MNCs such as Lenovo, which are not yet listed under the Top 50 World's Most Valuable Brands, joined the trend and built up global corporate brands (Bale 2018).

Even if the value of global corporate brands still increases (e.g., 17.0% increase in Apple's brand value from 2019 to 2020), consumers' skepticism towards the consumption of global brands as a symbol of globalization increases

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_1

Table 1.1 The World's Most Valuable Brands 2020. (Source: Forbes 2020b)

Rank 2020	Corporate Brand	Industry	Home Country	Brand Value (Billion $)	1-Yr Value Change		Brand Revenue (Billion $)
1	Apple	Technology	United States	241.2	+	17.0%	260.2
2	Google	Technology	United States	207.5	+	24.0%	145.6
3	Microsoft	Technology	United States	162.9	+	30.0%	125.8
4	Amazon	Technology	United States	135.4	+	40.0%	260.5
5	Facebook	Technology	United States	70.3		21.0%	49.7
6	Coca-Cola	Beverages	United States	64.4	+	09.0%	25.2
7	Disney	Leisure	United States	61.3	+	18.0%	38.7
8	Samsung	Technology	South Korea	50.4		05.0%	209.5
9	Louis Vuitton	Luxury	France	47.2	+	20.0%	15.0
10	McDonald's	Restaurants	United States	46.1	+	05.0%	100.2
11	Toyota	Automotive	Japan	41.5		07.0%	187.0
12	Intel	Technology	United States	39.5	+	02.0%	72.0
13	NIKE	Apparel	United States	39.1	+	06.0%	39.3
14	AT&T	Telecom	United States	37.3		10.0%	151.2
15	Cisco	Technology	United States	36.0	+	04.0%	50.6

(Liu et al. 2021). Encouraged by United Kingdom's (Br)exit, United States' protectionism policies, or climate change awareness, a critical attitude towards globalization becomes stronger (Mandler, Bartsch and Han 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic further questions the advantages of globalization (The New York Times 2020). The Economist (2019) even predicts a "slowbalization" replacing globalization. Consequently, MNCs must question themselves how much they can still profit from their global corporate brands. To answer this question, they have to learn how consumers across nations perceive and evaluate their global brands today and how much this perception depends on country-specific circumstances (Liu et al. 2021). This doctoral thesis ties up with this issue and focuses MNCs' perceived brand globalness (PBG). PBG is defined as consumers' perception of MNCs being global corporate brands (Steenkamp, Batra and Alden 2003; Swoboda and Hirschmann 2016).

In academic literature, the importance of analyzing PBG has been widely recognized (see Section 2.2.). However, mostly global product brands, rarely global corporate brands were in the focus of study (for corporate brands, e.g., Swoboda, Pennemann and Taube 2012). When investigating PBG, the majority of studies were conducted nationally. For example, Davvetas, Sichtmann and Diamantopoulos (2015) in Austria, Guo, Heinberg and Zou (2019) in China, or Winit et al. (2014) in Thailand. The few international studies found positive (indirect) effects of PBG on consumer behavior but revealed cross-national differences (e.g., Özsomer 2012 between Turkey, Singapore, and Denmark). These studies indicated the role of country-specific boundary conditions but not explicitly analyzed their effects. Research requires deeper insights into the effects of MNCs' PBG across nations and their dependence on important context factors.

As previously mentioned, the ranking of "World's Most Valuable Brands" is packed by global corporate brands (Forbes 2020b). Solely promoting the global corporate brand may not be sufficient anymore to differentiate from competitors. Many MNCs have recognized this problem and changed their corporate- but also product-dominant branding strategies towards an endorsed branding (Brexendorf and Keller 2017). Endorsed branding is defined as the use of a distinct global corporate brand to visually endorse global product brands (Keller 2012, p. 302). For example, MNCs ranked under the Top 100 Best Global Brands 2020 (Interbrand 2020), like Nestle, put their global corporate brand name or logo in front of the product package. Furthermore, other MNCs like Ferrero or Henkel apply the endorsed branding strategy (see Figure 1.1).

By applying the endorsed branding strategy, these MNCs aim to strengthen their global product brands by their global corporate brands. The endorsed branding strategy is known to enable MNCs to better control risk and monitor their

Figure 1.1 Examples of MNCs' Endorsed Branding Strategy. (Source: Own Creation)

brands (Hsu, Fournier and Srinivasan 2016). Especially in the current uncertain times, endorsed branding may be even more beneficial. The identification of a product brand with the MNC is said to be a reassurance for consumers when purchasing (Khojastehpour and Johns 2015). Whether consumers across nations really perceive such a reassurance to be beneficial and appreciate the endorsed branding strategy in purchase situations remains unknown. Moreover, regional adjustments of branding strategies already induce country differences for the benefits of endorsed branding (e.g., Kellogg's in Europe, Kellogg's 2019). This doctoral thesis takes on this case and accounts for consumers' perspective of the endorsed branding strategy, also in dependence of country contexts.

Research either focused horizontal instead of vertical image transfers (see Section 2.3.). When investigating vertical image transfers, vertical brand extensions or celebrity endorsements were emphasized (see Section 2.3.2.). Few studies analyzed the effects of corporate and product brands on consumer behavior and found differences between emerging and developed markets (e.g., Fatma, Khan and Rahman 2016 in India or Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018 in India and China, vs. Cretu and Brodie 2007 in New Zealand or Souiden, Kassim and Hong 2006 in Japan and USA). Moreover, Jakubanecs and Supphellen (2012) discussed cross-national differences for holistic corporate-product-links due to national culture. In summary, the effects of the image transfer from the global corporate to the product brand as well as their dependence on country-specific boundaries has received only little attention in research.

Finally, global MNCs, like Apple, increasingly sell their offerings online (10.7% sales via apple.com in 2019 vs. 12.4% in 2020, ecommerceDB 2021). Especially since the Covid-19 pandemic, consumers are increasingly shopping online (Forbes 2020a). This may be one reason, why e-commerce firms, like Amazon, are highly ranked in the World's Most Valuable Brands Ranking 2020 (Forbes 2020b). In this doctoral thesis, e-commerce firms are understood as online shop or platform providers selling physical goods to consumers (Luo, Zhao and Du 2005; Schu and Morschett 2017). Amazon has taken the advantages of an ongoing digital globalization (Luo 2021), and is now the biggest riser in terms of brand value (60.0% increase from 2019 to 2020, Interbrand 2020). Accordingly, Amazon is also leading the ranking of the largest e-commerce firms worldwide, characterized by its global operations (see Table 1.2).

Table 1.2 Largest E-Commerce Firms Worldwide. (Source: Annual Reports 2020)

Rank 2020	Corporate Brand	Home Country	Revenue (Billion USD)	Market Cap. (Billion USD)	Founded
1	Amazon	United States	280.52	1,662.00	1994
2	JD.com	China	82.80	51.51	1998
3	Alibaba	China	56.15	570.95	1999
4	Suning.com	China	38.06	13.47	1990
5	Meituan-Dianping	China	13.70	50.80	2010
6	Rakuten	Japan	11.60	11.67	1997
7	eBay	United States	10.80	28.74	1995
8	Wayfair	United States	9.13	8.50	2005
9	Zalando	Germany	7.26	12.59	2008
10	Coupang	South Korea	6.23	-	2010

Internet-based and information technologies are widely known to affect firms' internationalization processes (Banalieva and Dhanaraj 2019; Brouthers, Geisser and Rothlauf 2016). Besides the further listed, mainly Asia-focused e-commerce firms from China or South Korea, many e-commerce firms are already internationally active (Swoboda and Sinning 2020b, p. 12). For example, eBay currently

operates 27 country-specific online shops in terms of domain, language, and currency (e.g., Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016) and has a foreign sales share of approximately 60.0% (eBay 2020). Zalando already launched 17 country-specific online shops since its inception in 2008 (Zalando 2021). Consequently, internationalization processes of the largest e-commerce firms worldwide highly differ from those of traditional MNCs or commerce firms. They are known to expand more irregularly and rapidly internationally (e.g., Benmamoun et al. 2019; Monaghan, Tippmann and Coviello 2020). However, only inconclusive suggestions on whether to follow such internationalization processes (e.g., Jean and Tan 2019) and explanations for e-commerce firms' regional boundedness, exist (like Zalando to Europe, Zalando 2021). This thesis aims to clarify the way e-commerce firms profit from internationalization rhythm and speed, also when accounting for institutional distance.

Research on e-commerce firms' time-based internationalization process decisions, i.e., internationalization rhythm and speed, is highly limited (see Section 2.4.). Time-based internationalization process decisions were mainly considered in the context of manufacturers. Even for manufacturing firms, studies only analyzed the effects of internationalization speed on performance (e.g., Deng, Jean and Sinkovics 2018). For commerce firms, three studies found ambiguous results for the effects of speed on performance (e.g., Chan, Finnegan and Sternquist 2011, vs. Mohr and Batsakis 2017). For e-commerce firms, only antecedents of their internationalization speed were identified (e.g., Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016). Moreover, research recognized institutional distance between the home and host country to be an important context factor of international processes (e.g., Kostova et al. 2020). In the context, of e-commerce, institutional distance was partially studied and without concrete and consistent implications (e.g., Luo, Zhao and Du 2005; Shaheer and Li 2020).

In summary, MNCs as well as e-commerce firms face challenges when operating internationally in a dynamic and ever-changing environment. These challenges force decisions regarding (1) promoting MNCs' PBG in respective country contexts, (2) the application of the endorsed branding strategy in dependence of important boundaries, and (3) designing e-commerce firms' internationalization processes internationally. In view of the growing competition in global markets, the following questions were stated for this thesis:

(1) How can MNCs benefit from PBG in terms of repurchase intention through functional and psychological value across nations and whether and how do the degree of country development and national culture change these paths?

(2) How can MNCs benefit from an image transfer of global corporate to global product brands in terms of product purchase intention across nations and whether and how do the degrees of country development and national culture moderate the indirect and direct effects of global corporate brand image?
(3) How can e-commerce firms benefit from internationalization process rhythm and speed in terms of firm growth and whether and how do institutional distances moderate these effects?

Three specific studies were conducted to answer these research questions, which are presented in Chapter 2, 3, and 4. As a basis of these studies Chapter 2 includes an extensive literature review, from which specific research gaps are derived.

Literature Review and Research Gaps 2

2.1 Overview

The upcoming literature review provides an overview of studies within the three research streams presented in the introduction. Section 2.2. focuses the first research stream of MNCs' PBG. First, literature on similar constructs to PBG is presented (see Section 2.2.1.). Second, national and international studies on the effects of PBG are described in Section 2.2.2. Section 2.3. comprises literature on the second research stream of MNCs' global endorsed branding. Studies on horizontal image transfers are dealt with in Section 2.3.1., followed by studies on vertical image transfers in Section 2.3.2. Literature on the third research stream dealing with e-commerce firms' internationalization processes is presented in Section 2.4. To get a broader understanding of time-based internationalization process decisions, first studies investigating manufacturing firms are provided in Section 2.4.1. Studies on (e-)commerce firms' internationalization processes are referred to in Section 2.4.2.

2.2 Literature on Perceived Brand Globalness

2.2.1 Similar Constructs to Perceived Brand Globalness

A broad range of literature examined the importance of global brands and studied especially constructs similar to PBG in a national context (see Figure 2.1). Most studies analyzed the role of global vs. local brand attitudes and effects. Batra et al. (2000) were the first showing a preference of nonlocal (vs. local) brands in India, particularly for product categories high in social signaling value. This

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_2

preference is stronger for consumers who admire the lifestyle of developed countries and who are highly susceptible to normative influences. Zhou, Yang and Hui (2010) confirm these findings by indicating a higher perceived value for foreign (vs. local) brands. They further find a positive moderating effect of confidence in brand origin identification on the relation between perceived brand foreignness and value. Davvetas and Diamantopoulos (2018) investigate post-purchase consequences of global vs. local brand choices. Consumers with a global brand superiority schema and high global identity feel higher regret, lower satisfaction and lower repurchase intention when purchasing local brands. He and Wang (2017) go further and suggest incorporating local cultural elements into global brands as their compatibility, directly and indirectly, positively affects purchase intention via brand local iconness. However, global identity weakens the effect of local iconness on purchase intention.

Moreover, studies investigated the concepts of global consumption orientation and global consumer culture. Riefler (2012) finds a positive indirect effect of globalization attitude and global consumption orientation on global brand purchase intention. She identified global brand evaluation and global brand attitude as two important mediators of the aforementioned effect. Bartsch et al. (2016) complement these effects by identifying a positive effect of global consumption orientation on globality attitudes. Susceptibility to global consumer culture as one globality attitude further positively affects global brand identification, which enhances global brand ownership. Westjohn, Singh and Magnusson (2012) show that openness to experience leads to higher global identification and, in turn, has a positive effect on attitude towards global consumer culture positioning of an ad. Halkias et al. (2017) add that a global consumer culture positioning strategy strengthens levels of ad-brand incongruity but has the highest effect on ad attitude. At high levels of ad comprehension, global consumer culture positioning also has a positive indirect effect on ad attitude via ad credibility.

Additionally, previous literature focused the role of global brands solely. Dimofte, Johansson and Ronkainen (2008) indicate a positive indirect effect of brand globality on quality through affect and cognition, whereas the effect through affect is stronger. Even consumers who are against global brands have positive affective associations with them. Dimofte, Johansson and Bagozzi (2010) extend these findings and reveal differences in global brand attitudes between various ethnic groups within the USA. Overall, brand globality still results in consumers' increased purchase behavior.

Internationally, the majority of studies accounted for antecedents and consequences of global consumption orientation and global consumer culture (see Figure 2.2). Alden, Steenkamp and Batra (2006) identify exposure to foreign

cultures via mass media, travel, and materialism as an important positive influence factor of global consumption orientation in China, South Korea, and USA. Susceptibility to normative influences has a negative effect. The authors further show a direct effect of global consumption orientation on global brand attitude, which is negatively mediated by consumer ethnocentrism. Westjohn et al. (2016) contribute to these findings as they find a positive effect of individuals having promotion regulatory focus (emphasis on hope, need, etc., vs. prevention) on global consumption orientation. Global consumption orientation further positively influences consumers' preference for global consumer culture positioning of ads. Steenkamp and de Jong (2010) reveal a significant difference between consumers' attitude towards global vs. local consumer culture due to their values. Values, such as stimulation, power, universalism, and innovation positively affect attitudes towards global consumer culture. In contrast, consumers valuing tradition, conformity, ethnocentrism, self-direction, security, and environmentalism show higher local consumer culture attitudes. These differences in attitudes towards global vs. local consumer culture can be also explained in dependence of national cultural dimensions (Steenkamp 2019a). Attitude toward global consumer culture

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/ framework	Sample and method	Core findings
Bartsch et al. (2016)	How do globality consumer attitude/global brand identification mediate the relation of GCO and brand ownership?	- Social identity theory	- N=300 - Consumers/ France - Product brands - Regressions	- There is a positive significant effect of consumer orientations toward globality on attitudes towards globality. - Only susceptibility to a GCC positively affects global brand identification, while global brand identification positively influences global brand ownership.
Batra et al. (2000)	How does perceived brand local or nonlocal origin affect brand attitudes and for which type of consumers does this relationship differ?	- None	- N=508 - Women/India - Product brands - Regressions	- Degree of perceived brand local or nonlocal origin has a positive, significant effect on brand attitudes. This relationship is negatively moderated by category familiarity. - The perceived nonlocal origin-attitude effect was stronger for high SNI consumers who buy products with high social signaling value and have high admiration of economically developed country-lifestyle.
Davvetas and Diamantopoulos (2018)	What are the post-purchase consequences of global/local brand choices and how much do customers regret those decisions?	- Regret theory	- N_1=98, N_2=122, N_3=113, N_4=203 - Consumers/European countries - Product brands - Regressions	- When global brands dominate consumers' product category schema, purchasing local (vs. global) brands leads to higher regret, lower satisfaction/repurchase intention. - The effect is stronger for high global identity consumers. - Forgoing global for local (vs. local for global) brands is perceived as a less justifiable purchase decision and consequently, has a negative significant impact on regret.
Dimofte, Johansson and Bagozzi (2010)	How do global brand effects vary between ethnic groups?	- Cognitive consistency theory	- N=1,248 - Consumers/ USA - Product brands - T-test, SEM	- Caucasian consumers find the globality of brands more important than African Americans or Hispanics. - African Americans/Hispanics perceive global brands as more beneficial/favorable than Caucasians. - Hispanics (vs. Caucasians) show significantly higher consistency between attitude and behavior.
Dimofte, Johansson and Ronkainen (2008)	How do consumers characterize global brands and which effect does this perception have?	- None	- N_1=719, N_2=756 - Consumers/ USA - Product brands - Factor analysis, ANOVA	- Consumers characterize global brands beyond wide recognition, availability, and standardization differently. - Most consumers, even those against global brands, associate brand globality with positive affect. - Brand globality has an indirect effect on quality through affect and cognition. The effect via affect is stronger.

Figure 2.1 National Studies on Similar Constructs to Perceived Brand Globalness. (Source: Own Creation)

Frank and Watchravesringkan (2016)	Which relationship between acculturation to global consumer culture, perceived brand equity, attitudes toward the brand and brand resonance do exist?	- None	- N=394 - Students/USA - SEM	- Cosmopolitan/self-identification with global consumer culture dimensions of acculturation to global consumer culture are positively associated with brand equity. - Exposure to marketing activities of MNCs, global mass media exposure dimensions of global consumer culture, and acculturation to global consumer culture are negatively associated with perceived brand equity. - Perceived brand equity leads to positive associations with attitudes toward the brand and affects brand resonance.
Halkias et al. (2017)	How do three different advertising approaches influence ad-brand congruence, attitude toward the ad and which mediating/moderating effects of this relation exist?	- None	- N=185 - Consumers/ Austria - Product brands - ANOVA	- For a foreign brand, GCC positioning strategy of the ad has the largest positive effect on ad-brand incongruence, local and foreign consumer culture following. - For a foreign brand, GCC advertisement has a greater positive significant effect on favorable attitude toward the ad than local and foreign consumer culture ad. - At low (high) levels of comprehension, the indirect effect of ad GCC on attitude via credibility is negative (positive).
He and Wang (2017)	How does the incorporation of Chinese elements in global brands influence consumers' PI?	- Cognitive dissonance theory - Dynamic constructivist theory	- N=221 - Consumers/ China - Product brands - Hierarchical regressions	- Compatibility between global brand and local cultural elements has a positive and significant effect on PI. - Brand local iconness mediates these effects. - Cultural identity moderates the relationship of brand local iconness and PI. Higher local (global) identity enhances (weakens) the effect of brand local iconness on PI.
Iversen and Hem (2011)	How does a brand's perceived global or local origin influence brand extension evaluations and brand image?	- Associative network theory - Schema congruity theory - Meaning/ affect transfer	- N=267 - Consumers/ Norway - Corporate brands - SEM	- PBG/brand origin positively affect pre-brand image. - Pre-brand image, perceived similarity between parent brand and brand extension, and category attitude have a positive significant effect on expansion attitude, which negatively affects post-brand image. - Brand origin has a negative significant extension attitude. - Brand familiarity has a positive significant influence on brand origin, pre-brand image, and PBG.
Nijssen and Douglas (2011)	How do consumer world-mindedness and CE influence attitude toward ads with GCC/FCC/LCC positioning and which moderating effects exist?	- None	- N_1=90, $N_{2,3}$=100 - Consumers/ Netherland - Product brands - SEM	- Consumer world-mindedness has a positive (negative) significant effect on GCC/FCC (LCC) ad positioning. - CE negatively (positively) influences attitudes towards ads reflecting FCC/GCC (LCC) positioning. - CE and consumer exposure to other cultures positively (negatively) moderates the impact of consumer world-mindedness on FCC (LCC) positioning. - There is an indirect effect of consumer world-mindedness on attitude towards ads with LCC and FCC positioning through consumer preference for authenticity.
Riefler (2012)	How does consumers' globalization attitude/ GCO influence GBA and PI for foreign vs. domestic global brands?	- Categorization theory	- N_1=429, N_2=150 - Consumers/ Austria - Product brands - Multi-group analysis	- Globalization attitude (only in Study 1)/GCO has a positive significant effect on brand evaluation of domestic and foreign/only foreign global brands. - GCO has a positive significant influence on GBA for the domestic brand, while globalization attitude positively and significantly affects PI of the foreign global brand. - Globalization attitude/GCO has a positive indirect impact on PI via global brand evaluation and GBA. - PBG positively significantly affects global brand evaluation.
Suarez and Belk (2017)	How can cultural resonance illuminate positive and negative aspects of global brands?	- None	- Conceptual	- The analysis provides two forms of cultural resonance due to brands: as arrows and as targets. - As arrows, brands provide content for protestors' messages, helping them to communicate their ideas. - As targets, brands become social enemies, embodying negative aspects that are contested by society. - The form a brand has depends on its institutional resonance: Degree to which a brand represents an institution in society, echoing, reflecting valued outcomes, contributes to the collective/social standards of judgment.
Westjohn, Singh and Magnusson (2012)	Which consumer characteristics determine the preference of either GCC or LCC positioning?	- Self-verification theory - Five-factor theory of personality	- N_1=335, N_2=205 - Consumers/USA - Product brands - SEM	- There is a positive significant effect of global identification on attitude toward GCC positioning, whereas the effect of national identification is not significant. - National identification (vs. global identity) has a positive significant impact on LCC positioning - Openness to experience is positively related with global identification but not with national identification. - Agreeableness positively significantly affects national identification, but is not related to global identification.
Zhou, Yang and Hui (2010)	How do PBF/confidence in brand origin identification influence brand value and which moderating effect does COO has?	- Accessibility-diagnosticity theory - Signaling theory	- N=210 - Undergraduate students/China - Product brands - Multilevel SEM	- PBF/confidence in brand origin identification positively significantly affects consumers' brand value perception. - Confidence in brand origin identification positively moderates the PBF-brand value perception link. The moderating effect is weaker for foreign (vs. local) brands. - Foreign (vs. local) brands have higher perceived value.

Note: CE=Consumer Ethnocentrism; COO=Country-of-Origin; FCC=Foreign Consumer Culture; GBA=Global Brand Attitude; GCC=Global Consumer Culture; GCO=Global Consumption Orientation; LCC=Local Consumer Culture; PBF=Perceived Brand Foreignness; PBG=Perceived Brand Globalness; PI=Purchase Intention; SEM=Structural Equation Modeling; SNI=Susceptibility to Normative Influence.

Figure 2.1 (continued)

positively correlates with long-term orientation, harmony, intellectual autonomy, and secular-rational values. Attitude towards local consumer culture has positive correlations with power distance, embeddedness, and hierarchy.

In addition, studies consider the relations and differences between global and local brands despite the concept of consumer culture in an international context. Schuiling and Kapferer (2004) were the first revealing awareness and image benefits for local (vs. international or global) brands in France, Germany, Italy, and the UK. Even if consumers' usage intention is higher for global brands, local brands are actually used more intensively. Davvetas and Diamantopoulos (2016) specify these findings by showing that consumers prefer global brands in technology and local brands in food product categories. This global vs. local brand category superiority has a positive indirect effect on global vs. local brand purchase intention via purchase justifiability and normative purchase expectations, respectively.

Furthermore, effects of consumers' personal traits and global orientation as well as their belief in global citizenship were studied internationally. According to Zabkar et al. (2017), personality traits such as extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness to experience indirectly enhance purchase intention through their influence on global brand associations. Strizhakova, Coulter and Price (2011) uncover a positive indirect effect of belief in global citizenship via global brands on the importance of branded products through consumers' use of global brands as self-identity signals. The positive effect of global citizenship via global brands on global brand purchase is mediated by consumers' use of global brands as quality signals. Guo (2013) further accounts for global brands' country-of-origin (COO). The author shows a positive effect of consumers' global orientation on attitude towards global brands of developed-country origin. Consumer ethnocentrism has a negative effect on attitude towards these brands, which diminishes the higher consumers' global identity is.

2.2.2 Perceived Brand Globalness

Literature analyzed the effects of PBG on consumer attitudes and behavior in a national context (see Figure 2.3). Most studies investigated the mediating and moderating factors on the relation between PBG and purchase intention or willingness to pay. Akram, Merunka and Akram (2011) find a positive effect of PBG on purchase intention mediated by brand quality and prestige. The indirect effect through quality is stronger. Consumer ethnocentrism negatively moderates

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/ framework	Sample and method	Core findings
Alden et al. (2013)	How does the pathway from localism/CE via global company animosity and from materialism/cosmopolitanism through perceived value of global brands to GBA look like?	- Cognitive-affective processing system theory	- N_1=206, N_2=20, N_3=189 - Consumers/ Brazil, Germany, South Korea - Corporate brands - SEM	- CE (localism) positively significantly affects global company animosity in all three countries (only in Brazil). - Global company animosity has a negative significant effect on GBA in Germany/Brazil, but not South Korea. - Materialism (cosmopolitanism) has a positive significant impact on perceived value of global brands in all three countries (in Brazil and South Korea). - Perceived value for global brands has a positive significant impact on GBA in all three countries.
Alden, Steenkamp and Batra (2006)	Is the global consumption orientation valid across countries and what are its antecedents and consequences?	- Cultural globalization theory	- N_1=370, N_2=247, N_3=419 - Women/South Korea, USA, China - Product brands - SEM	- Results confirm GCO measure's validity and reliability. - Exposure to foreign cultures through mass media/travel/ materialism positively significantly affects GCO. - SNI has a negative effect on GCO. - GCO has a positive significant effect on positive GBAs. - CE has a negative and significant mediating effect on the relationship between GCO and GBA.
Davvetas and Diamantopoulos (2016)	Is the construct of global vs. local brand superiority in the category valid/reliable and how does product category affect consumer preferences between global vs. local brands?	- Schema theory	- N_1=295, N_2=370 - Consumers/ Austria, Slovakia - Product brands - SEM	- The global vs. local brand superiority construct in the category is valid/reliable in emerging/developed countries. - Consumers prefer global (local) brands in technology product (food) categories. - Purchase justifiability and normative purchase expectations positively mediate the relation between global vs. local brand category superiority and preference. - The authors propose that their construct of global vs. local brand superiority is not related to PBG.
Guo (2013)	How does consumer global orientation influence attitudes toward global brands from emerging vs. developed countries?	- Social identity theory - Identity-accessibility effects	- N_1=147, N_2=119, N_3=124, N_4=443 - Consumers/ China, India - Product brands - SEM	- Consumers' global orientation has a positive significant influence on their GBA from developed countries. - CE negatively significantly affects GBA, whereas this effect diminishes for consumers with high global identity. - For Indian (vs. Chinese) consumers, a similar effect of global orientation on GBA is found, but the results show a relatively weak influence of CE.
Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube (2017)	How does a global/local positioning moderate the advertising frequency-brand image/quality relationship in emerging markets?	- Persuasion theory	- N_1=23, N_2=437 - Consumers/ China, India - Product brands - Regressions, SEM	- Global/local iconic brand positioning has a positive significant (no) moderating effect on the relation between advertising frequency and brand image (quality). - The moderation of brand positioning on the advertising frequency-brand image relationship is mediated by source attractiveness but not by source credibility. - The interaction between global and local iconic brand positioning has a negative effect on source attractiveness and, consequently, on the relationship between advertising frequency and brand image.
Schuiling and Kapferer (2004)	How do local and international brands differ from each other?	- None	- N_1=744, N_2=9,739 - Consumers/UK, Germany, Italy, France - Product brands - Regressions	- Local (vs. international) brands receive much higher awareness levels, have a higher image of trust/reliability, and are perceived to be more valuable/"down to earth". - In contrast, there is no significant difference between the quality and prestige perceptions. - The usage intention of international (vs. local) brands seems to be higher, whereas the actual usage is significantly higher for local over international brands.
Steenkamp (2019a)	How do AGP and ALP correlate with individual-level and national-cultural correlates?	- Consumer culture theory - Cultural globalization theory - Acculturation Theory	- N=13,000 - Consumers/ 28 countries - Product brands - Correlations	- Consumer ethnocentrism has, among the individual-level correlates, the largest effect on GCC and LCC. - There are effects of age, education, social class, openness, and advertising attitude on GCC (not LCC). - GCC positively correlates with long-term orientation, harmony, intellectual autonomy, secular-rational values. - LCC positively correlates with power distance, embeddedness, hierarchy, and negatively with individualism, harmony, affective/intellectual autonomy, egalitarianism, secular-rational, and self-expressiveness.
Steenkamp and de Jong (2010)	How are AGP and ALP related to each other and which factors influence those attitudes?	- Consumer culture theory	- N=13,000 - Consumers/ 28 countries - Product brands - Regressions	- Consumers differ systematically on GCC and LCC. - There is a significant effect of materialism, nostalgia, and survival/self-expression on both GCC and LCC. - Stimulation has positive (negative) significant effect on GCC (LCC), whereas tradition, conformity, CE, and traditional/secular-rational have a positive (negative) significant impact on LCC (GCC). - Self-direction, security, and environmentalism only have positive significant effect on LCC, whereas power, universalism, and innovativeness only affect GCC positively.

Figure 2.2 International Studies on Similar Constructs to Perceived Brand Globalness. (Source: Own Creation)

Strizhakova and Coulter (2015)	How do local-global consumer values influence purchase of local (vs. global) brands and which mediating effects of quality and identity/moderating effects of product category and country development exist?	- Theory of consumer choice - GCC theory	- N=2,197 - Consumers/ Australia, Brazil, China, India, Russia, UK, USA - Product brands - Hierarchical regressions	- Independent of product category symbolism, consumers' perception of the identity function of local brands has a positive significant impact on local brand purchase, whereas local brand quality has no effect. - CE (global connectedness) positively (negatively) affects local brand quality, identity, brand purchase. - In countries with lower levels of economic development, CE (global connectedness) has a positive (negative) significant effect on local brand purchase for low symbolic products, but no effect on local brand quality and identity.
Strizhakova, Coulter and Price (2011)	How does global citizenship through global brands influence branded product importance/ global brand purchases by the use of quality/self-identity brand signals?	- None	- N_1=510, N_2=970 - Consumers/UK, USA, Russia - Product brands - SEM	- There is a significant indirect effect of belief in global citizenship via global brands on the importance of branded products mediated by consumers' use of brands as self-identity (quality) signals (in Russia but not the USA). - There is a significant mediating effect of consumer use of global brands as quality (self-identity) signals on the relation of global citizenship via global brands and global brand purchases (in Russia, but not in the UK and USA).
Westjohn et al. (2016)	How are promotion/prevention regulatory focus related to GCO and how does this influence consumers' preference for GCC (vs. LCC) positioning of ads?	- None	- N_1=630, N_2=63, N_3=95 - Consumers/ USA, China - Product brands - SEM, PROCESS analysis	- Prevention (promotion) regulatory focus negatively (positively) significantly affects GCO in both samples (China). - GCO has a positive significant effect on preference for GCC vs. LCC positioning of ads. - Therefore, there is an indirect effect of prevention (promotion) regulatory focus on preference for GCC positioning of ads through GCO for foreign and domestic brands in both samples (in the Chinese sample).
Zabkar et al. (2017)	How do personality traits influence consumers' willingness to buy global brands and which mediating effects exist?	- Cognitive-affective personality system theory	- N=4,539 - Consumers/Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia - Accounting for global brands in general - SEM, PROCESS analysis	- There is a positive (negative) significant indirect (direct) effect of extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness to experience (neuroticism) on PI. - Global brand associations positively mediate the effect of personality traits (except neuroticism) on PI. - Domestic country bias negatively mediates the neuroticism/openness to experience-PI relationship. - Price sensitivity has a positive significant mediating effect between extraversion/conscientiousness/openness to experience and PI.

Note: AGP=Attitude toward Global Positioning; ALP=Attitude towards Local Positioning; CE=Consumer Ethnocentrism; GBA=Global Brand Attitude; GCC=Global Consumer Culture; GCO=Global Consumption Orientation; PBG=Perceived Brand Globalness; PI=Purchase Intention; SEM=Structural Equation Modeling; SNI=Susceptibility to Normative Influence.

Figure 2.2 (continued)

both paths from PBG to purchase intention. Hussein and Hassan (2018) support these indirect effects of PBG on purchase intention via quality and prestige for consumers from Saudi Arabia. The authors also highlight a stronger path through quality. Vuong and Giao (2020) enhance those findings by indicating that PBG increases purchase intention indirectly through quality, prestige, and social responsibility. The authors slightly contradict previous studies as they show the strongest path from PBG to be via prestige. All indirect effects are weakened when consumers score high on consumer ethnocentrism. Davvetas, Sichtmann and Diamantopoulos (2015) report a positive indirect effect of PBG on willingness to pay via brand attitude, whereas they cannot confirm any moderating effects.

Research also examined consumer outcomes of and the interaction between PBG and perceived brand localness (PBL). Halkias, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos (2016) report that both PBG and PBL indirectly increase purchase intention through affecting brand attitude. An interaction between both constructs cannot be found. Xie, Batra and Peng (2015) specify those findings and show a positive

indirect effect of PBG through quality, prestige, and identity expressiveness on brand trust and affect, which further affect Chinese consumers' behavioral intentions. However, the indirect effect of PBL on behavioral intentions only holds for prestige and identity expressiveness as mediating factors. Swoboda, Pennemann and Taube (2012) further bring brands' origin into play. PBG and PBL positively affect retail patronage only via functional and psychological value. The effects of PBG are stronger when retailers are foreign (vs. domestic) and consumers have high global identity orientation. This is the only national study relying on PBG towards the corporate brand.

Other studies in the context of PBG focused on antecedents and effects of a more fine-grained conceptualization of PBG. De Meulenaer, Dens and De Pelsmacker (2015) explore the importance of different cues signaling PBG. They identified advertising copy as the most important cue for high- and low-involvement products. For low-involvement products, it is followed by spokesperson, brand logo, and brand name. Brand name, spokesperson, and brand logo gain importance for high-involvement products, respectively. Mandler (2019) conceptualize PBG by three dimensions: perceived market reach, global consumer culture positioning, and perceived standardization. Perceived market reach and global consumer culture positioning positively, whereas perceived standardization negatively affect brand evaluation and, thus, global brand attitude.

Fewer studies analyzed PBG effects internationally but solely by comparing different countries (see Figure 2.4). Steenkamp, Batra and Alden (2003) were the first examining PBG in an international context and created the starting point of researching this concept in general. They find a positive indirect effect of PBG on brand purchase likelihood through brand quality and prestige in Korea and the USA. The effect through brand quality is stronger. Consumer ethnocentrism weakens both PBG-purchase likelihood links. Swoboda and Hirschmann (2016) additionally capture the role of COO when exploring PBG effects in India, Japan, and the USA. PBG equally enhances consumer loyalty through functional and psychological value. These indirect effects are stronger for foreign (vs. domestic) companies in India and Japan but weakened by consumer ethnocentrism in all countries. This is the only international empirical study measuring PBG of the corporation. Randrianasolo (2017) reveals further country differences in the effects of PBG on brand attitudes, but not behavioral outcomes. PBG positively affects quality and prestige in least developed (Madagascar) and emerging countries (India) but not in developed countries (USA).

Özsomer (2012) applied the concept of PBG not only for the global but also the local brand to explain drivers of global brand purchase likelihood in Turkey, Singapore, and Denmark. PBG of the local brand strengthens local iconness in

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/ framework	Sample and method	Core findings
Akram, Merunka and Akram (2011)	How does PBG affect consumers' PI and which moderation effect of CE can be identified?	- Consumer culture theory	- N=452 - Consumer/ Pakistan - Product brands - SEM	- PBG positively significantly affects perceived brand quality and prestige, through which it indirectly influences PI. - The path from PBG through perceived brand quality to PI is stronger than through prestige. - The weaker CE, the stronger is the relationship between PBG and perceived brand quality/prestige.
Davvetas, Sichtmann and Diamantopoulos (2015)	How does PBG influence consumers' willingness to pay and which factors moderate this relation?	- Replication of study of Steenkamp/ Batra/Alden (2003)	- N_1=91, N_2=65, N_3=64, $N_{4\text{-}A}$= 108, $N_{4\text{-}B}$=90 - Consumers/ Austria - Product brands - Regressions	- PBG has an indirect positive, significant influence on consumers' willingness to pay through their brand attitude, whereas there is no direct effect. - Besides exceptions in study one (moderating effect of location on PBG-brand attitudes relation and cosmopolitanism on PBG-consumers' willingness to pay relation), there is no moderating effect of CE, global/local identity, cosmopolitanism, and demographic characteristics.
De Meulenaer, Dens and De Pelsmacker (2015)	How does globalization (vs. localization) of advertising copy, brand name, spokesperson, and brand logo influence PBG?	- Consumer culture positioning theory	- N=200 - Consumers/ Netherlands - Product brands - Conjoint analysis	- Advertising copy is the most important cue in signaling PBG for high and low-involvement products. - For the low-(high-)involvement product, it is followed by the spokesperson, the brand logo, and the brand name (brand name, spokesperson, and brand logo). - Advertising copy and brand name (brand logo and spokesperson) determine PBG more for local (global) consumers.
Guo, Heinberg and Zou (2019)	How do PBG and local iconness influence attitude toward culturally mixed products?	- Categorization theory	- N=646 - Consumers/ China - Corporate brands - SEM	- PBG has a direct negative significant effect on attitude toward culturally mixed symbolic products as well as an indirect one through product local iconness. - The negative effect of PBG on product local iconness is stronger for nonfood (vs. food) products. - Cultural respect has a direct positive significant effect on attitude toward culturally mixed symbolic products as well as an indirect one through product local iconness. - For nonfood products, cultural respect attenuates the negative link from PBG to product local iconness.
Halkias, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos (2016)	How do PBG and PBL affect PI through brand attitude?	- Stereotype content model	- N=253 - Consumers/ Austria - Product brands - SEM	- PBG/PBL have a positive significant effect on brand attitude, which further has a positive effect on PI. - Country competence has a positive significant effect on brand attitude and therefore, an indirect impact on PI. - PBG and competence have similar effects on brand attitude, whereas PBL has a stronger impact.
Hussein and Hassan (2018)	Which role do quality, prestige, and familiarity play in mediating the relation between PBG/COO and PI?	- None	- N=319 - Consumers/ Saudi Arabia - Product brands - SEM	- There is a positive significant effect of PBG and COO on quality, prestige, familiarity, and PI (not for COO). - There is a positive significant effect of quality and prestige, but not familiarity and COO on PI. - Quality and prestige have a positive significant mediating effect on the relationship between PBG/COO on PI.
Mandler (2019)	How does an extended conceptualization of PBG influence GBA through brand evaluation?	- Signaling theory	- N=907 - Consumers/ Germany - Product brands - SEM	- PBG has a positive significant indirect effect on GBA through brand evaluation. - Perceived market reach and GCCP (perceived standardization) have a positive (negative) significant effect on global brand evaluation and consequently, on GBA.
Swoboda, Pennemann and Taube (2012)	How can retailers translate PBG/PBL into patronage and which moderating effect do retailer's origin and consumer identity play in an emerging market?	- Accessibility-diagnosticity theory	- N=1,188 - Consumers/ China - Corporate brands - SEM	- PBG/PBL has positive significant indirect effect on retail patronage through functional and psychological value. - Foreign (Asian and Western)/domestic (Chinese) retailers benefit more from the relation between PBG/PBL and retail patronage. - For domestic (vs. foreign) retailers, the indirect effect is stronger (equally strong) through psychological (and functional) value. - The PBG-retail patronage link is stronger for consumers with high global (vs. hybrid/local) identity, whereas there is no difference for the PBL-retail patronage relationship.
Vuong and Giao (2020)	Which factors mediate and moderate the relationship between PBG and PI?	- None	- N=613 - Consumers/ Vietnam - Corporate brands - Regressions	- PBG has a positive significant effect on PI, perceived brand prestige, brand social responsibility, perceived brand quality, brand credibility. - Perceived brand prestige, brand social responsibility, and perceived brand quality positively influence PI. - PBG also has an indirect effect on perceived brand quality through brand credibility, perceived brand prestige, brand social responsibility, and perceived brand quality. - The relationship between PBG and quality/prestige/PI is weaker for consumers with high (vs. low) CE.

Figure 2.3 National Studies on Perceived Brand Globalness. (Source: Own Creation)

Winit et al. (2014)	How do brand ownership, PBG, perceived price differences and CE affect PI on local vs. global brands?	- Signaling theory - Associative network memory theory	- N_1=243, N_2=558 - Students/ Thailand - Product brands - Regressions	- Independent of brand ownership (foreign vs. local), PBG has a positive significant impact on brand quality and PI. - There is a positive significant effect of local iconness on brand quality for high-price/-involvement products. - Perceived price difference has a moderating effect on the brand ownership-PI link as PI of local (foreign) brands increases when prices of foreign (local) brands rise. - CE has a positive moderating effect of the relation between perceived price difference and PI.
Xie, Batra and Peng (2015)	How does PBG/PBL influence brand trust and affect and which mediating effects exist for the relation to behavioral intentions?	- Consumer culture theory - Identity theory	- N=287 - Consumers/ China - Product brands - SEM	- PBG/PBL has a positive significant effect on brand identity expressiveness. - Brand quality, prestige and identity expressiveness mediate the PBG-trust/affect link. - Brand identity expressiveness and prestige (but not quality) mediate the PBL-trust/affect link. - Brand trust (affect) mediates the identity expressiveness/ quality/prestige (only prestige)-behavioral intentions link.

Note: CE=Consumer Ethnocentrism; COO=Country-of-Origin; GBA=Global Brand Attitude; GCCP=Global Consumer Culture Positioning; PBG=Perceived Brand Globalness; PBL=Perceived Brand Localness; PI=Purchase Intention; SEM=Structural Equation Modeling.

Figure 2.3 (continued)

emerging (not developed) markets. It further enhances local brand quality and prestige, which diminish consumers' likelihood of purchasing global brands. In contrast, PBG of the global brand indirectly and positively affects global brand purchase likelihood via global brand quality, but not prestige. These effects are stronger in emerging than they are in developed countries. In line with comparing global vs. local brands, Sichtmann, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos (2019) show that PBG and PBL have a positive effect on consumer-brand identification in Austria and Bulgaria.

2.3 Literature on Endorsed Branding

2.3.1 Horizontal Image Transfer

Literature on image transfers mainly considered horizontal image transfers in a single country context (see Figure 2.5). Such studies either examined the links between product brand attributes and evaluations or horizontal brand extensions. Regarding the link between global product brand attributes or attitudes and evaluations, the majority of studies find positive effects of global consumption orientation, global consumer culture, and global brand attitude on global brand evaluation (e.g., Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2018; Halkias et al. 2017; Riefler 2012; for a more detailed description see Section 2.2.1.).

Further studies within this specific area of research neglected the role of global brands, but took COO image effects into account. Diamantopoulos, Schlegelmilch and Palihawadana (2011) show a positive indirect effect of COO image on purchase intention through brand image. Wang et al. (2012) provide a differentiated

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/ framework	Sample and method	Core findings
Özsomer (2012)	How does PBG influence the purchase likelihood of global brands and which mediating and moderating effect do exist?	- Signaling theory - Associative network memory theory	- N=480 - Consumers/ Turkey, Singapore, Denmark - Product brands - SEM	- PBG of the local brand has a positive significant influence on local iconness in emerging markets. - Local iconness has a positive significant effect on local brand prestige in emerging and mature markets. - PBG has a positive significant indirect effect on the purchase likelihood of the global brand. - Local brands' perceived quality/prestige positively affects purchase likelihood of the global brand.
Randrianasolo (2017)	How does PBG influence quality and prestige in developed, emerging, and least developed countries?	- Institutional theory - Signaling theory	- N_1=40, N_2=87, N_3=76 - Consumers/ Madagascar, USA, India - Product brands - Regressions	- PBG has a positive significant effect on quality in least developed/emerging, but not developed countries. - PBG has a positive significant effect on prestige in least developed/emerging, but not developed countries. - Prestige has a positive significant effect on quality in least developed, emerging, and developed countries.
Sichtmann, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos (2019)	How do PBG and PBL influence consumer-brand identification?	- Cue utilization theory - Brand relationship theory - Consumer culture theory	- N_1=150, N_2=302 - Consumers/ Austria, Bulgaria - Corporate brands - SEM	- PBG has a positive significant effect on consumer-brand identification in both samples. - PBL has a positive significant effect on consumer-brand identification in both samples. - The positive effect of PBG (PBL) on consumer-brand identification is stronger for domestic (foreign) brands in both samples. This effect mentioned in brackets is only true in the Austrian sample.
Sichtmann and Diamantopoulos (2013)	How do PBG, brand origin image, and brand origin-extension fit influence brand extension (PI) success?	- Signaling theory - Categorization theory	- N_1=301, N_2=290 - Consumers/ Austria, Bulgaria - Product brands - SEM	- By having a positive significant impact on perceived parent brand quality, PBG/brand origin image have a positive indirect impact on PI in the Austrian sample. - Brand origin-extension fit has a positive significant indirect effect on PI via perceived quality of the extension. - Brand origin-extension fit also has an indirect effect on quality through parent brand-extension fit.
Steenkamp, Batra and Alden (2003)	How does PBG affect the likelihood of brand purchase?	- None	- N_1=247, N_2=370 - Consumers/ USA, Korea - Product brands - SEM	- PBG positively significantly affects brand quality/prestige. - PBG has an indirect effect on purchase likelihood. The effect is stronger through brand quality (vs. prestige). - CE negatively moderates the PBG-PI link. - Local icon value has a positive indirect effect on purchase likelihood effect via prestige (not quality).
Swoboda and Hirschmann (2016)	Which effect has PBG on loyalty and how do CE and country of origin moderate this relationship?	- Accessibility-diagnosticity theory	- N=2647 - Consumers/ India, Japan, USA - Corporate brand/ - SEM	- PBG has a positive significant indirect effect on loyalty via psychological and functional value, which is greater for foreign (vs. domestic) companies in India and Japan. - The indirect effect is equally strong via functional and psychological value (stronger via psychological value) for foreign (domestic) companies in India and Japan. - CE negatively moderates the effect of PBG on loyalty. - For less (more) ethnocentric consumers, the PBG-loyalty link is stronger through functional (psychological) value in Japan and USA (in all three countries).

Note: CE=Consumer Ethnocentrism; PBG=Perceived Brand Globalness; PBL=Perceived Brand Localness; PI=Purchase Intention; SEM=Structural Equation Modeling.

Figure 2.4 International Studies on Perceived Brand Globalness. (Source: Own Creation)

conceptualization of country image. Cognitive country image indirectly increases purchase intention via product image, whereas affective country image directly enhances product image and purchase intention. Wang and Yang (2008) support this direct effect of COO image on purchase intention. COO image also positively moderates the relation between brand personality and purchase intention. Essoussi and Merunka (2007) enhance these findings as they also consider the fit between country of design or manufacturer image and product brand image. The higher this fit, the higher the perceived product quality.

Studies further accounted for the effects of brand image congruence and consistency as well as brand-self similarity and self-image congruence. Eggers et al.

(2013) report that brand consistency and congruence have a positive effect on brand trust, which consequently increases firm growth. Hu et al. (2012) add to these findings and uncover a positive impact of symbolic brand image congruity on functional image congruity. Functional image congruity enhances consumers' brand preference. Moreover, Pedeliento et al. (2016) explore the role of brand- and product-self congruence for attachment and loyalty. Thereby, brand-self congruity positively affects brand attachment, while product-self congruity increases product attachment. Product attachment has a positive effect on brand attachment, which strengthens brand loyalty. Rodrigo, Khan and Ekinci (2019) also find a positive influence of self-image congruence on consumers' product brand attitudes, which enhance their purchase intention. Furthermore, Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar and Sen (2012) show that brand-self similarity, despite brand characteristics like social benefits, warmth, distinctiveness, and memorable brand experience, positively determines consumer-brand identification. Consumer-brand identification further leads to beneficial brand loyalty.

When it comes to horizontal brand extensions, most studies focused on any form of similarity or fit between the extension and the parent brand. Huber et al. (2013) show that a higher fit between the extension product and the original brand leads to better extension evaluations. This effect is particularly strong in high (vs. low) involvement situations. Wilkie, Johnson and White (2015) do not fully confirm these findings as they reveal an inverted U-shaped relationship between line extension's difference to existing products and performance. The authors subsume that the first two products extended in a brand's range define the expected level of difference for all other product brand extensions. In addition, Spiggle, Nguyen and Caravella (2012) examine the construct of brand extension authenticity (i.e., maintaining brand standards and style, honoring brand heritage, preserving brand essence, and avoiding brand exploitation) in combination with brand extension similarity. Brand extension authenticity directly enhances extension evaluation but also positively moderates the relation between similarity and extension evaluation. Johnson et al. (2019) highlight brand extension fit as an important moderator. Perceived extension fit weakens the positive direct and indirect effect of brand reputation on extension evaluation via consumers' helping intention.

Chang, Lin and Chang (2011) uncover consumer differences in the importance of product category similarity between the extension and the parent brand. For prevention-focused (vs. promotion-focused) consumers, this similarity is more important. Monga and Gürhan-Canli (2012) add that when having a mating mindset (i.e., thinking about a mate), male consumers report greater fit perceptions and more favorable extension evaluations. These perceptions and evaluations are stronger for functional (vs. prestigious) brands. Puligadda, Cronley and Kardes

(2013) contribute to those findings. Their results show that consumers following a global (vs. local) processing (in terms of perceiving either the entirety or details) are more likely to accept more dissimilar (vs. similar) brand extensions. The authors suggest using advertising to prime such global or local processing. Cutright, Bettman and Fitzsimons (2013) identify further consumer characteristics determining opinions about brand extensions' fit. When people lose their feeling of control, they are less likely to consider poor-fitting brand extensions. When competition is high and a poor-fitting brand extension is the best choice, this effect diminishes. Milberg, Sinn and Goodstein (2010) also explore brand extensions in dependence of certain competitive settings and confirm these findings. In non-competitive (vs. competitive) settings, low fitting brand extensions are evaluated lower and consumers' associated purchase risk is higher. In contrast, when brands compete with less familiar brands, evaluations of low-fitting brand extensions are higher.

Only two studies referred to horizontal brand extensions in the context of globality and global brands. Lane and Fastoso (2016) account for the role of advertising in the context of brand extensions of global brands. Repeated ad exposure increases the positive spillover from extension evaluation on global brand evaluation, particularly for low-fit brand extensions. Iversen and Hem (2011) find a positive effect of PBG and global brand origin on pre-brand image. Pre-brand image, perceived similarity between brand extension and parent brand, and category attitude strengthen expansion attitude, which negatively influences post-brand image.

Internationally, studies on horizontal image transfers mostly analyzed the image transfer from global brand attitudes on global brand evaluation (see Figure 2.6). In summary, these studies find positive effects of global brand associations or PBG on global brand purchase intention when comparing a few countries (e.g., Özsomer 2012; Zabkar et al. 2017; see Sections 2.2.1. and 2.2.2.). Studies considering the image transfer between product brand attitudes and product brand evaluations without referring to global brands focused on revealing country differences. Laforet and Chen (2012) report that British (vs. Chinese) consumers prefer brands originated in the West, Japan, or South Korea. Their perceptions of brand familiarity and quality enhance their purchase intention. Van der Lans, van Everdingen and Melnyk (2016) identify quality, uniqueness, leading, and growing in popularity as important brand benefits, which increase consumers' purchase intention across 25 countries. Competition, consumers' self-image, and national culture strongly moderate these effects by determining consumers' susceptibility to different types of brand benefits.

Further international studies investigated country differences in horizontal brand extension perceptions. Boisvert and Ashill (2018) show that a French luxury brand's horizontal line extension is rated higher by French than American consumers, especially for a directly branded new brand (vs. sub-branded). Kim and Park (2019) add that when an extension is psychologically close, Asians (vs. Westerners) report better extension evaluations, particularly when the extension-parent fit is low. Henseler et al. (2010) try to explain such country differences referring to national cultural dimensions. The effect of quality on extension success is positively moderated by masculinity, whereas power distance and uncertainty avoidance negatively moderate this relation. Long-term orientation diminishes the influence of extension fit on extension success, while masculinity and individualism have a strengthening impact. Only one study explores the horizontal brand extension of global brands by comparing consumers from Austria and Bulgaria (Sichtmann and Diamantopoulos 2013). Thereby, brand origin-extension fit positively determines purchase intention via the perceived quality of the extension. Moreover, PBG and brand origin have a positive indirect effect on purchase intention through perceived parent brand quality (only in the Austrian sample).

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/ framework	Sample and method	Core findings
Horizontal Image Transfer of Product Brand to Product Brand				
Bian and Moutinho (2011)	How do brand image, product involvement, and knowledge influence purchase intention of counterfeits?	- None	- N=321 - Consumers/UK - Hierarchical regressions	- Differential weighting of affect-consistent information occurs only when people base their product evaluations on hedonic criteria. - When participants base their judgments on feelings, they give more weight to attribute information that was evaluatively consistent with their mood and report greater confidence in the judgments they made. - Focusing participants' attention to product-irrelevant sources of their affect decreases the impact of mood-attribute consistency on weighting attribute information.
Davvetas and Diamantopoulos (2018)	See Figure I– 2.			
Delassus and Descotes (2012)	How can brand equity be transferred successfully in the case of brand name substitution?	- None	- N=300 - Consumer/One country - Path analysis	- To successfully transfer brand equity, consumers should be aware of the brand substitution. - Consumers should have a positive attitude toward the replacement of the initial brand. - Consumers should perceive the old and new brand as similar and should not be too much emotionally bound to the former brand - The new brand should benefit from the presence of an umbrella brand.
Diamantopoulos, Schlegelmilch and Palihawadana (2011)	How does country-of-origin image influence consumers' purchase intention?	- None	- N=404 - Consumers/UK - SEM	- COO does not directly affect PI. - COO, either on a country level or on specific product category level, strongly has a positive significant indirect effect on PI through brand image.

Figure 2.5 Selected National Studies on Horizontal Image Transfer. (Source: Own Creation)

Dimofte, Johansson and Bagozzi (2010)	See Figure I– 2.			
Dimofte, Johansson and Ronkainen (2008)	See Figure I– 2.			
Eggers et al. (2013)	How are brand authenticity, brand trust and SME growth linked together?	- None	- N=285 - Consumers/ Germany - SEM	- Brand consistency and brand congruency have a positive significant effect on SME brand trust, whereas brand customer orientation has not. - SME brand trust positively significantly affects growth.
Essoussi and Merunka (2007)	How do country of design and country of manufacture affect the perception of bi-national products of consumers in emerging markets?	- None	- N=389 - Consumers/ Tunisia - SEM	- Product quality positively relates to overall country of design/manufacturer. - The higher the fit of country of design/manufacturer image and the product, the better the perceived quality. - Perceived product quality/brand image positively significantly affect the perceived quality of the branded product. - The country of design image has a positive significant impact on brand image, which is stronger the more typical the brand is of its country of design.
Frank and Watchravesringkan (2016)	See Figure I– 2.	-	-	-
Halkias et al. (2017)	See Figure I– 2.			
Hu et al. (2012)	How do functional and symbolic image congruity influence brand preference?	- Schema congruity theory	- N=1,440 - Consumers/ China - Regressions	- Functional (symbolic) image congruity has a positive significant (no) effect on consumers' brand preference. - Symbolic image congruity has a positive significant effect on functional image congruity. - Consumers' brand familiarity negatively moderates the effect of functional image congruity on brand preference.
Pedeliento et al. (2016)	How does the attachment to industrial brands and products affect brand loyalty?	- Theory of attachment - Theory of self-expansion	- N=317 - Truck owner-operators/One European country - Path analysis	- Brand-self congruity and brand reliability have a positive significant effect on brand attachment. - Product-self congruity and product reliability have a positive significant effect on product attachment. - Product attachment is positively significantly related to brand attachment, which influences brand loyalty. - Product attachment positively significantly affects product irreplaceability, which influences brand loyalty.
Riefler (2012)	See Figure I– 2			
Rodrigo, Khan and Ekinci (2019)	How do subjective norms and self-image congruence influence purchase intentions and which role does consumers' attitude towards foreign products play?	- Theory of reasoned action	- N=316 - Consumers/Sri Lanka - SEM	- Subjective norms and self-image congruence have a positive significant effect on consumers' attitude towards products made in foreign countries. - Attitudes towards foreign products positively significantly affect foreign products' PI. - Consumers' attitudes towards foreign products partially mediate the relationship between self-image congruence and PI towards foreign products.
Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar and Sen (2012)	How do brand characteristics influence consumer-brand identification and which effect has it on consumer behavior?	- Social identity theory	- N=781 - Consumers/ Germany - Mullti-group SEM	- Brand-self similarity, distinctiveness, social benefits, warmth, and memorable brand experiences have a positive significant effect on consumer-brand identification. - Product involvement positively moderates all of the aforementioned relationships. - Consumer-brand identification has a positive significant effect on brand loyalty and advocacy.
Visentin, Pizzi and Pichierri (2019)	Which factors mediate the relationship between news truthfulness and brand purchase intentions?	- Source credibility theory	- N=400 - Consumers/USA - Sequential mediation analysis	- News truthfulness positively significantly affects news credibility, which does not affect source credibility. - Source credibility positively affects brand trust. - Brand trust positively significantly affects brand attitudes, which enhance brand PI.
Wang et al. (2012)	How do cognitive and affective country image influence consumers' purchase intention?	- None	- N=1,257 - Consumers/ China - SEM	- Cognitive country image has a positive significant direct effect on product image, which positively influences PI of products from that country. - Affective country image positively significantly affects product image and PI.
Wang and Yang (2008)	How do brand personality and country-of-origin image influence purchase intention?	- Theory of reasoned action	- N=789 - Consumers/ China - Hierarchical regressions	- Brand personality and COO image have a positive significant effect on purchase intention. - COO image has a positive significant moderating effect on the relation between brand personality and purchase intention.

Figure 2.5 (continued)

Horizontal Brand Extension				
Ahn, Park and Hyun (2018)	How can brand equity of the parent brand be transferred to the evaluation of the extended brand?	- None	- N=324 - Consumers/USA - SEM	- Brand awareness, association, and quality have a positive significant effect on loyalty of the luxury automobile brand. - Brand loyalty positively significantly affects attitude toward the extended rental car service brand, which in turn significantly affects evaluation and PI.
Chang, Lin and Chang (2011)	How does benefit overlap vs. product category similarity influence extension evaluation?	- Self-regulatory theory	- N_1=131, N_2=130 - Adults, Students/Taiwan - ANOVA, Regressions	- When evaluating an extension, promotion-focused consumers emphasize the benefit overlap (vs. product category similarity) between the extension and parent brand. - When evaluating an extension, prevention-focused consumers emphasize the product category similarity (vs. benefit overlap) between the extension and parent brand.
Cutright, Bettman and Fitzsimons (2013)	How do consumers' feelings of control influence brand extension acceptance?	- Dissonance theory	- N_1=59, N_2=195, N_3=93, N_4=148 - Students, Consumers, Managers/USA - ANOVA	- Consumers' need for structure in consumption is one key success factor for brand extensions. - When people's feelings of control are shaken, they are less likely to consider poor-fitting brand extensions. - This relation is mitigated when people have the opportunity to engage in small acts of structure. - The relation between control and reactions to poor-fitting extensions is reversed in the face of competition, particularly when an extension with poor fit is the best choice.
Dwivedi, Merrilees and Sweeney (2010)	How do brand extensions influence parent brand attitudes?	- Categorization theory - Network memory theory	- N=387 - Students/India - SEM	- Parent brand image has a positive significant effect on brand extension attitude, perceived brand extension fit, and parent brand attitude change. - Brand extension fit has a positive significant effect on extension attitude and attitude change. - Attitude towards brand extension has a positive significant effect on parent brand attitude change.
Estes et al. (2012)	How do taxonomic and thematic brand extensions differ?	- None	- N_1=2, N_2=194, N_3=25, N_4=130 - Experts, Students, Consumers/One country - Regressions	- Taxonomic and thematic similarities independently contribute to branding professionals' and consumers' evaluations of real and hypothetical brand extensions. - Thematic brand extensions are processed more rapidly, judged more novel, and evaluated more positively. - When induced to consider the commonalities between the brand and extension product, taxonomic extensions are judged more novel and evaluated more positively.
Huber et al. (2013)	How do fit, order of market entry, and involvement influence extension evaluations?	- Categorization theory	- N=614 - Consumers/Hong Kong - MANOVA	- The better the fit between the extension product and original brand, the better the extension evaluation. - The effect is stronger in high (vs. low) involvement situations. - The positive effect of an ordered market entry is significantly stronger in low (vs. high) involvement situations.
Iversen and Hem (2011)	See Figure I– 2.			
Johnson et al. (2019)	How does brand reputation influence extension evaluations?	- Reciprocal altruism theory	- N_1=283, N_2=153, N_3=601, N_4=205, N_5=426 - Students/USA - ANOVA	- Brand reputation (social responsibility and ability reputation) has a positive significant direct and indirect effect on extension evaluation via consumers' helping intention. - Perceived extension fit negatively moderates the effects. - The effect of social responsibility on low fit brand extension evaluations is stronger for consumers who value close relationships and caring for one another's well-being and tends to dissipate when social responsibility initiatives are tainted with self-serving motives.
Lane and Fastoso (2016)	How does ad exposure affect the effect between extension and global brand evaluation?	- Theory of schema-triggered affect	- N=111 - Students/USA - Regressions	- Repeated ad exposure increases the magnitude of spillover from extension evaluation to global brand evaluation for low-fit but not high-fit extensions. - Global brand evaluations are higher with repeated (vs. one) ad exposure for low-fit extensions.
Liu et al. (2018)	How do extensions contribute to firms' profit in B2C and B2B markets?	- None	- N=169 - Corporate brands/USA - Hierarchical regressions	- The impact of substitutable brand extensions on firm profit in the B2B market is positive and significantly stronger than their impact in the B2C market. - The impact of independent brand extensions on profit in the B2C market is positively strong, while the impact takes the form of an inverted U-shape in B2B markets.
Milberg, Sinn and Goodstein (2010)	How does fit influence extension preferences in competitive settings?	- None	- N=278 - Students/Chile - ANOVA, regressions	- In noncompetitive settings, evaluations of worse (vs. better) fitting extensions will be lower and consumers' perceptions of purchase risk associated with worse (vs. better) fitting extension will be higher. - In competitive (vs. noncompetitive) settings, evaluations (perceived purchase risk) of worse fitting extensions competing with less familiar competitor brands are higher. - In competitive settings, evaluations (perceived purchase risk) of worse fitting extensions competing with less (vs. more) familiar competitors will be equal or greater (less).

Figure 2.5 (continued)

Monga and Gürhan-Canli (2012)	How do mating mind-sets influence extension evaluations and which factors trigger it?	- None	- N_1=371, N_2=168, N_3=317, N_4=113 - Students/One country - ANOVA	- In a mating (non-mating) mind-set, male (vs. female) consumers report greater (no difference) fit perceptions and more favorable extension evaluations. - For the functional brand, male consumers report greater fit perceptions and more favorable extension evaluations. For the prestige brand, differences between male and female consumers diminish. - For the direct (sub-brand) brand, male (and female) consumers report more favorable (do not vary in their) extension response.
Parker et al. (2018)	When should distant brand extensions be introduced?	- Mental categorization theory	- N1=233, N2=590, N3=400 - Consumers/USA - ANOVA	- The pre-first distant product (vs. at-first) brand attitude change is significantly more negative for late (vs. early) first distant product introductions. - Final brand attitudes are significantly lower after the completion of brand extension sequences using late (vs. early) first distant product introductions. - The impact of all brand extensions, including the first distant product, on brand attitudes are positively mediated by consumers' brand concept fluency.
Puligadda, Cronley and Kardes (2013)	How does the processing type influence the relation between similarity and extension evaluation?	- None	- N_1=128, N_2=58, N_3=129 - Students/USA - ANOVAA, ANCOVA	- Global processing leads to acceptance of a more dissimilar brand extension, while local processing leads to heightened concern for the extension similarity. - The modality of the advertising can be used to prime global and local processing. (Non-)comparative advertising leads to (global) local processing.
Ramanathan and Velayudhan (2015)	How does the influence of several factors on extension attitude differ between goods-to-goods vs. goods-to-services extensions?	- Categorization theory	- N=630 - Consumers/India - SEM	- The negative relation of quality variance across brand portfolio and extension attitude is weaker (stronger) for goods to goods (to services) brand extension. - The positive relationship between product category fit and attitude toward extension is stronger (weaker) for goods to goods (to services) brand extensions. - Extension attitude positively significantly affects revision of attitude toward the parent brand for both goods to goods and to services brand extensions.
Spiggle, Nguyen and Caravella (2012)	Which value does analyzing brand extension authenticity provide when evaluating extensions?	- Categorization theory	- N_1=61, N_2=186, N_3=236, N_4=128 - Students/USA - Regressions	- The brand extension authenticity construct contains four dimensions: maintaining brand standards and style, honoring brand heritage, preserving brand essence, and avoiding brand exploitation. - Brand extension authenticity positively affects brand extension evaluations and it positively moderates the effects of similarity/relevance on extension evaluations. - Self-brand connection positively moderates the effect of brand extension authenticity.
Wilkie, Johnson and White (2015)	How does the level of line extension's difference to existing products influence its performance?	- None	- N=318 - Extensions, consumer scanner data/Australia - Regressions	- There is an inverted U-shaped relationship between the level of difference and line extension performance. Line extensions can have a moderate flexibility level compared to existing products within the brand's range. - The effect of difference on the performance of line extensions changes with each entry position.

Note: B2B=Business-to-Business; B2C=Business-to-Consumer; COO=Country-of-Origin; PI=Purchase Intention; SEM=Structural Equation Modeling; SME=Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises.

Figure 2.5 (continued)

2.3.2 Vertical Image Transfer

Vertical image transfers were mostly studied in a single country context. Thereby, studies either focused on celebrity endorsement, vertical brand extensions, or, less often, on a vertical image transfer from the corporate to the product brand (see Figure 2.7).

The majority of studies examined the effects of various celebrity endorser characteristics. Ilicic, Baxter and Kulczynski (2016) show a negative moderating effect of age on the influence of consumer needs of autonomy and relatedness on their attachment to celebrities. Additionally, age diminishes the indirect effect

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/ framework	Sample and method	Core findings
Horizontal Image Transfer of Product Brand to Product Brand				
Davvetas and Diamantopoulos (2016)	See Figure I– 3.			
Laforet and Chen (2012)	Which factors influence Chinese and British consumers' brand choice?	- None	- N=400 - Consumers/ China, UK - Regressions	- British (not Chinese) consumers prefer brands originated from the West, Japan, and South Korea. - British consumers' evaluation of Chinese brands is influenced by the unfavorable China's COO. - Most of Chinese brands' image is perceived inferior to Western/Japanese/South Korean brands, brand value, brand perception, and brand trust dimensions. - Brand familiarity/quality influence British consumers' PI.
Özsomer (2012)	See Figure I– 5.			
Strizhakova and Coulter (2015)	See Figure I– 3.			
Strizhakova, Coulter and Price (2011)	See Figure I– 3.			
Van der Lans, van Everdingen and Melnyk (2016)	How do quality, uniqueness, leading and growing popularity as brand benefits influence purchase intention?	- None	- N=19,682 - Consumers/25 countries - Hierarchical Bayesian model	- Quality, uniqueness, leading/growing in popularity brand benefits are important factors in determining a brand's purchase likelihood across countries/product categories. - Culture strongly moderates the susceptibility to different types of brand benefits across the globe. - Competition significantly moderates the effect of all four brand benefits on PI. - Consumers' self-image in terms of warmth and competence moderates the influence of the relation between a brand's benefits and PI.
Zabkar et al. (2017)	See Figure I– 3.			
Horizontal Brand Extension				
Boisvert and Ashill (2018)	How do branding strategies influence horizontal and downward line extensions of luxury brands?	- None	- N=1,920 - Consumers/ France, USA - ANOVA	- A new horizontal line extension of a French luxury brand is rated less positively by Americans (vs. French). - A new downward line extension of a French luxury brand is evaluated similarly by French/American consumers, but less positively than a horizontal line extension. - A French luxury brand's new direct branded (sub-branded/independent) horizontal line extension rated less positively (less positively/similarly) by Americans (vs. French).
Henseler et al. (2010)	How do cultural traits influence brand extension success?	- None	- N=10 - Articles/France, India, UK, USA, Netherlands, New Zealand - Moderated regressions	- Long-term orientation (uncertainty avoidance) positively (negatively) significantly affects extension success. - The influence of quality on extension success is positively (negatively) moderated by masculinity (power distance and uncertainty avoidance). - The effect of extension fit on extension success is negatively (positively) moderated by long-term orientation and power distance (masculinity and individualism).
Kim and Park (2019)	How does culture influence brand extension judgements?	- None	- N_1=166, N_2=131, N_3=305 - Consumers/ USA, Canada, South Korea - Regressions	- When an extension is psychologically close (distant), Asians (Westerners) evaluate the extension more favorable, especially when the extension-parent fit is low. - When an extension is psychologically close (distant), perceptions of extension-parent similarity (perceived risk about the extension) mediate the observed effect of culture.
Miniard et al. (2018)	How can brand extensions fully benefit from their parental heritage?	- None	- N_1=111, N_2=55, N_3=150, N_4=58, N_5=404 - Students/USA, Mexico - ANOVA	- Reinstatement of an extension's association to a well-liked parent brand does not influence extension evaluations when it does not alter the parental association's accessibility. - When reinstatement of an extension's association to a well-liked parent brand enhances this association's accessibility during extension evaluation, evaluations of extensions that fit their parental heritage increase.
Sichtmann and Diamantopoulos (2013)	See Figure I– 5.			

Note: COO=Country-of-Origin; PI=Purchase Intention.

Figure 2.6 Selected International Studies on Horizontal Image Transfer. (Source: Own Creation)

of self-determination needs on brand attachment through celebrity attachment. Roy, Guha and Biswas (2015) add that more celebrity-consumer chronological age congruence improves ad attitude and purchase intention. When celebrity-product congruence is high, the effect is even stronger. Moreover, celebrity endorser attractiveness positively affects ad attitude, which consequently enhances brand attitude (Felix and Borges 2014). The authors find visual attention for the endorser to be an important lever of perceived celebrity endorser attractiveness. Chen and Wyer Jr (2020) analyze how endorsers' facial expressions influence status perceptions. Whereas the smile of male endorsers has a positive effect on social status via deviation from expectations, the effect of female endorsers' smile is negative. Social status further increases purchase intention. Two studies explored celebrity endorsers' credibility and victory effects. Dwivedi, McDonald and Johnson (2014) report an indirect effect of endorser credibility on brand evaluation via self-brand connection. The effect is positively moderated by endorser-brand fit. Nicolau and Santa-María (2013) highlight the increase in firm performance the more victories a celebrity endorser has, especially when those have been close and hard-fought wins. However, additional wins seem to have a marginal effect only. Vaid and Ahearne (2018) analyze chief execute officer (CEO) endorsement, which weakens firm performance. Only sales and marketing appointment announcements in the immediate term (vs. by the year-end) can level this negative effect.

Vertical brand extension literature investigated upward vs. downward extension effects or success factors of such vertical line extensions. Allman et al. (2016) show that an upward extension results in higher post-extension brand image regardless of its country of manufacturing. In contrast, there is no change in post-expansion brand image for a downward extension manufactured in an unfavorable country. Goetz, Fassnacht and Rumpf (2014) further reveal more negative parent brand evaluations after an upward (vs. downward) extension. A close extension degree positively, whereas a functional brand concept negatively moderates this effect. Chun et al. (2015) find that for a strong reputation brand offering a low fit extension with innovative benefits, brand extension evaluation and spillover effects on the parent brand are stronger. He et al. (2016) indicate a negative moderating effect of family-sub-brand distance and consideration set size on the relation between family and sub-brand attitude.

When considering image transfers from the corporate to the product brand, studies often showed direct effects. Abosag and Farah (2014) report a positive effect of corporate image on loyalty and product judgements. Besides, the authors identify consumer ethnocentrism and religious animosity as positive antecedents of boycotting foreign products, which weakens their corporate image. Biehal

and Sheinin (2007) find corporate messages, especially corporate ability, to be more relevant for the evaluation of other products in the portfolio than product messages. Voss and Mohan (2016) support this finding in the context of brand alliances. The authors show that the corporate (vs. product) brand is more relevant for co-branded product evaluations when brand portfolio dispersion is low. Additionally, studies examined indirect effects of corporate associations or attitudes on product brand evaluations via product brand associations or attributes. Cretu and Brodie (2007) find a positive effect of corporate reputation on customer value, which positively affects customers' product brand loyalty. Suh and Youjae (2006) uncover a positive effect of corporate image, ad attitude, and customer satisfaction on loyalty through product brand attitude. Product involvement enhances the effects of corporate image and ad attitude. Fatma, Khan and Rahman (2016) complement these findings. Corporate associations and corporate social responsibility increase brand identification, which positively determines brand loyalty. Hsu, Fournier and Srinivasan (2016) explore the image transfer between the corporate and the product brand holistically, i.e., in form of the endorsed branding strategy. The authors indicate that the application of the endorsed branding strategy reduces reputation, dilution, and brand stretch risk. However, this strategy does not necessarily deliver cost advantages or performance improvement.

Only seven studies analyzed vertical image transfers internationally (see Figure 2.8). Two studies examined the role of celebrity endorsement in China and India. Knoll and Matthes (2017) focus on factors increasing celebrity endorsement effectiveness. Generally, the authors find celebrity endorsement (vs. no endorsement) to stronger enhance ad and endorsed object attitude, especially for unfamiliar objects. Specifically, male and congruent celebrity endorsers as well as actors (vs. models) are more effective. Roy et al. (2019) account for the importance of COO and show that fit between celebrity endorser and consumers' or brand's COO leads to better brand evaluations. For foreign (vs. local) brands only, consumer ethnocentrism strengthens this effect.

Two studies explored vertical brand extensions by comparing two countries each. Boisvert and Ashill (2018) find no difference in the evaluation of a French luxury brand's downward line extension by French vs. American consumers. However, Allman, Hewett and Kaur (2019) reveal stronger vertical line extension type effects on parent brand image for analytical (vs. holistic) consumers.

The remaining studies considered the vertical image transfer between the corporate and the product brand. They uncovered differences in either direct or holistic effects of this image transfer on product evaluations in diverse countries. Souiden, Kassim and Hong (2006) find out that the corporate brand name directly enhances product evaluations and corporate image. Corporate image directly and

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/ framework	Sample and method	Core findings
Celebrity/CEO Endorsement				
Chen and Wyer Jr (2020)	How does endorser's facial expression influence status perceptions and purchase intentions?	- None	- N_1=54, N_2=489, N_3=738, N_4=475 - Students, Consumers/Hong Kong - ANOVA, Mediated moderation analysis	- Endorsers are attributed greater warmth but lower competence, if they smile (vs. they do not), regardless of whether they are male or female. - Smile of male (female) endorsers has a positive (negative) significant direct and indirect effect on social status via deviation from expectation. - The effect of an endorser's facial expression on the perceived social status mediates its effect on consumers' desire to purchase the endorsed product, especially when the brand is unfamiliar.
Derdenger (2018)	Which influence do celebrity endorsements have across consumer segments?	- None	- N=800 - On-/Off-course shops/USA - Regressions	- In the category of woods, novice (vs. expert) golfers are more impacted by a Tiger Woods endorsement. This effect is not true Titleist irons. - The endorsement led to over §500,000 of additional profit for Titleist's, which provided a return on investment of 49%.
Dwivedi, McDonald and Johnson (2014)	How do celebrity endorsements influence consumers' self-brand connection and brand evaluation?	- Associative network theory - Self-concept theory	- N=620 - Consumers/ India - SEM	- Endorser credibility has an indirect (but not direct) effect on brand evaluation via self-brand connection. - Endorser-brand fit has a positive significant moderating effect on the relationship between endorser credibility and self-brand connection.
Erfgen, Zenker and Sattler (2015)	Do celebrities overshadow the brand and which factors moderate this relation?	- Perceptual processing theory - Associative learning theory	- N=4,970 - Consumers/ Germany - Hierarchical logistic regressions	- A celebrity endorser has a negative significant effect on brand recall (so called vampire effect). - This negative effect is greater (lesser) in conditions of low (high) perceived congruence between the endorser and the brand and when the cognitive link between the endorser and the brand is weak (strong).
Felix and Borges (2014)	How does celebrity endorser attractiveness influence brand attitude?	- None	- N=81 - Students/ Mexico - PLS-based 'SEM	- Celebrity endorser attractiveness has a positive significant effect on attitude toward the ad. - Attitude toward the ad fully mediates the relation of celebrity endorser attractiveness and brand attitude. - Visual attention for the endorser has a positive influence on perceived celebrity endorser attractiveness.
Ferguson and Mohan (2020)	How does the use of celebrity and non-celebrity persons in B2B advertisements influence managers' behavior?	- Information processing theory	- N=62 - Managers/USA - Experiment/ ANOVA	- Managers pay greater attention to a B2B ad with an image of a person (vs. no person). - Managers are more likely to recall the brand name form a B2B ad with an image of a non-celebrity person (vs. not). - When a B2B ad has an image of celebrity person (vs. no person), managers give more attention to the ad and subsequently have less positive utilitarian/ hedonic attitudes.
Ilicic, Baxter and Kulczynski (2016)	How does age influence the effects on celebrity and brand attachment?	- Lifespan development theory - Self-determination theory	- N_1=250, N_2=167 - Consumers/ Australia - Regressions	- Age has a negative moderating effect on the influence of consumer needs of autonomy/relatedness on consumer attachment to the celebrity. - Age moderates the indirect effect of self-determination (autonomy/relatedness) needs on brand attachment through celebrity attachment.
Kwon, Saluja and Adaval (2015)	How does a specific cultural mindset influence perceptions of endorser-message relatedness?	- None	- N_1=96, N_2=235, N_3=85, N_4=148 - Students/Hong Kong - ANOVA	- Participants with a collectivistic (vs. individualistic) mindset have better memory for the link of celebrity endorser and content of the endorser's message. - The effect of message-celebrity endorser fit is greater when a collectivistic mindset is primed.

Figure 2.7 Selected National Studies on Vertical Image Transfer. (Source: Own Creation)

indirectly increases product evaluations through corporate reputation. The effects are stronger in Japan as a more collectivistic country than in USA being a more individualistic country. Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube (2018) support these findings and show a positive direct and indirect effect of corporate image on product brand equity via corporate reputation. Both effects are stronger in China than in India. Jakubanecs and Supphellen (2012) add that a consumers' collectivistic orientation has a positive direct effect on the importance of the corporate

Nicolau and Santa-María (2013)	How is the endorser's performance affecting the endorsing firm performance?	- Prospect theory	- N=85 - Matches of Rafael Nadal/Spain - ANOVA	- The victories of the celebrity endorser have a positive significant effect on firm's market value. - There is a diminishing sensitivity pattern found, indicating marginal effects of additional wins. - Close and hard-fought wins have stronger impact on firm value than easy wins.
Roy, Guha and Biswas (2015)	How do different types of endorser congruence affect consumers' evaluations?	- None	- N_1=130, N_2=274 - Women/India - ANOVA, MANOVA	- More (vs. less) celebrity-consumer chronological age congruency improves ad attitude and increases purchase intention, especially for Gen Y (vs. Gen X). - High (vs. low) celebrity-product congruency results in larger effects of the age congruency.
Vaid and Ahearne (2018)	How does CEO endorsement of sales and marketing leaders influence firm performance?	- None	- N=820 - Announcements/USA - Regressions	- CEO endorsement has a negative significant effect on firm performance. - In the immediate term (by the year-end), relative to other functions, sales and marketing appointment announcements reverse (enhance) the negative impact of CEO endorsement on firm performance.
Vertical Brand Extension				
Allman et al. (2016)	How do country of manufacture, brand concept, and vertical line extension type influence brand image evaluations?	- Schema congruity theory	- N=520 - Consumers/USA - Experiment/ANOVA	- Manufacturing an upward vertical extension leads to higher (no change) post-extension (vs. pre-) brand image for the functional (prestige) brand. - Manufacturing a downward vertical line extension in an unfavorable country leads to no change in (lower) post-extension (vs. pre-) brand image for the functional (prestige) brands. - For a functional (prestige) brand, an upward (downward) vertical line extension from a favorable country has the highest (lowest) post-extension image.
Caldieraro, Kao and Cunha Jr (2015)	Can the launch of premium products result in competitive disadvantages?	- Information-based theory of umbrella branding	- N=163 - Consumers/One country - Bayesian algorithm	- Upward line extensions (e.g., adding a premium sub-brand) change consumers' perceptions about the value provided by the brand, product attributes of the firm's current offerings, and competitor's offerings. - Depending on the magnitude of the changes in consumer perceptions about brands and product attributes, a leading firm's advantages may erode, making it unprofitable to launch the premium sub-brand.
Chun et al. (2015)	What are the strategic benefits of low fit brand extensions?	- None	- N_1=318, N_2=218, N_3=377 - Students/One country - ANOVA	- For a strong (weak) reputation brand, the dual effects of positive brand extension evaluations/spillover effects on the parent brand are maximized when the brand offers a low fit (high) extension with innovative benefits. - For a strong (weak) reputation brand, these effects are mediated by enhanced motivation to process low fit brand's innovative benefits.
Goetz, Fassnacht and Rumpf (2014)	How do upward vs. downward extensions influence parent brand evaluations?	- Social comparison theory	- N=375 - Consumers/Germany - MANCOVA	- Parent brand evaluation is evaluated more negatively after an upward (vs. downward) extension. - An upward extension weakens parent brand evaluation more than a downward extension improves it. - A close (vs. far) extension degree more strongly positively affects the effect of extension direction on parent brand evaluation after upward (vs. downward) extension. - A prestige (vs. functional) brand concept stronger negatively affects the effect of extension direction on parent brand evaluation after downward (vs. upward) extension.
He et al. (2016)	Which factors influence the relationship between family and sub-brand attitudes?	- Associative network theory	- N_1=181, N_2=121, N_3=42 - Students/USA - Regressions	- Family/sub-brand distance and consideration set size negatively moderate the positive relationship between family brand attitude and sub-brand attitude. - When there is a larger (smaller) consideration set, consumers who are more (less) loyal to a family (competing) brand display a positive relationship between family brand and sub-brand attitudes.
Vertical Image Transfer of Corporate Brand to Product Brand				
Abosag and Farah (2014)	How do religiously motivated boycotts influence CI, loyalty, and product judgement?	- Cognitive dissonance theory - Self-perception theory	- N=238 - Customers/Saudi Arabia - SEM	- Consumer ethnocentrism/religious animosity positively significantly affect boycotting foreign companies' products. - Boycotting has a negative significant effect on CI and loyalty, but not on product judgement. - CI has a positive significant effect on consumers' loyalty and product judgement.

Figure 2.7 (continued)

Biehal and Sheinin (2007)	Can corporate messages be transferred to products in order to form judgments about products in the company's portfolio?	- Accessibility-diagnosticity framework	- N_1=173, N_2=301 - Students/USA - ANOVA, MANOVA	- Corporate (vs. product) messages are more diagnostic for the evaluations of other products (vs. itself) in the portfolio. - CA (vs. CSR) messages are more diagnostic. - Corporate transfer depends on competitive message sequence and positioning similarity. - A competitive message positioned against a product in the portfolio does not reduce transfer to other, unrelated products in the portfolio.
Cretu and Brodie (2007)	How do brand image and CR influence product quality, costs and prices, customer value, and loyalty?	- None	- N=377 - Consumers/ New Zealand - SEM	- Brand image has a positive significant effect on product and service quality (not customer value/loyalty). - CR, perceived quality and prices and costs have a positive significant effect on customer value. - CR/customer value have a positive significant effect on customer loyalty.
Fatma, Khan and Rahman (2016)	How do CA/CSR indirectly affect brand loyalty?	- Social identification theory - Social exchange theory - Disconfirmation theory	- N=489 - Banking experienced respondents/India - SEM	- CA/CSR has a positive significant effect on brand identification through which it positively indirectly influences brand loyalty. - Brand identification has a positive significant effect on affective commitment and satisfaction, which further positively affect brand loyalty.
Hsu, Fournier and Srinivasan (2016)	Which influence do different branding strategies have on firm value components?	- None	- N=302 - Companies/ USA - Regressions	- Shifting focus from the corporate to a superordinate endorsed brand, reputation, dilution, and brand stretch risk are mitigated, which induces better risk control. - Endorsed branding does not deliver cost advantages to offset incremental brand-building costs. - The hybrid architecture does not offer consistent performance improvements over the house of brands and the branded house strategy.
Suh and Youjae (2006)	How do satisfaction, ad attitude, and CI influence brand attitudes and loyalty and how does involvement determine these relations?	- None	- N=1,940 - Consumers/ South Korea - SEM	- Customer satisfaction has positive significant direct and indirect effect on loyalty through brand attitude. - Ad attitudes and CI have a positive significant indirect effect on loyalty through brand attitude. - Product involvement has negative moderating effect on the direct effects of satisfaction on brand attitude/loyalty, but increases the indirect effect of ad attitudes and CI.
Voss and Mohan (2016)	How does corporate/product brand ally influence perceived quality of the focal brand?	- Signaling theory - Diagnosticity theory	- N=935 - Students/USA - Hierarchical regressions	- If brand portfolio dispersion is high (low), the focal brand would desire to ally with product (corporate) brands. - There is a stronger significant effect of the attitude toward the corporate brand on consumer evaluation of the focal brand when the attitude toward the corporate brand is higher compared to other corporate brands.
Wang, Wei and Yu (2008)	How could a global brand equity model look like and how do corporate-level variables affect product outcomes?	- None	- N=735 - Consumers/ China - SEM	- Brand awareness (CA) has a positive significant effect on quality perception (and brand extensibility). - Quality perception has a positive significant effect on brand resonance, extendibility, and price flexibility. - Brand resonance has a positive significant effect on brand extendibility and repurchase intention.

Note: B2B=Business-to-Business; CA=Corporate Ability; CEO=Chief Executive Officer; CI=Corporate Image; CR=Corporate Reputation; CSR=Corporate Social Responsibility; PLS=Partial Least Square; SEM=Structural Equation Modeling.

Figure 2.7 (continued)

endorsement in six countries. The importance of the corporate endorsement and knowledge of the corporate brand positively affect product brand attitude.

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/ framework	Sample and method	Core findings
Celebrity Endorsement				
Knoll and Matthes (2017)	When is celebrity endorsement effective?	- Social adaptation theory - Schema theory - Balance theory - Theory of planned behavior	- N=46 - Articles/USA, India, China - Meta-analysis	- Celebrity endorsement (vs. no endorsement) stronger increases attitude toward the ad and endorsed object. - Male (vs. female) celebrity endorsers evoke stronger endorsement effects. - Actors (vs. models) elicit stronger celebrity endorsement effects. - Congruent (vs. incongruent) celebrity endorsers evoke stronger endorsement effects. - Celebrity endorsements effects are stronger for unfamiliar (vs. familiar) objects.
Roy et al. (2019)	How do COO effects relate to celebrity endorsements?	- Information integration theory	- N_1=233, N_2=234, N_3=348, N_4=400 - Consumers/ China, India - Regressions	- Fit between celebrity's and consumer's/brand's COO heightens consumer's evaluations. - For foreign brands, more ethnocentric consumers are more motivated by consumer COO fit, and so using a foreign celebrity endorser leads to lower evaluations. - For local brands, brand and consumer COO concern align, irrespective of ethnocentrism.
Vertical Brand Extension				
Allman, Hewett and Kaur (2019)	How does culture influence parent brand perceptions in response to an extension?	- Schema theory	- N=420 - Consumers/ USA, India - ANOVA	- Vertical line extension type has a stronger influence on analytical consumers' evaluations of post-extension parent brand image than those of holistic consumers. - There is no interaction effect between vertical line extension type and parent brand concept.
Boisvert and Ashill (2018)	See Figure I– 7.			
Vertical Image Transfer of Corporate Brand to Product Brand				
Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube (2018)	How does CI directly and indirectly affect product brand equity in China and India?	Signaling theory	- N_1=554, N_2=1,180 - Consumers/ India, China - SEM	- CI has positive significant effect on product brand equity, whereas the effect is stronger in China than in India. - CI has a positive, significant indirect effect on product brand equity through CR, whereas the indirect effect is stronger in China vs. India. - When including the mediator, there is a full mediation revealed for India and a partial mediation for China.
Jakubanecs and Supphellen (2012)	How does individualism vs. collectivism influence the application of the endorsed branding strategy?	None	- N_1=1,108, N_2=2,091 - Consumers/UK, Russia, USA, Australia, Norway, Sweden - SEM	- A consumers' vertical individualistic (collectivistic) orientation has a positive significant indirect (direct) effect on the perceived importance of the corporate endorsement through subjective corporate brand. - There is a positive significant effect of corporate brand knowledge/perceived importance of corporate endorsement on product brand attitude.
Souiden, Kassim and Hong (2006)	How do corporate associations directly and indirectly influence consumers' product evaluations?	None	- N=218 - Consumers/ Japan, USA - SEM	- Corporate name has positive significant effect on consumers' product evaluation and CI. - CI has a positive significant direct effect on consumers' product evaluation, which is greater for Japanese than Americans, as well as an indirect effect through CR. - CI and CR have a positive significant effect on corporate commitment/loyalty. - Corporate commitment/loyalty have a positive significant effect on consumers' product evaluation, which is greater for Japanese than Americans.

Note: CI=Corporate Image; COO=Country-of-Origin; CR=Corporate Reputation; SEM=Structural Equation Modeling.

Figure 2.8 International Studies on Vertical Image Transfer. (Source: Own Creation)

2.4 Literature on E-Commerce Firms' Internationalization Processes

2.4.1 Internationalization Processes from a Traditional Manufacturing View

Literature broadly examined time-based internationalization process decisions of manufacturers. Thereby, most studies considered the determinants of internationalization rhythm or internationalization speed, seldom of both simultaneously (see Figure 2.9). When it comes to the identification of influencing factors of internationalization rhythm, studies focused on the effects of CEO-specific factors. Elosge et al. (2018) state that the more CEO changes occur, the more irregular firms internationalize. In the case of internal succession, internationalization processes become less irregular. Moreover, Lin and Cheng (2013) find a positive effect of a high CEO compensation level on a regular internationalization, which is negatively moderated by firm performance. The compensation gap between the CEO and the top management team has a U-shaped relationship with internationalization rhythm.

In terms of internationalization speed, studies mainly investigated the impact of learning and knowledge-related company characteristics. Casillas and Moreno-Menéndez (2014) show that a higher depth and diversity of accumulated knowledge in the course of international expansion has a U-shaped influence on internationalization speed. Hutzschenreuter et al. (2016) report a positive effect of internationalization knowledge gained through direct learning on subsequent internationalization speed. Additionally, Hilmersson and Johanson (2020) differentiate further knowledge acquisition strategies. Grafters, networkers, and pragmatists faster develop capabilities than experiencers and, thus, have a higher internationalization speed.

Studies also identified CEO or entrepreneur characteristics as important drivers of internationalization speed. Acedo and Jones (2007) find that firms having a CEO with an international orientation, high tolerance for ambiguity, and high proactive dispositions perceive less risk when internationalizing. This reduction in firm's risk perception leads to an accelerated internationalization. Accordingly, Hsieh et al. (2019) suggest entrepreneurs' international business experience, commitment to innovation, and orientation toward differentiations from competitors to affect speed of deepening the international expansion positively. Only their differentiation orientation has also a positive effect on geographic diversification speed. Moreover, general firm characteristics seem to play an important role for internationalization speed (Gassmann and Keupp 2007). Firms with a specialized

position in an international value chain, homogeneous products and services, and innovative uniqueness internationalize faster. A high internationalization speed can also be traced back to firm's scope and extent of intellectual property rights and its embeddedness in global communities or social networks.

Only two studies accounted for the determinants of internationalization rhythm and speed. Lin (2012) reveals a positive effect of family ownership on internationalization speed, whereas it negatively affects internationalization rhythm. Lin (2014) shows that a firm's high organizational slack and performance below its aspiration lead to a faster and more irregular internationalization.

Fewer studies analyzed the effect of internationalization speed, but not rhythm, on manufacturing firms' performance (see Figure 2.10). Chetty, Johanson and Martín (2014) develop a multidimensional construct to measure internationalization speed, which positively affects international performance. Deng, Jean and Sinkovics (2018) specify this effect and show that speed of upward expansion into more trade-opened markets increases firm performance. This effect is strengthened by the degree of subnational home market liberalization. Moreover, Kim et al. (2020) state that a faster intra-regional (vs. inter-regional) internationalization enhances firm performance, especially when firms possess technological and marketing resources. However, García-García, García-Canal and Guillén (2017) report a U-shaped effect of internationalization speed on long-term performance. Technological knowledge steepens, while multinationals' diversity of prior international experience flattens the effect. Hilmersson and Johanson (2016) confirm but further differentiate this finding. The speed of change in breadth of international markets as well as the speed of increase in commitment of resources have a U-shaped effect on firm performance. In contrast, Zhou (2007) could not reveal any significant relation between internationalization speed and performance.

2.4.2 Internationalization Processes of Commerce Firms

In the context of commerce firms, literature mainly investigated the influence factors of internationalization speed, not rhythm (see Figure 2.11). Two studies focused on the analysis of offline commerce firms' internationalization speed. Batsakis and Mohr (2017) uncover a negative effect of product diversification on geographic scope and internationalization speed. Firms' international experience negatively moderates this effect. Mohr and Batsakis (2014) rather show a positive effect of international experience as well as intangible assets on internationalization speed. Firms' home-region concentration further strengthens the relation between international experience and internationalization speed.

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/ framework	Sample and method	Core findings
Internationalization Rhythm				
Elosge et al. 2018	How do CEO succession events influence firms' internationalization process?	- Agency theory - Institutional theory - Upper echelons approach	- N=234 - CEO succession events/ Germany - Regressions	- The number of CEO succession events has an inverted U-shaped effect on DOI growth over time. - The higher the number of CEO changes, the more irregular the internationalization rhythm. - Internal (vs. external) succession decreases the irregularity of the internationalization rhythm. - Ownership concentration has no moderating effect on the aforementioned relationships.
Lin and Cheng 2013	How do the compensation level and the gap between CEO and TMT affect rhythm of internationalization?	- Fairness theory - Tournament theory	- N=345 - Public firms/Taiwan - OLS regressions	- A high compensation level of the CEO is associated with a regular internationalization rhythm. - The compensation gap between CEO and TMT has a U-shaped relationship with the regular internationalization rhythm. A further increase in compensation gap will lead to team conflicts and hamper a regular pattern. - Firm performance negatively moderates the relationship between CEO's compensation and rhythm.
Internationalization Speed				
Acedo and Jones 2007	How do CEO characteristics influence internationalization speed?	- None	- N=216 - SMEs/Spain - PLS SEM	- CEOs with (vs. without) an international orientation, high tolerance for ambiguity, and high proactive disposition exhibit a lower perception of risk when confronted with internationalization. - CEOs with perceptions of lower (vs. higher) levels or risk will access international markets faster.
Casillas and Moreno-Menéndez 2014	How does learning acquired in the course of past international activities affect internationalization speed?	- None	- N=889 - Firms/Spain - Cox regressions	- A higher diversity of accumulated experience in international markets/modes of operations has a curvilinear effect on internationalization speed (U form). - A higher depth of accumulated market experience in the host country has a curvilinear influence on internationalization speed (inverted U form).
Gassmann and Keupp 2007	Which factors influence SMEs' early and rapid internationalization?	- Knowledge-based view	- N=6 - SMEs/Australia, Germany, Switzerland - Case study analysis	- The extent to which the firm can take on a specialized position in an international value chain, the homogeneity of the firm's products and services, and the innovatory uniqueness of the firm's products are positively associated with its early and rapid internationalization. - The firm's scope and extent of intellectual property rights perfection and its embeddedness in global communities/ social networks (importance of firm's presence at a specific geographic location) is positively (negatively) associated with the early and rapid internationalization.
Hilmersson and Johanson 2020	How do different knowledge acquisition strategies affect SMEs' internationalization speed?	- Capability development theory	- N_1=203, N_2=228, N_3=152 - SMEs/Sweden, China, Poland - Regressions	- Grafters, networkers, and pragmatists will have a higher speed of capability development than firms acquiring knowledge from their own experience (Experiencers). - There is a curvilinear (inverted U-shaped) relationship between speed of capability development and speed of spread between international markets.
Hilmersson et al. 2017	How are time-related concepts of internationalization related to each other?	- Internationalization process theory	- N=203 - SMEs/Sweden - Regressions	- The longer the time to internationalization of the firm, the lower the speed of international expansion. - The further in the past the start of internationalization, the lower the speed of international expansion. - The point in time when internationalization starts positively moderates the negative relationship between the time to internationalization and the speed of international expansion of the firm.
Hsieh et al. 2019	How do entrepreneurial characteristics affect multiple dimensions of internationalization speed?	- None	- N=180 - SMEs/China, Arab Middle East, Denmark, India, Poland, UK - OLS regressions	- Entrepreneurs' international business experience and perception of opportunities abroad have a positive significant effect on earliness of internationalization. - International experience, commitment to innovation, and orientation towards differentiation vis-à-vis competitors positively significantly affect speed of deepening. - Their differentiation vis-à-vis competitors has a positive significant effect on speed of geographic diversification. - Those focusing exploratory (vs. exploitative) innovation have higher deepening speed. Those focusing an ambidextrous (vs. exploitative) strategy internationalize earlier.
Hutzschenreuter et al. 2016	How do business and internationalization knowledge affect new business unit's internationalization speed?	- Organizational learning theory - Internationalization theory	- N=90 MNEs/ Germany - Cox event history model	- The more related a new business unit is to the nearest neighbor business unit of its parent MNE's overall business unit portfolio, the faster its subsequent internationalization speed. - The more internationalization knowledge the new business unit has obtained through direct learning, the faster its subsequent internationalization speed. This effect decreases the higher the relatedness of the new business unit is to the nearest neighbor business unit of its parent MNE's overall business unit portfolio.

Figure 2.9 Selected Studies on Internationalization Rhythm and Speed as Dependent Variables. (Source: Own Creation)

Musteen, Francis and Datta 2010	Which influences have international networks on internationalization speed and performance?	- Social capital theory	- N=155 - SMEs/Czech Republic - Poisson, OLS regressions	- There is no significant relationship between reliance on personal ties and internationalization speed, whereas personal ties have a negative and significant impact on performance during initial stages of internationalization. - Language congruency between SMEs and international ties has a positive impact on speed. - Degree of geographical diversity of international ties has a positive and significant impact on performance.
Satta, Parola and Persico 2014	Which factors influence MNEs' internationalization pace?	- Linkage-Leverage-Learning Model	- N=56 - MNEs/No countries specified - OLS regressions	- Cumulative benefits from inward investments positively affect emerging MNEs' internationalization pace. - Inter-regional geographic diversification positively affects emerging (vs. traditional) MNEs' internationalization pace, intra-regional geographical diversification has no effect.
Internationalization Rhythm and Speed				
Lin 2014	How do organizational slack and performance feedback influence internationalization processes?	- Behavioral theory of the firm	- N=772 - Public firms/ Taiwan - GLS estimation	- A firm's high organizational slack (i.e., excess resources) has a positive influence on a rapid pace, a wide scope, and an irregular rhythm of internationalization. - An organization's performance below its aspiration is positively associated with rapid pace, wide scope, and irregular rhythm of internationalization.
Lin 2012	Which effect has family ownership on the processes of internationalization?	- None	- N=772 - Public firms/ Taiwan - Regressions	- Family ownership is positively and significantly associated with the pace of internationalization. - There is a negative and significant relationship between family ownership and international scope. - Family ownership is negatively significantly related to firm's rhythmic internationalization.

Note: CEO=Chief Executive Officer; DOI=Degree of Internationalization; GLS=Generalized Least Squares; MNE=Multinational Enterprise; OLS=Ordinary Least Squares; PLS=Partial Least Squares; SEM=Structural Equation Modeling; SME=Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprise; TMT=Top Management Team.

Figure 2.9 (continued)

For e-commerce firms, Luo, Zhao and Du (2005) were the first to identify top management team's foreign experience, intangible assets, and firms' innovation and marketing strength as important firm-specific drivers of internationalization speed. Moreover, the authors show country-specific factors as internet ability, technological supportiveness, legal protection, and government transparency but not cultural distance to increase internationalization speed. Schu, Morschett and Swoboda (2016) also reveal firm- and country-specific factors to play an important role for e-commerce firms' internationalization speed. Particularly, online shop's imitability and geographic scope have a curvilinear effect on internationalization speed, whereas CAGE (cultural, administrative, geographic, and economic) distances decelerate the internationalization process. Shaheer and Li (2020) also find support for a negative effect of CAGE distances on e-commerce firms' internationalization speed. When such firms pursue a social sharing strategy, these effects are weakened. In contrast, following a virtual community strategy in order to encourage social interaction negatively moderates the relation between economic distance and internationalization speed. Lastly, Shaheer, Li and Priem (2020) investigate the role of location in e-commerce firms' internationalization process. When penetrating lead markets with high demand heterogeneity as well as markets with high preference overlap, firms internationalize faster.

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/ framework	Sample and method	Core findings
Chetty, Johanson and Martín 2014	How can internationalization speed be measured and how does it affect performance?	- Internationalization process theory	- N=170 - SMEs/Europe - PLS SEM	- Internationalization speed can be measured by a multidimensional construct: Speed of learning from repetition of international activities, from diversity of international activities, and speed of committing internationally. - Internationalization speed has a positive significant effect on international performance.
Deng, Jean and Sinkovics 2018	How does export expansion speed affect firm performance?	- Institutional theory	- N=8,681 - INV/China - 2SLS estimation model	- Upward (downward) expansion speed has a positive (negative) significant effect on firm performance. - The degree of subnational home market liberalization strengthens (weakens) the positive (negative) relation between upward (downward) export expansion speed and the firm performance of INVs.
García-García, García-Canal and Guillén 2017	How does internationalization speed affect long-term performance?	- Knowledge-based view - Organizational learning theory	- N=120 - Firms/Spain - Probit regressions	- Internationalization speed has an inverted U-shaped effect on long-term performance. - Technological knowledge steepens the inverted U-shaped relationship, whereas multinationals' diversity of prior international experience flattens this relation.
Hilmersson and Johanson 2016	How does SME's internationalization speed affect its performance?	- Internationalization process theory	- N=203 - SMEs/Sweden - Regressions	- Speed of change in the breadth of international markets has a curvilinear effect on performance. - The speed of SME increase in commitment of resources abroad has a curvilinear effect on SME performance (U-shaped).
Jiang et al. 2020	How is early internationalization related to performance?	- Various internationalization theories	- Literature review	- The literature overview states that the entrepreneurs' early internationalization will be successful when the entrepreneur has human and social capital to support this strategy. - Early internationalization is successful when INVs and born globals have corresponding marketing and research and development assets and operate in industries or locations conductive for early internationalization.
Kim et al. 2020	How is MNEs' financial performance affected by internationalization speed in intra- vs. inter-regional host countries?	- Internalization theory	- N=767 - MNEs/China - GLS regressions	- A faster internationalization speed to intra- (vs. inter-) regional host countries increases (decreases) performance. - MNEs' technological and marketing resources positively moderate the relationship between the faster speed of internationalization into intra-regional host countries and financial performance. - MNEs' technological and marketing resources negatively moderate the relationship between the faster speed of internationalization into emerging market inter-regional host countries and financial performance.
Zhou 2007	Which are the sources of foreign market knowledge and how does it influence internationalization speed?	- Entrepreneurial market learning framework	- N=775 - SMEs/China - Regressions	- For early internationalizing firms, entrepreneurial proclivity (consists of three dimensions proactiveness, innovativeness, risk taking) has a significant impact on pace of development through foreign market knowledge. - Cultural diversity positively contributes to impact of innovative proclivity on accumulation of market knowledge. - The speed of internationalization is not significantly related to international sales growth.

Note: 2SLS=Two-Stage Least Squares; GLS=Generalized Least Squares; INV=International New Venture; MNE=Multinational Enterprise; PLS=Partial Least Squares; SEM=Structural Equation Modeling; SME=Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprise.

Figure 2.10 Studies on Internationalization Speed as Independent Variable. (Source: Own creation)

Firms' technological and marketing capabilities enhance, whereas the acquisition of a higher proportion of lead users and the payment of users for revenues decrease the effects.

Only three studies considered the effect of offline commerce firms' internationalization speed on performance and find highly contradictory results (see Figure 2.12). On the one hand, Chan, Finnegan and Sternquist (2011) show that, besides the level of development and country income, internationalization speed increases sales growth. On the other hand, Mohr and Batsakis (2017) find a

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/ framework	Sample and method	Core findings
Offline Commerce Firms				
Batsakis and Mohr 2017	How does product diversification affect retailers' internationalization scope and speed?	- None	- N=12 - Retailers/Latin America - Cross-sectional Tobit model	- Product diversification has a negative significant effect on retailers' geographic diversification (scope of internationalization) and internationalization speed. - International experience attenuates the negative relationship between retailers' product diversification and its geographic diversification/internationalization speed.
Mohr and Batsakis 2014	Which factors explain the internationalization speed of retailers?	- Resource-based view - Knowledge-based view	- N=144 - International retailers - FGLS regressions	- Intangible assets have a positive significant effect on firms' internationalization speed. - International experience (i.e., breadth and depth) has a positive effect on internationalization speed, which is further strengthened by firms' home-region concentration.
E-Commerce Firms				
Luo, Zhao and Du 2005	Which are the underlying factors for the fast speed of ECCs' internationalization?	- Internationalization theories	- N=93 - ECCs/U.S. - Multiple regressions	- Top management team's foreign experience and ECCs strengths in innovation and marketing are positively associated with the firm's speed of foreign market entrance. - The internationalization speed of ECCs is significantly associated with their intangible skills. - Among macro-level determinants, internet ability, technological supportiveness, legal protection, and government transparency have a positive influence on entry speed.
Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016	Which factors influence the internationalization speed of online retailers?	- Resource-based view	- N=150 - Online retailer/Central Europe/North America - Hazard model	- Imitability of an online shop and country portfolio's diversity and scope have a curvilinear effect on speed. - A greater distance between a newly entered country market and the home country negatively affects speed. - Venture capitalists in the case of an online shop do not have a positive influence on internationalization speed.
Shaheer and Li 2020	Which factors influence the internationalization speed of digital innovations?	- None	- N=127 - Apps/50 countries - Hazard model	- An increase in the CAGE distances (cultural, administrative, geographic, and economic distance) slows the penetration speed of a digital innovation in a focal country. - Pursuing a social sharing strategy mitigates the effect of the CAGE distances on the penetration speed. - Pursuing a virtual community strategy mitigates the effect of the economic distance on penetration speed.
Shaheer, Li and Priem 2020	Which country-specific factors accelerate mobile apps' internationalization and which boundary conditions exist?	- None	- N=1,910 - Mobile Apps/No country specification - Parametric hazard model	- Penetration in lead markets with high demand heterogeneity accelerates the penetration in other target countries. - This effect is reduced (enhanced) if digital technologies rely more on paying users for revenues and acquire a higher proportion of light users (if high technological and marketing capabilities are deployed). - Penetration in lead markets with high preference overlaps accelerates the penetration of digital technologies. - This effect is reduced (enhanced) in case of a higher proportion of light users (high marketing capabilities).

Note: ECC=E-Commerce Company; FGLS=Feasible Generalized Least Squares.

Figure 2.11 Studies on Internationalization Speed as Dependent Variable. (Source: Own Creation)

U-shaped effect of internationalization speed on firm performance, which is steepened by firms' focus on a wide range of overseas markets and their international expansion. In contrast, Mohr, Batsakis and Stone (2018) uncover a positive effect of internationalization speed on foreign divestment. Intra-regional concentration and international experience weaken this relation.

Author(s) and year	Research question	Theory/ framework	Sample and method	Core findings
Chan, Finnegan and Sternquist 2011	Which external and internal factors influence retailer's sales growth and ROI?	- Resource-based view	- N=200 - Retailers - OLS regressions	- No external or internal factors show an influence on ROI. - Country development, country income, and expansion speed have positive significant effects on sales growth, while population and country risk have no influence. - Retail portfolio management (number of formats) and experience (number of international markets served) have a negative significant influence on sales growth.
Mohr and Batsakis 2017	How does internationalization speed affect retailers' performance and which factors moderate this relation?	- Theory of the growth of the firm	- N=110 - Retailers - Regressions	- There is a U-shaped relation between internationalization speed and firm performance. - Rapid international expansion of firms' international sales operations is less beneficial if a firm is focused on a narrow (vs. wide) range of overseas markets. - Firms with higher levels of international experience benefit more from rapid internationalization.
Mohr, Batsakis and Stone 2018	How does internationalization speed affect international operations' divestment and which factors moderate or mediate this relation?	- Regional strategy theory	- N=189 - Retailers - 2SLS regressions	- Internationalization speed has a positive significant impact on foreign divestment. There is also an effect of intra-regional internationalization speed on intra-regional foreign divestment. - Intra-regional concentration and international experience (especially intra-regional international experience) has a negative moderating effect on this relation. - Performance does not mediate the internationalization speed-foreign divestment link.

Note: 2SLS=Two-Stage Least Squares; OLS=Ordinary Least Squares; ROI=Return on Investment.

Figure 2.12 Studies on Internationalization Speed as Independent Variable. (Source: Own creation)

2.5 General Research Objectives

The above literature review reveals an ongoing debate in international marketing and management literature. Two main issues, one regarding global branding and one pertaining to e-commerce firms' internationalization, have not sufficiently be addressed and essential questions remain unanswered.

The first research gap that the present doctoral thesis addresses, refers to MNCs' PBG effects. Studies showed contradictory findings regarding the paths translating PBG into beneficial consumer behavior (e.g., stronger effect via functional value, Akram, Merunka and Akram 2011, vs. via psychological value, Xie, Batra and Peng 2015) and seldom analyzed them simultaneously (e.g., Swoboda, Pennemann and Taube 2012). Moreover, research mainly analyzed PBG effects in one country. Few country comparisons indicate differences in the paths from PBG to consumer behavior in emerging vs. developed countries. Additionally, initial but contradictory indications on the role of national culture exist. Whereas some studies expect national culture to affect global brand perceptions and effects (e.g., Akaka and Alden 2010; He and Wang 2017), Steenkamp (2019a) questions this link. However, scholars encourage the analysis of fundamental paths of PBG across nations to provide more generalizable and rigorous results (e.g., Halkias, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016). It is also called for an analysis

across nations to provide stronger evidence for differing PBG effects in countries with varying degrees of development (e.g., Winit et al. 2014). Moreover, a clarification of the impact of national culture in global brand research is needed. Thus, the aim of Study 1 is to move this research field forward by investigating the paths from PBG to repurchase intention across nations, while accounting for country development and national culture.

The second research gap identified within this thesis concerns the effects of the global endorsed branding strategy and the global corporate endorser itself. Existing literature predominantly examined vertical image transfers in form of celebrity endorsement and vertical brand extension. Studies on image transfers from the corporate to the product brand are mainly national. International studies including a few countries neglected the role of country development even when consumer perceptions are known to differ between emerging and developed countries (e.g., Burgess and Steenkamp 2006). However, such studies made initial indications of corporate endorsemente effects to vary due to national culture (e.g., Jakubanecs and Supphellen 2012). In contrast, global brand research reports contradictory results (indicating a positive moderating effect, Van der Lans, van Everdingen and Melnyk 2016, vs. questioning the role of national culture, Steenkamp 2019a). Calls for respective research exist. On the one hand, scholars call for an analysis of global endorsed branding and global corporate endorser effects across nations to provide stronger evidence through more generalizable results (e.g., Brexendorf and Keller 2017; Samiee 2019). On the other hand, they induce studies accounting for the degree of country development and the clarification of national cultural effects in global branding (e.g., Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018; Gürhan-Canli, Sarial-Abi and Hayran 2018). Therefore, Study 2 provides insights into the direct and indirect effects of global corporate brand image in dependence of important country-specific boundary conditions.

The third research gap captured by this doctoral thesis concerns the effects of e-commerce firms' time-based internationalization process decisions. Research in this context is scarce as most studies focused on the antecedents and effects of manufacturing firms' internationalization rhythm and speed. When analyzing commerce firms, literature mainly considered the determinants of internationalization speed of offline commerce firms, but only seldom for e-commerce firms. Three studies accounted for the effect of offline commerce firms' internationalization speed but find contradictory results (positive effect on performance, Chan, Finnegan and Sternquist 2011, U-shaped effect on performance, Mohr and Batsakis 2017, or positive effect on divestment, Mohr, Batsakis and Stone 2018). Moreover, contradictory results regarding the importance of cross-national institutional distances exist. Whereas some studies find a decelerating effect of

distances (Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016; Shaheer and Li 2020), others question the role of distances and find no effects (Luo, Zhao and Du 2005; Yamin and Sinkovics 2006). However, scholars call for respective analysis. They ask for the investigation of e-commerce firms' time-based internationalization processes (e.g., Chen et al. 2019; Tolstoy et al. 2021) as well as the analysis of cross-national distances in the context of online internationalization (Samiee 2019; Shaheer and Li 2020). Consequently, Study 3 helps to clarify contradictory results by analyzing the effects of e-commerce firms' internationalization rhythm and speed and the important moderating role of institutional distances.

To shed light on these issues, three studies were designed to pursue the following key research objectives:

- Analyzing the mediation paths of MNCs' PBG for consumers' repurchase intention across nations, moderated by selected country differences.
- Examining the direct and indirect effects of MNCs' global corporate brand for consumers' product purchase intention across nations. The effects are examined in light of specific country differences.
- Investigating the effects of e-commerce firms' internationalization rhythm and speed on firm growth as well as the moderating role of cross-national institutional distances.

Each of the three main research objectives is addressed in a separate study. Every study raises more specific research questions relating to the above-mentioned research objectives. While Study 1 deals with paths from PBG to consumer behavior, Study 2 investigates direct and indirect effects of the global corporate endorser across nations. Study 3 accounts for the effects of e-commerce firms' time-based internationalization process decisions. The structure and contribution of these three studies are presented in detail.

Structure and Contribution of the Studies

3

3.1 Cross-National Differences in Perceived Brand Globalness Effects

Leading MNCs are perceived as global brands with advantages in influencing consumer behavior. PBG is a predominant success factor for MNCs differentiating from competitors and attracting consumers (e.g., Halkias, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016; Hussein and Hassan 2018). MNCs being perceived as global brands differentiate themselves through increasing perceived functional and psychological value. However, whether the advantages of PBG hold across nations, are stronger transmitted via functional or psychological value, or depend on country-specific context factors remains unknown. Correspondingly, in this study, important paths from PBG to repurchase intention (i.e., likelihood of consumer purchasing an MNC's product again, Van Vaerenbergh, Larivière and Vermeir 2012) across nations are examined. The study further focuses on two highly relevant boundary conditions: The degree of country development and national culture.

The motivation for Study 1 emerges from a substantial gap in literature. Previous research found contradictory results regarding PBG paths to beneficial consumer behavior (stronger path through functional value, Akram, Merunka and Akram 2011, vs. stronger path via psychological value, Xie, Batra and Peng 2015). These studies are restricted to a single country context or country comparisons and thus limit the generalizability of the results. They only indicate the effect of important country-specific context factors but fail to provide empirical insights. Thus, knowledge on such boundary conditions is still limited. However, knowledge on PBG paths in a multiple country setting is important as global brands are rather managed across nations than country-specifically (Gupta,

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_3

Pansari and Kumar 2018). Moreover, managers should know which country environments hamper the advantages of PBG and which encourage them.

Study 1 therefore analyzes the following two research questions:

- How can MNCs benefit from PBG in terms of repurchase intention through functional and psychological value across nations?
- Whether and how do the degree of country development and national culture change these paths?

To examine these issues and develop the corresponding conceptual framework, this study applies accessibility-diagnosticity theory (Feldman and Lynch 1988). Within the conceptual framework, MNC's PBG indirectly affects consumers' repurchase intention through their functional and psychological value. These indirect paths are assumed to differ based on the degree of country development and national culture. According to accessibility-diagnosticity theory, the likelihood that consumers use certain information about an object for decision-making depends on information's accessibility and diagnosticity. Accessibility refers to the ease of retrieving specific information, whereas diagnosticity represents the extent to which this information is perceived to be adequate and relevant to make a decision (Lynch Jr, Marmorstein and Weigold 1988). In the context of Study 1, the likelihood that consumers use PBG information to intend their repurchase depends on its accessibility and diagnosticity. PBG is accessible information per se but not directly relevant for consumer behavior (Alden et al. 2013; Lee, Lockshin and Greenacre 2016). It only becomes diagnostic by influencing perceived functional and psychological value (e.g., Swoboda and Hirschmann 2016). The cognitive processes underlying the PBG paths further differ due to country-specific context factors, i.e., the degree of country development and national cultural value dimensions (Beckert 2010).

The empirical study of Study 1 is based on hierarchical data from 22,055 consumer evaluations of an MNC in 31 countries. The sample derives from a cooperation with an MNC in the health and nutrition industry. Countries were selected based on their importance for the MNC. To ensure sample comparability, several screening criteria were applied. Consumers' general knowledge of and experience with the MNC was confirmed. The collected data was analyzed using multilevel mediation structural equation modeling with cross-level interactions. Conditional indirect effects were tested using the floodlight test (Hayes 2017, p. 254).

The results of Study 1 underline indirect-only paths from PBG to repurchase intention through functional and psychological value across nations. The path from PBG to repurchase intention through psychological value is stronger. Accordingly, leading MNCs may focus on psychological value propositions when using their PBG. However, the paths change with the degree of country development and national culture. Country development weakens, whereas the degree of embeddedness, mastery, and hierarchy strengthen the PBG-repurchase intention links. The moderations differ in strength. MNCs must choose certain levers to effectively manage PBG. This study makes corresponding suggestions and contributes to research concerning cross-national brand management.

3.2 Cross-National Differences in Endorsed Branding Effects

Many global MNCs change their branding strategies towards an endorsed branding and use their global corporate brand to endorse their global product brands (Brexendorf and Keller 2017; Hsu, Fournier and Srinivasan 2016). This enables consumers to identify a product brand with an MNC, which helps them to make product purchase decisions (Khojastehpour and Johns 2015). However, applying the endorsed branding strategy attracts international consumers differently. Therefore, it is important to analyze how corporations profit from endorsed branding strategies across nations or whether they must rely on country-specific factors, i.e., the degree of country development or national culture.

The motivation of Study 2 lies in the lack of knowledge regarding the effect of global endorsed branding across nations. Research either focused horizontal images transfers (e.g., Bian and Moutinho 2011; Boisvert and Ashill 2018), other types of vertical image transfers (e.g., celebrity endorsement or vertical brand extensions, Allman et al. 2016; Knoll and Matthes 2017), or were conducted nationally (e.g., Abosag and Farah 2014). However, managers may benefit from such knowledge to learn how beneficial the endorsed branding strategy is across nations from a consumers' perspective. Moreover, studies indicated the success of the endorsed branding strategy to differ in emerging vs. developed countries (e.g., Fatma, Khan and Rahman 2016 vs. Cretu and Brodie 2007) or due to national culture (Jakubanecs and Supphellen 2012). It is recommendable for managers to consider such country-specific boundary conditions when deciding for a country-specific application of the endorsed branding strategy.

Study 2 therefore examines the following two research questions:

- How can MNCs benefit from an image transfer of global corporate to global product brands in terms of product purchase intention across nations?
- Whether and how do the degrees of country development and national culture moderate the indirect and direct effects of global corporate brand image?

To address these research aims, the conceptual framework of Study 2 is based on schema theory (Fiske and Taylor 1991). MNCs' global corporate brand image directly and indirectly influences product purchase intention via global product brand image. The degree of country development and national culture, i.e., the cultural value dimension embeddedness, are assumed to strengthen or weaken these effects. Schema theory suggests consumers' prior knowledge about an object to be organized in hierarchically structured superordinated and subordinated cognitive schemata (Crocker 1984; Fiske and Taylor 1991, p. 98). These schemata determine the way consumers receive and retrieve information, which makes them relevant for decision-making (Sujan and Bettman 1989). In the context of Study 2, global corporate brand image reflects the associations stored in the superordinated global corporate brand schema, whereas global product brand image comprises associations within the subordinated product brand schema (Halkias 2015; Hoyer, MacInnis and Pieters 2012, p. 108). When purchasing a product brand, the global corporate brand image is transferred to the product brand image and indirectly, but also directly, retrieved to decide about product purchase intentions (Meyers-Levy and Tybout 1989). Consumers' brand schema development and activation differ in country-specific contexts, making corporate and product brand schemata more or less strongly activated and salient based on the degree of country development and embeddedness (e.g., Crocker 1984; Halkias 2015).

To provide empirical insights, Study 2 relies on hierarchical data from 7,660 consumer evaluations of an MNC's global corporate and product brands in 35 countries. The MNC has a centrally managed global corporate brand and is active in the health and nutrition industry. Product brands from four product categories were preselected based on the most important globality criteria and their endorsement by the global corporate brand (e.g., Steenkamp 2019b). Moreover, various screening criteria were used to ensure sample comparability. Familiarity with the MNC as well as the global product brands were confirmed. This study applies multilevel mediation structural equation modeling with cross-level interactions and conditional effects to analyze the typical direct and indirect effects of global corporate brand image and global product brand image on product purchase intention across nations (Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, pp. 4-5; Spiller et al. 2013).

The results of Study 2 contribute to the application of theory and show a positive indirect effect of global corporate brand image on product purchase intention via global product brand image across nations. Additionally, a positive, although weaker, direct effect of global corporate brand image on product purchase intention is found. Hence, across nations, the application of the global endorsed branding strategy seems to be beneficial for MNCs. Moreover, the results provide insights into country-specific moderators, i.e., the degree of country development and national culture. However, the degree of country development and national culture moderate both effects differently. Whereas an increasing degree of country development enhances the indirect and weakens the direct effect of global corporate brand image, embeddedness only positively moderates the indirect effect. This study provides new theoretical implications and shows that a country portfolio offers concrete hints for managers.

3.3 Effects of E-Commerce Firms' Internationalization Processes

In an increasingly digitalizing economy, e-commerce firms benefit from more easily reaching customers, accessing resources, and exchanging information (Amit and Zott 2001). These benefits help to reduce expansion barriers and lead to advantages in internationalization (Shaheer and Li 2020). This results in a more irregular and faster internationalization process of e-commerce firms compared to offline firms. However, it remains unknown if such internationalization processes are also more successful in an online world. Thus, it is important to analyze how e-commerce firms benefit from time-based internationalization decisions in terms of firm growth and whether they are still limited by institutional distances.

The motivation of Study 3 is twofold. From a theoretical point of view, there are only a few studies on e-commerce firms' internationalization processes (e.g., Luo, Zhao and Du 2005; Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016) and no study on their effects. Research either focused manufacturing or offline commerce firms (e.g., Lin 2014; Mohr and Batsakis 2017). This may be a misleading approach, because the way e-commerce firms internationalize highly differs from traditional firms (Coviello, Kano and Liesch 2017; Monaghan, Tippmann and Coviello 2020). E-commerce firms' internationalization processes may also differently lead to firm growth. Moreover, it remains unknown whether and how e-commerce firms are equally affected by cross-national institutional distances (e.g., Shaheer and Li 2020; Yamin and Sinkovics 2006). From a managerial point of view, such knowledge is of paramount importance. On the one hand,

managers of e-commerce firms can use these insights to design their internationalization processes in a way, which increases firm growth (Jean and Tan 2019). On the other hand, understanding the influence of institutional distances helps them to successfully operate their e-businesses internationally.

Study 3 therefore investigates the following two research questions:

- How can e-commerce firms benefit from internationalization process rhythm and speed in terms of firm growth?
- Whether and how do institutional distances moderate these effects?

In Study 3, a conceptual framework based on an enhanced, e-commerce-specific version of internationalization process theory is proposed to analyze the effects of e-commerce firms' internationalization rhythm and speed on firms' sales growth (e.g., Benmamoun et al. 2019; Coviello, Kano and Liesch 2017). Institutional distances are assumed to change these effects. According to internationalization process theory, firms internationalize in a gradual manner to increase their growth (Johanson and Vahlne 1977; 2009). Characteristics of modern firms (Vahlne and Johanson 2017) and of e-commerce firms demand adjustments of this theory (Monaghan, Tippmann and Coviello 2020). E-commerce firms' growth may still be determined by internationalization processes (Coviello, Kano and Liesch 2017). However, the need for an incremental and slow internationalization process seems to be weakened (e.g., Benmamoun et al. 2019). In the context of Study 3, e-commerce firms can have stronger growth rates when internationalizing irregularly and fast. Internationalization process theory further expects institutional distances to determine the benefits of time-based internationalization process decision (Johanson and Vahlne 2009). Referring to Study 3, e-commerce firms need to learn about foreign country's institutional settings (Brouthers, Geisser and Rothlauf 2016). We expect regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive distance to weaken the effects of rhythm and speed on firm growth.

To analyze the respective hypotheses, this study applies multilevel modeling with cross-level interactions. The authors use data from 228 leading e-commerce firms in Europe and 1,702 market entries over 21 years. Thereby, foreign market entries were defined as the launch of an online shop with country-specific domain, language, and currency (e.g., Schu and Morschett 2017). E-commerce firms were preselected. One the on hand, only firms operating in their home and at least one foreign market were included. On the other hand, the full retraceability of e-commerce firms' internationalization process was a prerequisite for their inclusion. Market entries for which data on institutional distances was missing were excluded for hypothesis testing.

The results show a positive effect of e-commerce firms' internationalization rhythm and speed on firm growth. Hence, stronger growth can be reached by an irregular and fast internationalization process. This supports the application of a further developed, e-commerce-specific version of the internationalization process theory (Benmamoun et al. 2019; Coviello, Kano and Liesch 2017). However, these relationships change depending on certain cross-national institutional distances. With an increasing degree of regulative and cultural-cognitive distance, the effects of internationalization rhythm and speed on firm growth become weaker. In contrast, normative distance shows no significant moderating effect. Important country-specific variances further reveal regulative distance, closely followed by cultural-cognitive distance, to be an important lever of e-commerce firms' internationalization process effects. The findings have direct implications for managers interested in how online internationalization processes affect firms' growth and suppliers interested in new e-commerce channels.

Further Remarks

4

The remainder of this doctoral thesis is structured as follows: To answer the aforementioned research questions, this thesis comprises three separate studies that focus on MNCs' global branding and e-commerce firms' internationalization processes. The three studies are illustrated in detail in Part II, Part III, and Part IV. Study 1, Study 2, and Study 3 are organized according to the following structure, irrespective of the applied theory or methodology:

- Introduction
- Conceptual framework and hypothesis development
- Empirical study, including sample design, measurement, method, and results
- Discussion with theoretical and managerial implications
- Limitations and directions for further research

To address the thesis's general research questions, a summary is provided in Chapter 5. The thesis concludes with an outline of further research objectives.

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_4

Part II

Study 1: How Country Development and National Culture Affect the Paths of Perceived Brand Globalness to Consumer Behavior across Nations

This study was published as: Swoboda, B., & Sinning, C. (2020). How country development and national culture affect the paths of perceived brand globalness to consumer behavior across nations. *Journal of Business Research*, 118(September), 58–73 (see also Web Appendix).

Introduction

5

PBG, i.e., the degree to which consumers perceive MNCs as global corporate brands, enables MNCs to differentiate themselves from competitors and attract consumers (e.g., Swoboda and Hirschmann 2016). Well-known MNCs are global brands by nature, and PBG is a predominant success factor (e.g., for favorable consumer behavior, Halkias, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016; Hussein and Hassan 2018). Even without prior experience with MNCs, consumers are able to match MNCs' PBG with the values they offer (Steenkamp, Batra and Alden 2003). For example, Philips promotes its PBG by announcing its listing in Interbrand's "Best Global Brands 2019 Ranking" to deliver the psychological benefits of a global lifestyle to those purchasing their brand (Philips 2019). Even emerging-market MNCs, such as Lenovo, built a global corporate brand across nations and deliver functional and emotional benefits to their customers (Bale 2018). However, whether such effects hold across nations or are affected by country-specific contexts is unknown. Therefore, this study examines the paths from PBG to repurchase intention through functional and psychological value across nations and considers the degree of country development and national culture as important national context factors.

Scholars have recognized the importance of global brands and have studied global orientation, brand attitude, and, less often, PBG (see Figure 5.1). Studies have mostly shown indirect paths from PBG—for corporate or product brands—to purchase intention, loyalty, or willingness to pay (e.g., Halkias, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016). Scholars have often studied functional value, such as quality and value for money, or psychological value, such as emotional experience and the enhancement of social self-concept, as paths that translate PBG into consumer behavior (more seldom both simultaneously, e.g., Swoboda, Pennemann and Taube 2012). More importantly, almost all studies have focused on one country or compared a few countries. International comparisons have indicated

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_5

stronger paths from PBG in emerging countries than in developed countries (e.g., Özsomer 2012). Randrianasolo (2017) initially addressed PBG effects in developed, emerging, and the least developed countries. Regarding national culture, studies show contradictory results. Studies have expected PBG to vary across cultures (Akaka and Alden 2010), shown positive effects of compatibility between global brands and national culture on purchase intention (He and Wang 2017) and found correlations of cultural dimensions (e.g., mastery) with global mindset (De Mooij 2017). In contrast, Steenkamp (2019a) questioned the link between culture and global brand attitude and showed correlations in only four of 14 national cultural dimensions.

		Perceived Brand Globalness	Similar Constructs of Global Brands
National Studies	Developed Countries	Akaka and Alden (2010); Davvetas, Sichtmann and Diamantopoulos (2015); De Meulenaer, Dens and De Pelsmacker (2015); Halkias, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos (2016); Mandler (2019)	Bartsch et al. (2016); Davvetas and Diamantopoulos (2018); Dimofte, Johansson and Bagozzi (2010); Dimofte, Johansson and Ronkainen (2008); Halkias et al. (2017); Iversen and Hem (2011); Riefler (2012); Westjohn, Singh and Magnusson (2012)
	Emerging Countries	Akram, Merunka and Akram (2011); Hussein and Hassan (2018); *Swoboda, Pennemann and Taube (2012)*; Vuong and Giao (2020); Winit et al. (2014); Xie, Batra and Peng (2015)	Batra et al. (2000); He and Wang (2017); Suarez and Belk (2017); Zhou, Yang and Hui (2010)
International Studies	Only Developed Countries	Johansson and Ronkainen (2005); Steenkamp, Batra and Alden (2003)	Schuiling and Kapferer (2004)
	Including Emerging Countries	Özsomer (2012); Randrianasolo (2017); Sichtmann and Diamantopoulos (2013); *Swoboda and Hirschmann (2016)*	*Alden et al. (2013)*; Alden, Steenkamp and Batra (2006); Davvetas and Diamantopoulos (2016); Guo (2013); Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube (2017); Strizhakova and Coulter (2015); Strizhakova, Coulter and Price (2011); Westjohn et al. (2016); Zabkar et al. (2017)
	Across Nations	**This study**	Steenkamp (2019a); Steenkamp and de Jong (2010)

Note: Studies analyzing corporate brands (vs. product brands) are in italics. References are not included in the reference list.

Figure 5.1 Literature Review. (Source: Own Creation)

Scholars have called for studies on PBG across nations to ensure generalizable results (e.g., Halkias, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016). Moreover, knowledge of the effects of important country context factors on PBG paths is limited. Scholars have encouraged analyses of emerging and developed countries (e.g., Winit et al. 2014), and the contradictory results regarding national culture could be clarified by performing appropriate multilevel structural equation modeling across nations to show the explained variances of each context factor. This knowledge is important as global brands are more often managed across nations than in geocentric consumer groups within each country (Gupta, Pansari and Kumar 2018). CEOs and global brand managers are responsible for PBG across nations, mostly in headquarters. Knowledge regarding the moderating role of the degree of a country's development or national culture could allow CEOs and managers to predict the paths of PBG across nations.

This study aims to address these research gaps and to analyze how MNCs can benefit from PBG in terms of repurchase intention through functional and psychological value across nations and determine, in particular, whether the degree of country development and national culture, i.e., value dimensions, change these paths. Therefore, this study offers three contributions.

First, this study extends knowledge on MNCs' PBG paths across nations. Considering these paths across different countries provides more generalizable and rigorous results. For example, studies comparing countries have shown that foreign global brands have stronger diagnosticity via functional value (e.g., Akram, Merunka and Akram 2011) or via psychological value (e.g., Xie, Batra and Peng 2015) or equal diagnosticity via both (e.g., Swoboda and Hirschmann 2016). This study refers to accessibility-diagnosticity theory and extends existing studies by applying this theory to both value paths across nations. Due to high recall and availability across countries, global brands are highly associated with globalness (Xie, Batra and Peng 2015). Consumers may not have knowledge about MNCs but perceive Nike and Coca Cola as global. Therefore, PBG is easily accessible information (e.g., Gürhan-Canli, Sarial-Abi and Hayran 2018; Swoboda, Pennemann and Taube 2012) retrieved by consumers when making purchase decisions. This study examines repurchase intention because consumers refer to their experience with an MNC and may judge the accessibility and diagnosticity differently compared to the initial purchase (Lynch Jr 2006). Assessing the roles of easily accessible PBG and functional and psychological value in repurchase intention is important for brand managers when promoting the corporate brand (Abdellah-Kilani and Zorai 2019).

Second, this study contributes to research by examining the degree of country development and national culture as moderators (following calls from, e.g., Gürhan-Canli, Sarial-Abi and Hayran 2018). The contextual factors reinforce or diminish the underlying cognitive processes behind PBG's diagnosticity (Beckert 2010). This research extends the only study indicating the importance of the degrees of country development for PBG (Randrianasolo 2017) by using cross-level interactions to determine whether PBG's effects are affected across nations. Country development is essential due to the increasing importance of emerging markets for MNCs (globalization forces MNCs to succeed in these markets, Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2017; Özsomer 2012). Certain emerging markets show strong economic growth (Kumaraswamy et al. 2012), and the world's GDP will increasingly shift to them. Moreover, identifying differences between developed and emerging markets helps MNCs understand how to exploit these growth prospects and gain market share (He and Wang 2017). By analyzing national culture, this study adds knowledge to existing inconsistent results and sheds

light on how national culture affects PBG paths across nations. Scholars have called for corresponding studies (e.g., Gupta, Pansari and Kumar 2018). This study relies on the cultural value model of Schwartz (1994) because of its relatively strong theoretical foundation (De Mooij 2017). Swoboda and Batton (2019) showed that this model has the highest explanatory power in revealing culturally induced differences in consumer perceptions of and attitude towards global brands. Accordingly, the value dimensions of embeddedness (vs. autonomy), mastery (vs. harmony), and hierarchy (vs. egalitarianism) are analyzed in this study. Managers can learn how country contexts reduce or reinforce PBG paths, which can help them decide whether to rely on global brand positioning in specific countries (e.g., Abdellah-Kilani and Zorai 2019; Vuong and Giao 2020). Moreover, the results allow a prognosis for PBG in countries not yet surveyed.

Third, this study contributes by accounting for country differences through multilevel mediation structural equation modeling with cross-level interactions (Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, pp. 4–5). Conditional indirect effects are provided. The floodlight test is applied to show the novel results of all moderator values (Spiller et al. 2013).

Conceptual Framework

6

In the conceptual framework of this study, an MNC's PBG affects consumers' functional and psychological value and indirectly affects repurchase intention across nations, while the indirect paths from PBG differ based on continuous moderators (see Figure 6.1; extending, e.g., Swoboda and Hirschmann 2016). Repurchase intention represents the likelihood that consumers buy an MNC's product again (Van Vaerenbergh, Larivière and Vermeir 2012). A widely applied value concept differentiates functional value (utility derived from perceived quality, performance, and value for money) and psychological value (feelings, states, and ability to enhance consumers' social self-concept, Sweeney and Soutar 2001). The degree of country development describes countries' economic growth and social and human conditions (Çilingirtürk and Koçak 2018). Cultural dimension embeddedness reflects the social structures between individuals and groups in a society, mastery relates to the relation between individuals and their natural and social world, and hierarchy describes how societies are organized with respect to responsible, cooperative behavior (Schwartz 1994).

The research aims of this study are based on accessibility-diagnosticity theory (Feldman and Lynch 1988). According to this theory, the likelihood that consumers use certain information in decision making is a function of the information's accessibility in the consumers' minds and behavioral diagnosticity. Accessibility represents the ease of retrieving information, while diagnosticity refers to the extent to which this information is perceived to be adequate and relevant to the behavioral outcome (Lynch Jr, Marmorstein and Weigold 1988). The usage of PBG as information for consumers' repurchase intention depends on its accessibility and diagnosticity. As accessible information (e.g., Alden et al. 2013), PBG is not naturally relevant for decision making (Lee, Lockshin and Greenacre 2016). PBG becomes diagnostic by affecting the perceived functional

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_6

and psychological values offered by an MNC by rendering this information relevant for repurchasing (e.g., Swoboda and Hirschmann 2016). Separating these two value paths uncovers the differences in the strength of PBG's accessibility and diagnosticity in repurchase intention.

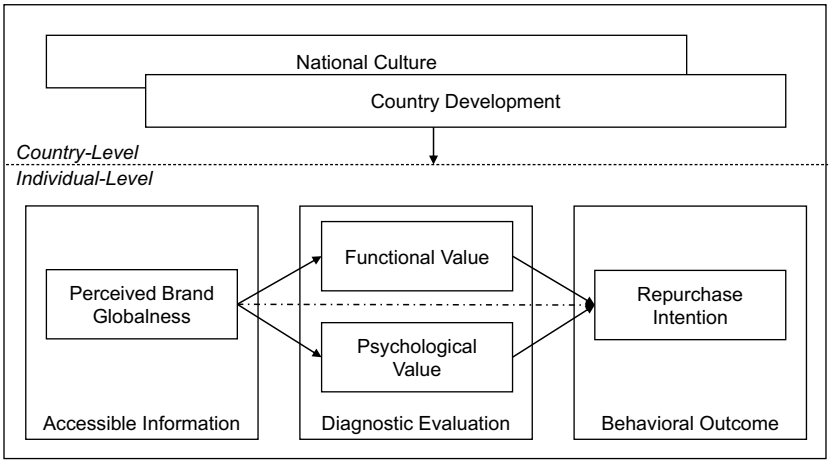


Figure 6.1 Conceptual Framework. (Source: Own Creation)

The cognitive mechanism of PBG is determined by country-specific contexts (Beckert 2010). Even if all consumers have the same cognitive capacity, cognitive processes—based on systematic environmental differences in the information stored in memory—may differ (D'Andrade 1981). The degree of country development may act to diminish diagnosticity because PBG will be emphasized due to a lack of brand knowledge in emerging markets (e.g., Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2017). Cognitive processes interact with national cultural values, which determine how information is perceived and the relevance that is attached to it (Aaker 2000; Schwartz 2014). This interaction results in consumers questioning how PBG acts as belief-consistent information. If their cultural value dimensions allow for belief consistency, they may become diagnosticity multipliers (He and Wang 2017). In summary, the moderators are assumed to affect the PBG-value links. The values-repurchase intention links supplement PBG's diagnosticity, and combining both links constitutes the conditional indirect effect of PBG on repurchase intention.

Next, hypotheses are derived regarding the main effects and the moderating effects, and they also refer to knowledge on global (corporate or product) brands. For each moderator, theoretical rationales are provided first for its role in PBG and its value paths and second for the possible relative strength of its increasing or decreasing role in one of the two value paths.

Hypothesis Development

7

In previous research, PBG has mostly shown an indirect link to consumer behavior (e.g., Halkias, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016). Based on accessibility-diagnosticity theory (Lynch Jr, Marmorstein and Weigold 1988), it is assumed that PBG indirectly affects repurchase intention via functional and psychological value across nations. Value transforms PBG into relevant information that consumers consider for repurchase intention. Consumers' intention to repurchase global brands relies on PBG's accessibility and diagnosticity (Lynch Jr 2006).

Currently, a global consumer culture dominates, and globalization increasingly shapes consumers' consumption (Steenkamp 2019a). However, some consumers criticize globalization processes and even reject global brands or regret global brand purchases (e.g., due to threats to local firms or aversion to cultural homogenization, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2018; Riefler 2012). However, studies still find positive global brand attitudes (Davvetas, Sichtmann and Diamantopoulos 2015), even for anti-global brand consumers (Dimofte, Johansson and Ronkainen 2008). It seems that consumers still attempt to find meaning in their life by consuming global brands (Steenkamp and de Jong 2010). PBG helps them to participate in aspirational global consumer culture in two ways: more rationally (functional value) and more emotionally (psychological value).

PBG reinforces the offered functional value. Global brands are perceived to be of higher quality, to provide better performance, or to offer higher value for the money (e.g., Mandler 2019). Consumers' perception of such beneficial functional value results in increased MNC credibility or purchase intention (e.g., Halkias, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016; Swoboda and Hirschmann 2016). Global brands also stimulate perceptions of an MNC's psychological value because they deliver social benefits by giving consumers the feeling of belonging to the global community (e.g., Özsomer 2012; Strizhakova and Coulter 2015). These brands are also perceived as being unique and sophisticated, thus enhancing consumers'

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_7

self-concept (e.g., Swoboda, Pennemann and Taube 2012; Xie, Batra and Peng 2015).

Therefore, the functional and psychological values offered through PBG can benefit MNCs in terms of repurchase intention (see such paths for purchase intention in two countries, e.g., Sichtmann and Diamantopoulos 2013). The following hypothesis is proposed:

H1. MNCs' PBG has a positive link to consumers' repurchase intention through (a) functional value and (b) psychological value across nations.

The paths from PBG to repurchase intention vary depending on the degree of country development as the latter affects consumers' information processing (e.g., Beckert 2010). Countries' degree of development is expected to play an important role in making accessible PBG information diagnostic based on the following rationales.

Global corporate brands are considered more weakly established in emerging (vs. developed) markets because of their relatively short history in these markets (Swoboda, Pennemann and Taube 2012). However, PBG represents accessible information that consumers may emphasize because they lack brand knowledge (Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2017). They desire global brands and prefer them to local ones due to higher quality perceptions (Özsomer 2012). Moreover, in less developed countries, consumers experience a less stable political and economic situation, and PBG reflects security and confidence-inspiring brand information (e.g., Strizhakova, Coulter and Price 2011). Consumers further perceive that they can receive emotional value through PBG because global brands represent emotions or exclusivity (Guo 2013). To lift themselves out of poverty, these consumers strive for global citizenship and conformity with people from the advanced world by intending to buy global brands (Randrianasolo 2017). Studies comparing emerging and developed countries support this argumentation (e.g., Sichtmann and Diamantopoulos 2013). In developed countries, both paths are weaker due to accessible PBG's less favorable diagnosticity (Swoboda and Hirschmann 2016). Therefore, it is concluded that a higher (vs. lower) level of country development results in diminished (vs. multiplied) accessible PBG's diagnosticity via its offered functional and psychological values.

It is further assumed that PBG information is more strongly diminished through the psychological (vs. functional) value path with an increasing degree of country development. Scholars have indicated that in less developed countries, affective reasons for global brand purchase dominate (Xie, Batra and Peng 2015) and consumers patronize global brands because of their psychological value

(e.g., Swoboda, Pennemann and Taube 2012). As living conditions in such countries improve, consumers' basic needs may be more satisfied and PBG's security function may lose importance. Consumers, moreover, become more familiar with global culture (e.g., through media, Akram, Merunka and Akram 2011). Based on these experiences, being part of the aspirational global consumer culture as a psychological benefit of PBG becomes more belief-consistent in less developed markets (Hussein and Hassan 2018). It is assumed that MNC's PBG becomes more diagnostic through the offered psychological value (Zhang and Khare 2009). Conversely, an increasing degree of country development diminishes the cognitive PBG path (Beckert 2010). In summary, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2. An increasing degree of country development negatively moderates the indirect path between PBG and repurchase intention through (a) functional value and (b) psychological value, wherein (c) it has a stronger diminishing effect on the psychological (vs. functional) value path.

National cultural value dimension embeddedness is assumed to affect PBG's diagnosticity. Embeddedness characterizes individuals for whom conformance with group norms and belonging to the community are important (Schwartz 1994). Consumers in countries with a higher degree of embeddedness rely on traditions but are open to technology and the internet to build social relationships and ensure family security (De Mooij 2017). Their cultural values seem to be consistent with the perceived values delivered through global brands (Zhang and Khare 2009), thereby affecting the cognitive processes that render PBG relevant for repurchase intention (Aaker 2000).

Consumers from societies characterized by an increasing degree of embeddedness are more sensitive to external behavior and rely more on the general opinion of society (Schwartz 2014). They adhere to the perception that foreign global brands are of higher quality to improve their group's interest (Gupta, Pansari and Kumar 2018). Moreover, due to the authority transmitted by MNCs, consumers in such societies perceive them to be experts and do not question the quality of their offered values (Camacho, De Jong and Stremersch 2014). Embeddedness may further intensify the opinion that an appreciation for global brands serves as an entrance to global citizenship (Strizhakova and Coulter 2015). Striving for belongingness is attractive because building relationships between parties is very important to these consumers (De Mooij 2015). Thus, the degree of embeddedness is a diagnosticity multiplier. It makes the accessible PBG information more relevant for repurchase intention because PBG is belief-consistent information (Dalmoro et al. 2015).

In societies with high embeddedness, individuals do not primarily focus on emotional and social factors to push their self-interest but because qualitative benefits enhance group interest (Gupta, Pansari and Kumar 2018). This affects the way in which quality leads to behavioral intentions (Ozdemir and Hewett 2010). The tendency of embeddedness is to address the functional value paths that transform PBG into diagnostic information. These qualitative benefits, for example, allow for higher belief consistency (Zhang and Khare 2009). Therefore, the degree of embeddedness is assumed to play a stronger enhancing role in the path from PBG to repurchase intention through functional (vs. psychological) value. The following hypothesis is proposed:

H3. An increasing degree of embeddedness positively moderates the indirect path between PBG and repurchase intention through (a) functional value and (b) psychological value, wherein (c) it has a stronger enhancing effect on the functional (vs. psychological) value path.

Different PBG-repurchase intention paths are expected depending on the degree of mastery. The degree of mastery reflects individuals' preference for changing the environment to improve their personal and group success (Schwartz 1994). Characteristics such as ambitious, independent, and capable describe consumers in countries with increasing degrees of mastery (Schwartz 1994). Mastery appears to accompany consumers' global attachment (De Mooij 2017), which affects the way they transform PBG information into behavior (Aaker 2000).

An increasing degree of mastery characterizes societies in which consumers connect local brands to their current home country situation, whereas global brands represent a situation that consumers aspire to (Holt, Quelch and Taylor 2004). Here, repurchasing global brands signifies obtaining access to optimization opportunities outside the home market. The latter are attractive because global brands are perceived to be of higher quality (Swoboda and Hirschmann 2016). Moreover, global brands are perceived as unique or sophisticated and as delivering something valuable, and they therefore act more strongly as symbols of the desired change as the degree of mastery increases. The aspiration to achievement, which individuals in such societies like to express, is known to be one important characteristic of global brands (Özsomer 2012). De Mooij (2017) showed that global brands are in line with mastery in consumers' global and cosmopolitan mindsets. An increasing degree of mastery acts as a diagnosticity multiplier, i.e., increases PBG's diagnosticity.

Consumers from societies with high levels of mastery intend to make a true impact in changing their environment. They focus on aspects such as MNCs'

competence (De Mooij 2015) and PBG signals in terms of quality and value for money (Davvetas, Sichtmann and Diamantopoulos 2015). The degree of mastery seems to affect repurchase intention through a global brand's quality aspects, which aligns with high-mastery societies' values (Camacho, De Jong and Stremersch 2014), i.e., making PBG more diagnostic through functional value. The following hypothesis is proposed:

H4. An increasing degree of mastery positively moderates the indirect path between PBG and repurchase intention through (a) functional value and (b) psychological value, wherein (c) it has a stronger enhancing effect on the functional (vs. psychological) value path.

Finally, PBG paths differ due to the degree of a society's hierarchy. Highly hierarchical societies have an explicit social order, and individuals accept their assigned positions (Schwartz 1994). Their main values, wealth and authority lead to the purchase of expensive products and the enjoyment of their own success (De Mooij 2017). These values are consistent with the values offered by global brands (De Mooij 2017), which affects how PBG becomes diagnostic (Aaker 2000).

With regard to MNCs' global presence and global market power, consumers perceive MNCs as trustworthy authorities. Global brand rankings underline this power and indicate that perceived brands are market leaders (e.g., Coca Cola, Forbes 2019). Consumers from highly hierarchical societies accept, respect, and appreciate this power and are sensitive to information from authorities (De Mooij 2015). Consumers consider powerful, highly ranked MNCs the best in the hierarchy of brands and often do not question their delivered quality. An increasing degree of hierarchy leads consumers to act in line with the given hierarchies by purchasing global brands (Strizhakova and Coulter 2015). MNCs that are perceived as global and powerful brands meet such needs. Hierarchy allows for belief consistency in repurchasing global brands (Zhang and Khare 2009), positively affects consumers' information processing (Aaker 2000), and acts as a diagnosticity multiplier of both value links from PBG to repurchase intention.

Although an increasing degree of hierarchy leads to repurchases of global brands due to psychological value, consumers from hierarchical societies may place a stronger emphasis on quality aspects because of different hierarchy levels. They perceive MNCs to be at a superior level in the hierarchy due to their global market power and expect better-quality products (Gupta, Pansari and Kumar 2018). In line with the tendency of national culture to have a stronger effect on the functional value path, the qualitative benefits are more consistent with the values of consumers from societies with high levels of hierarchy (Zhang

and Khare 2009). Thus, a stronger enhancing effect of the degree of hierarchy on PBG's diagnosticity via the functional value path is expected. The following hypothesis is proposed:

H5. An increasing degree of hierarchy positively moderates the indirect path between PBG and repurchase intention through (a) functional value and (b) psychological value, wherein (c) it has a stronger enhancing effect on the functional (vs. psychological) value path.

Empirical Study

8

8.1 Sample

The data derive from cooperation with a German MNC that is active in the health and nutrition industry and offers drugs, crop products, skin and beauty care, consumer goods, and services across all continents. The MNC conducted a specific study with 1,200 consumers in each of 31 countries on PBG (37,200 respondents in total). The authors designed the survey, and the data are used for the first time in this study. The countries were chosen based on their importance for the MNC. It was assured that the MNC conducted no special activities in any of the countries analyzed.

After conducting pre-tests in the home country and several foreign countries (e.g., hierarchy of effects, face validity, reliability and validity tests), a commercial marketing research agency collected the data using a cross-national panel approach (average participation rate of 58%). The agency applied text-appealing strategies to highlight the public benefit of participating and offered bonus points (Pedersen and Nielsen 2016). The authors controlled panel and response quality using individualized survey links, instructional manipulation checks, short answering periods, random clicking, or straight lining (e.g., Oppenheimer, Meyvis and Davidenko 2009). To ensure comparability among the respondents across nations, screening criteria were used. These criteria included quota sampling related to age and gender based on national registration office information and restriction to the urban population aged between 18 and 65 (55) in developed (emerging) countries with high levels of education or professions (e.g., Özsomer

Supplementary Information The online version contains supplementary material available at https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_8.

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_8

2012). Only respondents with at least general knowledge of the MNC (= 2 on a five-point scale) were included in the sample (29,376), and only those who had experience with the MNC's brands (have bought them: 1 = yes, 0 = no). This procedure led to a total sample of 22,701 evaluations, which were not representative of each country. After the elimination of Mahalanobis distance-based outliers, 22,055 cases remained (see Table 8.1). Data were not normally distributed; therefore, a maximum likelihood estimator with robust standard errors and chi-square test statistic was used (Asparouhov 2005).

8.2 Measurement

Individual-level variables were measured using five-point Likert-type scales (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree; see Table 8.2). PBG was measured with three items (Steenkamp, Batra and Alden 2003) and was independent of perceived brand localness (PBL, e.g., Halkias et al. 2017; Swoboda, Pennemann and Taube 2012). Functional and psychological value were each measured with four items by adapting Sweeney and Soutar (2001) to the context of corporate brands (e.g., Alden et al. 2013; Swoboda and Hirschmann 2016). Repurchase intention was measured with three items from Maxham III and Netemeyer (2002; widely used in the literature, e.g., Van Vaerenbergh, Larivière and Vermeir 2012). A commercial translation agency applied parallel blind translation-back-translation, including reviews. Therefore, if necessary, appropriate item adjustments were made (decentering and cultural rephrasing, e.g., Watkins 2010) to maximize the construct equivalence (e.g., Yang, Floyd and Tanner Jr 2019). Pre-tests of the scales in eight of the ten economically strongest countries (average N = 150 per country) yielded satisfactory values for reliability and validity. On a country level, the degree of country development was measured by the Human Development Index (HDI, United Nations Development Programme 2017). This measure consists of three indices (life expectancy, education, and gross national income) and is the predominant measure for country development (e.g., Çilingirtürk and Koçak 2018). All cultural dimensions were measured based on the most recent data provided by Schwartz (1994).[1]

[1] Missing data on all national cultural value dimensions were replaced for three countries (Guatemala, United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia) using those for neighboring countries (Steenkamp and Geyskens 2006). Then, the models were estimated with and without countries with missing data. The results remained stable for all three dimensions (see Web Appendix G.2.3.). Due to these results and for model identification reasons, the countries with replaced data were included in the survey.

Table 8.1 Sample Characteristics

N		Gender (%)		Age Groups (Years, %)				
		Male	Female	18–25	26–35	36–45	46–55	56–65
Argentina	936	50.5	49.5	24.4	27.6	25.1	23.0	0.0
Australia	795	49.9	50.1	11.6	20.9	22.3	21.3	24.0
Belgium	918	51.0	49.0	15.9	19.3	23.2	22.7	19.0
Brazil	875	50.7	49.3	35.3	28.0	22.6	14.1	0.0
Canada	839	48.6	51.4	19.5	21.9	21.9	16.4	20.1
China	760	50.7	49.3	23.4	33.8	26.6	16.2	0.0
Colombia	966	49.9	50.1	24.0	29.2	27.2	19.6	0.0
Costa Rica	460	51.5	48.5	33.5	22.2	22.8	21.5	0.0
Denmark	687	54.7	45.3	9.8	17.8	22.6	22.9	27.1
Egypt	151	73.5	26.5	27.8	22.5	29.1	20.5	0.0
Finland	813	48.2	51.8	13.5	17.2	21.2	21.8	26.3
France	768	52.0	48.0	15.0	20.6	22.5	14.5	27.5
Germany	937	51.6	48.4	16.2	17.4	24.9	24.0	17.5
Guatemala	473	71.5	28.5	41.9	22.6	18.2	17.3	0.0
India	724	49.5	50.5	21.1	25.1	23.6	30.1	0.0
Italy	954	48.4	51.6	13.8	22.2	22.2	21.7	20.0
Japan	718	52.0	48.0	10.6	19.2	21.9	22.6	25.8
Jordan	176	72.0	28.0	18.8	29.5	34.1	17.6	0.0
Mexico	959	49.1	50.9	31.4	28.9	23.3	16.5	0.0
Netherlands	880	49.7	50.3	12.5	18.0	25.8	23.2	20.6
New Zealand	651	52.5	47.5	13.1	16.6	25.7	24.7	20.0
Norway	514	53.1	46.9	11.9	14.8	23.0	24.1	26.3
Russia	747	53.0	47.0	23.3	25.2	25.3	26.2	0.0
Saudi Arabia	240	76.7	23.3	29.6	24.2	27.9	18.3	0.0
Spain	980	50.8	49.2	13.6	23.3	25.7	20.4	17.0
Sweden	505	53.5	46.5	12.3	13.3	18.8	24.4	31.3
Turkey	905	50.8	49.2	16.0	34.3	28.3	21.4	0.0
United Arab Emirates	331	69.5	30.5	23.6	27.8	30.5	18.1	0.0
UK	572	49.7	50.3	12.2	20.6	24.1	21.7	21.3

(continued)

Table 8.1 (continued)

N		Gender (%)		Age Groups (Years, %)				
		Male	Female	18–25	26–35	36–45	46–55	56–65
USA	899	50.7	49.3	16.8	19.5	23.8	23.9	16.0
Venezuela	922	50.2	49.8	23.2	31.8	27.2	17.8	0.0
Total	22,055	52.0	48.0	19.2	23.2	24.2	21.0	12.3

Source: Own Creation

Age, gender (0 = male, 1 = female), and brand familiarity ("[MNC] is very familiar to me", Steenkamp, Batra and Alden 2003) were controlled for at the individual level. These controls may affect the cognitive processes underlying PBG paths (e.g., Lynch Jr 2006; Miller and Halpern 2014; Salthouse 2012). The number of respondents per country was controlled at the country level to prevent an unequal number from affecting the results (Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, p. 215).

Because consumers are nested in countries, multilevel modeling requirements were tested. Intra-class correlation, estimated in a null model without predictor variables, indicated that 21.9% of the variance in repurchase intention is attributable to country differences. Multilevel modeling is highly adequate (Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, pp. 4–13). The reliability and validity tests yielded satisfactory results (see Tables 8.2–8.4; e.g., Hair et al. 2018, p. 93).

Reliability and validity were also ensured in every single country to assure construct equivalence in a post-hoc manner. The test described by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) assured discriminant validity between functional and psychological value and between psychological value and repurchase intention ($\chi^2(2) = 1{,}159.685$, $p < .001$ and $\chi^2(2) = 2{,}172.497$, $p < .001$, respectively). Multilevel reliability based on multilevel alpha, multilevel composite reliability and maximal reliability was confirmed (Geldhof, Preacher and Zyphur 2014, see Table 8.5). To reduce model complexity (Kline 2015, p. 128), regression scores for PBG and values were used (DiStefano, Zhu and Mindrila 2009; comparing validity coefficients with those of parceling, Kennedy and Tuckman 2013, see Table 8.7).

Common method variance (CMV) was addressed using an appropriate questionnaire design. A single-factor test was performed (with lower fit values than the proposed model, $\Delta\chi^2(6) = 74{,}739.68$, $p < .001$). The marker variable technique was applied using occupation as a theoretically unrelated marker variable (Lindell and Whitney 2001). The latent variable approach of Williams, Hartman and Cavazotte (2010) indicated method variances between 1.62% and 1.92% and

Table 8.2 Reliability and Validity

	Item	MV/Std	FL	KMO	ItTC	α	CR	AVE	λ
PBG	To me, [MNC] is a global company brand.	4.17/1.06	.887	.766	.857	.942	.943	.861	.888
	I don't think consumers abroad buy [MNC's] products.	4.15/1.02	.941		.896				.942
	[MNC] sells its products all over the world.	4.20/1.01	.931		.889				.930
FV	[MNC] offers high-quality products and services.	3.86/.915	.915	.851	.878	.943	.943	.854	.921
	[MNC] develops well-made innovative products and services.	3.73/.906	.890		.857				.880
	With its products, [MNC] is a leader in research and technology.	3.74/.913	.882		.850				.874
	[MNC] offers good value for money.	3.87/.920	.902		.867				.911
PV	[MNC] offers products I like and enjoy.	3.64/1.01	.900	.858	.853	.927	.927	.824	.904
	The appealing image of [MNC's] products makes me feel good.	3.51/1.01	.829		.794				.818
	[MNC's] products improve the way I am perceived.	3.89/.950	.847		.809				.869
	With [MNC's] products, I make a better impression on other people than with those of competitors.	3.61/.974	.914		.865				.899
RPI	In the future, I intend to use products and services from [MNC].	3.50/1.10	.957	.786	.938	.973	.973	.914	.957
	It is very likely that I will use products and services from [MNC].	3.58/1.08	.958		.939				.958
	In the future, I will continue using products and services from [MNC].	3.53/1.10	.966		.945				.966

Note: Confirmatory Model Fit: CFI .985; TLI .981; RMSEA .053; SRMR .023; $\chi^2(71) = 4{,}432.999$; Scaling Cor. Factor Maximum Likelihood = 1.2815. FV = Functional Value; MNC = Multinational Corporation; PBG = Perceived Brand Globalness; PV = Psychological Value; RPI = Repurchase Intention. FL = Factor Loadings (Exploratory Analysis); KMO = Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Criterion (≥.5); ItTC = Item-to-Total Correlation (≥.5); α = Cronbach's Alpha (≥.7); CR = Composite Reliability (≥.6); AVE = Average Variance Extracted (≥.5); λ = Standardized Factor Loadings (Confirmatory Factor Analysis).
Source: Own Creation

Table 8.3 Discriminant Validity

	PBG		FV		PV		RPI	
PBG	**.861**		*.255*		*.194*		*.139*	
FV	.505	***	**.854**		*.810*		*.572*	
PV	.441	***	.900	***	**.824**		*.686*	
RPI	.372	***	.756	***	.828	***	**.914**	

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; ns = not significant. *Note:* Confirmatory Model Fit: CFI,.985; TLI,.981; RMSEA,.053; SRMR,.023; $\chi^2(71) = 4{,}432.999$; Scaling Correction Factor Maximum Likelihood = 1.2815. FV = Functional Value; PBG = Perceived Brand Globalness; PV = Psychological Value; RPI = Repurchase Intention. AVE = Average Variance Extracted (≥.5); AVEs are on the diagonal; squared correlations are above the diagonal; correlations are below the diagonal.
Source: Own Creation

no significant changes in correlations (see Web Appendix). CMV is not an issue in this study.

Tests for endogeneity reduce bias from omitted variables (Antonakis et al. 2014). Exposure to the MNC's marketing—more specifically, its communication activities—was selected as a theoretically related instrumental variable (IV, measured by one item, Cleveland and Laroche 2007) for PBG. The IV's strength was tested using F-tests (Stock and Watson 2019, p. 270). As the calculated F-value has exceeded the recommended threshold of 10 (IV = 244.467), the IV can be considered as a strong predictor (Antonakis et al. 2014). The calculation of an efficient model, which had no significant difference from the consistent model, demonstrated PBG's exogeneity (Hausman 1978, see Table 8.7).

Following Steenkamp and Baumgartner (1998), measurement invariance across nations was tested by considering differences in comparative fit indices (Chen 2007). First, significant factor loadings in each country ensured configural invariance in a freely estimated model. Second, a model with fixed factor loadings was applied to test metric invariance. Third, scalar invariance was considered through additionally fixing each item's intercepts. Metric and scalar invariances were confirmed as differences in comparative fit indices were within the respective thresholds (see Table 8.8).

We have further tested for multilevel measurement invariance following the procedure of Jak, Oort and Dolan (2013). Compared to traditional methods, this approach is suitable for a large number of groups (Byrne and Van de Vijver 2010). Multilevel measurement invariance treats group membership as random and tests for violations of measurement invariance across clusters ("cluster bias"). First,

Table 8.4 Correlations

	(1)		(2)		(3)		(4)		(5)		(6)		(7)		(8)		(9)		(10)		(11)		(12)	
PBG (1)	1																							
FV (2)	.505	***	1																					
PV (3)	.441	***	.900	***	1																			
RPI (4)	.372	***	.756	***	.828	***	1																	
Gender (5)	-.062	***	.018	**	.021	**	.019	**	1															
Age (6)	.122	***	-.020	**	-.075	***	-.091	***	.007	ns	1													
BF (7)	.413	***	.591	***	.643	***	.594	***	-.008	ns	-.085	***	1											
CPC (8)															1									
CD (9)															.073	***	1							
EMB (10)															-.243	***	-.741	***	1					
MA (11)															-.205	***	-.385	***	.479	***	1			
HIE (12)															-.102	***	-.621	***	.594	***	.739	***	1	

$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$; ns = not significant.

Note: BF = Brand Familiarity; CD = Country Development; CPC = Consumers per Cluster; EMB = Embeddedness; FV = Functional Value; HIE = Hierarchy; MA = Mastery; PBG = Perceived Brand Globalness; PV = Psychological Value; RPI = Repurchase Intention.

Source: Own Creation

Table 8.5 Multilevel Reliability and Validity

	Alpha		Composite Reliability		Maximal Reliability	
	α_W	α_B	ω_W	ω_B	H_W	H_B
PBG	.939	.993	.939	.995	.944	.999
FV	.932	.995	.931	.995	.934	.998
PV	.926	.994	.904	.996	.911	.996
RPI	.966	.999	.966	.999	.966	.999

Note: FV = Functional Value; PBG = Perceived Brand Globalness; PV = Psychological Value; RPI = Repurchase Intention.
α = Alpha ($\geq$.8); ω = Composite Reliability ($\geq$.8); H = Maximal Reliability ($\geq$.8); W = Within (Individual) Level; B = Between (Country) Level.
Source: Own Creation

Table 8.6 Comparison of Factor Scores

Validity Coefficients of	Regression Scores	Item Parceling
PBG	.947	.935
FV	.934	.712
PV	.944	.799

Note: FV = Functional Value; PBG = Perceived Brand Globalness; PV = Psychological Value.
Source: Own Creation

intra-class correlations, a null and an independent model were conducted to prove the necessity of multilevel analysis. Second, a measurement model was specified, and third, cluster bias was tested. We have used robust maximum likelihood estimation (asymptotically equivalent to the test statistic of Yuan and Bentler 2000). We have chosen RMSEA as an approximate fit index. Within ($RMSEA_W$) and between ($RMSEA_B$) RMSEA were assessed (Ryu and West 2009).

The intra-class correlations are .201 (RPI_1), .192 (RPI_2), and .193 (RPI_3). A null model without specifying variances and covariances at the between level is not suitable for the data ($\chi^2(32) = 9{,}821.344$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .118; $RMSEA_B = 3.141$). An independence model without covariances at the between level is neither appropriate for the data ($\chi^2(18) = 439.338$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .033; $RMSEA_B = .869$). Thus, there are significant between-level (co)variances and multilevel modeling is highly appropriate. A one-factor model fits the data ($\chi^2(71) = 2{,}235.966$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .037; $RMSEA_W = .037$).

Table 8.7 Comparison of Consistent and Proposed Model

			Random Intercept (Baseline) Model			
			Consistent Model		Proposed/Efficient Model	
			b	*p*	b	*p*
Direct Effects						
PBG	→ FV		.420	***	.430	***
PBG	→ PV		.330	***	.342	***
FV	→ RPI		.214	***	.217	***
PV	→ RPI		.584	***	.580	***
PBG	→ RPI		-.003	ns	-.001	ns
IV	→ PBG		.345	***	-	
Indirect Effects						
PBG	→ FV	→ RPI	.090	***	.095	***
PBG	→ PV	→ RPI	.193	***	.194	***
Total Effect						
PBG	→ RPI		.282	***	.289	***
Controls (Individual Level)						
GEN	→ RPI		.007	ns	.007	ns
Age	→ RPI		-.022	***	-.022	***
BF	→ RPI		.116	***	.114	***
Control (Country Level)						
CPC	→ RPI		.000	ns	.000	ns
AIC			302,075.365		189,735.056	
BIC (adjusted)			302,239.358		189,932.813	

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; ns = not significant.
Note: b = Unstandardized Coefficients; BF = Brand Familiarity; CPC = Consumers per Cluster; FV = Functional Value; GEN = Gender; IV = Instrumental Variable; PBG = Perceived Brand Globalness; PV = Psychological Value; RPI = Repurchase Intention.
Source: Own Creation

The cluster invariance model with equally constrained factor loadings and no residual variances at the between level is not appropriate for the data ($\chi^2(166) = 13{,}982.240$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .061). Modification indices indicate misfit due to RPI_3's zero residual variance. We can assure good model fit when freeing its residual variance ($\chi^2(165) = 7{,}354.922$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .044). Consequently, 1.97% of the total variance in RPI_3 can be traced back to cluster bias.

Table 8.8 Results of Measurement Invariance Test across 31 Countries

	CFI (ΔCFI)	TLI (ΔTLI)	RMSEA (ΔRMSEA)	SRMR (ΔSRMR)	χ^2/df (*p*-value)
Model 1:	.977	.971	.056	.031	7,131.211/2,201
Configural Invariance					(***)
Model 2:	.975	.971	.056	.047	8,026.783/2,501
Metric Invariance	(.002)	(.000)	(.000)	(.016)	(***)
Model 3:	.966	.963	.063	.051	10,705.077/2,801
Scalar Invariance	(-.009)	(-.008)	(.007)	(.004)	(***)

*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$; ns = not significant.
Note: Scaling Correction Factor Model 1: 1.2797, Model 2: 1.2428, and Model 3: 1.2158. χ^2 = Chi-Square; CFI = Comparative Fit Index; df = Degrees of Freedom; RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; SRMR = Standardized Root Mean Square Residual; TLI = Tucker-Lewis Index.
Source: Own Creation

All factor loadings can be considered equal across levels. Thus, cluster bias is not an issue in this study.

8.3 Method

To test the hypotheses, a multilevel mediation structural equation model (MSEM) with cross-level interactions was applied in Mplus 8.3. MSEM accounts for a nested data structure by simultaneously considering country- and individual-level variables and the interactions between them. It further detects variance between and within countries and specifies latent variables and moderators (Raudenbush and Bryk 2002, p. 159).

Stepwise random intercept and slope models were computed (Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, pp. 9–13), and AIC and BIC were calculated to assess model fit.[2] First, a baseline model including individual-level controls was calculated and supplemented by adding all further individual-level variables. The

[2] According to AIC and BIC, model fit increases compared to the baseline model when adding a moderator variable. In contrast, model fit is worse for the full model compared to the null and baseline random intercept model. This decrease in model fit is rooted in the penalty term included in the AIC and BIC equations to prevent overfitting when a high number of parameters are added to the model (e.g., Scott, Simonoff and Marx 2013, pp. 116–117).

independent variable and all moderators were grand mean centered (Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, pp. 61–63). The following equation describes this model:

$$RPI_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j}(PBG_{Ij}) + \beta_{2j}(FV_{ij}) + \beta_{3j}(PV_{ij}) + \beta_{ILC}(ILC_{ij}) + r_{iJ}, \tag{8.1}$$

with i denoting consumers in a country and j indicating countries. RPI_{ij} reflects consumer i's repurchase intention in country j. PBG_{ij} indicates consumer i's perception of the MNC's PBG in country j, and FV_{ij} (PV_{ij}) stands for the functional (psychological) value consumer i perceives that the MNC delivers in country j. ILC_{ij} includes individual-level control variables. β_{0j} denotes the first-level intercept, whereas β_{1j}, β_{2j} and β_{3j} indicate the independent and mediator variables' regression scores at the individual level. Intercept β_{0j} and slopes β_{1j}, β_{2j} or β_{3j} are allowed to vary across countries. r_{ij} is the first-level error term.

Then, a country-specific control (second baseline model) and moderators were accounted for separately to predict variation in the β coefficients:

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}\left(CLV_j\right) + \gamma_{02}\left(CLC_j\right) + u_{0j}, \tag{8.2}$$

$$\beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10} + \gamma_{11}\left(CLV_j\right) + u_{1j}, \tag{8.3}$$

$$\beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20} + u_{2j}, \tag{8.4}$$

$$\beta_{3j} = \gamma_{30} + u_{3j}, \tag{8.5}$$

where γ_{00} denotes the second-level intercept of repurchase intention. γ_{10}, γ_{20}, and γ_{30} represent the intercept of the second-level random slope of PBG, functional value, and psychological value, respectively. CLV_j represents the different country-level variables (i.e., the degree of country development, embeddedness, mastery, and hierarchy), and u_{qj} ($q = 0, 3$) are country-level residual variances. CLC_j stands for the country-level control variable number of consumers per cluster. For each moderator, a separate multilevel model was computed and used for hypothesis testing. The following equation comprises equations (8.1–8.5) and shows the moderated mediation including cross-level interactions:

$$RPI_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(CLV_j) + \gamma_{10}(PBG_{ij}) + \gamma_{11}(CLV_j)(PBG_{ij}) + \gamma_{20}(FV_{ij}) + \gamma_{30}(PV_{ij}) + \gamma_{ILC}(ILC_{ij}) + \gamma_{CLC}(CLC_j) + error. \tag{8.6}$$

In addition to cross-level interaction effects, conditional indirect effects were tested using the floodlight test (Hayes 2017, p. 254). This test shows the degrees of the moderator's measurement span at which the conditional indirect effect yields strengthened or weakened significant results. It has significantly more value than previous tests because it considers all moderator values instead of only specific ones (Spiller et al. 2013).

8.4 Results

Table 8.9 shows the results. Unstandardized coefficients and effect sizes are interpreted (Marsh et al. 2009; Raudenbush and Bryk 2002, p. 159). PBG has a positive significant indirect link to repurchase intention via functional and psychological value (b = .095, $p < .001$; b = .194, $p < .001$). The direct link is insignificant (b = -.001, $p > .05$). The indirect-only mediation supports *H1a-b*.

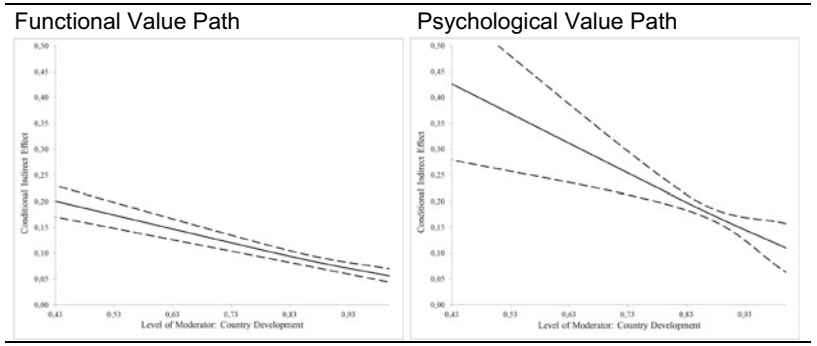
The degree of country development has a negative moderating effect on both value paths from PBG to repurchase intention ($b_{PBGxCD\text{-}FV} = -.940$, $p < .001$; $b_{PBGxCD\text{-}PV} = -.829$, $p < .01$). Figure 8.1 illustrates this significant diminishing effect. With an increasing degree of country development, the indirect paths from PBG to repurchase intention become linearly more negative. The results support *H2a-b*. Against expectations, the effect is equally strong on both value paths ($t = .541$, $p > .05$), thus rejecting *H2c*. Even if consumers in emerging countries repurchase global brands due to their aspirational benefits, satisfying their basic needs is still an equal issue for behavior (Randrianasolo 2017). This moderator explains 22.2% of the country-level variance in repurchase intention.

The degree of embeddedness positively moderates both paths from PBG to repurchase intention ($b_{PBGxEMB\text{-}FV} = .235$, $p < .001$; $b_{PBGxEMB\text{-}PV} = .222$, $p < .05$). The floodlight test supports these findings as the indirect paths from PBG to repurchase intention through functional and psychological values become stronger as the degree of embeddedness increases (see Figure 8.2). *H3a-b* is supported. The path through functional value only tends to be more strongly affected than the path through psychological value ($t = .202$, $p > .05$). *H3c* is rejected. Highly embedded societies seem to similarly weight the way PBG binds individuals and delivers quality benefits to the group (De Mooij 2015). The degree of embeddedness explains 33.3% of country-level variance.

Table 8.9 Results

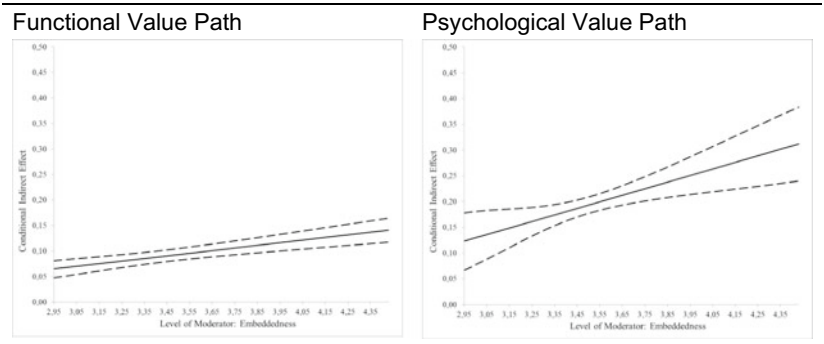
	Random Intercept Model			Random Intercept and Slope Model								
	Null Model	Baseline	Full Model	Baseline Model		CD		EMB		MA		HIE	
	b*p*	b*p*	b*p*	b*p*	*diff.*	b*p*	*diff.*	b*p*	*diff.*	b*p*	*diff.*	b*p*	*diff.*
Direct Effects													
PBG →FV			.430***	.430***		.432***		.432***		.429***		.429***	
			(.862)	(.862)		(.866)		(.866)		(.860)		(.860)	
PBG →PV			.342***	.342***		.343***		.343***		.342***		.342***	
			(.689)	(.689)		(.691)		(.691)		(.689)		(.689)	
FV →RPI			.218***	.217***		.215***		.219***		.217***		.217***	
			(.429)	(.427)		(.423)		(.431)		(.427)		(.427)	
PV →RPI			.579***	.580***		.580***		.580***		.579***		.579***	
			(1.13)	(1.14)		(1.14)		(1.14)		(1.13)		(1.13)	
PBG →RPI			-.001ns	-.001ns		-.001ns		-.003ns		-.001ns		-.001ns	
			(-.002)	(-.002)		(-.002)		(-.006)		(-.002)		(-.002)	
Indirect Effects													
PBG→FV→RPI			.096***	.095***		.094***		.095***		.095***		.095***	
			(.189)	(.187)	*t* = 8.96	(.186)		(.187)		(.187)		(.187)	
PBG→PV→RPI			.194***	.194***	*p* < .05	.198***		.198***		.194***		.194***	
			(.383)	(.383)		(.391)		(.391)		(.383)		(.383)	
Total effect													
PBG →RPI			.290***	.289***		.291***		.293***		.290***		.290***	
			(.572)	(.570)		(.574)		(.578)		(.572)		(.572)	
Moderating Effects													
CD →FV						-2.57 ***							
						(-.481)							
PBGxCD→FV						-.940 ***							
						(-.176)	*t* = .541						
CD →PV						-3.25 ***	*p* > .05						
						(-.612)							
PBGxCD→PV						-.829 **							
						(-.156)							
EMB →FV								.447**					
								(.271)					
PBGxEMB→FV								.235***					
								(.142)	*t* = .202				
EMB →PV								.557**	*p* > .05				
								(.339)					
PBGxEMB→PV								.222*					
								(.135)					
MA →FV										.493*			
										(.162)			
PBGxMA→FV										.289**			
										(.095)	*t* = 1.79		
MA →PV										.633*	*p* > .05		
										(.210)			
PBGxMA→PV										.254**			
										(.084)			
HIE →FV												.258**	
												(.246)	
PBGxHIE→FV												.126***	
												(.120)	*t* = 2.00
HIE →PV												.330**	*p* < .05
												(.316)	
PBGxHIE→PV												.094**	
												(.090)	
Controls													
GEN →RPI		.020ns	.007ns	.007ns		.007ns		.007ns		.007ns		.007ns	
Age →RPI		.001ns	-.022***	-.022***		-.021***		-.022***		-.021***		-.021***	
BF →RPI		.418***	.114***	.114***		.114***		.113***		.113***		.114***	
CPC →RPI				.000ns		.000ns		.000ns		.000ns		.000ns	
Residual Variance (Individual Level)	.868	.682	.364	.364		.364		.364		.364		.364	
Residual Variance (Country Level)	.244	.043	.010	.009		.007		.006		.008		.007	
Expl. Variance (Individual Level)		21.4%	46.6%	0.0%									
Expl. Variance (Country Level)				10.0%		22.2%		33.3%		11.1%		22.2%	
AIC	105,126.234	99,969.509	189,733.522	189,735.056		189,577.780		189,599.492		189,631.396		189,622.482	
BIC (adjusted)	105,198.584	100,056.329	189,926.455	189,932.813		189,814.123		189,826.189		189,867.740		189,858.825	

*p < .05; ** p < .01; ***p < .001; ns = not significant. Effect sizes are provided in brackets. *Note*: b = Unstandardized Coefficients; BF = Brand Familiarity; CD = Country Development; CPC = Consumers per Cluster; EMB = Embeddedness; FV = Functional Value; GEN = Gender; HIE = Hierarchy; MA = Mastery; PBG = Perceived Brand Globalness; PV = Psychological Value; RPI = Repurchase Intention.



Notes: Plots based on unstandardized coefficients. Continuous lines represent the indirect paths at several levels of moderator values. Dashed lines represent confidence bands. Indirect paths are significant as long as the dashed lines do not cross the x-axis.

Figure 8.1 Conditional Indirect Effect for the Degree of Country Development. (Source: Own Creation)

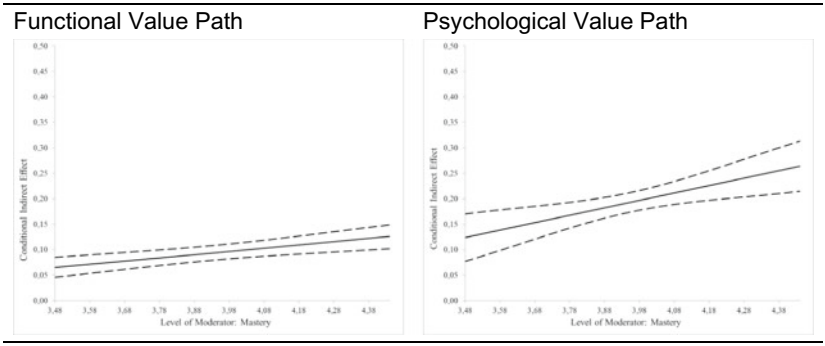


Notes: Plots based on unstandardized coefficients. Continuous lines represent the indirect paths at several levels of moderator values. Dashed lines represent confidence bands. Indirect paths are significant as long as the dashed lines do not cross the x-axis.

Figure 8.2 Conditional Indirect Effect for the Degree of Embeddedness. (Source: Own Creation)

Increasing mastery strengthens the indirect paths from PBG to repurchase intention through psychological value ($b_{PBGxMA\text{-}FV} = .289$, $p < .01$) and functional value ($b_{PBGxMA\text{-}PV} = .254$, $p < .01$). Figure 8.3 confirms that these links increase with higher levels of mastery, which supports *H4a-b*. The impact on the functional value path only tends to be stronger ($t = 1.796$, $p > .05$), thus rejecting *H4c*. For high-mastery societies, the competence of global MNCs is important to

inducing change, as is MNCs' symbolization. This moderator explains 11.1% of country-level variance.



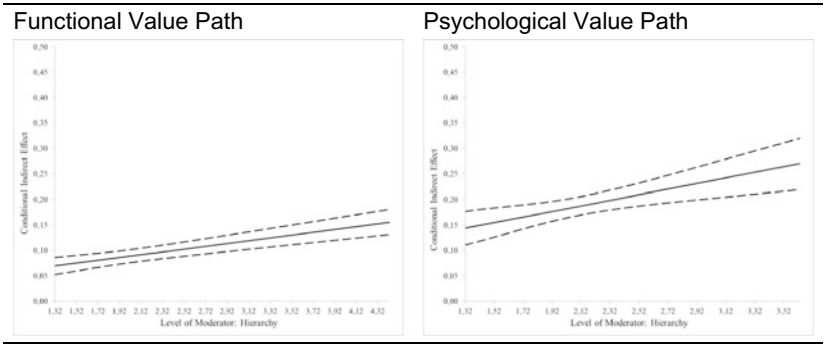
Notes: Plots based on unstandardized coefficients. Continuous lines represent the indirect paths at several levels of moderator values. Dashed lines represent confidence bands. Indirect paths are significant as long as the dashed lines do not cross the x-axis.

Figure 8.3 Conditional Indirect Effect for the Degree of Mastery. (Source: Own Creation)

The degree of hierarchy positively moderates the paths via functional and psychological value ($b_{PBGxHIE\text{-}FV} = .126$, $p < .001$ and $b_{PBGxHIE\text{-}PV} = .094$, $p < .01$). The floodlight test further reveals a positive and significant moderating effect of the degree of hierarchy. The positive indirect paths from PBG to repurchase intention through functional and psychological value increase with higher levels of hierarchy (see Figure 8.4). This supports *H5a-b*. The path through functional (vs. psychological) value is more strongly enhanced by an increasing degree of hierarchy ($t = 2.000$, $p < .05$), supporting *H5c*. The degree of hierarchy explains 22.2% of country-specific variance.

Among the covariates, only age and brand familiarity have significant and expected effects.

For stability reasons (see Web Appendix), a split-half test was used to randomly split the full sample (with satisfactory values for multilevel reliability for both groups, Geldhof, Preacher and Zyphur 2014; Warrens 2015). The PBG-repurchase intention links and the moderating effects of the degrees of country development, embeddedness, mastery, and hierarchy remained stable for both split samples. Three further models were calculated (see Web Appendix). First, strong indirect paths from PBG to repurchase intention through functional and psychological value were assured in all countries analyzed (e.g., Spain: $b_{PBG\text{-}FV\text{-}RPI} = .092$, $p < .001$, $b_{PBG\text{-}PV\text{-}RPI} = .198$, $p < .001$ or Costa Rica:



Notes: Plots based on unstandardized coefficients. Continuous lines represent the indirect paths at several levels of moderator values. Dashed lines represent confidence bands. Indirect paths are significant as long as the dashed lines do not cross the x-axis.

Figure 8.4 Conditional Indirect Effect for the Degree of Hierarchy. (Source: Own Creation)

$b_{PBG\text{-}FV\text{-}RPI} = .076$, $p < .01$, $b_{PBG\text{-}PV\text{-}RPI} = .182$, $p < .001$). Second, more economically oriented and less often used measures for country development were tested: gross domestic product per capita (GDP), gross national income per capita (GNI), the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI), and the GINI Index (e.g., Kumar and Pansari 2016; Sebri and Zaccour 2017). The results are in line with the findings for HDI (e.g., $b_{PBGxGDP\text{-}FV} = -.105$, $p < .001$, $b_{PBGxGDP\text{-}PV} = -.080$, $p < .01$), which are assumed to indicate result stability. Third, the moderating effects of the opposing dimensions of Schwartz's (1994) national cultural value model were tested, i.e., autonomy, harmony, and egalitarianism. Almost all dimensions significantly moderated the paths in the opposite direction (e.g., $b_{PBGxEGA\text{-}FV} = -.177$, $p < .05$, $b_{PBGxEGA\text{-}PV} = -.172$, $p < .01$). The results appear to be stable for national culture.

Discussion and Implications

9

9.1 Overview

This study contributes to the understanding of whether and how MNCs can benefit from PBG in terms of repurchase intention through functional and psychological value across nations and primarily adds to the literature by analyzing PBG paths considering the degree of country development and national culture. The generalizability of the PBG paths across nations (Halkias, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016) and the consideration of these two boundary conditions are of paramount importance (Gürhan-Canli, Sarial-Abi and Hayran 2018). Important theoretical and managerial implications are provided.

9.2 Theoretical Implications

Regarding the first research question, the results show that MNCs benefit from PBG in terms of improved repurchase intention because it reinforces the functional and psychological value they offer. These findings affirm the applicability of the theoretical reasoning of accessibility-diagnosticity theory in the context of global brands across nations (Feldman and Lynch 1988). Consumers judging an MNC as a global brand link this knowledge with its offered value to make PBG a diagnostic criterion for their repurchase intention (Lynch Jr 2006; not only purchase intentions as in extant research). While studies using accessibility-diagnosticity theory mostly compare forms of information differing in their accessibility, this study shows how one type of accessible information can vary in consumer behavior due to its diagnosticity (e.g., Saini and Lynch Jr 2016). Moreover, this study contributes to the contradictory research results regarding

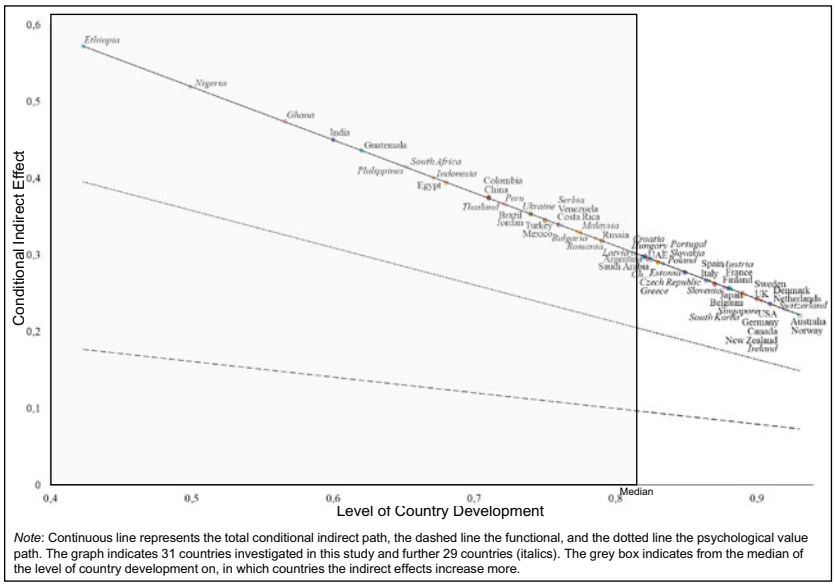
C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_9

the roles of functional and psychological value, i.e., stronger paths through functional value (e.g., Akram, Merunka and Akram 2011) and psychological value (e.g., Xie, Batra and Peng 2015) or equally strong paths (e.g., Swoboda and Hirschmann 2016). This research empirically shows that across nations, PBG is more diagnostic through the psychological value path. Consumers who embrace global consumer culture find meaning in their life by repurchasing global brands mostly because of the emotional and social benefits offered (Steenkamp and de Jong 2010).

Regarding the second research question, this study addresses calls for research (e.g., Gürhan-Canli, Sarial-Abi and Hayran 2018) and analyzes two national boundary conditions of PBG paths across nations. The results enhance current studies by accounting for PBG paths based on the degree of country development, which explains 22.2% of country-specific variance in repurchase intention. This finding is of paramount importance because globalization forces MNCs to succeed, particularly in emerging countries with strong economic growth prospects (He and Wang 2017; Özsomer 2012). It further underlines the theoretical rationale of this study that country-specific differences such as the degree of country development affect the underlying cognitive processes of accessibility-diagnosticity theory (e.g., Beckert 2010). Because of differing environmental settings in emerging vs. developed markets, consumers evaluate the relevance of the value offered through PBG differently. Countries with a decreasing degree of country development represent a setting allowing for a more favorable perception of global brands. Lower brand knowledge or usage determines cognitive information processing (Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2017) and evaluations of PBG's diagnosticity in a positive way. This context factor leads to the diminished diagnosticity of accessible PBG information across nations. Unfortunately, the theory is unable to explain the nonsignificant difference in the moderating effect of country development on the functional vs. psychological value path. Hence, future research may apply further theories (e.g., consumer culture theory, Steenkamp 2019a). This study methodologically contributes to research by providing cross-level interaction effects and presents a linear moderating effect for the first time in PBG research.

Figure 9.1 additionally visualizes these findings in terms of the measurement span of country development and shows much stronger indirect paths in countries with a lower degree of development. The findings are in line with and extend indications in comparison studies (e.g., focusing upon one emerging and one developed country, Sichtmann and Diamantopoulos 2013). Brands are often not well established in markets with a low degree of country development, which is

why accessible PBG information is becoming increasingly important (e.g., Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2017). Consumers in less developed countries become more familiar with global culture, and their desire to be part of the aspirational global consumer culture increases (Akram, Merunka and Akram 2011; Hussein and Hassan 2018). They further seek security, which global brands can provide (Randrianasolo 2017).



Note: Continuous line represents the total conditional indirect path, the dashed line the functional, and the dotted line the psychological value path. The graph indicates 31 countries investigated in this study and further 29 countries (italics). The grey box indicates from the median of the level of country development on, in which countries the indirect effects increase more.

Figure 9.1 Country Overview of Conditional Indirect Effects for Country Development. (Source: Own Creation)

It is highly important for MNCs to observe the role of national culture, as this study initially finds a significant influence of the strength of the value dimensions embeddedness, mastery, and hierarchy on the paths from PBG. In general, the findings confirm the rationale of accessibility-diagnosticity theory. Cultural values determine how information is perceived and the relevance attached to it, thereby influencing consumers' cognitive information processing (Aaker 2000; Schwartz 2014). In societies that score high on these cultural dimensions, repurchasing MNCs' brands allows for belief consistency (He and Wang 2017; Zhang and Khare 2009). Consumers perceive PBG as self-relevant, which is why PBG's

diagnosticity is higher in such societies. As correlations have indicated (mastery correlates with global mindset, De Mooij 2017), cultural values align with global elements in consumer culture (Steenkamp 2019a). Specifically, the theory fully explains the effects of the degree of hierarchy as the moderating effect significantly differs between the functional and psychological value paths. Regarding the degree of embeddedness and mastery, the theory explains the overall PBG path but not the assumed difference between functional and psychological value (H3c and H4c). In such countries, global brands deliver global cultural myths in a functional and psychological way (e.g., Özsomer 2012). National cultural surroundings may provide a fine-grained theoretical explanation in future research.

This study sheds light on previous ambiguous results. It confirms the expected PBG paths due to differing cultural contexts (Akaka and Alden 2010), contributes to global brand research across nations and goes beyond studies considering country comparisons or correlations. It provides cross-level interactions of national cultural value dimensions and therefore contradicts studies questioning the importance of national culture for global brand attitudes (e.g., Steenkamp 2019a). Rather, the study underlines the need to analyze national cultural differences. Although the degree of embeddedness, mastery, and hierarchy are significant moderators, important theoretical implications are provided regarding the dimensions deserving focus (e.g., embeddedness due to high explanatory power or hierarchy due to an option to separately manage functional and psychological value).

- The degree of embeddedness acts as a diagnosticity multiplier on the PBG-repurchase intention links through offered value and is the strongest lever among the national cultural dimensions (explaining 33.3% of country variance in repurchase intention). For consumers from societies with increased levels of embeddedness, repurchasing global brands is beneficial (He and Wang 2017). They follow their community's favorable perceptions of foreign global brands because such behavior is consistent with their striving for conformity with group norms (Dalmoro et al. 2015). This study confirms the way qualitative as well as emotional aspects of global MNCs lead to enhanced behavioral intentions in such societies (Ozdemir and Hewett 2010). MNCs can further promote their global network to emphasize the possibility of building global relationships by repurchasing global brands (De Mooij 2015).
- The degree of mastery is also a diagnosticity multiplier. For consumers in societies with higher levels of mastery, global brands represent an opportunity

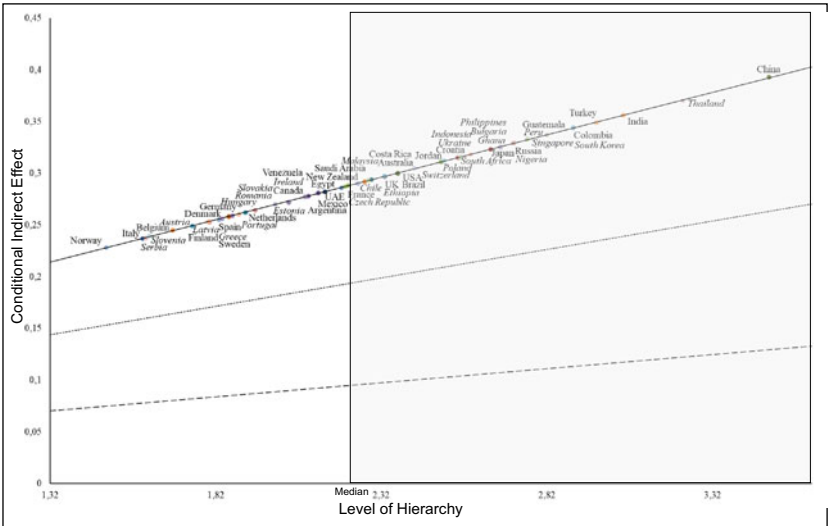
to change the environment (Holt, Quelch and Taylor 2004). Their global mindset further enhances the way MNCs can profit from PBG (De Mooij 2017). Although mastery highly correlates with hierarchy, their explanatory power differs (mastery only explains 11.1% of variance).

- An increasing degree of hierarchy leads to strengthened indirect paths from PBG to repurchase intention through functional and psychological value. Hierarchy has the second highest explanatory power (explaining 22.2% of country-specific variance). It provides several ways that PBG affects management (focusing on either functional or psychological value), indicating its strong contribution to theory. Accessibility-diagnosticity theory explains how the degree of hierarchy affects consumers' underlying cognitive processes, varying the strength of PBG's diagnostic paths (Aaker 2000). In particular, MNCs' offered functional value is consistent with high-hierarchy societies' values (Zhang and Khare 2009); thus, diagnosticity increases.

Figure 9.2 shows the linear moderating cross-level interaction effect of the degree of hierarchy. The higher the degree of hierarchy is, the more MNCs can benefit from their PBG in terms of repurchase intention. Consumers in societies with high levels of hierarchy appreciate the power MNCs possess due to their global presence (De Mooij 2015). Such societies are more sensitive to information from authorities and do not question the qualitative and emotional benefits that MNCs deliver. Consequently, functional value delivered through PBG is dominant in such societies (e.g., due to higher expectations of authorities, Gupta, Pansari and Kumar 2018).

9.3 Managerial Implications

Managers should be aware of the role that MNCs' PBG plays in foreign countries and use PBG as a source of competitive advantage for international expansion. H.J. Heinz Company considers this strength when deciding whether to rely on its brand or make acquisitions in new countries (Johnson 2011). However, the managers at Heinz need to consider that PBG only pays off indirectly when attracting consumers through functional and psychological value; globalness perceptions alone do not generate consumer behavior (Swoboda and Hirschmann 2016). Moreover, across nations, PBG more strongly affects repurchases through psychological (vs. functional) value. Managers need to promote global corporate brand exposure, as Philips does (Philips 2019; De Meulenaer, Dens and De



Note: Continuous line represents the total conditional indirect path, the dashed line the functional, and the dotted line the psychological value path. The graph indicates 31 countries investigated in this study and further 29 countries (italics). The grey box indicates from the median of the level of hierarchy on, in which countries the indirect effects increase more.

Figure 9.2 Country Overview of Conditional Indirect Effects for Hierarchy. (Source: Own Creation)

Pelsmacker 2015), and make it emotionally visible by, for example, highlighting brand consumption worldwide (as Nike does in social networks, Business Today 2014; Vuong and Giao 2020). MNCs may further link their brand to the global consumer culture, e.g., by adding global elements to their slogan such as Panasonic in "A Better Life, A Better World" (e.g., Mandler 2019). Focusing on the product brand would provide a more detailed picture for decisions regarding direct competition but is likely to be influenced by a strategically important corporate brand.

Observing the country context yields further implications. The degree of country development and all national cultural dimensions are significant positive or negative levers in almost all PBG paths (Gupta, Pansari and Kumar 2018; following assumptions and calls, Gürhan-Canli, Sarial-Abi and Hayran 2018). This study offers concrete choices for managers:

- Managers can focus on the degree of country development and embeddedness as the strongest levers (explaining 22.2% and 33.3% of the country-specific variance in repurchase intention).
- Managers can alternatively focus on the degree of country development and hierarchy (country-specific variance of 22% each) as hierarchy is the only cultural dimension through which MNCs can make a different impact on repurchase intention via the functional and psychological value paths.

The second choice is recommended because of the mentioned scope for MNCs. Figures 9.1 and 9.2 show the countries in which MNCs can profit most from their PBG when considering the degree of country development and hierarchy. In India, which has the lowest degree of country development in the sample, MNCs profit most from PBG. To realize this potential and to gain market share through repurchases in such growing economies (He and Wang 2017), managers should communicate their PBG's emotional and social benefits (Randrianasolo 2017). In China, the country with the strongest hierarchy, MNCs profit most from PBG. Here, managers can communicate quality, market power or listing in rankings, like Philips in the "Best Global Brands" (Philips 2019).

More importantly, the results constitute a starting point for internationalization processes when entering new countries and determining how to use PBG in competition in countries not regularly surveyed, as both figures indicate PBG paths in such countries. When PBG is beneficial, managers should rely on a global brand positioning (Abdellah-Kilani and Zorai 2019). Centralizing and standardizing the brand while adjusting communication to increase PBG paths are planning options in countries not surveyed (Vuong and Giao 2020). MNCs profit from PBG in countries such as Ethiopia, Nigeria, India, Thailand, China, or Turkey, which all have considerable GDP growth potential.

Limitations and Further Research

10

This study has certain limitations that suggest future research directions. Although the specific data for this study were carefully collected, expanding the database will allow for further conclusions. This study considered only one MNC, but previous studies using data from various MNCs in the industry support the results of this study (Swoboda and Hirschmann 2016). This study includes more developed than emerging countries. Future research could place more emphasis on the uneasy balance between the least developed, emerging, and developed countries within the dataset. In this case, even stronger indirect paths from PBG to consumer behavior can be expected. Studies could account for different industries and global product brands.

The measurement in this study used a cross-sectional design. However, PBG may vary over time as perceived global brands might not persist (Akaka and Alden 2010). Moreover, PBG is considered separately from PBL (low correlation, e.g., -.149, Halkias, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016; -.190, Swoboda, Pennemann and Taube 2012). This study focuses on MNCs as global brands due to their benefits in terms of behavioral effects, cost economics, and time-to-market and the complexity of the present model. Future research could also differentiate functional value (e.g., quality and price; Gonçalves, Lourenço and Silva 2016; Vuong and Giao 2020) and psychological value (e.g., status, esteem, and prestige; Hussein and Hassan 2018; Khan and Mohsin 2017), which was integrated due to the model's complexity, and further investigate value conceptualizations linked to PBG (e.g., Halkias, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016; Leroi-Werelds 2019; Xie, Batra and Peng 2015, for emotional and social benefits). Properly assessing construct equivalence across nations requires exploratory, qualitative research (e.g., in-depth interviews, Hult et al. 2008). Performing qualitative research in each country could enable the development of emic, country-specific measures to identify subtle cultural differences in item meanings (Ford et al. 2018). Due to

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_10

the high number of countries surveyed, it is necessary to rely on the more general assessment of construct equivalence during the translation-back-translation process (e.g., Yang, Floyd and Tanner Jr 2019). Thus, this study adopts locally modified imposed etic and previously used scales (Douglas and Craig 2006) for which satisfactory reliability and validity can be demonstrated separately in each country within the data (Hair et al. 2018, p. 93). Methodologically, this study accounts for the nested data structure with MSEM with cross-level interactions. Nevertheless, due to convergence problems (Kline 2015, p. 81), the results of all moderators cannot be provided simultaneously. Such results could help to reveal the most important lever as an important contribution to research. However, hierarchy and mastery are highly correlated. Their combination is not recommended as their effects may cancel each other out.

Regarding the conceptual framework of this study, scholars might study the role of the degree of country development and national culture for PBL and domestic brands. Further contextual factors—on a country and individual level—could be studied (e.g., global connectedness due to the increasing role of the internet, Gürhan-Canli, Sarial-Abi and Hayran 2018). The rationale of this study treats global corporate and product brands similarly (due to scant research on corporate brands, Alden et al. 2013). However, based on the present results, studies can account for this issue. Finally, accessibility-diagnosticity theory explains most relationships studied, but seldom the differing moderations of the functional and psychological value paths. Measuring accessibility and diagnosticity directly (e.g., Van Herpen and Pieters 2007) could provide further information regarding the mechanism responsible for the specific value paths. Additional theories, such as consumer culture theory, could be applied (e.g., Steenkamp 2019a).

Part III

Study 2: Endorsement of Global Product Brands by Global Corporate Brands – A Consumer Perspective across Nations

This study was published as: Swoboda, B., & Sinning, C. (2021). Endorsement of Global Product Brands by Global Corporate Brands – A Consumer Perspective across Nations. *Management International Review*, 61(4), 563–598 (see also Web Appendix)

Introduction

11

MNCs applying an endorsed branding strategy, i.e., the use of a distinct global corporate brand as a visual endorsement of global product brands, can experience demand benefits (Hsu, Fournier and Srinivasan 2016). Therefore, MNCs place their corporate brand name/logo on products with the product brand still more prominently positioned (Keller 2012, p. 302). Based on the endorser, consumers can identify a product with an MNC, which attracts them in making product purchase decisions (Khojastehpour and Johns 2015). Although many MNCs, such as Danone, L'Oréal, Tyson, or Nestlé, change product or corporate dominant strategies, i.e., branded house or house of brands, towards an endorsed branding (Brexendorf and Keller 2017, versus sub-branding), their strategies' effects are not equal across nations. For example, Kellogg's has long used its global corporate brand to support its global product brands (e.g., Smacks, Frosties) to profit from positive image transfers in terms of consumer behavior. However, since 2019, Kellogg's has adjusted its strategy for Europe by accounting for cultural differences (Kellogg's 2019). Additionally, other MNCs, such as Unilever, have had to adjust their branding strategy, for example, in emerging countries (after losing market share in China, Indonesia, and India, Gupta and Wright 2019). Hence, these MNCs need to consider endorsed branding across nations. Therefore, this study examines the direct effect of global corporate brand image, i.e., the endorser itself, and the indirect effect through global product brand image, i.e., the endorsed product brand, on product purchase intention across nations. This initial analysis provides new insights across nations and may validate the only nationally known effects (e.g., Samiee 2019). We study the degree of country development and national culture as important national context factors.

Scholars recognize the importance of image transfers (see Figure 11.1). Studies on horizontal image transfers analyze the links between product evaluations (e.g., in developed or emerging countries, Bian and Moutinho 2011 or Essoussi

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_11

and Merunka 2007, or comparing countries, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2018) or horizontal brand extensions (new products under a brand, e.g., Ahn, Park and Hyun 2018; Chang, Lin and Chang 2011; Boisvert and Ashill 2018). Studies on vertical image transfers often consider celebrity endorsement or vertical brand extensions (e.g., Allman et al. 2016; 2019; Chen and Wyer Jr 2020; Derdenger 2018) but seldom corporate and product brands. When the latter are included, the focus is only on corporate-product evaluation-links but not effects (e.g., Biehal and Sheinin 2007; Abosag and Farah 2014; in two countries, Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018; Souiden, Kassim and Hong 2006). Few scholars study the effects of corporate and product brands on purchase intentions or intentional loyalty (with differences in emerging versus developed countries, Fatma, Khan and Rahman 2016; Wang, Wei and Yu 2008, versus Cretu and Brodie 2007; Suh and Youjae 2006). Jakubanecs and Supphellen (2012) is the only study analyzing corporate-product brand-links in more countries (six); however, it does not consider their effects. Consequently, studies on the effects of important global endorsed branding on consumer behavior across nations are missing, and studies have not sufficiently considered contradictory effects in emerging versus developed countries (e.g., for horizontal image transfers, Özsomer 2012; Strizhakova and Coulter 2015). Moreover, vertical image transfers seem to vary due to national culture (especially for collectivism, Jakubanecs and Supphellen 2012). However, the general brand research provides contradictory assumptions on culture: Van der Lans, van Everdingen and Melnyk (2016) show a moderation of culture for the effects of brands on purchase intention; Steenkamp (2019a) questions the link between culture and brand attitude. Thus, important national contextual factors must be studied for global corporations' endorsement of global product brands (consumer factors such as ethnocentrism dominate, Roy et al. 2019).

In summary, scholars have not considered the role of global corporate brands in supporting global product brands and their effects on purchase intentions across nations. There have been calls for such studies to generalize and validate nationally known effects globally (Brexendorf and Keller 2017; Samiee 2019). More importantly, insights on important boundary conditions, i.e., degree of country development and national culture, for global endorsed branding are missing (Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018). Respective knowledge is important for those managers responsible for endorsed branding at headquarters as they learn whether this strategy is beneficial across nations from the target group perspective. Predominant boundary conditions in branding research allow country-specific portfolios to be generated as a basis for decisions on where to rely on or strengthen endorser strategy effects and where not.

		Vertical Image Transfer		Horizontal Image Transfer	
		CB→PB	**Others**	**PB→PB**	**Others**
National	Developed Countries	Biehal and Sheinin 2007; Cretu and Brodie 2007; Hsu, Fournier and Srinivasan 2016; Voss and Mohan 2016.	Celebrity Endorsement: Derdenger 2018; Erfgen, Zenker and Sattler 2015; Ferguson and Mohan 2020; Ilicic, Baxter and Kulczynski 2016; Nicolau and Santa-María 2013; Vaid and Ahearne 2018; etc. Brand Extension: Allman et al. 2016; Caldieraro, Kao and Cunha Jr 2015; Chun et al. 2015; Goetz, Fassnacht and Rumpf 2014; He et al. 2016; etc.	Bian and Moutinho 2011; *Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2018*; Delassus and Descotes 2012; Diamantopoulos, Schlegelmilch and Palihawadana 2011; *Dimofte, Johansson and Bagozzi 2010*; *Dimofte, Johansson and Ronkainen 2008*; Eggers et al. 2013; *Frank and Watchravesringkan 2016*; *Halkias et al. 2017*; Pedeliento et al. 2016; *Riefler 2012*; Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar and Sen 2012; Visentin, Pizzi and Pichierri 2019.	Outcomes: Ahn, Park and Hyun 2018; Estes et al. 2012; Johnson et al. 2019; Liu et al. 2018; Monga and Gürhan-Canli 2012; Spiggle, Nguyen and Caravella 2012; Wilkie, Johnson and White 2015; etc. Attitudes: Cutright, Bettman and Fitzsimons 2013; *Iversen and Hem 2011*; *Lane and Fastoso 2016*; Parker et al. 2018; Puligadda, Cronley and Kardes (2013); Puligadda, Ross Jr and Grewal 2012; etc.
	Emerging Countries	Abosag and Farah 2014; Fatma, Khan and Rahman 2016; Suh and Youjae 2006; *Wang, Wei and Yu 2008*.	Chen and Wyer Jr 2020; Dwivedi, McDonald and Johnson 2014; Felix and Borges 2014; Kwon, Saluja and Adaval 2015; Muroyiwa, Abratt and Mingione 2017; Roy, Guha and Biswas 2015.	Essoussi and Merunka 2007; Hu et al. 2012; Rodrigo, Khan and Ekinci 2019; Wang et al. 2012; Wang and Yang 2008.	Chang, Lin and Chang 2011; Dwivedi, Merrilees and Sweeney 2010; Huber et al. 2013; Milberg, Sinn and Goodstein 2010; Ramanathan and Velayudhan 2015.
International	Country comparison	Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018; Jakubanecs and Supphellen 2012; Souiden, Kassim and Hong 2006.	Allman, Hewett and Kaur 2019; Boisvert and Ashill 2018; Knoll and Matthes 2017; Roy et al. 2019.	*Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016*; Laforet and Chen 2012; *Özsomer 2012*; *Strizhakova and Coulter 2015*; *Strizhakova, Coulter and Price 2011*; *Zabkar et al. 2017*.	Boisvert and Ashill 2018; Henseler et al. 2010; Kim and Park 2019; Miniard et al. 2018; *Sichtmann and Diamantopoulos 2013*.
	Across Nations	***This study.***	--	Van der Lans, van Everdingen and Melnyk 2016.	--

Note: Studies analyzing global brands are in italics. CB=Corporate Brand; PB=Product Brand.

Figure 11.1 Literature Review. (Source: Own Creation)

We aim to address these research gaps by analyzing the following research questions. First, how can MNCs benefit from an image transfer of global corporate to product brands in terms of product purchase intention across nations? Second, do the degrees of country development and national culture moderate the indirect and direct effects of global corporate brand image, and if so, how strong? We thereby offer two important contributions to theory and practice.

First, analyzing the relationship between corporate and product brands across nations provides novel insights into the global application of the endorsed branding strategy. Studies on vertical image transfers investigate endorsed branding holistically (comparing branding strategies, e.g., Hsu, Fournier and Srinivasan 2016, or corporate-product-links only, e.g., Jakubanecs and Supphellen 2012). Our focus on global brand effects across nations extends the very few international studies. We clarify how global endorsers and endorsed brands contribute to consumers' product brand purchase intentions. Moreover, whereas studies on image transfers refer to categorization, associative network or signaling theory, we aim to contribute to the application of schema theory as a promising new rationale for endorsed branding and moderation effects across nations. Corporate and product brand images represent consumers' brand knowledge stored in respective

brand schemata (Halkias 2015). In product purchase situations, consumers activate dominant product brand schemata and can also activate the corporate brand schema (transmitting it to product brands, Meyers-Levy and Tybout 1989).

Second, we contribute to the research by examining the degree of country development and national culture as moderators (following calls, Wang, He and Barnes 2017). Schema theory suggests that such environmental and cultural differences shape consumers' brand schema structure and activation in memory by determining their brand schematicity (e.g., Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016; Halkias 2015; Puligadda, Ross Jr and Grewal 2012). By referring to this theory, we add to studies analyzing vertical image transfers in emerging or developed countries (e.g., Abosag and Farah 2014; Biehal and Sheinin 2007). Certain emerging markets become important for MNCs as they report strong economic growth (Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2017). Revealing differences in emerging versus developed markets also enables MNCs to exploit the growth potential of an endorser strategy (He and Wang 2017). Analyzing national culture contributes to understanding inconsistent results and accounts for how culture affects endorsed branding. Corresponding to the most often viewed Hofstede's cultural dimension, collectivism, in the brand research (e.g., Gupta, Pansari and Kumar 2018; Jakubanecs and Supphellen 2012), the embeddedness dimension of Schwartz (1994) is referenced here. Compared to Hofstede, Schwartz's model is more theoretically profound, considers guidance of behavior, and reports high empirically explained variances (e.g., De Mooij 2017; Swoboda and Batton 2019). Moreover, embeddedness is theoretically and empirically the most important cultural dimension in global brand perceptions (e.g., Swoboda and Sinning 2020a). Finally, we use multilevel mediation structural equation modeling (MSEM) with cross-level interactions and conditional effects (Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, pp. 4–5; Spiller et al. 2013) to study the leverage effects of the moderators in a country portfolio (including conclusions beyond the countries analyzed).

The remainder of this study proceeds as follows. Drawing from theory, we derive and test hypotheses based on 7,660 consumer evaluations of global brands across 35 nations. After presenting the results, we provide implications and directions for further research.

Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis 12

12.1 Definitions

To address our research aims, we build on schema theory and empirical studies.

Scholars differentiate four branding strategies: house of brands reflects a purely product strategy, and branded house reflects a purely corporate strategy (e.g., Gillette of P&G and Nike); sub-branding and endorsed branding are categorized within those extremes. Sub-branding applies equally to corporate and product brands, e.g., Sony PlayStation, VW Golf (as in national studies, e.g., He et al. 2016; Hsu, Fournier and Srinivasan 2016). In contrast, endorsed branding links corporate and product brands to a lesser extent, e.g., the corporate brand name appears on the product package, not as part of the product brand name (Brexendorf and Keller 2017).[1] As mentioned, it is particularly interesting globally, as leading MNCs use global corporate and global product brands to attract consumers (Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016; Swoboda and Sinning 2020a). However, for endorsed branding, the indirect and direct effects of MNCs' global corporate brand image via global product brand image on consumers' product brand purchase intention must be studied initially (i.e., the likelihood that consumers will buy a product brand, Van der Lans, van Everdingen and Melnyk 2016; see Figure 12.1). Generally, brand image is defined as the brand perceptions reflected by the brand associations in consumers' minds (Keller 1993). Specifically, corporate brand image represents consumers' mental picture of an MNC (Gray and Balmer 1998; Souiden, Amara and Chaouali 2020), and product brand image represents consumers' mental picture of a global product brand (Park, Jaworski and MacInnis 1986; Plumeyer et al. 2019).

[1] We do not consider the subtypes of branding strategies such as brand alliances or co-branding (Åsberg and Uggla 2019).

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_12

We study the roles of continuous national moderators: degree of country development (i.e., countries' economic growth, social, and human conditions, Çilingirtürk and Koçak 2018), and embeddedness (i.e., social structures between groups and individuals within a society characterizing individuals for whom conformance with group norms or belonging to the community are important, Schwartz 1994).

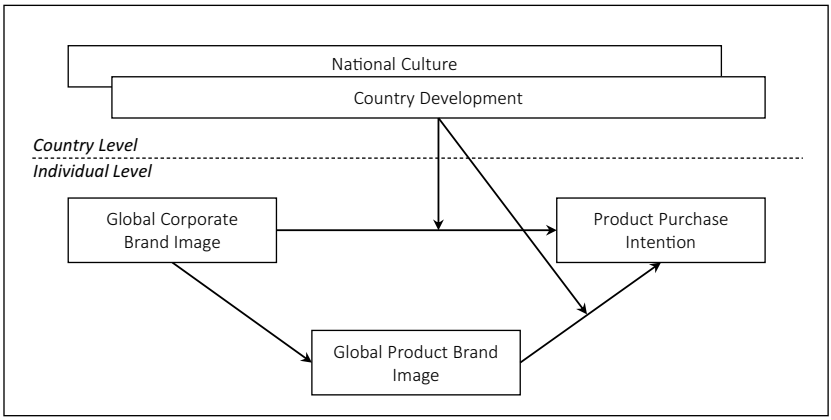


Figure 12.1 Conceptual Framework. (Source: Own Creation)

12.2 Theory

Schema theory addresses memory-stored cognitive structures that organize consumers' prior knowledge about objects (Fiske and Taylor 1991, p. 98). Those schemata are structured hierarchically such that superordinated schemata subsume various subschemata. Superordinated schemata are characterized by more generic associations and interact with subordinated schemata incorporating more specific attributes (Crocker 1984). Additions to information incorporated into a subschema lead to changes in the attributes associated with the respective subschema and the corresponding superordinated schema. Thus, super- and subordinated schemata guide the reception and retrieval of information and are used for decision-making (Sujan and Bettman 1989). Consumers' environmental and cultural socialization determines their schema structure and schematicity (e.g.,

Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016; Shaw 1990). For example, brand-schematic (vs. aschematic) consumers develop and activate super- and subschemata more easily (Puligadda, Ross Jr and Grewal 2012).

In our context, global corporate and product brand schemata organize prior brand knowledge in consumers' minds. Brand image is a common construct for illustrating consumers' brand knowledge (Halkias 2015). Hence, global corporate brand image reflects consumers' corporate brand associations stored in the global corporate brand schema, while global product brand image reflects their product brand associations in the product brand schema (Hoyer, MacInnis and Pieters 2012, p. 108). The product brand represents a subschema of the superordinated corporate brand schema. For example, new product brand information received in a product purchase situation is primarily incorporated into the respective product brand subschema but also into the corporate brand schema (Meyers-Levy and Tybout 1989). In such situations, consumers activate the respective product brand subschema and transfer the superordinated, more generic, corporate brand image to the more specific product brand image. This procedure affects product purchase intention. Moreover, the retrieved global corporate brand schema may affect global product purchase behavior (Biehal and Sheinin 2007).

As indicated, the cognitive processes of consumers' brand schema development and activation differ in country-specific contexts (e.g., Crocker 1984; Halkias 2015). Generally, the degree of country development determines consumers' brand schematicity such that consumers in less developed countries tend to be more brand-aschematic due to weaker corporate and product brand knowledge (Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2017; Sheth 2011). For brand-aschematic consumers, the image transfer from the corporate to the product brand is known to be weaker when determining their product purchase intention (Puligadda, Ross Jr and Grewal 2012). Schemata also depend on one's national cultural socialization (e.g., Crocker 1984). The cultural dimension of valuing the group is said to particularly affect consumers' schema activation and structure (versus other cultural dimensions that more determine activation, Shaw 1990). As super- and subordinated schema structures are analyzed, we focus on embeddedness, which induces schema structures to be more homogeneous (Schwartz 1994). A homogeneous schema structure encourages consumers' brand schematicity and enables consumers to more easily activate and link the global corporate brand to the global product brand in product purchase situations.

Next, the study's hypotheses are derived referring to theoretical as well as empirical insights. First, arguments for the hypotheses on the indirect and direct effects of global corporate brand image as well as their relative strengths are

provided. Second, for each moderator, the rationales of their roles in the indirect and direct effects are developed.

12.3 Hypothesis Development

Theoretically, superordinated global corporate brand schemata indirectly and directly affect product purchase intention. In product purchase situations, the activation of global product brand schemata is highly relevant (Biehal and Sheinin 2007; Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016). Thus, consumers activate product-related schemata for decision-making purposes (Halkias 2015). When an MNC applies endorsed branding, indicated by the indirect effect, consumers can identify the product with the MNCs' global corporate brand (Brexendorf and Keller 2017). Hence, the use of endorsed branding enables consumers to link superordinated corporate brand schemata to subordinated product brand schemata. Through this link, the overall corporate brand image is transferred and adds value to product brands (Souiden, Kassim and Hong 2006). This image transfer is especially strong for global brands due to their high recall and availability (Xie, Batra and Peng 2015). Consumers use global corporate brand information to supplement global product brand images (Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018) and, consequently, determine consumers' product purchase intention. We argue that this mechanism holds across nations, even if the literature has indicated country differences. Empirically, national studies underscore a transmission from corporate brand associations to product brand attitudes to evaluate product brands (e.g., in loyalty and repurchase intention models, Fatma, Khan and Rahman 2016; Wang, Wei and Yu 2008). Internationally, only Jakubanecs and Supphellen (2012) suggest that corporate endorsement positively affects product brand attitudes when comparing country groups.

Moreover, regarding the direct effect, we assume that global corporate brand schemata are activated directly to determine consumers' behavior towards MNCs' global product brands. Corporate image is important information consumers use to evaluate product brands (Souiden, Kassim and Hong 2006). Furthermore, global corporate brands are known to deliver functional and psychological benefits, which are translated into beneficial consumer behavior across nations (Swoboda and Sinning 2020a). Some authors in our literature review indicated a positive direct effect of corporate image on product brand equity (e.g., in two countries, Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018).

Finally, because of the predominant relevance of global product brand image in product purchase situations (Biehal and Sheinin 2007), the indirect (versus direct) effect of corporate brand image on product purchase intention is assumed to be stronger. Global corporate brand schemata also affect global product brand schemata through consumers' retrieval of global product and corporate images. Hence, the endorsed branding strategy is assumed to more strongly affect consumers' product purchase intention than the endorser itself. In summary, endorsement offers distinct value to the product brand and consumers' decision-making within product purchase situations. We propose the following:

H1. Across nations, global corporate brand image has (a) a positive indirect effect on consumers' product purchase intention via global product brand image and (b) a positive direct effect on consumers' product purchase intention wherein (c) the indirect effect is stronger than the direct effect.

The effects of the endorsed branding, i.e., the indirect effect, and the endorser, i.e., the direct effect, differ depending on the degree of country development, which determines consumers' brand knowledge and brand schematicity (Puligadda, Ross Jr and Grewal 2012; Sheth 2011). Consumers in developed countries are highly familiar with global brands, have well-structured brand schemata and are known to be more brand-schematic (Bahadir, Bharadwaj and Srivastava 2015; Puligadda, Ross Jr and Grewal 2012). In contrast, consumers in less developed countries tend to have lower brand knowledge due to their relatively short brand history, unbranded product variety or heterogeneous demand (e.g., Sheth 2011; Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2017). The reduced brand experience makes them more brand-aschematic (Puligadda, Ross Jr and Grewal 2012).

Developed countries are homes of strong brands where specific product (versus corporate) brand attributes are particularly more important in product purchase situations than they are in emerging countries (e.g., Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016; Hsieh, Pan and Setiono 2004). Thus, in product purchase situations, consumers in developed countries rely on global product brand schemata to determine their product purchase intention. Additionally, for such brand-schematic consumers, it is easier to activate and link global corporate and product brand schemata (Halkias 2015). The endorsed branding strategy makes it easier for consumers to transfer the superordinated corporate brand image to the subordinated product brand image for purchase decisions about global product brands. In contrast, more brand-aschematic consumers have a weaker transfer of the corporate brand image to the product brand image, more strongly relying on the superordinated global corporate brand image in product purchase situations. Thus,

we assume an increasing degree of country development to enhance indirect, endorsed branding, effects.

However, in emerging countries, where unbranded competition is high, branded products may become less attractive as the importance of global corporate brands increases (e.g., Bahadir, Bharadwaj and Srivastava 2015). Moreover, even when consumers are more brand-aschematic, they may still activate superordinated global corporate brand schemata directly when not being questioned in common situations to link them to respective subordinated product brand schemata (Puligadda, Ross Jr and Grewal 2012). They may not be brand experts but recognize global corporate brands due to their high standardization and availability (Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2017; Xie, Batra and Peng 2015). Generally, global (versus local) brands are preferred as they deliver benefits such as security and entrance to global citizenship in less stable political and economic environments (Özsomer 2012; Strizhakova, Coulter and Price 2011). Empirical studies confirm that corporate brand image is particularly valued for guidance in decision-making in emerging countries (e.g., India or China, Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018). We carefully assume that consumers in emerging (versus developed) countries more strongly retrieve the global corporate brand schema, the endorser itself, directly to determine their product purchase intention.

In summary, consumers in more developed countries rely more strongly on product-related brand information and can easily transfer the global corporate brand image to the global product brand image, whereas consumers in emerging countries place more emphasis on global corporate brands. Hence, an increasing degree of country development enhances the indirect but may diminish the direct effect on product purchase intention. We hypothesize as follows:

H2. Across nations, the degree of country development positively moderates (a) the indirect effect of global corporate brand image on consumers' product purchase intention via global product brand image, whereas it negatively moderates (b) the direct effect of global corporate brand image on consumers' product purchase intention.

National cultural value dimension embeddedness is assumed to affect the indirect and direct effects of global corporate brand image on product purchase intention. Embeddedness determines consumers' brand schematicity and their schema structure (Shaw 1990). Individuals in highly embedded societies value tradition, group norms, and conformance with the group (Camacho, De Jong and Stremersch 2014; Schwartz 1994). As schemata are tied to values and the ideology of the

culture and are usually shared within a given population, this behavior and thinking based on preferences of the group make respective cognitive schemata more homogeneous (e.g., Crocker 1984; Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016; Shaw 1990). Individuals with such homogeneous schema structures can be characterized as more brand-schematic and more sensitive to global corporate and product brand information (e.g., Halkias 2015; Puligadda, Ross Jr and Grewal 2012).

We assume a strengthened indirect effect of global corporate brand image on product purchase intention with an increase in embeddedness. Theoretically, based on the high brand-schematicity in societies, an activation and link of superordinated corporate and subordinated product brand schemata due to the endorsed branding strategy should be easier (Shaw 1990). Individuals in such societies strive to belong to and to be part of the community (e.g., De Mooij 2017; Schwartz 1994). As brand-schematic consumers, they further value wealth and status (Puligadda, Ross Jr and Grewal 2012) and, in turn, global corporate and product brands, as they are proven to make consumers feel part of a community and to provide status (e.g., Strizhakova and Coulter 2015). Thus, an endorsed brand appears to align with embeddedness, which makes it attractive in such countries. Such alignment and the ease of activating and linking respective brand schemata support beneficial consumer behavior in societies with an increasing degree of embeddedness (Sujan and Bettman 1989). Empirical studies support this reasoning. National studies have found stronger effects of product brand attributes on behavior for consumers who emphasize group (versus individual) interests (Thompson, Newman and Liu 2014). For image transfers, country comparisons have indicated that corporate endorsement/image more positively affects product brand evaluation in societies that strongly value the group (e.g., Jakubanecs and Supphellen 2012; Souiden, Kassim and Hong 2006).

We also assume a strengthened direct effect of global corporate brand image on product purchase intention with an increase in the embeddedness of societies. Theoretically, brand-aschematic consumers may also directly activate global corporate brand schemata in product purchase situations when not linking it to product brand schemata (Puligadda, Ross Jr and Grewal 2012). However, individuals in embedded societies tend to more strongly prefer global corporate brands (Gupta, Pansari and Kumar 2018). In addition to relying on traditions, they are open to the new and foreign brands (De Mooij 2017). This may enable them to ensure family security and build social relationships (Camacho, De Jong and Stremersch 2014). Global corporate brands are known to deliver high functional benefits to improve group interest and psychological benefits in building social relationships (Swoboda and Sinning 2020a). Such cultural values appear to be consistent with the communication of the global corporate endorser (e.g.,

Swoboda and Batton 2019). Due to this conformity of cultural values with the corporate endorser, the global corporate brand schema may gain importance in product purchase situations in which consumers retrieve it directly. Empirically, studies have indicated that the effect of corporate brand signals and associations on consumer behavior is stronger in more (versus less) socializing countries (e.g., Erdem, Swait and Valenzuela 2006; Swoboda, Puchert and Morschett 2016).

In summary, we assume an increasing degree of embeddedness to enhance the indirect and direct effects of global corporate brand image through global product brand image on product purchase intention. We propose the following:

H3. Across nations, embeddedness positively moderates (a) the indirect effect of global corporate brand image on consumers' product purchase intention via global product brand image and (b) the direct effect of global corporate brand image on consumers' product purchase intention.

Empirical Study

13

13.1 Sample

The data derive from cooperation with a German MNC with subsidiaries in 150 countries offering nonprescription drugs, crop products, skin/beauty care, consumer goods, and services. The MNC uses a standardized, centrally managed global corporate brand. In 2018, a specific study was conducted in 35 countries selected due to their importance for the MNC (360 respondents per country). We conceptualized the study and preselected global product brands, i.e., those offered on at least three continents with the same brand name and a similar marketing strategy as the most important criteria of globality (Gürhan-Canli, Sarial-Abi and Hayran 2018; Steenkamp 2019b; controlling for further criteria, Samiee 2019). In doing so, four product categories were selected: nonprescription drugs, consumer care, consumer goods for animals, and crop products. The ten or fewer leading product brands in each category were identified using data from the MNC. To ensure brand knowledge and familiarity, seven product brands with the highest market share in each category were chosen. For every product brand in every country, we intensively collected information (on respective websites, in calls with local product managers) to control the characteristics of globality (i.e., brand name, availability) and endorsement (i.e., product packages). For the survey, we ultimately chose consumer products that were clearly endorsed on the front of the product package, five per category. We and a marketing research agency conducted qualitative and quantitative pretests. First, the scales and the questionnaire design were pretested by two consumer focus groups. Second, the scales were

Supplementary Information The online version contains supplementary material available at https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_13.

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_13

quantitatively pretested in the home country and in seven of the most important foreign countries for the MNC based on a cross-national panel approach (N = 130 each, quota sample). The pretests yielded satisfactory results for face validity, possible hierarchy of effects, awareness of all 20 global product brands, and enhanced construct equivalence after minor item adjustments as well as reliability and validity of the measurements.

The agency collected the data for the main study (average participation rate of 66%). Text-appealing strategies were used to highlight the public benefit of participating, and bonus points were offered (Pedersen and Nielsen 2016). The quality of the panel was ensured by accounting for individualized survey links, instructional manipulation checks, or response times (Abbey and Meloy 2017). Quota sampling related to gender and age was applied based on information from national registration offices. Additionally, screening criteria were used to further increase the comparability of responses across nations. The sample was limited to the urban population between 18 and 65 years old with higher educational or professional levels (at least a higher school education, Özsomer 2012). Initially, the respondents had to indicate their (un)prompted awareness of the MNC (based on a five-point Likert-type scale, 1 = I do not know the MNC to 5 = I know the MNC very well; Keller 1993). Only respondents with at least general knowledge (= 2) of the MNC were included in the survey, leading to 11,335 evaluations. Regarding the product brands, (un)prompted awareness was also assessed, and only respondents with at least general knowledge (= 2) of two or more product brands were included in the survey (8,058 respondents). We randomly chose one of two product brands for evaluation (despite a product category): alternately more and less known. After eliminating Mahalanobis distance-based outliers, 7,660 respondents remained (see Table 13.1). The data were not normally distributed. Thus, a maximum likelihood estimator with robust standard errors and chi-square test statistics was used to test the hypotheses (Maydeu-Olivares 2017).

13.2 Measurement

Individual-level variables were measured using five-point Likert-type scales (from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree; see Table 13.2). For corporate brand image, we relied on four items adapted from Keller (1993). Product brand image was measured with four items (Salinas and Pérez 2009). Three items were used to measure product purchase intention (Putrevu and Lord 1994; widely used in brand research, e.g., Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016). Parallel blind

Table 13.1 Sample Distribution

		Gender (%)		Age Groups (Years, %)				
	N	Male	Female	18–25	26–35	36–45	46–55	56–65
Argentina	137	65.7%	34.3%	19.7%	25.5%	23.4%	15.3%	16.1%
Australia	152	61.8%	38.2%	10.5%	31.6%	20.4%	15.8%	21.7%
Belgium	373	65.4%	34.6%	17.7%	21.2%	23.1%	21.2%	16.9%
Brazil	150	62.0%	38.0%	50.0%	26.7%	14.7%	8.7%	0.0%
Canada	112	57.1%	42.9%	17.0%	29.5%	18.8%	17.9%	17.0%
Chile	156	61.5%	38.5%	19.2%	33.3%	38.5%	9.0%	0.0%
China	167	53.9%	46.1%	32.3%	22.8%	19.8%	25.1%	0.0%
Croatia	202	68.3%	31.7%	7.9%	26.7%	48.0%	17.3%	0.0%
Czech Republic	193	71.0%	29.0%	8.8%	16.6%	22.3%	24.4%	28.0%
Egypt	246	74.8%	25.2%	29.7%	29.3%	29.7%	11.4%	0.0%
Finland	206	63.6%	36.4%	21.8%	18.0%	20.9%	18.4%	20.9%
France	256	53.9%	46.1%	21.9%	22.7%	16.8%	11.7%	27.0%
Germany	189	54.5%	45.5%	27.5%	19.6%	21.7%	20.6%	10.6%
Hungary	202	55.4%	44.6%	11.4%	20.3%	16.3%	19.8%	32.2%
India	169	52.7%	47.3%	18.9%	19.5%	27.8%	33.7%	0.0%
Ireland	182	57.1%	42.9%	15.9%	26.9%	22.0%	22.0%	13.2%
Italy	506	55.1%	44.9%	12.8%	20.8%	20.8%	23.5%	22.1%
Japan	254	49.2%	50.8%	10.6%	12.2%	16.1%	27.6%	33.5%
Malaysia	271	53.9%	46.1%	15.9%	26.9%	24.0%	23.6%	9.6%
Mexico	139	60.4%	39.6%	43.9%	20.1%	20.9%	15.1%	0.0%
Netherlands	234	56.8%	43.2%	16.7%	20.1%	25.2%	17.9%	20.1%
New Zealand	117	65.0%	35.0%	17.1%	17.9%	26.5%	20.5%	17.9%
Norway	237	56.5%	43.5%	9.7%	15.6%	21.1%	25.7%	27.8%
Poland	259	59.5%	40.5%	16.2%	20.5%	18.5%	24.7%	20.1%
Portugal	159	63.5%	36.5%	7.5%	27.0%	50.9%	14.5%	0.0%
Russia	162	73.5%	26.5%	22.2%	22.2%	29.0%	26.5%	0.0%
Saudi Arabia	297	73.4%	26.6%	25.6%	27.3%	34.0%	13.1%	0.0%
Singapore	202	55.0%	45.0%	14.9%	26.2%	26.2%	21.3%	11.4%
Slovakia	272	62.5%	37.5%	11.0%	23.2%	22.4%	20.2%	23.2%

(continued)

Table 13.1 (continued)

		Gender (%)		Age Groups (Years, %)				
	N	Male	Female	18–25	26–35	36–45	46–55	56–65
Spain	245	56.7%	43.3%	19.2%	23.3%	26.5%	16.3%	14.7%
Turkey	476	47.9%	52.1%	14.7%	32.8%	29.8%	22.7%	0.0%
United Arab Emirates	365	66.0%	34.0%	20.3%	40.9%	32.1%	6.6%	0.0%
UK	107	58.9%	41.1%	20.6%	26.2%	28.0%	14.0%	11.2%
USA	145	49.7%	50.3%	12.4%	22.8%	29.7%	18.6%	16.6%
Venezuela	121	61.2%	38.8%	16.5%	37.2%	38.0%	8.3%	0.0%
Total	7,660	59.7%	40.3%	18.1%	24.5%	25.6%	19.0%	12.8%

Source: Own Creation

translation-back-translation, with translation reviews, was applied by a commercial translation agency. To maximize construct equivalence (e.g., Yang, Floyd and Tanner Jr 2019), minor item adjustments, i.e., cultural rephrasing, were made (Watkins 2010).

The country-level variable degree of country development was measured by the Human Development Index (United Nations Development Programme 2018). The HDI consists of three indices (life expectancy, education, and GNI) and is the predominant measure of country development (e.g., Çilingirtürk and Koçak 2018). The national cultural dimension embeddedness was based on the most recent data available from Schwartz (1994).[1] We relied on embeddedness due to model complexity and its predominant role in the global brand research (e.g., highest explanatory power among cultural value dimensions, Swoboda and Batton 2019; Swoboda and Sinning 2020a).

On the individual level, we controlled for gender (0 = male, 1 = female), age, brand familiarity (measured by one item, "How familiar are you with [MNC] and its product brands?", Steenkamp, Batra and Alden 2003), and the four product brand categories (categorical, e.g., Mandler 2019). The controls may affect consumers' brand schematicity and, thus, how the schemata are activated for product purchase intention (Halkias 2015; Puligadda, Ross Jr and Grewal 2012). On the

[1] Missing embeddedness data for two countries (United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia) were replaced by the values of neighboring countries according to Steenkamp and Geyskens (2006). We estimated models without those countries with stable results. For reasons of complexity and model identification, we included the two countries in the survey.

country level, the number of respondents in each country was controlled to prevent an unequal number from affecting the results (e.g., Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, p. 215). Lettering, coloring, and language for the corporate and product brands on the product package were controlled (dummy variables: 0 = standardized, 1 = adapted). These are important controls that may affect brand perception and the development of schemata (Buechel and Townsend 2018; Carnevale, Luna and Lerman 2017; Kim, Spence and Marshall 2018).

As consumers are nested in countries, multilevel modeling requirements were tested. Intra-class correlation, estimated within a null model without any predictor variables, indicated that 11.0% of the variance in product purchase intention is attributable to country differences; thus, multilevel modeling was needed (Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, pp. 4–13). Reliability and validity tests across nations yielded satisfactory results (see Table 13.2; Hair et al. 2018, p. 93; also assured in each country).

Discriminant validity between product brand image and purchase intention was ensured by Anderson and Gerbing's test (1988, $\chi^2(2) = 438.073$, $p < .001$, see Table 13.3; correlation exceeds .800, see Table 13.4). Multilevel reliability was confirmed based on multilevel alpha, multilevel composite-, and maximal reliability (Geldhof, Preacher and Zyphur 2014, see Table 13.5). After comparing the validity coefficients of factor score procedures (based on factor variances, Table 13.6), regression scores were used for corporate and product brand image to reduce model complexity (DiStefano, Zhu and Mindrila 2009; Kline 2015, pp. 127–129).

An appropriate questionnaire design was applied (i.e., ensuring the anonymity and confidentiality of the study, appropriate order of questions, Chang, Van Witteloostuijn and Eden 2010) to ex ante address potential threats of CMV. Ex post, a single-factor test showed significant lower fit values than the proposed model ($\Delta\chi 2(6) = 10{,}505.107$, $p < .001$). The marker variable technique was applied with occupation as a theoretically unrelated marker variable (Lindell and Whitney 2001). It revealed no significant changes in correlations, and the method variances were less than 2.0% (Williams, Hartman and Cavazotte 2010). CMV is not an issue in this study (see Web Appendix).

Endogeneity tests reveal bias from omitted variables (Antonakis et al. 2014). MNCs' perceived brand innovativeness of the corporation was selected as a theoretically related IV (one item, Shams, Alpert and Brown 2015) for corporate brand image. As the calculated F-value has exceeded the recommended threshold of 10 (IV = 540.338; Stock and Watson 2019, p. 270), the IV can be considered as a strong predictor and an efficient model was calculated (Antonakis et al.

Table 13.2 Reliability and Validity

	Item	MV/Std	FL	KMO	ItTC	α	CR	AVE	λ
CI	I can better identify with [MNC] than with other companies.	3.21/1.17	.802	.818	.751	.897	.897	.710	.811
	[MNC] is likeable.	3.34/1.08	.857		.798				.853
	As far as I know, [MNC] is respected worldwide.	3.66/1.07	.820		.762				.820
	I believe [MNC] performs at a premium level.	3.57/1.02	.837		.777				.833
PI	[Product] is a brand I respect and trust.	3.60/1.07	.906	.854	.865	.936	.936	.799	.903
	[Product] is a brand that cares for me.	3.43/1.11	.875		.840				.878
	[Product] is a brand that helps me live a better life.	3.48/1.11	.895		.857				.894
	[Product] is a quality product that works.	3.70/1.02	.869		.833				.870
PPI	In the future, I intend to use [product].	3.46/1.19	.949	.775	.911	.953	.953	.840	.947
	I will consider [product] for my next purchase.	3.44/1.20	.922		.892				.924
	I will definitely buy [product] in the future.	3.44/1.21	.928		.897				.928

Note: Confirmatory Model Fit: CFI .983; TLI .977; RMSEA .055; SRMR .016; $\chi^2(41) = 977.539$; Scaling Cor. Factor Maximum Likelihood = 1.3381. CI = Corporate Brand Image; MNC = Multinational Corporation; PI = Product Brand Image; PPI = Product Purchase Intention.
FL = Factor Loadings (Exploratory Analysis); KMO = Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Criterion (≥.5); ItTC = Item-to-Total Correlation (≥.5); α = Cronbach's Alpha (≥.7); CR = Composite Reliability (≥.6); AVE = Average Variance Extracted (≥.5); λ = Standardized Factor Loadings (Confirmatory Factor Analysis).

Source: Own Creation

Table 13.3 Discriminant Validity

	CI		PI		PPI	
CI	**.710**		*.552*		*.422*	
PI	.743	***	**.799**		*.763*	
PPI	.650	***	.874	***	**.840**	

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; ns = not significant.
Note: Confirmatory Model Fit: CFI .983; TLI .977; RMSEA .055; SRMR .016; $\chi^2(41) = 977.539$; Scaling Cor. Factor Maximum Likelihood = 1.3381. CI = Corporate Brand Image; PI = Product Brand Image; PPI = Product Purchase Intention.
AVE = Average Variance Extracted (≥.5); AVEs are on the diagonal; squared correlations are above the diagonal; correlations are below the diagonal.

Source: Own Creation

2014). It did not differ significantly from the consistent model (Hausman 1978), demonstrating that corporate brand image is exogenous (see Table 13.7).

Following Steenkamp and Baumgartner (1998), measurement invariance across nations was tested by considering differences in comparative fit indices (Chen 2007). First, significant factor loadings in each country ensured configural invariance in a freely estimated model. Second, a model with fixed factor loadings was applied to test metric invariance. Metric invariance were confirmed as differences in comparative fit indices were within the respective thresholds (see Table 13.8).

We have tested for multilevel measurement invariance following the procedure of Jak, Oort and Dolan (2013). Compared to traditional methods, this approach is suitable for a large number of groups (Byrne and Van de Vijver 2010; Selig, Card and Little 2008). Multilevel measurement invariance treats group membership as random and tests for violations of measurement invariance across clusters ("cluster bias"). First, intra-class correlations, a null and an independent model were conducted to prove the necessity of multilevel analysis. Second, a measurement model was specified, and third, cluster bias was tested. We have used robust maximum likelihood estimation (asymptotically equivalent to the test statistic of Yuan and Bentler 2000). We have chosen RMSEA as an approximate fit index. Within ($RMSEA_W$) and between ($RMSEA_B$) RMSEA were assessed (Ryu and West 2009).

The intra-class correlations are .103 (PPI_1), .101 (PPI_2), and .115 (PPI_3). A null model without specifying variances and covariances at the between level is not suitable for the data ($\chi^2(23) = 1{,}605.645$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .095; $RMSEA_B = 1.402$). An independence model without covariances at the between

Table 13.4 Correlations

	(1)		(2)		(3)		(4)		(5)		(6)		(7)	(8)		(9)		(10)		(11)		(12)		(13)
CI (1)	1																							
PI (2)	.743	***	1																					
PPI (3)	.650	***	.874	***	1																			
Gender (4)	-.030	*	-.029	*	-.051	***	1																	
Age (5)	-.092	***	-.100	***	-.115	***	-.038	**	1															
BF (6)	.457	***	.378	***	.363	***	-.071	***	-.046	***	1													
PC (7)	.056	***	.029	*	.042	***	.022	*	.004	ns	.027	*	1											
CPC (8)														1										
LT (9)														-.188	***	1								
Color (10)														-.182	***	.845	***	1						
LG (11)														-.123	***	.230	***	.143	***	1				
CD (12)														-.073	***	-.117	***	-.023	ns	-.164	***	1		
EMB (13)														.161	***	-.115	***	-.149	***	.152	***	-.525	***	1

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; ns = not significant.
Note: BF = Brand Familiarity; CD = Country Development; CI = Corporate Brand Image; CPC = Consumer per Cluster; EMB = Embeddedness; GEN = Gender; LG = Language; LT = Lettering; PC = Product Category; PI = Product Brand Image; PPI = Product Purchase Intention.

Source: Own Creation

Table 13.5 Multilevel Reliability and Validity

	Alpha		Composite Reliability		Maximal Reliability	
	α_W	α_B	ω_W	ω_B	H_W	H_B
CI	.888	.977	.889	.986	.891	.988
PI	.936	.972	.930	.989	.931	.992
PPI	.947	.992	.948	.992	.949	.994

Note: CI = Corporate Brand Image; PI = Product Brand Image; PPI = Product Purchase Intention.
α = Alpha ($\geq$.8); ω = Composite Reliability ($\geq$.8); H = Maximal Reliability ($\geq$.8); W = Within (Individual) Level; B = Between (Country) Level.

Source: Own Creation

Table 13.6 Comparison of Factor Scores

		Regression Scores Validity Coefficients	Item Parceling Validity Coefficients
CI		.900	.898
PI		.937	.907

Note: CI = Corporate Brand Image; PI = Product Brand Image.

Source: Own Creation

level is neither appropriate for the data ($\chi^2(15) = 417.179$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .059; $RMSEA_B = .875$). Thus, there are significant between-level (co)variances and multilevel modeling is highly appropriate. A one-factor model does fit the data ($\chi^2(41) = 775.534$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .048; $RMSEA_W = .048$).

The cluster invariance model with equally constrained factor loadings and no residual variances at the between level is not appropriate for the data ($\chi^2(101) = 2{,}576.405$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .057). Modification indices indicate misfit due to PI_2's and CI_2's zero residual variance. We can assure good model fit when freeing their residual variance ($\chi^2(99) = 1{,}848.896$, $p < .001$; RMSEA = .048). Consequently, for item PI_2 3.55% and for item CI_2 3.43% of the total variance can be traced back to cluster bias. All factor loadings can be considered equal across levels. Thus, cluster bias is not an issue in this study.

13.3 Method

MSEM was applied using Mplus 8.3 to test the hypotheses. MSEM accounts for the nested data structure by considering individual- and country-level variables and the interactions between them. It detects observed variances between and within countries and specifies latent variables and moderators (Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, pp. 271–274).

The analysis was based on calculating random intercept and slope models in a stepwise procedure (Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, pp. 9–13). First, a baseline model including individual-level controls was calculated. We added corporate and product brand image as predictor variables. Due to model complexity, the independent variables and all moderators were grand mean centered (Ryu 2015). The level-one model is as follows:

$$PPI_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j}(CI_{ij}) + \beta_{2j}(PI_{ij}) + \beta_{Controls}(ILC_{ij}) + r_{ij}\,, \qquad (13.1)$$

Table 13.7 Comparison of Consistent and Proposed Model

			Random Intercept (Baseline) Model			
			Consistent Model		Proposed/Efficient Model	
			b	*p*	b	*p*
Direct Effects						
CI	→ PPI		.061	***	.062	***
CI	→ PI		.668	***	.668	***
PI	→ PPI		.904	***	.905	***
IV	→ CI		.657	***		
Indirect Effects						
CI	→ PI	→ PPI	.603	***	.603	***
Total Effect						
CI	→ PPI		.664	***	.665	***
Controls (Individual Level)						
GEN	→ PPI		-.055	*	-.056	*
Age	→ PPI		-.019	*	-.020	*
BF	→ PPI		.045	***	.044	***
PC	→ PPI		.055	ns	.047	ns
Control (Country Level)						
CPC	→ PPI		.015	ns	.016	ns
Color	→ PPI		-.142	ns	-.145	ns
LG	→ PPI		.029	ns	.029	ns
LT	→ PPI		.129	ns	.132	ns
AIC			80,459.663		42,255.587	
BIC (adjusted)			80,610.302		42,387.397	

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; ns = not significant.
Note: b = Unstandardized Coefficients; BF = Brand Familiarity; CI = Corporate Brand Image; CPC = Consumer per Cluster; GEN = Gender; IV = Instrumental Variable; LG = Language; LT = Lettering; PC = Product Category; PI = Product Brand Image; PPI = Product Purchase Intention.

Source: Own Creation

Table 13.8 Results of Measurement Invariance Test across 35 Countries

	CFI (ΔCFI)	TLI (ΔTLI)	RMSEA (ΔRMSEA)	SRMR (ΔSRMR)	χ^2/df (p-value)
Model 1:	.974	.965	.068	.031	2,898.658/1,435
Configural Invariance					(***)
Model 2:	.971	.967	.066	.053	3,337.728/1,707
Metric Invariance	(.003)	(.002)	(-.002)	(.022)	(***)

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; ns = not significant.
Note: Scaling Correction Factor Model 1: 1.2636 and Model 2: 1.2141. χ^2 = Chi-Square; Δ = Difference; CFI = Comparative Fit Index; df = Degrees of Freedom; RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; SRMR = Standardized Root Mean Square Residual; TLI = Tucker-Lewis Index.

Source: Own Creation

where i indicates consumers in a country and j displays the countries. PPI_{ij} represents consumer i's product purchase intention in country j. CI_{ij} and PI_{ij} represent consumer i's perceived corporate and product brand image in country j. ILC_{ij} denotes individual-level control variables. The first-level intercept β_{0j} and the individual-level slopes β_{1j} and β_{2j} are allowed to vary across countries. r_{ij} represents the individual-level error term.

Second, we included country-level controls (second baseline model) and country-level moderators:

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(CLV_j) + \gamma_{02}(CLC_j) + u_{0j}\,, \tag{13.2}$$

$$\beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10} + \gamma_{11}(CLV_j) + u_{1j}\,, \tag{13.3}$$

$$\beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20} + \gamma_{21}(CLV_j) + u_{2j}\,, \tag{13.4}$$

with γ_{00} denoting the county-level intercept of product purchase intention, γ_{10} and γ_{20} representing the intercepts of the country-level random slope of corporate and product brand image. CLV_j displays the different country-level moderator variables (i.e., the degree of country development and embeddedness). CLC_j denotes the country-level control variables (i.e., number of consumers per cluster, lettering, color, and language). For each moderator, we calculated a separate model to predict variations in β coefficients. Comprising equations (13.1–13.4), the following equation represents the multilevel moderated mediation

with cross-level interactions:

$$PPI_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(CLV_j) + \gamma_{10}(CI_{ij}) + \gamma_{11}(CLV_j)(CI_{ij}) + \gamma_{20}(PI_{ij}) + \gamma_{21}(CLV_j)(PI_{ij}) + \gamma_{ILC}(ILC_{ij}) + \gamma_{CLC}(CLC_j) + error. \quad (13.5)$$

For hypotheses testing, we used cross-level interaction effects and conditional indirect and direct effects according to the floodlight test (Hayes 2017, p. 254). This test shows at which degrees of the moderator's measurement span the conditional effect yields strengthened or weakened significant results. It adds significant value compared to previous tests as it considers all moderator values instead of specific ones (Spiller et al. 2013).

13.4 Results

The results of hypotheses tests are shown in Table 13.9. Unstandardized coefficients are interpreted as standardized coefficients cannot be computed in random intercept and slope models (Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, p. 17).

There is a positive indirect effect of global corporate brand image via global product brand image on product purchase intention (b = .603, $p < .001$). The results also indicate a positive direct link between global corporate brand image and product purchase intention (b = .062, $p < .001$): the indirect (versus direct) effect is significantly stronger (b = .541, $p < .001$). Hypotheses H1a-c are supported.

The degree of country development positively moderates the indirect effect of global corporate brand image through global product brand image on product purchase intention ($b_{PI \times CD \rightarrow PPI} = .469$, $p < .001$). H2a is supported. An increasing degree of country development diminishes the direct effect of global corporate brand image ($b_{CI \times CD \rightarrow PPI} = -.295$, $p < .05$), which supports H2b. Figure 13.1 supports these results.

An increasing degree of country development enhances the positive indirect effect of global corporate brand image but diminishes the direct effect. With very high degrees of country development, even the positive direct effect of corporate brand image on product purchase intention becomes insignificant (the lower confidence interval crosses the x-axis). The global product brand gains, while the global corporate brand loses, importance with an increasing degree of country development. 20.0% of the country-level variance is explained.

Table 13.9 Results

							Random Intercept Model				Random Intercept and Slope Model			
			Null Model		Baseline Model		Full Model		Baseline Model		CD		EMB	
			b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*
Direct Effects														
CI	→ PPI *(H1b)*						.062 (.098)	***	.062 (.098)	***	.061 (.096)	***	.060 (.095)	***
CI	→ PI						.668 (1.31)	***	.668 (1.31)	***	.668 (1.31)	***	.668 (1.31)	***
PI	→ PPI						.905 (1.46)	***	.905 (1.46)	***	.902 (1.46)	***	.905 (1.46)	***
Indirect Effect														
CI	→ PI	→ PPI *(H1a)*					.603 (.953)	***	.603 (.953)	***	.601 (.950)	***	.603 (.953)	***
Total Effect														
CI	→ PPI						.665 (1.05)	***	.665 (1.05)	***	.662 (1.04)	***	.664 (1.05)	***
Diff. (Indirect versus Direct Effect) *(H1c)*							.541	***	.541	***				
Cross-Level Interaction														
CD	→ PPI										-.482 (-.056)	*		

(continued)

Table 13.9 (continued)

							Random Intercept Model				Random Intercept and Slope Model			
	x PI	→ PPI *(H2a)*									.469 (.756)	***		
	x CI	→ PPI *(H2b)*									-.295 (-.446)	*		
EMB	→ PPI												.113 (.077)	**
	x PI	→ PPI *(H3a)*											.147 (.237)	***
	x CI	→ PPI *(H3b)*											.035 (.055)	ns
Controls (Individual Level)														
GEN	→ PPI				-.058	ns	-.055	*	-.056	*	-.056	*	-.055	*
Age	→ PPI				-.043	**	-.019	*	-.020	*	-.019	*	-.019	*
BF	→ PPI				.334	***	.045	***	.044	***	.045	***	.045	***
PC	→ PPI				.013	ns	.057	ns	.047	ns	.042	ns	.049	ns
Controls (Country Level)														
CPC	→ PPI								.016	ns	.005	ns	-.010	ns
Color	→ PPI								-.145	ns	-.113	ns	-.127	ns
LG	→ PPI								.029	ns	.009	ns	.001	ns

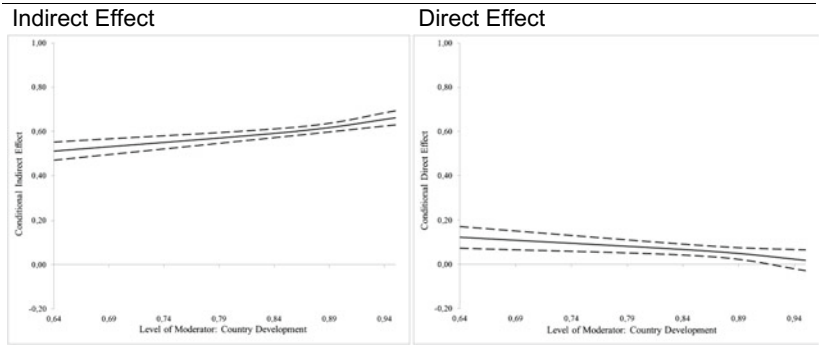
(continued)

Table 13.9 (continued)

				Random Intercept Model		Random Intercept and Slope Model			
LT	→ PPI				.132	ns	.084	ns	.130	ns
Residual Variance (Individual Level)		1.136	1.011	.345	.345		.345		.345	
Residual Variance (Country Level)		.141	.081	.005	.005		.004		.003	
Explained Variance (Individual Level)			11.0%	65.9%	0.0%					
Explained Variance (Country Level)					0.0%		20.0%		40.0%	
AIC		48,913.512	48,066.421	56,887.904	42,255.587		42,244.557		42,275.930	
BIC (Adjusted)		48,970.002	48,137.974	57,004.650	42,387.397		42,387.664		42,430.335	

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; ns = not significant. Effect sizes are shown in brackets.
Note: b = Unstandardized Coefficients; BF = Brand Familiarity; CD = Country Development; CI = Corporate Brand Image; CPC = Consumer per Cluster; EMB = Embeddedness; GEN = Gender; LG = Language; LT = Lettering; PC = Product Category; PI = Product Brand Image; PPI = Product Purchase Intention.

Source: Own Creation

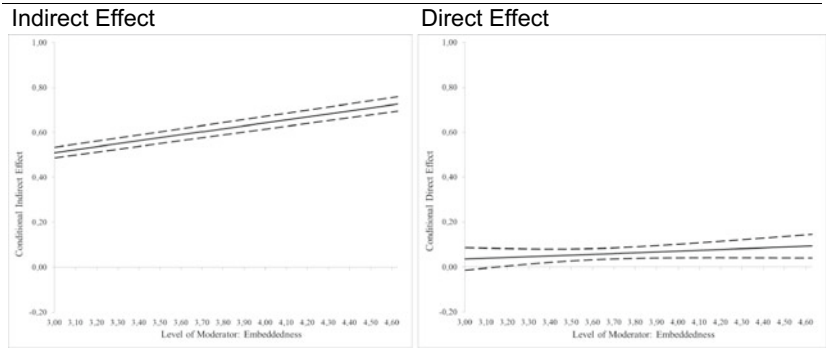


Notes: Plots based on unstandardized coefficients. Continuous lines represent the indirect and direct paths at several levels of moderator values. Dashed lines represent the confidence bands. Indirect and direct paths are significant as long as the dashed lines do not cross the x-axis.

Figure 13.1 Conditional Indirect Effect for the Degree of Country Development. (Source: Own Creation)

The degree of embeddedness positively moderates the indirect effect of global corporate brand image on product purchase intention ($b_{PI \times EMB \rightarrow PPI} = .147$, $p < .001$), which supports H3a. Conditional indirect effects support this hypothesis, as an increasing degree of embeddedness enhances the effect of the endorsed branding strategy (see Figure 13.2). However, embeddedness does not significantly affect the direct effect of global corporate brand image on product purchase intention ($b_{CI \times EMB \rightarrow PPI} = .035$, $p > .05$); thus, H3b is rejected. Consumers in highly embedded societies with more homogeneous brand schemata (Shaw 1990) rely on product (versus corporate) brand schemata in product purchase situations. Moreover, the global corporate brand appears to receive importance only when endorsing MNCs' global product brands as this strategy is consistent with consumers' cultural values (Schwartz 1994). However, Figure 13.2 shows that only for very low levels of embeddedness does the direct effect of global corporate brand image on product purchase intention become insignificant (the lower confidence interval crosses the x-axis). Embeddedness moderates the indirect effect of corporate brand image via the product brand image on product purchase intention but only partially moderates the direct effect. 40.0% of the country-level variance is explained.

Among the covariates, gender, age, and brand familiarity have significant and expected effects.



Notes: Plots based on unstandardized coefficients. Continuous lines represent the indirect and direct paths at several levels of moderator values. Dashed lines represent the confidence bands. Indirect and direct paths are significant as long as the dashed lines do not cross the x-axis.

Figure 13.2 Conditional Indirect Effect for the Degree of Embeddedness. (Source: Own Creation)

13.5 Alternative Models

For reasons of stability, a random split-half test was applied (ensuring multilevel reliability, Geldhof, Preacher and Zyphur 2014). The indirect and direct effects of global corporate image on product purchase intention remained stable (see Web Appendix). Three alternative models were considered (see Web Appendix).

First, we changed the dependent variable to provide insight into the effects on purchase intention regarding the MNC (measured by four items, Putrevu and Lord 1994). This procedure shows a dependence of schema activation on respective purchase situations. In purchase situations, in which consumers have purchase intentions towards an MNC, we assume consumers will primarily activate respective global corporate brand schemata. The results support this rationale and show a positive indirect ($b = .138$, $p < .001$) and direct ($b = .735$, $p < .001$) effect of the endorser: the direct effect is significantly stronger ($b = .597$, $p < .001$). The corporate brand gains, whereas the endorsed branding strategy loses, importance when purchase intention towards the corporation (versus product) is considered. Thus, whether and how corporate and product brand schemata are activated to determine consumers' purchase intention depends on the respective purchase situation.

Second, we tested corporate brand image as a mediator and product brand image as an antecedent. Schema theory assumes that subordinated product brand schemata affect superordinated corporate brand schemata when determining product purchase intention (Crocker 1984). The rationale aligns with our results (direct: $b = .903$, $p < .001$, indirect: $b = .045$, $p < .001$), supporting the assumption of global corporate brand schemata being less important in global product purchase situations. Moreover, model fit was worse than for our proposed model (based on comparison of AIC/BIC).

Third, a feedback loop between product and corporate brand is possible (Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018). Based on schema theory, product and corporate brand schemata in consumers' minds affect each other in a loop and affect product purchase intention. Even though global corporate and product brand schemata influence each other, the activation of product-related schemata should be primarily relevant in product purchase situations (Biehal and Sheinin 2007). A nonrecursive MSEM with two appropriate IVs and a required disturbance correlation between the images was applied (Nagase and Kano 2017). First, social and environmental responsibility (measured by three items, Walsh, Beatty and Shiu 2009) was selected as the IV because it is known to be a strong predictor of corporate brand image (Iglesias et al. 2019). Second, product attributes (two items, Souiden, Kassim and Hong 2006) were selected as the IV as they are known to be core antecedents of product brand image (Plumeyer et al. 2019). The results support our observations and show that global corporate and product brand image influence each other ($b_{CI \rightarrow PI} = .231$, $p < .001$; $b_{PI \rightarrow CI} = .374$, $p < .001$). Even when considering the reciprocal effects, product-related schemata are primarily relevant for product purchase intention (total effects: $b_{CI \rightarrow PPI} = .268$, $p < .001$ and $b_{PI \rightarrow PPI} = .929$, $p < .001$; direct effects: $b_{CI \rightarrow PPI} = .058$, $p < .001$ versus $b_{PI \rightarrow PPI} = .907$, $p < .001$). This model has a worse fit than our proposed model (comparing AIC/BIC).

Discussion

14

14.1 Overview

This study contributes to our understanding of whether and how MNCs can benefit from an endorsed branding strategy of global brands across nations (contributing to respective calls, e.g., Brexendorf and Keller 2017; Samiee 2019). Furthermore, we enhance the literature by analyzing the effects of endorsed branding depending on important boundary conditions: the degree of country development and national culture (Gürhan-Canli, Sarial-Abi and Hayran 2018). Next, we carefully provide theoretical and managerial implications.

14.2 Theoretical Implications

Regarding our first research question, the results show an indirect and direct effect of global corporate brand image through global product brand image on product purchase intention. The indirect effect more strongly affects product purchase intention across nations, and MNCs benefit from the use of endorsed branding. These findings confirm the applicability of the rationale of schema theory in the context of global brands across nations (Crocker 1984; Halkias 2015). Consumers intending to purchase global product brands primarily activate product brand schemata (supporting national studies, Biehal and Sheinin 2007). Through an endorsed branding strategy, the superordinated corporate brand schema adds value to the subordinated product brand schema, which subsequently results in strong purchase intention towards global product brands. We thereby empirically confirm that hierarchically structured brand schemata are linked to the success of a specific branding strategy (Halkias 2015). The use of this strategy enhances

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_14

firm value (Hsu, Fournier and Srinivasan 2016), reduces challenges of brand extensions (He et al. 2016), and improves consumers' purchase intention across nations. These findings are in line with, but extend, most studies on the relationship of corporate and product evaluations. We contribute to the literature on the benefits of vertical image transfer (celebrity endorsement as a communication issue, e.g., Derdenger 2018; Chen and Wyer Jr 2020; brand extension, e.g., Allman et al. 2016; Muroyiwa, Abratt and Mingione 2017) by showing the indirect effect of global corporate image across nations.

Regarding our second research question, we respond to research calls by analyzing two important national boundary conditions (e.g., Gürhan-Canli, Sarial-Abi and Hayran 2018; Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018).

First, we enhance the current research by accounting for the indirect and direct effects of global corporate brand image based on the degree of country development (following calls, Wang, He and Barnes 2017). The degree of country development is of paramount importance because globalization forces MNCs to succeed, particularly in emerging markets with strong economic growth prospects and branding strategy challenges for some of them (e.g., Gupta and Wright 2019; He and Wang 2017). The results underscore our theoretical rationale and enhance knowledge on how brand schemata vary due to environmental differences (Halkias 2015). The degree of country development affects the underlying cognitive processes of global brand schemata development and activation (Puligadda, Ross Jr and Grewal 2012). Consumers in emerging versus developed countries rely on either global product or corporate brand schemata in product purchase situations. Countries with an increasing degree of country development represent a setting where product (versus corporate) brand information is particularly relevant (Hsieh, Pan and Setiono 2004). Well-structured brand schemata of brand-schematic consumers further facilitate and thus enhance the image transfer from superordinated corporate to subordinated product brand schemata. Hence, for endorsed branding, the ease of brand schema activation and linkage increases with an increasing degree of country development. In contrast, the lower brand knowledge of more brand-aschematic consumers affects cognitive information processing (Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2017) and increases the importance of global corporate brand schema, even in product purchase situations. In less developed countries, complex endorsed branding strategies cannot easily be cognitively processed. Direct corporate brand effects gain, while indirect image transfer effects lose, importance. These findings confirm indications from studies in emerging markets (Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018). We also contribute to the endorsed branding research across nations by providing insightful conditional effects.

Second, it is important for MNCs to observe the role of national culture as we identify a significant role of the value dimension embeddedness in the indirect effect of global corporate brand image. This finding confirms our theoretical rationale and delivers respective insights on why brand schemata differ between countries (Halkias 2015). Embeddedness affects consumers' brand schematicity and how their schemata are structured (Crocker 1984). In countries that score high on embeddedness, consumers' cognitive schema structure is more homogeneous (Shaw 1990), which makes schemata easier to activate. Thus, for individuals, it is easier to activate global corporate and product brand schemata and transfer corporate to product brand image when intending to purchase global product brands. Moreover, the application of the endorsed branding strategy appears to meet the needs of belongingness of individuals in highly embedded societies and aligns with their values (Schwartz 1994) as the global corporate and global product brand deliver the feeling of being part of the community and gaining status. Unfortunately, the theory cannot explain the insignificant moderating effect on the direct link between global corporate brand image and product purchase intention in our model. Hence, future research may apply further theories (e.g., Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018; Steenkamp 2019a). However, we align with and contribute to the findings of country comparisons indicating a stronger valuation of corporate endorsers in societies that value the group (Jakubanecs and Supphellen 2012). We go beyond those studies and shed light on ambiguous results in the global brand literature and cultural contexts (Van der Lans, van Everdingen and Melnyk 2016). Finally, we show cross-level interactions of embeddedness and, thus, underscore the need to analyze national cultural differences.

We could even speculate that the positive image transfer effects in highly developed and embedded countries may differ when (un)favorable corporate brand schemata are linked to (un)favorable product brand schemata (Kirca et al. 2020). As product brands receive more attention in such countries, we would expect favorable product brand images to level unfavorable corporate brand images. In contrast, unfavorable product brand images would probably weaken favorable corporate brand images.

Finally, we draw theoretical conclusions by providing a country portfolio with respect to the degree of country development and embeddedness as moderators of endorsed branding effects (see Figure 14.1). Based on the stronger indirect (versus direct) effect, we carefully recommend the application of an endorsed branding strategy across nations (instead of relying solely on the product or corporate brand; Brexendorf and Keller 2017). However, MNCs must adjust the strategy according to the development and cultural conditions in countries and face tradeoffs. The country portfolio may serve as a basis for further research and

management regarding the relative effect of endorsed branding, even for countries not analyzed but with available country development and embeddedness data.

- Field I: The indirect effect of global corporate brand on product purchase intention is enhanced by an increasing degree of country development and embeddedness. Individuals in such countries primarily rely on product brand schemata in product purchase situations (Hsieh, Pan and Setiono 2004). They also activate and link the superordinated corporate brand schema to the subordinated product brand schema when intending to purchase global product brands. We highly recommend the use of the endorsed branding strategy in countries within this quadrant. Consumers should be able to identify the product with the MNC as this strategy is beneficial in terms of consumer behavior (in addition to increased firm value, Hsu, Fournier and Srinivasan 2016). Thus, we encourage MNCs to use corporate brand names/logos to endorse specific product brands whereas the product brand should still be more visible (Brexendorf and Keller 2017).
- Field II: The strong indirect effect of corporate brand image on product purchase intention is diminished by lower levels of country development and reinforced by a high degree of embeddedness. Embeddedness is the stronger lever (explaining 40.0% versus 20.0% of variance) for determining endorsed branding effects. Thus, we recommend the careful use of the endorsed branding strategy in such countries. Especially in countries close to the country development threshold (e.g., Saudi Arabia), endorser branding can be beneficial but should be combined with some marketing activities. In countries distant from the threshold (e.g., India), the global corporate brand may be focused. MNCs could enlarge the corporate brand name/logo on the product brand or apply some form of sub-branding (Åsberg and Uggla 2019).
- Field III: Higher levels of country development enhance, while lower levels of embeddedness diminish, the benefits of the endorsed branding strategy in terms of consumer behavior, an opposite context to Field II. MNCs should avoid or very carefully manage existent endorsed branding strategies in such (mainly European) countries. On the one hand, when applying the endorsed branding strategy, further marketing activities are needed, e.g., communication. On the other hand, MNCs could shift the focus to the global product brand. Hence, global brand managers may decrease the size of the corporate brand name/logo or even place it on the back of the product package (like companies employing the house of brands strategy, Hsu, Fournier and Srinivasan 2016).

- Field IV: The effect of the endorsed branding strategy is diminished by both lower country development and embeddedness. The application of the endorsed branding strategy is not recommended in this context or may need many and strong additional marketing-mix efforts. The application of the branded house strategy may be more promising.

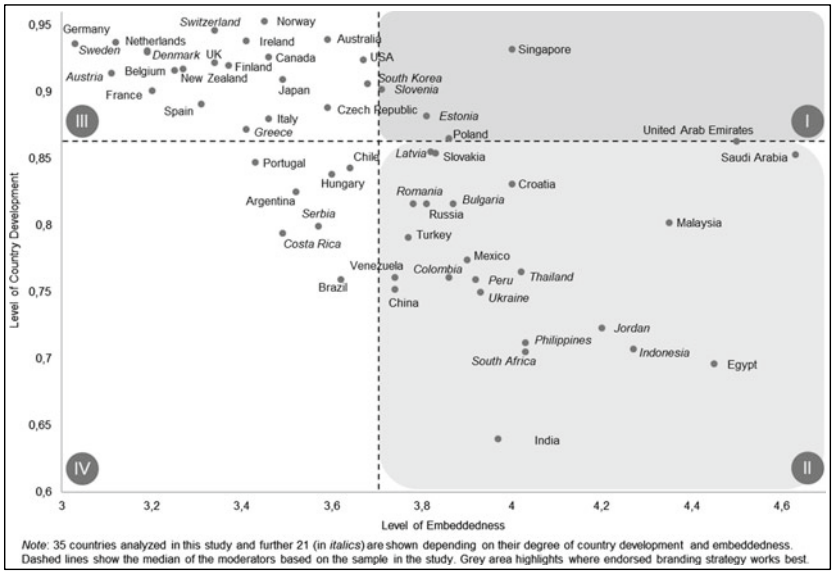


Figure 14.1 Country Portfolio. (Source: Own Creation)

In summary, endorsed branding is successful in countries in Field I and Field II (the direct effect of global corporate brand image on product purchase intention gains importance in Fields II/IV). Lower levels of country development increase the benefits of focusing on the corporate brand image in product purchase situations (product brand becomes less attractive, Bahadir, Bharadwaj and Srivastava 2015), whereas only high levels of embeddedness appear to play a minor role. Thus, we recommend that the global corporate brand should be emphasized in countries such as India and Argentina. Moreover, consumers in more developed countries primarily rely on global product brand schemata in product purchase

situations (Hsieh, Pan and Setiono 2004). We conclude that for consumers who live in highly developed but less embedded countries, a more product-focused branding strategy may be better (e.g., house of brands strategy, Hsu, Fournier and Srinivasan 2016). Future research may compare respective effects across nations.

14.3 Managerial Implications

Managers can benefit from an endorsed branding strategy across nations. They may follow L'Oréal, Nestlé, or Unilever and increasingly use endorsed branding as a source of competitive advantage abroad. Focusing on product brands is advantageous to enhance product purchase intention (Hsieh, Pan and Setiono 2004). Moreover, promoting the corporate brand as an endorser leads to stronger consumer responses across nations. It is highly recommendable to make the global corporate brand visible to create positive spillover effects. This provides reassurance for consumers in product purchase situations and enables managers to monitor their brands (Khojastehpour and Johns 2015). Consequently, managers profit from demand- and supply-side benefits (Hsu, Fournier and Srinivasan 2016).

However, the country context yields further implications (Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018). The degree of country development and national culture are important levers of the effects of endorsed branding. Kellogg's, for example, considers the strengths of the endorsed branding strategy but adjusts it in Europe (Kellogg's 2019). Our country portfolio shows options for centrally managed endorsed branding and offers concrete choices for managers (see Figure 14.1).

- Managers should clearly apply the endorsed branding strategy in countries in Field I because here MNCs profit most from the strategy. Thus, managers should build strong global corporate and product brands and promote the linkage between those brand schemata. Additionally, in Field II, we recommend endorsed branding in tendency. Here, managers can also rely on the global corporate endorser itself (generally in less developed countries) or on a more corporate brand focused mixed branding strategy, such as sub-branding (Hsu, Fournier and Srinivasan 2016). They are confronted with only weak cognitive brand schemata; thus, they should focus on market creation (Sheth 2011) to strengthen strong global corporate brands in consumers' minds to make the connection more salient for decision-making.
- In the context of Fields III and IV, the effects of endorsed branding are diminished and managers must invest in further marketing-mix activities. In doing

so, they may use more product-dominant strategies (Field III) as consumers in such countries favor the global product brand. In contrast, they may apply the branded house strategy and communicate and rely on the global corporate endorser itself (Field IV), as these effects are positively levered in countries with lower degrees of development and may be a starting point to gain market share in important emerging markets (He and Wang 2017; especially when facing unbranded competition, Bahadir, Bharadwaj and Srivastava 2015).

These implications constitute a starting point for internationalization when entering new countries and deciding whether to apply endorsed branding within new country openings.

Limitations and Further Research

15

This study has certain limitations that suggest future research directions.

Although we carefully collected specific data, database expansion will allow further conclusions, e.g., by analyzing additional MNCs, industries, product categories or even local brands (Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016; ensuring presence along nondurable-durable or price continuums, Özsomer 2012). The study's cross-national design improves its external validity while future research may place emphasis on internal validity (e.g., Halkias, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016). Moreover, this study includes more developed than emerging countries while within a balance of least developed and emerging countries, a weaker (stronger) indirect (direct) effect of global corporate brand image via product brand image on product purchase intention should emerge.

Regarding the measurement, we rely on brand images as important constructs to assess consumers' schemata. However, there is no consensus on how to measure image (e.g., Souiden, Amara and Chaouali 2020; Plumeyer et al. 2019). Established measures, e.g., brand equity (Keller 1993), can be applied to replicate our results and to provide additional insights into the interplay between the corporate and product brand (Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018). Moreover, global corporate and product brand image may vary over time and may be different from those for local brands. We controlled for brand familiarity but studies could additionally view further variables (e.g., product category involvement, Strizhakova, Coulter and Price 2011). Qualitative research allows for the development of emic, country-specific measures, which may enhance construct equivalence assessment (Ford et al. 2018). Due to the high number of countries surveyed and the resulting need for item comparability, we use slightly modified imposed etic and previously used scales (Yang, Floyd and Tanner Jr 2019; Douglas and Craig 2006).

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_15

Regarding our conceptual framework, scholars might study further branding strategies across nations, e.g., sub-branding or variations of endorsed branding (also different placements of the corporate on the product brand, Brexendorf and Keller 2017; Hsu, Fournier and Srinivasan 2016). Moreover, studying different modes of communication of corporate brands, temporal endorsed or co-branding could be promising (Åsberg and Uggla 2019). Future studies could also account for the combined effects of endorsed branding and celebrity endorsement (as an effective communication tool, Dwivedi, McDonald and Johnson 2014). The positive effects of endorsed branding can be enhanced by celebrity endorsers as respective attributes can be easily integrated into existing matching brand schemata (Knoll and Matthes 2017). They may also study the effects of schematic constructs (e.g., attributes within a schema, schema activation or favorability, Halkias 2015). Finally, the role of further cultural value dimensions or contextual factors on global endorsement might be studied (e.g., social media usage, political ideology, Gürhan-Canli, Sarial-Abi and Hayran 2018).

Part IV

Study 3: Effects of Internationalization Rhythm and Speed on E-Commerce Firms' Growth and the Role of Institutional Distances

Introduction

16

E-commerce firms, i.e., providers of online shops and platforms for physical goods to consumers, already account for more than 20% of total global retail sales (Young 2021). They benefit from Internet-based technologies that reduce expansion barriers and offer opportunities for internationalization (Shaheer and Li 2020). Firms such as Zalando capture these opportunities in specific time-based internationalization decisions (Coviello, Kano and Liesch 2017). Zalando is one of the top 10 fast-growing e-commerce firms in Europe (Digital Commerce 360 2018). It first launched a first country-specific online shop abroad in 2009 (a year after its foundation), followed by twelve more countries (2010–2012) and, years later, two other countries (Zalando 2021). The German firm seems to employ a fast and irregular internationalization process, but whether and how this process affects firm growth is an important unanswered question. Moreover, Zalando's internationalization is restricted to Europe, i.e., institutionally relatively close countries. It seems to be important for Zalando to control the dynamic aspects of its institutional context (Kostova et al. 2020), while the role of distances as a contextual factor is generally assumed to lose relevance in e-business (e.g., Chen et al. 2019; Yamin and Sinkovics 2006). Therefore, the focus of this study is to examine how the internationalization rhythm and speed of e-commerce firms—that is, different from manufacturing firms and born globals—affect firm growth and whether institutional distances are important contexts for this relationship.

Many scholars studied time-based internationalization decisions (see Figure 16.1). Most studies analyzed the drivers of manufacturing firms' internationalization rhythm or speed (e.g., Acedo and Jones 2007; Elosge et al. 2018; both Lin 2012; 2014) and, more seldom, their effects (e.g., Chetty, Johanson and Martín 2014). For commerce firms, only internationalization speed was analyzed, predominantly as a dependent variable (e.g., Batsakis and Mohr 2017; for e-commerce, Luo, Zhao and Du 2005). Three studies considered the effects of

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_16

internationalization speed for offline commerce firms and provided partly contradictory results (positive effects on performance and divestments, Chan, Finnegan and Sternquist 2011 and Mohr, Batsakis and Stone 2018, or a U-shaped effect on performance, Mohr and Batsakis 2017). Studies addressing similar issues for e-commerce firms or their internationalization rhythm are lacking. Moreover, studies partly undervalued the role of institutional distance or found contradictory results as well. Focusing on e-commerce firms, Luo, Zhao and Du (2005) found no effect of cultural distance on internationalization speed, while further studies showed a decelerating role of cultural or CAGE distances (Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016; Shaheer and Li 2020). The latter findings address distances but not for the effects of e-commerce firms' internationalization rhythm or speed.

Firm		Internationalization Rhythm	Internationalization Speed
Manufacturing	As Dependent Variable	Elosge et al. 2018; Lin and Cheng 2013.	Acedo and Jones 2007; Casillas and Moreno-Menéndez 2014; Gassmann and Keupp 2007; Hilmersson and Johanson 2020; Hilmersson et al. 2017; Hsieh et al. 2019; Hutzschenreuter et al. 2016; Musteen, Francis and Datta 2010; Satta, Parola and Persico 2014; etc.
			Lin 2012; Lin 2014.
	As Independent Variable	--	Chetty, Johanson and Martín 2014; Deng, Jean and Sinkovics 2018; García-García, García-Canal and Guillén 2017; Hilmersson and Johanson 2016; Jiang, Beamish and Makino 2014; Kim et al. 2020; Zhou 2007.
			--
Commerce	As Dependent Variable	--	Batsakis and Mohr 2017; **Luo, Zhao and Du 2005**; Mohr and Batsakis 2014; **Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016**; **Shaheer and Li 2020**; **Shaheer, Li and Priem 2020**.
			--
	As Independent Variable	--	Chan, Finnegan and Sternquist 2011; Mohr and Batsakis 2017; Mohr, Batsakis and Stone 2018.
		This Study.	

Note: Studies on e-commerce firms are bold. Studies considering distances between the home and the host country are in italics. Etc.=Further studies not listed here.

Figure 16.1 Literature Review. (Source: Own Creation)

In summary, research focused on internationalization speed, seldom rhythm and not their effects on e-commerce firms' growth. Scholars called for studies on their respective effects (Chen et al. 2019; Tolstoy et al. 2021). Specific insights are valuable for managers of e-commerce firms to design internationalization processes to increase firm growth (Jean and Tan 2019) and for suppliers interested in new e-sales channels. Scholars also recently called for insights into the role of cross-national distances in internationalization processes (Samiee 2020; Shaheer and Li 2020); others see their vanishing importance in digitalizing economies (e.g., Yamin and Sinkovics 2006). We assume that e-commerce firms still face challenges regarding the management of institutional contexts, as those not only affect internationalization processes but also their role in firms' sales growth (Zaheer, Schomaker and Nachum 2012). Understanding the relative importance of

major distances for internationalization process effects helps firms to successfully operate e-businesses internationally.

This study aims to address these research gaps by analyzing two research questions. First, how can e-commerce firms benefit from internationalization process rhythm and speed in terms of firm growth? Second, whether and how do institutional distances moderate these effects? We thereby offer two important contributions to theory and practice.

First, examining the effect of e-commerce firms' internationalization rhythm and speed on firms' growth provides novel insights into the success of time-based internationalization decisions (e.g., Vermeulen and Barkema 2002). We contribute to contradictory findings on the effects of commerce firms' internationalization speed and initially show the effects of internationalization rhythm on e-commerce firms' growth. Analyzing internationalization processes is of paramount importance, as these are known to be major strategic decisions in MNCs (which differently affect the overall firm performance, Hilmersson et al. 2017). In line with previous studies, we refer to internationalization process theory, which expects firms to internationalize in a gradual manner (Johanson and Vahlne 1977). However, we contribute to the application of the further development of this theory in a digitalizing economy by empirically capturing e-commerce firms' time-based internationalization processes over time (responding to calls, Coviello, Kano and Liesch 2017). Therefore, the internationalization process of e-commerce firms is still expected to be path dependent but not necessarily incremental and rather slow (e.g., Luo, Zhao and Du 2005).

Second, we contribute to the research by following calls and examining institutional distances as steady moderators, i.e., degrees of cross-country contextual differences (Kostova et al. 2020). Following the extant research, we assume that the institutional context does not affect firm growth directly only and independently but interacts with important e-commerce firms' internationalization processes (Brouthers and Hennart 2007; Schwens, Eiche and Kabst 2011). Multilevel modeling with cross-level interactions shows the explained variances of important institutional distances and identifies the strongest levers (Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, pp. 4–5). We also contribute to the application of internationalization process theory and the suggested role of country distances in this theory (Johanson and Vahlne 2009). In digital economies, some scholars expect these distances to have reduced or no importance (e.g., not affecting internationalization, Yamin and Sinkovics 2006), while others expect the opposite (e.g., Shaheer and Li 2020). Even e-commerce firms operating country-specific websites have to find appropriate local business partners and build up a customer base (Brouthers, Geisser and Rothlauf 2016). As such, the management of

international expansion and of distances was equated (Kostova et al. 2020), we assume institutional distances to affect e-commerce firms' internationalization process effects. Thus, we contribute to the literature by initially clarifying the role of institutions in the context of e-commerce. According to the broad international business (IB) research, we study the degree of regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive institutions (Kostova et al. 2020; Scott 1991) and extend the studies on each of those dimensions, for example, by showing the explained variance and relative importance of each moderator.

The remainder of this study proceeds as follows. Drawing on theory, we derive and test hypotheses based on 1,702 market entries over 21 years of 228 e-commerce firms leading in Europe. After presenting the results, we provide implications and directions for further research.

Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis 17

17.1 Definitions

In the conceptual framework of this study, e-commerce firms' internationalization rhythm and speed are related to annual firm growth over time (see Figure 17.1). These effects are conceptualized as dependent on institutional country distances as continuous moderators.

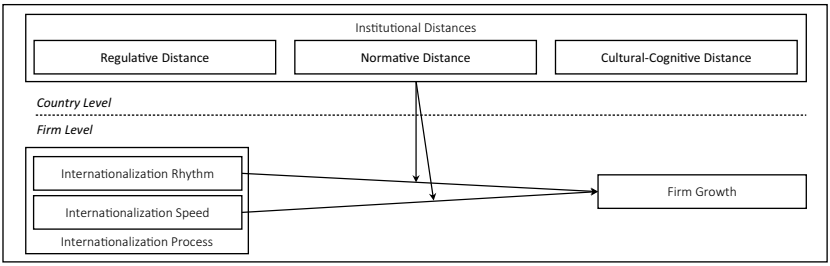


Figure 17.1 Conceptual Framework. (Source: Own Creation)

Annual growth is an important performance indicator of commerce firms (e.g., Chan, Finnegan and Sternquist 2011), and internationalization rhythm and speed are important time-based indicators that capture firms' internationalization processes (Lin and Cheng 2013). Vermeulen and Barkema (2002) were among the first researchers to discover internationalization rhythms and define them as irregular firms' expansion processes. Internationalization rhythm itself does not refer to regularity but irregularity. Whereas the authors analyze the processes of MNCs, we adapt that conceptualization to e-commerce firms by referring to

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_17

foreign market entries, i.e., launches of country-specific online shops in terms of domain, language, and currency (e.g., Schu and Morschett 2017; Shneor and Flåten 2008). E-commerce firms that follow a rhythmic, regular expansion process may, for example, launch one country-specific online shop every third year (see Figure 17.2, the two plots on the left-hand side). In contrast, firms that follow an arrhythmic, irregular expansion process may launch several online shops in three years, followed by several years of inactivity (two right-hand plots). Internationalization speed is defined as a time-based indicator of how many country-specific online shops a firm launches in a time period (Vermeulen and Barkema 2002) but is conceptualized differently in IB studies (Hilmersson et al. 2017; Hsieh et al. 2019). First, a static focus on pre-internationalization occurs as the time between the firm's foundation and first international activity is viewed as the internationalization speed (Hilmersson 2014). Second, an overall conceptualization of speed as the average number of foreign entries per year exists (Vermeulen and Barkema 2002). Third, speed is the time that elapses between two consecutive market entries within the internationalization process (Casillas and Acedo 2013). We rely on the third conceptualization because it allows us to gain a deep understanding of how e-commerce firms' internationalization processes develop and to longitudinally account for their path-dependency (e.g., Casillas and Moreno-Menéndez 2014; Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016).

Institutions are conceptualized by the degree of regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive institutional distances as continuous moderators with reference to organizational institutionalism (the most prominent approach, He, Brouthers and Filatotchev 2013; Scott 1991). Organizational institutionalism emphasizes firms' challenges due to institutional distance based on differences between home and host countries without referring to institutional quality itself (Kostova et al. 2020). The regulative pillar comprises the establishment of rules and laws within a country, the monitoring of regulatory processes, and sanctioning activities. The normative pillar includes norms and codes of conduct as well as prescriptive, evaluative, and obligatory dimensions in social life. The cultural-cognitive pillar constitutes the shared meaning and common values in a society that shape the nature of and give meaning to everyday life (Scott 2014, pp. 59–67).

Next, we refer to internationalization process theory and its further development to address our research aims to examine the effects of e-commerce firms' internationalization processes and the moderating effects.

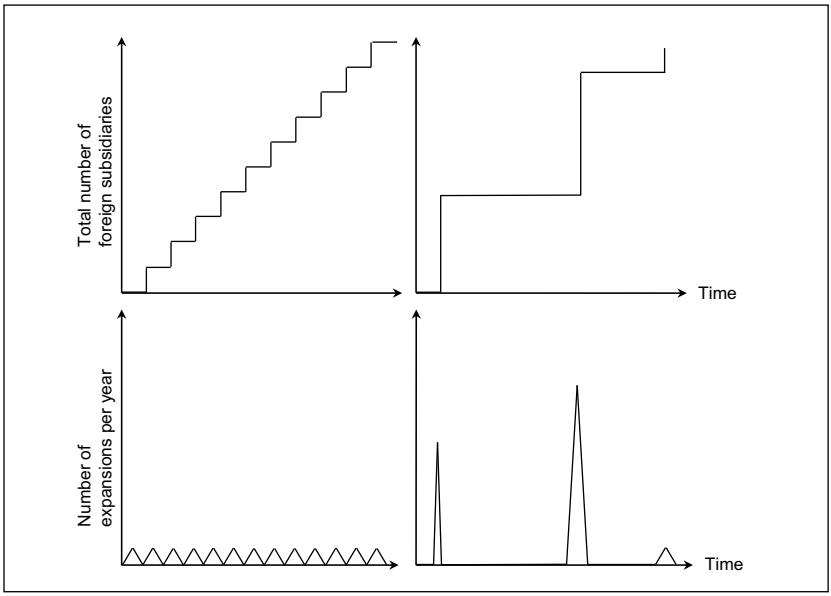


Figure 17.2 Regular vs. Irregular Internationalization Process. (Source: Own Creation)

17.2 Theory

Internationalization process theory suggests that firms follow a certain internationalization process to increase their growth, conceptualized as an incremental, gradual process of entering foreign markets over time (Johanson and Vahlne 1977). In the Uppsala model, firms enter a foreign market when they have sufficient experience to reduce uncertainties, which may also occur quickly over time (Hilmersson and Johanson 2016; Johanson and Vahlne 2009). This aligns with firms' regular internationalization process as irregularity leads to reduced experiential learning (Vermeulen and Barkema 2002). In revised versions of the theory, Vahlne and Johanson (2017) indicated changes in internationalization in the modern world. Firms are more open to decisions based on risk and uncertainty, which leads to higher strategic flexibility. Their focus shifts from opportunity recognition to exploitation, which may accelerate foreign expansion processes. However, the thesis that successful internationalization is an incremental process holds.

Regarding online internationalization, scholars have questioned the applicability of traditional internationalization process theory, but e-commerce firms' growth may still be dependent on internationalization processes (e.g., Benmamoun et al. 2019; Schu and Morschett 2017). The nature of e-commerce firms fundamentally differs from that of traditional MNCs and goes beyond that of newly characterized modern firms and born globals in terms of their offers, distribution, or value chain (e.g., Luo, Zhao and Du 2005). Digitalization changes the way e-commerce firms design internationalization processes to be successful (Coviello, Kano and Liesch 2017). In a globally connected world, consumers can be reached quickly, resources can be accessed, and information can be exchanged more easily (Amit and Zott 2001). High strategic flexibility and less complex cross-national coordination facilitate organizational learning and reduce prior knowledge integration when making further international expansion steps (Amit and Han 2017; Autio et al. 2018). The need for an incremental, slower internationalization process is mostly alleviated (Monaghan, Tippmann and Coviello 2020). Firms that capture this change when designing their process are able to compete successfully in an online environment. We therefore refer to an e-commerce-specific, enhanced version of internationalization process theory that assumes that an irregular and fast process is critical to increase firm growth (e.g., Benmamoun et al. 2019; Nambisan, Zahra and Luo 2019). In contrast to characterized modern firms, these characteristics of e-commerce firms' internationalization processes may align with those of born globals (e.g., Garcia-Lillo et al. 2017). However, based on the definition of e-commerce firms, we clearly differentiate them from born globals. The literature on born globals mostly analyzed knowledge-intensive firms from the software and biotechnology industries (e.g., Autio, Sapienza and Almeida 2000; Hagen and Zucchella 2014). Born globals often sell non-physical products, rely on patents, or are active in B2B-markets, i.e., have firms and not customers as target groups (e.g., Hennart, Majocchi and Hagen 2021; Trudgen and Freeman 2014). This implies different marketing, payment, logistic, or regulative requirements for born globals, which lead to special requirements for their internationalization processes. Moreover, a firm is characterized as a born global when it has a large foreign sales share one to three years after inception (e.g., Patel, Criaco and Naldi 2018). This is not the case for most e-commerce firms (e.g., even Amazon has only a 32% foreign sales share 26 years after inception, Amazon 2021).

In internationalization process theory, institutional distance between home and host countries is suggested to be an important context (Johanson and Vahlne 2009). When institutional distance is high, firms suffer from a liability of foreignness due to missing market knowledge. The transfer of firm-specific advantages

to the host country and the establishment of external legitimacy are complicated (Dong, Fang and Straub 2017; Kostova et al. 2020). Increasing distance hampers organizational learning and enhances the need to integrate prior knowledge, forcing firms to internationalize more incrementally to increase firm growth (Johanson and Vahlne 1977; 2009).

The effects of e-commerce firms' internationalization processes on firm growth are expected to be affected by institutional distance (Shaheer and Li 2020). E-commerce firms have advantages in reaching consumers, accessing resources, and communicating but lack specific institutional market knowledge, which they have to learn about in institutionally distant countries, for example. E-commerce firms may not have to learn how to reduce investment risks for foreign market entry as a primary strategy, but they first need to know how to develop a user base and network to overcome liabilities of outsidership (Brouthers, Geisser and Rothlauf 2016; Rothaermel, Kotha and Steensma 2006). This complicates their transfer of economic advantages, resulting in a greater challenge in gaining external legitimacy. As e-commerce firms still sell physical goods, managing expansion steps, for example, in the form of finding appropriate logistic partners to assure local service standards and to overcome liabilities of foreignness becomes more complex in institutionally distant countries (Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016). They may benefit less in terms of firm growth from an irregular and rapid internationalizing process when institutional distance is high. We capture institutions according to Scott (Scott 2014, p. 56), who argued that regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive elements affect organizational structures and actions. All these pillars may decrease e-commerce firms' benefits from irregular and rapid internationalization in terms of growth.

Next, the study's hypotheses are derived with reference to theoretical, e-commerce firm-specific rationales and empirical insights. First, arguments for the effects of internationalization processes are provided. Second, rationales for each moderator's role in the effects of internationalization rhythm and speed on firms' growth are developed.

17.3 Hypothesis Development

In the context of e-commerce, internationalization process theory suggests that firm growth is dependent on the rhythm of the internationalization process (e.g., Schu and Morschett 2017). However, to realize strong growth rates, the internationalization process of e-commerce firms does not have to be incremental or regular (e.g., Benmamoun et al. 2019).

E-commerce firms' characteristics and the digital area they operate in enable more informed decision-making and higher flexibility, which facilitates their coordination of cross-national processes (e.g., Amit and Zott 2001). E-commerce firms taking advantage of easier cross-national coordination by employing an irregular internationalization process can follow the trend of growing by exploiting global opportunities whenever they recognize them (Monaghan, Tippmann and Coviello 2020). To stay competitive, they can afford less time to build up and integrate prior knowledge when planning further international expansion steps (Amit and Han 2017; Autio et al. 2018). E-commerce firms can rely on opportunity-capture heuristics by observing other e-commerce firms, for example, to increase firm growth (Monaghan and Tippmann 2018). Such an opportunity-based, irregular internationalization process allows for entering foreign markets by following consumer trends and internationally exploiting firm-specific advantages whenever time is ready (Benmamoun et al. 2019). Additionally, e-commerce firms can internationalize whenever they need resources that are available in foreign countries (e.g., payment partners), which further enhances firm growth. Therefore, we expect e-commerce firms to have higher firm growth prospects when internationalizing irregularly. No previous study empirically supports our rationales. However, we propose the following:

H1. E-commerce firms' internationalization rhythm (its irregularity) has a positive effect on firm growth.

Internationalization process theory also suggests that an e-commerce firm's growth is dependent on its internationalization speed (e.g., Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016). To stay competitive in an online environment, fast international expansion may be a critical success factor (e.g., Shaheer and Li 2020).

E-commerce firms have the ability to make use of the benefits of digitalization in their international expansion processes (Coviello, Kano and Liesch 2017; Nambisan, Zahra and Luo 2019). These benefits generally accelerate organizational learning (Autio et al. 2018). E-commerce firms can even accelerate their organizational learning more in comparison to their online competitors by employing a rapid internationalization process (Shaheer and Li 2020). When internationalizing faster, they can build up resources and complementary assets quicker and rapidly achieve the respective synergies (Monaghan, Tippmann and Coviello 2020). Additionally, a high internationalization speed enables e-commerce firms to avoid imitations, capture global opportunities, and build an international customer base to gain first-mover and competitive advantages (e.g., Amit and Han 2017; Schu,

Morschett and Swoboda 2016). Exploiting such advantages through a fast internationalization process increases firm growth. We expect e-commerce firms to benefit more from a faster (vs. slower) internationalization process in terms of firm growth. Empirical studies have indicated a positive effect of internationalization speed on performance, but only for offline commerce or manufacturing firms (e.g., Chan, Finnegan and Sternquist 2011; Deng, Jean and Sinkovics 2018). The following hypothesis is proposed:

H2. E-commerce firms' internationalization speed has a positive effect on firm growth.

Internationalization process theory expects regulative distance to affect the way firms benefit from their internationalization process (Johanson and Vahlne 2009; Kostova et al. 2020). Moreover, differences in regulative institutions may affect or even change e-commerce firms' market entry decisions as they, for example, monitor exports, sanction undeclared goods, or define e-commerce firms' transactional integrity (Jean and Tan 2019; Oxley and Yeung 2001). Host country regulations create pressure for their legal conformance to gain market access and external legitimacy (e.g., Dong, Fang and Straub 2017; Scott 2014, p. 59). When the regulative distance between the home and the host country increases, conforming and establishing legitimacy becomes more difficult (Chao and Kumar 2010).

In highly regulative distant countries, e-commerce firms have more difficulty transferring firm-specific advantages (Ang, Benischke and Doh 2015). Such countries are also associated with greater challenges in managing expansion steps as designing reliable contracts with, for example, local logistic partners becomes more complicated (Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016). The integration of prior knowledge to successfully coordinate expansion over time in countries with more regulative distant seems to gain importance, which can be considered by using a more rhythmic internationalization process (Vermeulen and Barkema 2002). Aiming to enhance firm growth, the irregular internationalization process of e-commerce firms will be reduced when entering highly regulative distant countries.

Moreover, if the countries are more distant in terms of their regulative institutions, e-commerce firms will suffer from a liability of outsidership, making international expansion more complex (e.g., Brouthers, Geisser and Rothlauf 2016). This increased complexity may alleviate firms' benefits of fast organizational learning and circumventing some barriers to traditional entry. Due to the

need to fulfill the respective regulations and build up a customer base and network, the e-commerce firms' internationalization process takes more time (Luo, Zhao and Du 2005). Consequently, to increase firm growth when entering highly regulative distant countries, e-commerce firms' international expansion processes will slow down.

In summary, we assume diminished relationships between irregular or fast internationalization and firm growth with increasing regulative distance. Such links have not been empirically shown, but studies show that regulative institutions negatively affect market entry or internationalization speed decisions in e-commerce (e.g., Luo, Zhao and Du 2005; Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016). We propose the following:

H3. An increasing degree of regulative distance negatively moderates the effect of e-commerce firms' (a) internationalization rhythm (irregularity) and (b) internationalization speed on firm growth.

According to internationalization process theory, the effects of e-commerce firms' internationalization process rhythm and speed may change due to the normative distance (Johanson and Vahlne 2009; Kostova et al. 2020). Normative institutions reflect appropriate and desirable models of local behavior and incorporate informally sanctioned social obligations (Scott 2014, p. 64). Differing norms or codes of conduct for e-commerce firms' negotiations with, for example, logistic partners or for expectations of transparency towards business partners may hinder or encourage their market entries (Moore et al. 2015). They are often neither externalized nor made available (Eden and Miller 2004, pp. 15–16), making it difficult for foreign e-commerce firms to conform to social norms in host countries with an increasing normative distance as a basis for external legitimacy (Dong, Fang and Straub 2017).

Due to this possible lack of knowledge, normative distance is a potential source of e-commerce firms' liability of outsidership (Rothaermel, Kotha and Steensma 2006; Schu and Morschett 2017). To recognize, understand, and respond appropriately to host countries' more distant normative institutions, the integration of prior knowledge for further international expansion is required (Pogrebnyakov and Maitland 2011). Hence, when entering countries with high normative distance, e-commerce firms may adjust their internationalization rhythm over time. When striving for strong firm growth, internationalizing less irregularly may be more appropriate in such contexts.

Moreover, when the home and host countries' normative backgrounds are dissimilar, normative institutions can manifest as entry barriers (if recognized, Pogrebnyakov and Maitland 2011). This complicates the management of international expansion steps and decelerates organizational learning, which is necessary to build up customer and business networks. To realize strong firm growth, e-commerce firms may slow down their internationalization processes accordingly (Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016).

We assume that increasing normative distance weakens the effects of e-commerce firms' internationalization process rhythm and speed on firm growth. However, empirical studies have not indicated the role of normative distance in our context. We therefore carefully hypothesize the following:

H4. An increasing degree of normative distance negatively moderates the effects of e-commerce firms' (a) internationalization rhythm (irregularity) and (b) internationalization speed on firm growth.

Internationalization process theory suggests that the effects of e-commerce firms' internationalization rhythm and speed change due to the cultural-cognitive distance between the home and host countries (Johanson and Vahlne 2009; Kostova et al. 2020). Cultural-cognitive institutions indicate the shared meanings and values of a society (Scott 2014, p. 69). Firms have direct contact with consumers in a country and need to address consumers' values, online preferences, or needs to achieve legitimacy (Dong, Fang and Straub 2017). Differences in consumers' shared meaning about, for example, openness towards technology use or online communication may influence e-commerce firms' market entry (e.g., Shaheer and Li 2020). Conformance with such values and needs is more difficult to achieve when operating in countries with an increasing cultural-cognitive distance (Kim and Jensen 2014; Rothaermel, Kotha and Steensma 2006).

Translating textual website elements is not sufficient (Shaheer and Li 2020). E-commerce firms need to adapt their websites visually (Singh, Zhao and Hu 2005). More importantly, they need to adapt their websites' ease of use, customer services, or assortments to provide strong shopping experiences to consumers (e.g., Bleier, Harmeling and Palmatier 2019; Wagner, Schramm-Klein and Steinmann 2020). Knowledge of the elements that align particularly with consumers' values, preferences, or needs in more distant countries and designing respective offers takes time. In such distant environments, firms have difficulty engaging in the benefits of facilitated cross-national coordination and have to adjust their internationalization process rhythm. Internationalizing less irregularly over time

when entering countries that have high cultural-cognitive distance is likely to be beneficial for firm growth.

Cultural-cognitive distance also increases e-commerce firms' liability of outsidership (Hutzschenreuter, Kleindienst and Lange 2016). E-commerce firms must know consumers' values or be able to adapt offers and create an essential shopping experience for consumers (Bleier, Harmeling and Palmatier 2019). Thus, managing expansion steps in such countries becomes more complex, which decelerates the organizational learning needed to build up a customer base (Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016). When expanding in highly cultural-cognitive distant countries, e-commerce firms may maintain firm growth by accounting for these challenges through a slower internationalization process.

In summary, increased cultural-cognitive distance diminishes the effects of e-commerce firms' internationalization processes on firm growth. Cultural distance has been shown to negatively affect the internationalization speed and market selection of online firms (e.g., Shaheer and Li 2020; Rothaermel, Kotha and Steensma 2006) but not the studied effects. We propose the following:

H5. An increasing degree of cultural-cognitive distance negatively moderates the effect of e-commerce firms' (a) internationalization rhythm (irregularity) and (b) internationalization speed on firm growth.

Empirical Study

18

18.1 Sample

For the sample selection, foreign market entry of e-commerce firms was commonly defined as the first launch of an online shop in a country with a country-specific domain, language, and currency (e.g., Schu and Morschett 2017). We developed a unique hierarchical database over a 21-year period by using different sources.

First, the selection of e-commerce firms was based on the 2018 Internet Retailer's ranking of Europe's 500 largest e-commerce firms (Digital Commerce 360 2018). These firms operate the leading online shops in Europe but are not necessarily founded in Europe and may be active worldwide. To be included in our dataset, they need to be present in at least one foreign country. E-commerce firms that operated only in their home market (N = 192) or solely offered international shipping through a ".com-domain" (N = 8) were excluded, leading to 300 firms. Digital Commerce tracked firms for 20 years via their sales data (data coming directly from an e-commerce firm or estimated by Digital Commerce and verified by each firm, Digital Commerce 360 2021). To the best of our knowledge, this is the only database that provides sales data for e-commerce firms, as most of them—like most offline commerce firms—are not obligated to report performance data.

Second, we collected data on each e-commerce firm's internationalization process step by step through its websites, annual reports, press releases, published articles, or social media. Foreign market entries were considered to match the respective year. Whenever possible, the data was verified by two sources, and we opened and double-checked the existence of almost every country's website. On that basis, all e-commerce firms for which the internationalization process was

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_18

not reconstructible over time (N = 72) were excluded. The final sample included 228 firms operating in various industries (fashion, food and drugs, electronics and media, furniture or general merchandise).

Third, country data were obtained from the World Bank (2018) and the World Competitiveness Yearbook (Institute for Management Development 2018), and national cultural values were provided by Schwartz (1994). Different from when calculating the independent variables, market entries for which country data on institutional dimensions were not available were excluded from the hypotheses tests.

The data included 228 firms from 20 home countries with 1,702 market entries in 39 host countries from 1996–2017 (see Table 18.1). The data were not normally distributed. A maximum likelihood estimator with robust standard errors and chi-square test statistics was used to test the hypotheses (Maydeu-Olivares 2017).

18.2 Measurement

Dependent Variable. Firm growth was measured at the firm level by the percentage of the year-to-year change in online sales (e.g., Zhou and Wu 2014). Data were available for the years 2012 to 2017. Due to convergence reasons, we observed all market entries available when calculating cross-level interactions (Kline 2015, p. 81). For all entries before 2012, the annual growth from 2012 to 2013 was calculated. For further entries, the annual growth between the year of market entry and the consecutive year was calculated for each firm. To the best of our knowledge, annual sales growth is an important and solely available performance measure of e-commerce firms in Europe (Chan, Finnegan and Sternquist 2011; the only study with objective measures, Colton, Roth and Bearden 2010). Performance measures differ greatly (e.g., return on assets or equity, Mohr and Batsakis 2017), but most require a benchmark that is missing for e-commerce firms to be meaningful.

Independent Variables. Internationalization rhythm and speed (two variables at the firm level, Hilmersson et al. 2017; Lin 2012) were calculated on the basis of all collected foreign market entries, irrespective of country data availability. Both variables are measured on a yearly basis due to incomplete and non-reliable daily and monthly-based data. Internationalization rhythm was measured by the kurtosis of firms' foreign market entries over time (Vermeulen and Barkema 2002; Lin 2014). This measure goes beyond capturing variations in the coefficient and accounts for the distribution and concentration of foreign market entries over time (Elosge et al. 2018). It was captured dynamically for each year of market entry

Table 18.1 Sample Distribution. (Source: Own Creation)

Home Countries	Number of E-Commerce Firms	Number of Market Entries
Austria	1	9
Canada	1	1
China	6	79
Czech Republic	4	10
Denmark	4	34
France	44	263
Germany	43	294
United Kingdom	60	436
Indonesia	1	1
Italy	5	39
South Korea	1	26
Netherlands	5	27
Norway	1	3
Poland	4	13
Rumania	1	1
Russia	1	1
Spain	6	76
Switzerland	5	55
Turkey	3	7
United States of America	32	327
Total	**228**	**1,702**

based on a four-year period according to the following formula:

$$\text{Kurtosis} = \left\{ \frac{n\,(n\,+\,1)}{(n-1)\,(n-2)\,(n-3)} - \sum \left(\frac{x_i - \overline{x}}{s} \right)^4 \right\} - \frac{3(n-1)^2}{(n-2)(n-3)}, \tag{18.1}$$

where n is the number of observations, x_i is the number of foreign market entries during year i, and s denotes the standard deviation of the number of foreign market entries. Low kurtosis reflects regular internationalization, and high kurtosis reflects irregular internationalization.

Internationalization speed was dynamically measured as the number of years between two consecutive market entries (Casillas and Moreno-Menéndez 2014; used as an inverse to facilitate interpretation, Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016). When there are multiple market entries in one year, the time between two consecutive market entries is 0. This measure is superior to unidimensional or multidimensional measures capturing internationalization speed rather static and more general (e.g., García-García, García-Canal and Guillén 2017; Hsieh et al. 2019).

Moderators. The regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive distances between home and host countries were measured by established indicators in the IB research (e.g., Kostova et al. 2020).

We measure regulative distance by the World Governance Indicators of the World Bank (as used in recent well-published journals, Ang, Benischke and Doh 2015; Konara and Shirodkar 2018). The indicator consists of six dimensions, i.e., voice and accountability, political stability and absence of violence, government efficiency, regulatory quality, rule of law, and control of corruption (World Bank 2018), and is one of the most often used measures for regulative distance (especially in studies referring to Scott 1991; Kostova et al. 2020). Studies have shown the relevance of the rule of law (Oxley and Yeung 2001), corruption (Berthon et al. 2008) or overall regulative environment (e.g., Martinez and Williams 2010; Zhu and Thatcher 2010) for a country's e-readiness, which constitutes the e-commerce firm's business environment in a foreign country. Data for the World Governance Indicators are freely available on a biannual basis (e.g., Kaufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi 2005). Due to comparability issues with other moderators, regulative distance was measured at one point in time.

Normative distance was measured based on indicators of the government efficiency category from the World Competitiveness Yearbook (as suggested by Kostova et al. 2020 and widely used in recent studies, e.g., Ang, Benischke and Doh 2015; Moore et al. 2015). We followed Gaur, Delios and Singh (2007) and Gaur and Lu (2007) by using the following five dimensions: adaptation of the political system to economic challenges, adaptability of government policy, transparency, risk of political instability, and bureaucracy (Institute for Management Development 2018). The World Competitiveness Yearbook is not freely available; thus, normative distance was measured statically. A second measure of normative

distance suggested by Kostova et al. (2020) was used in the alternative model section.

Cultural-cognitive distance is often measured by the cultural dimensions of Hofstede (1980). We rely on the approach of Schwartz (1994) because this cultural value model is theoretically profound, enables a more complex cross-country comparison, considers guidance for behavior, and explains (at least by tendency) more of the country-level variance (e.g., De Mooij 2017; Drogendijk and Slangen 2006; Siegel, Licht and Schwartz 2013). Due to the binary nature of the value dimensions, cultural-cognitive distance was measured by the embeddedness, hierarchy, and mastery dimensions. The data from Schwartz (1994) are only available at one point time.

To consider the multidimensionality of the institutions, the Mahalanobis distance method was applied. This method is preferable due to its ability to account for the variance-covariance matrix of the underlying institutional dimensions (e.g., He, Brouthers and Filatotchev 2013).

Controls. Important variables were controlled at the firm level and the country level.

We controlled for e-commerce firms' home market size, which may affect their growth (e.g., Oh, Sohl and Rugman 2015). A large home market size offers stronger domestic growth opportunities, and a small home market size may force internationalization (Hsieh et al. 2019). Home market size was measured by the logarithm of the country's gross domestic product. Data were gathered from the World Bank (2018).

We controlled for firm size as an important antecedent of firms' growth and internationalization (e.g., Rothaermel, Kotha and Steensma 2006). Firm size was measured by the logarithm of firms' sales (Digital Commerce 360 2018; Lin and Cheng 2013) because the number of employees was not available to us and e-commerce firms are known to hire fewer employees but have high sales volumes (Luo, Zhao and Du 2005).

Firms' multichannel strategy was controlled (Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016). Pure e-commerce firms have a higher ratio of internet-based business activities than firms operating offline and online sales channels. This ratio enhances firm flexibility and may affect internationalization processes and growth (Monaghan, Tippmann and Coviello 2020). This traditional multichannel strategy was measured dichotomously (firm also operates an offline shop as a sales channel = 1 or not = 0).

We controlled for firms' use of major online channels. Internet use differs between traditional online and mobile devices (e.g., Wagner, Schramm-Klein and Steinmann 2020). Applying both major e-channels attracts more consumers and

increases firms' sales growth but requires more market adaptation efforts, for example, and may hamper internationalization processes (Shaheer, Li and Priem 2020). We measured it dichotomously (1 = both e-channels, 0 = only traditional e-devices, Digital Commerce 360 2018).

Finally, the domain used for foreign market entry was controlled and measured categorically, indicating whether a firm used, e.g., the ".de"- (0), ".com/de"- (1), or "de.companyname.com" domain (2) for a country-specific online shop. Using a pure country-specific domain indicates a more localized website and higher adaptation efforts, possibly changing internationalization processes and firm growth options (e.g., Monaghan, Tippmann and Coviello 2020; Shneor and Flåten 2008). We collected these data as described above.

At the country level, we controlled for host country market size as an indicator of a firm's local growth options (e.g., Shaheer and Li 2020). Large countries may affect a fast entry and internationalization processes to capture growth options (Deng, Jean and Sinkovics 2018). We used the logarithm of a country's gross domestic product (Schu and Morschett 2017) and data from the World Bank (2018).

Possible home country dominance was addressed in the alternative model section. Table 18.2 shows the descriptive statistics and partial correlations of all variables. Correlations do not exceed .346 and .533 at the firm and country levels, respectively. We tested for variance inflation factors that are below the common threshold of 10 (e.g., O'Brien 2007). Multicollinearity did not seem to be a serious problem in this study.

Tests for endogeneity reduce potential biases from omitted variables (Antonakis et al. 2014). International online experience (measured by the number of years a firm was internationally active online, Batsakis and Mohr 2017) was selected as a theoretically related instrumental variable (IV) for firms' internationalization rhythm for two reasons. First, international online experience builds the basis for a path-dependent internationalization process (e.g., Johanson and Vahlne 2009). Second, international online experience is an intangible resource, which determines the risk e-commerce firms are willing to take when determining the irregularity of their internationalization process (Lin 2014). Firms' website traffic (measured by unique monthly website visits, Kotha, Rindova and Rothaermel 2001) was chosen as a relevant IV for firms' internationalization speed because it encourages e-commerce firms to internationalize (e.g., Benmamoun et al. 2019). Website traffic is an indicator for e-commerce firms' customer relations and their promotional effectiveness in terms of foreign website access and search engine placements (e.g., Kromidha and Robson 2021). Consequently, higher website traffic facilitates building up partnerships and attracting consumers, which accelerates

Table 18.2 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations. (Source: Own Creation)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Mean	.213	12.834	.953	.680	.980	19.252	28.919	2.540	9.009	10.938	7.009	27.235
SD	.443	.695	2.225	.466	.140	1.548	1.040	.596	2.409	3.538	3.629	1.624
VIF	–	1.194	1.221	1.092	1.015	1.040	1.033	1.193	1.249	1.517	1.431	1.153
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(6)**	**(7)**	**(8)**	**(9)**	**(10)**	**(11)**	**(12)**
Growth (1)	1											
Rhythm (2)	.054 *	1										
Speed (3)	−.014 ns	.346 **	1									
MC (4)	.018 ns	−.043 ns	−.041 ns	1								
Mobile Version (5)	.015 ns	.027 ns	−.008 ns	.037 ns	1							
Size (6)	.218 ***	−.132 **	−.083 **	.073 **	.029 ns	1						
Home MS (7)	−.034 ns	−.029 ns	−.034 ns	.015 ns	.023 ns	.076 **	1					
Domain (8)	.071 **	−.053 *	.215 ***	−.268 ***	−.097 ***	−.078 **	−.043 ns	1				
REGDIS (9)									1			
NORDIS (10)									.337 ***	1		

(continued)

Table 18.2 (continued)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Mean	.213	12.834	.953	.680	.980	19.252	28.919	2.540	9.009	10.938	7.009	27.235
SD	.443	.695	2.225	.466	.140	1.548	1.040	.596	2.409	3.538	3.629	1.624
VIF	–	1.194	1.221	1.092	1.015	1.040	1.033	1.193	1.249	1.517	1.431	1.153
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**	**(6)**	**(7)**	**(8)**	**(9)**	**(10)**	**(11)**	**(12)**
CULDIS (11)									.247 ***	.533 ***	1	
Host MS (12)									.267 b	.136 ***	.163 ***	1

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; ns = not significant.

Note: CULDIS = Cultural Distance; Home MS = Home Market Size, Host MS = Host Market Size; MC = Multichannel; NORDIS = Normative Distance; REGDIS = Regulative Distance; SD = Standard Deviation; VIF = Variance Inflation Factor.

the penetration of foreign markets (Kotha, Rindova and Rothaermel 2001). The IVs' strength was tested using F-tests (Stock and Watson 2019, p. 270). The efficient and consistent models do not differ significantly, indicating the exogeneity of the internationalization rhythm and speed in this study (Hausman 1978; see Table 18.3).

Table 18.3 Comparison of Consistent and Proposed Model. (Source: Own Creation)

		Random Intercept (Baseline) Model			
		Consistent Model		**Proposed/Efficient Model**	
		b	*p*	b	*p*
Direct Effects					
Rhythm	→ Growth	.066	*	.070	*
Speed	→ Growth	.012	*	.013	*
IV_1	→ Rhythm	−.041	***		
IV_2	→ Speed	.102	**		
Controls (Company Level)					
Multichannel	→ Growth	.029	ns	.015	ns
Mobile Site	→ Growth	.052	ns	.054	ns
Firm Size	→ Growth	.065	**	.065	**
Home Market Size	→ Growth	.003	ns	−.002	ns
Domain	→ Growth	.111	ns	.114	ns
Controls (Country Level)					
Host Market Size	→ Growth	−.087	ns	.081	ns
AIC		26,826.183		16,307.672	
BIC (Adjusted)		26,875.532		16,343.875	

$^{*}p < .05$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{***}p < .001$; ns = not significant.
Note: b = Unstandardized Coefficients; IV = Instrumental Variable.

18.3 Method

For hypotheses tests, multilevel modeling with cross-level interactions was applied using Mplus 8.6. Multilevel modeling accounts for the nested data structure (firms active in several countries) by simultaneously considering the interactions of firm- and country-level variables and the variance between and within countries (Finch and Bolin 2017, p. 28). To test whether multilevel modeling is appropriate, intraclass correlations were calculated in a null model without predictor variables. 10.2% of the variance in firm growth is attributed to country differences. Multilevel modeling is highly adequate (Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, p. 215).

Stepwise random intercept and slope models were computed (Finch and Bolin 2017, pp. 33–37), and AIC and BIC were used to assess model fit. First, a baseline model including firm-level controls was calculated and supplemented by adding all further firm-level independent variables. The latter and all moderators were grand mean centered (increasing interpretability of intercepts, Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, pp. 61–63). The following equation describes this model:

$$Growth_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j}\left(Speed_{ij}\right) + \beta_{2j}\left(Rhythm_{ij}\right) + \beta_{Controls}\left(ILC_{ij}\right) + r_{ij}, \tag{18.2}$$

with i denoting e-commerce firms and j countries. $Growth_{ij}$ reflects firm i's growth. $Speed_{ij}$ indicates firm i's internationalization speed, and $Rhythm_{ij}$ stands for firm i's internationalization rhythm. ILC_{ij} includes firm-level control variables. β_{0j} denotes the first-level intercept, whereas β_{1j} and β_{2j} indicate the regression scores of the independent variables at the firm level. Intercept β_{0j} and slopes β_{1j} and β_{2j} are allowed to vary across countries. r_{ij} is the first-level error term.

Country-specific control (second baseline model) and country-level moderators were considered to predict variation in the β coefficients:

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}\left(CLV_j\right) + \gamma_{02}\left(CLC_j\right) + u_{0j}, \tag{18.3}$$

$$\beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10} + \gamma_{11}\left(CLV_j\right) + u_{1j}, \tag{18.4}$$

$$\beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20} + \gamma_{21}\left(CLV_j\right) + u_{2j}, \tag{18.5}$$

where γ_{00} denotes the second-level intercept of firm growth. γ_{10} and γ_{20} represent the intercepts of the second-level random slope of internationalization speed and rhythm, respectively. CLV_j represents one of the three country-level variables, and u_{qj} ($q = 0, 2$) is the country-level residual variance. CLC_j stands for the country-level control variable. For each moderator, a separate multilevel model was computed and used for hypothesis testing. The following equation comprises equations (18.2–18.5) and shows the multilevel regressions including cross-level interactions:

$$Growth_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(CLV_j) + \gamma_{10}(Speed_{ij}) + \gamma_{11}(CLV_j)(Speed_{ij}) + \gamma_{20}(Rhythm_{ij}) + \gamma_{21}(CLV_j)(Rhythm_{ij}) + \gamma_{ILC} ILC_{ij} + \gamma_{CLC} CLC_{ij} + error. \quad (18.6)$$

18.4 Results

The results of the hypotheses tests are shown in Table 18.4. Unstandardized coefficients are shown as standardized coefficients cannot be computed in random intercept and slope models (Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, pp. 17–18).

Firms' internationalization rhythm positively affects their growth ($b = .070$, $p < .05$). The more irregularly e-commerce firms conduct their internationalization process (indicated by a high kurtosis), the greater their firm sales growth rates (e.g., Benmamoun et al. 2019). H1 is supported.

E-commerce firms' internationalization speed positively affects their growth ($b = .013$, $p < .05$). The faster firms internationalize, the greater their growth (e.g., Nambisan, Zahra and Luo 2019). The results support H2.

An increasing degree of regulative distance negatively moderates the effect of internationalization rhythm on firm growth ($b_{REGDISxRhythm} = -.042$, $p < .05$). H3a is confirmed. Higher regulative distance also diminishes the effect of internationalization speed on firm growth ($b_{REGDISxSpeed} = -.006$, $p < .01$). H3b is supported. Regulative distance explains 54.5% of the country-specific variance.

An increasing degree of normative distance insignificantly moderates the effects of internationalization rhythm and speed ($b_{NORDISxRhythm} = -.001$, $p > .05$, $b_{NORDISxSpeed} = -.002$, $p > .05$). H4a and H4b are rejected. Normative distance weakens the advantages of e-commerce firms from an irregular and fast internationalization process in terms of firm growth only in tendency. Normative institutions may not explicitly affect e-commerce firms' international expansion due to their implicit character (e.g., Eden and Miller 2004, pp. 15–16)

Table 18.4 Results. (Source: Own Creation)

			Null Model		Baseline Model 1		Full Model		Baseline Model 2		Regulative Distance		Normative Distance		Cultural Distance	
			b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*
Direct Effects																
Rhythm	→ Growth						.070	*	.070	*	.068	*	.074	*	.070	**
Speed	→ Growth						.013	*	.013	*	.014	*	.015	*	.014	**
Cross-Level Interaction																
REGDIS	→ Growth										.017	ns				
	x Rhythm	→ Growth									−.042	*				
	x Speed	→ Growth									−.006	**				
NORDIS	→ Growth												−.012	ns		
	x Rhythm	→ Growth											−.001	ns		
	x Speed	→ Growth											−.002	ns		
CULDIS	→ Growth														.023	ns
	x Rhythm	→ Growth													-.018	*
	x Speed	→ Growth													-.002	**
Controls (Firm Level)																
Home Market Size	→ Growth				.001	ns	.000	ns	−.002	ns	.003	ns	.001	ns	−.054	ns
Firm Size	→ Growth				.062	*	.065	**	.065	**	.064	**	.064	**	.064	**
Multichannel	→ Growth				.011	ns	.015	ns	.015	ns	.024	ns	.015	ns	.020	ns
Mobile Version	→ Growth				.057	*	.054	ns	.054	ns	.059	ns	.06	ns	.054	ns

(continued)

Table 18.4 (continued)

		Null Model		Baseline Model 1		Full Model		Baseline Model 2		Regulative Distance		Normative Distance		Cultural Distance	
		b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*
Domain	→ Growth			.100	ns	.114	ns	.114	ns	.118	ns	.113	ns	.112	ns
Control (Country Level)															
Host Market Size	→ Growth							.081	ns	1.169	ns	.715	ns	1.640	ns
Residual Variance (Firm Level)		.184		.173		.170		.170		.170		.170		.169	
Residual Variance (Country Level)		.021		.022		.022		.022		.010		.015		.011	
Explained Variance (Firm Level)				5.9%		1.7%		.0%							
Explained Variance (Country Level)								.0%		54.5%		31.8%		50.0%	
AIC		1,984.007		16,620.871		16,607.335		16,307.672		15,661.836		16,469.159		15,943.579	
BIC (Adjusted)		1,990.795		16,661.600		16,654.851		16,343.875		15,695.776		16,503.099		15,977.519	

$^{***}p < .001$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{*}p < .05$; ns = not significant.
Note: b = Unstandardized Coefficients; CULDIS = Cultural Distance; NORDIS = Normative Distance; REGDIS = Regulative Distance.

and, more importantly, possibly lower the requirements for respective knowledge and organizational learning. This may be traced back to, for example, standardized negotiations with or the behavior of globally operating logistic partners (e.g., UPS delivering worldwide, UPS 2021).

Regarding the moderation of cultural-cognitive distance, the results support H5a and H5b. An increasing degree of cultural-cognitive distance negatively affects the effects of internationalization rhythm and speed on e-commerce firms' growth ($b_{CULDISxRhythm} = -.018$, $p < .05$; $b_{CULDISxSpeed} = -.002$, $p < .01$). Cultural-cognitive distance explains 50.0% of the country-specific variance.

Among the controls, only firm size plays a significant and expected role.

18.5 Alternative Models

For reasons of stability, alternative models were tested.

First, we replaced annual growth with the annual growth rate over a five-year period. The results show stable positive effects of e-commerce firms' internationalization rhythm and speed ($b = .014$, $p < .01$ and $b = .005$, $p < .05$; see Table 18.5).

Second, as this is the first study accounting for e-commerce firms' internationalization rhythm, we tested its isolated effect on firm growth. The results remains stable, as internationalization rhythm also positively affects firm growth on its own ($b = .052$, $p < .05$; see Table 18.6).

Third, due to the dominance of e-commerce firms from France, Germany, and the UK, we controlled for these home countries to assure the stability of our results. None of the three dummy control variables (1 = specific home country, 0 = any other home country) shows a significant influence ($b_{France} = -.031$, $p > .05$, $b_{Germany} = -.048$, $p > .05$, $b_{UK} = -.082$, $p > .05$) and the results remain the same (see Table 18.7). The home country does not seem to bias our results.

Fourth, we alternatively measured normative distance following the suggestion of Kostova et al. (2020). We used seven items from the Global Competitiveness Report (GCR, World Economic Forum 2018; Xu, Pan and Beamish 2004). The results remain stable ($b_{NORDISxRhythm} = -.009$, $p > .05$, $b_{NORDISxSpeed} = -.002$, $p > .05$, see Table 18.8), whereas model fit is worse ($AIC_{GCR} = 17{,}171.637$ and $BIC_{GCR} = 17{,}205.577$ vs. $AIC_{WCY} = 16{,}469.159$ and $BIC_{WCY} = 16{,}503.099$).

Fifth, we tested for added institutional distance, i.e., cross-national differences between already entered and newly entered countries (Hutzschenreuter and Voll 2008; see Table 18.9). The added regulative, cultural-cognitive, and normative distances negatively moderate the internationalization rhythm-growth

Table 18.5 Results for Five-Year Growth. (Source: Own Creation)

		Null Model		Baseline Model 1		Full Model		Baseline Model 2	
		b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*
Direct Effects									
Rhythm	→ Growth					.015	**	.014	**
Speed	→ Growth					.005	*	.005	*
Controls (Company Level)									
Home Market Size	→ Growth			−.008	ns	−.017	ns	−.016	ns
Firm Size	→ Growth			.016	*	.016	**	.016	**
Multichannel	→ Growth			.003	ns	.005	ns	.005	ns
Mobile Version	→ Growth			.081	ns	.082	ns	.080	ns
Domain	→ Growth			.033	ns	.038	ns	.037	ns
Control (Country Level)									
Host Market Size	→ Growth							−.228	ns
Residual Variance (Company Level)		823.721		.013		.013		.013	
Residual Variance (Country Level)		77.140		.003		.003		.002	
AIC		16,291.343		12,475.081		12,453.615		12,151.806	
BIC (Adjusted)		16,298.131		12,515.809		12,501.132		12,188.009	

$^{***}p < .001$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{*}p < .05$; ns = not significant.
Note: b = Unstandardized Coefficients.

link ($b_{REGDISxRhythm} = -.333$, $p < .001$, $b_{NORDISxRhythm} = -.281$, $p < .01$, $b_{CULDISxRhythm} = -.316$, $p < .001$). E-commerce firms' internationalization processes are path dependent. However, added institutional distance does not significantly moderate the effects of internationalization speed ($b_{REGDISxSpeed} = -.008$, $p > .05$, $b_{NORDISxSpeed} = -.007$, $p > .05$, $b_{CULDISxSpeed} = -.012$, $p > .05$). Theoretically, firms must integrate prior knowledge when added institutional distance is high but may still internationalize quickly (e.g., Johanson and Vahlne 2009).

Table 18.6 Results for Internationalization Rhythm Solely. (Source: Own Creation)

		Null Model		**Baseline Model 1**		**Full Model**		**Baseline Model 2**	
		b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*
Direct Effects									
Rhythm	→ Growth					.055	*	.052	*
Controls (Company Level)									
Home Market Size	→ Growth			.001	ns	.002	ns	-.053	ns
Firm Size	→ Growth			.062	*	.065	**	.064	**
Multichannel	→ Growth			.011	ns	.014	ns	.013	ns
Mobile Version	→ Growth			.057	*	.051	ns	.045	ns
Domain	→ Growth			.100	ns	.104	ns	.102	ns
Control (Country Level)									
Host Market Size	→ Growth							.512	ns
Residual Variance (Company Level)		.184		.173		.171		.171	
Residual Variance (Country Level)		.021		.022		.022		.021	
AIC		1,984.007		16,620.871		16,607.252		16,335.181	
BIC (Adjusted)		1,990.795		16,661.600		16,650.243		16,366.858	

$^{***}p < .001$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{*}p < .05$; ns = not significant.
Note: b = Unstandardized Coefficients.

Table 18.7 Results for Controlling Home Country Dominance of France, Germany, and the UK. (Source: Own Creation)

		Null Model		**Baseline Model 1**		**Full Model**		**Baseline Model 2**	
		b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*
Direct Effects									
Rhythm	→ Growth					.070	*	.070	*
Speed	→ Growth					.013	*	.013	*
Controls (Company Level)									
Home Market Size	→ Growth			−.050	ns	.005	ns	.008	ns
Firm Size	→ Growth			.061	**	.065	**	.065	**
Multichannel	→ Growth			.011	ns	.016	ns	.016	ns
Mobile Version	→ Growth			.049	ns	.053	ns	.053	ns
Domain	→ Growth			.098	ns	.115	ns	.115	ns
France	→ Growth			−.015	ns	−.028	ns	−.031	ns
Germany	→ Growth			−.019	ns	−.044	ns	−.048	ns
United Kingdom	→ Growth			−.031	ns	−.079	ns	−.082	ns
Control (Country Level)									
Host Market Size	→ Growth							−.181	ns
Residual Variance (Company Level)		.184		.173		.170		.170	
Residual Variance (Country Level)		.021		.025		.021		.021	
AIC		1,984.007		16,629.098		16,613.027		16,311.933	
BIC (Adjusted)		1,990.795		16,676.614		16,667.331		16,354.924	

$^{***}p < .001$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{*}p < .05$; ns = not significant
Note: b = Unstandardized Coefficients.

Table 18.8 Results of Alternative Measure for Normative Distance. (Source: Own Creation)

			Null Model		Baseline Model 1		Full Model		Baseline Model 2		Normative Distance	
			b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*
Direct Effects												
Rhythm	→ Growth						.070	*	.070	*	.065	*
Speed	→ Growth						.013	*	.013	*	.011	†
Cross-Level Interaction												
NORDIS	→ Growth										−.007	ns
	x Rhythm	→ Growth									−.009	ns
	x Speed	→ Growth									−.00	ns
Controls (Firm Level)												
Home Market Size	→ Growth				.001	ns	.000	ns	-.002	ns	−.054	ns
Firm Size	→ Growth				.062	*	.065	**	.065	**	.065	**
Multichannel	→ Growth				.011	ns	.015	ns	.015	ns	.015	ns
Mobile Version	→ Growth				.057	*	.054	ns	.054	ns	.049	ns
Domain	→ Growth				.100	ns	.114	ns	.114	ns	.110	ns
Control (Country Level)												
Host Market Size	→ Growth								.081	ns	1.15	ns

(continued)

Table 18.8 (continued)

	Null Model		**Baseline Model 1**		**Full Model**		**Baseline Model 2**		**Normative Distance**	
	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*
Residual Variance (Firm Level)	.184		.173		.170		.170		.170	
Residual Variance (Country Level)	.021		.022		.022		.022		.015	
Explained Variance (Firm Level)			5.9%		1.7%		.0%			
Explained Variance (Country Level)							.0%		31.8%	
AIC	1,984.007		16,620.871		16,607.335		16,307.672		17,171.637	
BIC (Adjusted)	1,990.795		16,661.600		16,654.851		16,343.875		17,205.577	

$^{***}p < .001$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{*}p < .05$; ns = not significant.
Note: b = Unstandardized Coefficients; NORDIS = Normative Distance.

Table 18.9 Results of Added Institutional Distances. (Source: Own Creation)

			Null Model		Baseline Model 1		Full Model		Baseline Model 2		Added Regulative Distance		Added Normative Distance		Added Cultural Distance	
			b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*
Direct Effects																
Rhythm	→ Growth						.070	*	.070	*	.071	†	.061	*	.068	**
Speed	→ Growth						.013	*	.013	*	.012	*	.011	†	.012	*
Cross-Level Interaction																
Added REGDIS	→ Growth										.449	ns				
	x Rhythm	→ Growth									−.333	***				
	x Speed	→ Growth									−.008	ns				
Added NORDIS	→ Growth												.464	*		
	x Rhythm	→ Growth											-.281	**		
	x Speed	→ Growth											-.007	ns		
Added CULDIS	→ Growth														.374	*
	x Rhythm	→ Growth													−.316	***
	x Speed	→ Growth													−.012	ns
Controls (Company Level)																
Home Market Size	→ Growth				.001	ns	.000	ns	−.002	ns	.014	ns	.011	ns	−.052	ns
Multichannel	→ Growth				.011	ns	.015	ns	.015	ns	.021	ns	.018	ns	.021	ns
Mobile Site	→ Growth				.057	*	.054	ns	.054	ns	.050	ns	.053	ns	.043	ns
Domain	→ Growth				.100	ns	.114	ns	.114	ns	.123	†	.121	ns	.119	ns
Firm Size	→ Growth				.062	*	.065	**	.065	**	.061	**	.062	**	.061	**

(continued)

Table 18.9 (continued)

	Null Model		Baseline Model 1		Full Model		Baseline Model 2		Added Regulative Distance		Added Normative Distance		Added Cultural Distance	
	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*	b	*p*
Control (Country Level)														
Host Market Size → Growth							.081	ns	.495	ns	.828	**	.973	**
Residual Variance (Company Level)	.184		.173		.170		.170		.168		.168		.168	
Residual Variance (Country Level)	.021		.022		.022		.022		.002		.013		.016	
AIC	1,984.007		16,620.871		16,607.335		16,307.672		16,851.902		17,399.291		16,987.244	
BIC (Adjusted)	1,990.795		16,661.600		16,654.851		16,343.875		16,883.579		17,433.232		17,018.921	

$^{***}p < .001$; $^{**}p < .01$; $^{*}p < .05$; † = < .1; ns = not significant.

Note: b = Unstandardized Coefficients; CULDIS = Cultural Distance; NORDIS = Normative Distance; REGDIS = Regulative Distance.

Discussion

19

19.1 Overview

This study contributes to our understanding of how e-commerce firms can benefit from internationalization process rhythm and speed (contributing to respective calls, e.g., Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016; Tolstoy et al. 2021). This study also enhances research by showing that the effects of internationalization process decisions depend on the boundary role of important institutional distances (e.g., Shaheer and Li 2020). We carefully provide theoretical and managerial implications.

19.2 Theoretical Implications

Regarding our first research question, the results show a positive effect of internationalization rhythm and speed on firm growth. E-commerce firms' internationalization process decisions are strategically relevant in managing foreign expansion (Hilmersson et al. 2017). Theoretically, e-commerce firms' growth is still dependent on their internationalization process (Johanson and Vahlne 1977). Firms that intend to achieve high growth rates should internationalize following an irregular and rapid process. Thus, e-commerce firms theoretically differ from traditional manufacturing firms (and conceptually from born globals) in their time-based internationalization decisions (Coviello, Kano and Liesch 2017). In their newest conceptualization of the Uppsala model, Vahlne and Johanson (2017) provide a characterization of modern firm internationalization, which may partly be applicable to e-commerce. The authors recognize risk and uncertainty

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_19

as the basis of a reasonable decision-making model for the commitment process of modern firms. Moreover, modern firms' focus shifts from opportunity recognition to opportunity exploitation. This rationale may be in line with our findings as an irregular and fast internationalization process may be related to e-commerce firms' trend of exploiting global opportunities (Monaghan, Tippmann and Coviello 2020).

According to the newest version of the Uppsala model, modern firms' knowledge development processes comprise strategic flexibility but still require learning and the integration of prior knowledge via an incremental process (Vahlne and Johanson 2017). However, digitalization further changes this process (Coviello, Kano and Liesch 2017). E-commerce firms reach consumers more quickly, gain improved resource access, and exchange information more easily (Amit and Zott 2001). They have high strategic flexibility because learning and prior knowledge have to be achieved to build up a customer base and networks instead of reducing investment risks (e.g., Brouthers, Geisser and Rothlauf 2016; Monaghan, Tippmann and Coviello 2020). To be and stay competitive, e-commerce firms are said to rely on opportunity-capturing heuristics (e.g., observing competitors, Bingham and Eisenhardt 2011; Monaghan and Tippmann 2018). Finally, their cross-national coordination is less complex, and the rationality of an incremental and rather slow internationalization process is diminished (Amit and Han 2017; Monaghan, Tippmann and Coviello 2020). Hence, we can confirm the applicability of an adjusted version of internationalization process theory in the context of e-commerce firms (e.g., Benmamoun et al. 2019; Schu and Morschett 2017).

In summary, our findings regarding our first research question support the few studies indicating that e-commerce firms' internationalization processes are irregular and fast (e.g., Luo, Zhao and Du 2005; Nambisan, Zahra and Luo 2019). We add to the literature by initially accounting for internationalization rhythm as a time-based internationalization decision and its effect on firm growth (Hilmersson et al. 2017; Vermeulen and Barkema 2002). Moreover, we contribute to contradictory results regarding the role of commerce firms' internationalization speed (e.g., positive effects on performance versus divestment, Chan, Finnegan and Sternquist 2011; Mohr, Batsakis and Stone 2018). E-commerce firm's internationalization speed positively affects its growth.

Regarding our second research question, this study provides novel insights into the role of important institutional distances for the effects of e-commerce firms' internationalization processes (referring to calls, Samiee 2020; Shaheer and Li 2020). We show important cross-level interactions in multilevel models (e.g., beyond independent effects, Schwens, Eiche and Kabst 2011) and shed light on ambiguous indications of the importance of institutional distances in online

internationalization (e.g., nonsignificant or negative effects on speed decisions, Luo, Zhao and Du 2005; Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016). We discuss only the significant results and carefully provide two initial, finer-grained implications.

First, we enhance the current research by considering regulative distance as an important contextual factor. Regulative institutions are known to be of paramount importance for e-commerce firms' internationalization speed and foreign market selection (Luo, Zhao and Du 2005; Schu and Morschett 2017). We show the importance of regulative distance for the effects of e-commerce firms' internationalization rhythm and speed on firm growth over time. The higher the regulative distance between the home and the host country is, the less e-commerce firms can benefit from an irregular and fast internationalization process in terms of their annual growth. Thus, regulative distance still affects time-based internationalization process decision effects, which underscores our theoretical rationales (Johanson and Vahlne 2009; Shaheer and Li 2020). Moreover, this finding extends the research by showing high explained country variance by regulative distance (54.5%). Regulative institutions constitute the business actions within a society and seem to affect the behaviors of e-commerce firms (Oxley and Yeung 2001; Scott 2014, p. 59). When regulative distance increases, this necessitates an in-depth analysis of the host country's regulative institutions to interpret rules and laws correctly, which should be analyzed in future research (Ang, Benischke and Doh 2015; Chao and Kumar 2010). Only through correct interpretation and conformance with these regulations can market access and external legitimacy be gained (Dong, Fang and Straub 2017). E-commerce firms have greater difficulty transferring firm-specific advantages when adjusting to legal regulations, which weakens their benefits of fast organizational learning. Hence, the management of expansion steps in such distant countries becomes more complex.

Second, our findings provide strong evidence for the importance of considering cultural-cognitive distance when planning international expansion steps. In line with our theoretical rationale, cultural-cognitive distance weakens the effect of internationalization rhythm and speed on firm growth (Johanson and Vahlne 2009; Kostova et al. 2020). Cultural-cognitive institutions comprise the shared meanings and common beliefs within a society (Scott 2014, pp. 59–67). They are of particular importance for e-commerce firms, as they shape consumers' values, needs, and online shopping preferences (Shaheer and Li 2020). Thus, when host countries are cultural-cognitively distant, e-commerce firms have more difficulties meeting their highly divergent needs to gain legitimacy (Kim and Jensen 2014). Creating a strong local consumer shopping experience requires a deeper understanding of consumers' values. E-commerce firms must go beyond translating

websites, as they need to provide full online-specific offers (e.g., Bleier, Harmeling and Palmatier 2019). Observing consumers' values to adapt offers accordingly may take time and increase the complexity and costs (Schu and Morschett 2017). We agree with findings indicating a decelerating effect of cultural-cognitive distance on internationalization speed (e.g., Shaheer and Li 2020) but extend these findings by showing quite high explained country variance by cultural-cognitive distance (50.0%).

19.3 Managerial Implications

Unknown roles of the effects of internationalization rhythm and speed create a risk of missing opportunities for e-commerce firms, as these dimensions are known as important decisions in IB research and practice (Hilmersson et al. 2017). Successful time-based decisions are essential for e-commerce firms (Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016).

From our findings, e-commerce firms may learn to internationalize irregularly and fast to keep growing and expect competitors to do so. They should capture internationalization opportunities and focus less on integrating their previous experiences (Monaghan, Tippmann and Coviello 2020). Managers can observe competitors to rely on identified internationalization heuristics (e.g., entering only English-speaking countries, Bingham and Eisenhardt 2011; Monaghan and Tippmann 2018). However, in our sample, 22.8% of e-commerce firms internationalized in the three years after launching an online shop at home. This is similar to born globals, but the foreign sales shares are expected to be lower. Nearly half of the 12.3% of e-commerce firms that already internationalized in the year of inception entered one foreign country, mostly within the same geographical region (e.g., a Danish firm to Norway). When internationalizing overseas, leading countries with the same language were chosen (e.g., from the UK to the USA). After their first international expansion step, the majority of firms had two or three years of inactivity. However, on average, it took firms 0.95 years to launch the next country-specific online shop. This information is heuristic when striving for stronger growth through irregular and fast internationalization. This understanding enables managers to have a better knowledge base, i.e., promising ways of internationalizing to build up valuable customer bases and networks, concerning future foreign investments (Luo, Zhao and Du 2005). Finally, the internationalization processes shown may be noteworthy for suppliers interested in fast-growing e-network partners or e-sales channels.

However, practitioners need to be aware of the role of institutional distances. We found regulative and cultural-cognitive distances to be strong negative levers of the links between internationalization rhythm and speed on firm growth. When striving to increase firm growth through an irregular and fast internationalization process, entering regulative and cultural-cognitive distant countries should be avoided. Thus, firms need to be cautious about important distances (Shaheer and Li 2020) to better navigate their business through a competitive international online environment (Kostova et al. 2020). This may be one reason why firms such as Zalando internationalize within a geographical region (Europe, Zalando 2021). In summary, we carefully suggest that e-commerce firms focus on regulative distance between the home and the host country as the strongest lever (explaining 54.5% of country-specific variance), closely followed by cultural-cognitive distance (50.0%). These suggestions may constitute a starting point for linked decisions, such as market selection and the aim of irregular and fast internationalization.

Limitations and Further Research

20

This study has certain limitations that suggest future research directions.

We refer to a unique database, but its broadening would allow further conclusions. We need to condense market entries before 2012 to firm growth in 2012–2013, while research should link the growth of the year of market entry with consecutive year(s) to verify our results. We focus on the top 500 e-commerce firms operating leading online shops in Europe, but a worldwide database would increase the generalizability of the results (Schu and Morschett 2017). We controlled for dominant home countries, but the results may be specific for developed market firms, with different views of institutional distance, or pure online firms, which need to be studied (e.g., Benmamoun et al. 2019; Chen et al. 2019). The latter do not handle physical goods (e.g., logistically) and may internationalize faster or may be less restricted by distances (e.g., Shaheer and Li 2020). Moreover, countries that restrict e-market entries (e.g., India) or e-commerce activities could not be studied.

Concerning the measures, firm sales growth is an important indicator of commerce firms' performance. However, performance measures accounting for (even local) assets and costs would be insightful (e.g., Mohr and Batsakis 2017; Swoboda, Morbe and Hirschmann 2018). We refer to a formula-based measurement of internationalization rhythm that does not further explain firms' internationalization process beyond determining their degree of irregularity (Vermeulen and Barkema 2002). Future research may develop possible measures to reveal the characteristics of arrhythmic internationalization processes. Internationalization speed was measured by a unidimensional indicator, which could be replaced—if available—by a multidimensional measure (e.g., Casillas and Moreno-Menéndez 2014; Hilmersson et al. 2017). Due to comparability and data availability reasons, we measured institutional distances at one point in time, while future research

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_20

may consider them dynamically (possible for regulative and normative institutions, Kostova et al. 2020). We controlled for important variables, but accounting for risk and uncertainty as a possible theoretical basis for e-commerce firm managers' decision making would be insightful (e.g., Coviello, Kano and Liesch 2017).

Regarding our conceptual framework, scholars might study the effects of further specific internationalization decisions made by e-commerce firms, e.g., the scope or degree of internationalization, and foreign direct investments, including local logistics and foreign market entries, also via intermediary platforms (e.g., Samiee 2020; Vermeulen and Barkema 2002). Future research could account for the antecedents of these time-based online internationalization decisions (e.g., family ownership, Lin 2012, or CEO changes, Elosge et al. 2018). Future studies may also capture firms' organizational learning, prior knowledge, and operational capabilities over time as a theoretical basis of internationalization process decisions (Vahlne and Johanson 2017). Methodologically, research needs to account for nested data from e-commerce firms to fully present results and correctly draw conclusions (Coviello, Kano and Liesch 2017).

Part V
Final Remarks

Discussion and Conclusions 21

21.1 Core Results

In a globalized world, MNCs and e-commerce firms must increasingly learn how to build sustainable competitive advantages to set themselves apart from competitors. They more and more recognize that the source of competitive advantage lies in their strategic decisions regarding global brand management and internationalization processes. This doctoral thesis takes up the question of how to exploit these sources of competitive advantage and respectively provides fine-grained results.

The literature review in Section 2.2. identified PBG to be a key determinant of consumer behavior but left unanswered questions (e.g., Swoboda and Hirschmann 2016). The majority of studies analyzed constructs similar to PBG, such as global brand attitudes, global consumption orientation, and global consumer culture positioning (e.g., nationally, Bartsch et al. 2016; Batra et al. 2000; internationally, Alden et al. 2013; Alden, Steenkamp and Batra 2006). PBG effects were mostly studied nationally (e.g., Akram, Merunka and Akram 2011; Davvetas, Sichtmann and Diamantopoulos 2015) or by comparing few countries (e.g., Özsomer 2012; Randrianasolo 2017). Those studies support a positive indirect effect of PBG on consumers' behavioral outcomes. However, studies could not consistently identify the most important factors translating PBG into beneficial consumer behavior. They further neglected the influence of important national context factors.

Section 2.3. reveals that literature mainly considered horizontal image transfers between product brands or horizontal brand extensions (e.g., nationally, Bian and Moutinho 2011; Ahn, Park and Hyun 2018; internationally, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016; Boisvert and Ashill 2018). The majority of studies examined vertical image transfers in terms of celebrity endorsement or vertical brand

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_21

extensions (e.g., nationally, Chen and Wyer Jr 2020; Allman et al. 2016; internationally, Knoll and Matthes 2017; Allman, Hewett and Kaur 2019) or only focused on the image transfer between corporate and product brands nationally (e.g., Abosag and Farah 2014). Only three studies support a positive but only direct or holistic effect, i.e., overall endorsed branding, of a vertical image transfer from the corporate to the product brand internationally (Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018; Jakubanecs and Supphellen 2012; Souiden, Kassim and Hong 2006). By comparing few countries, these studies indicate a difference in such vertical image transfers due to national culture but neglect the important role of country development.

When having a look at literature on internationalization processes (see Section 2.4.), studies mostly examined determinants and effects of manufacturing firms' time-based internationalization process decisions, i.e., internationalization rhythm and speed (e.g., determinants, Elosge et al. 2018; Acedo and Jones 2007; effects, Chetty, Johanson and Martín 2014). When accounting for commerce firms, the focus was mainly put on the influence factors or effects of offline commerce firms' internationalization speed (e.g., Batsakis and Mohr 2017; Chan, Finnegan and Sternquist 2011). Only four studies analyzed the drivers of e-commerce firms' internationalization speed (e.g., Luo, Zhao and Du 2005; Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016) but not their effects and not for their internationalization rhythm.

In summary, various research gaps on MNCs' global brand management and e-commerce firms' internationalization processes exist and respective research questions remained unanswered. This doctoral thesis addressed the following research questions to fill the identified research gaps:

(1) How can MNCs benefit from PBG in terms of repurchase intention through functional and psychological value across nations and whether and how do the degree of country development and national culture change these paths?
(2) How can MNCs benefit from an image transfer of global corporate to global product brands in terms of product purchase intention across nations and whether and how do the degrees of country development and national culture moderate the indirect and direct effects of global corporate brand image?
(3) How can e-commerce firms benefit from internationalization process rhythm and speed in terms of firm growth and whether and how do institutional distances moderate these effects?

All three studies rely on hierarchical data, either compromising consumers (Study 1 and Study 2) or e-commerce firms (Study 3) in numerous countries. Accordingly, in all three studies multilevel modeling including the calculation of cross-level interactions was applied. On this basis, this doctoral thesis provides novel and valuable insights into MNCs' global branding and e-commerce firms' internationalization processes as well as their boundary conditions as indicated below.

Study 1 addresses the first research question by proposing indirect paths from MNCs' PBG on consumer behavior, which vary due to country-specific context factors. The results show that MNCs can indirectly benefit from their PBG in terms of consumers' repurchase intention across nations. The indirect paths through functional as well as psychological value are positive and significant. Consumers repurchase global brands as these are perceived to be of higher quality, provide better performance, and offer higher value for money (e.g., Mandler 2019). When purchasing global brands again, consumers also have the feeling of being part of the global community, which helps to enhance their self-concept (e.g., Strizhakova and Coulter 2015; Xie, Batra and Peng 2015). However, the path through psychological value is stronger across nations. Consumers especially value MNCs' PBG because of the emotional and social benefits offered, which leads to greater repurchase intention (Steenkamp and de Jong 2010).

On a country level, the degree of country development and national culture are identified as important context factors of the paths from PBG to repurchase intention. The higher the degree of country development, the weaker the indirect paths from PBG to repurchase intention through functional and psychological value. Global brand knowledge is less established in less developed countries due to relatively short brand history (Swoboda, Pennemann and Taube 2012). However, the high standardization and availability of global brands allows consumers in less developed countries to recognize them and use PBG as information indirectly relevant for their purchase decision (e.g., Xie, Batra and Peng 2015). In such countries, PBG reflects confidence-inspiring brand information as well as emotions and exclusivity (Guo 2013; Randrianasolo 2017), enhancing its functional and psychological value. All three national cultural value dimensions, i.e., embeddedness, mastery, and hierarchy, positively moderate the paths from PBG to repurchase intention via functional and psychological value. By explaining 33.3% of country-specific variance, embeddedness is the strongest lever among the national cultural value dimensions. Consumers in highly embedded societies value global brands due to their higher quality as well as their ability to enable belongingness to global citizenship (Gupta, Pansari and Kumar 2018; Strizhakova and Coulter 2015). Highly mastery characterized societies comprise consumers

appreciating global brands as these reflect optimization opportunities in terms of quality but also incorporate the aspiration of achievement (De Mooij 2017; Holt, Quelch and Taylor 2004). Hierarchy is the only context factor stronger enhancing the path through functional than psychological value. Even if consumers in highly hierarchical societies value global brands because of their perceived trustworthiness, they especially repurchase global brands due to their quality indicated through MNCs' authority. These values of consumers in societies with high embeddedness, mastery, and hierarchy align with the functional and psychological value transmitted by PBG, which enhances such consumers' repurchase intention.

The second research question was answered in Study 2. Study 2 deals with the effects of endorsed branding from a consumer perspective and important country-specific boundary conditions. The results demonstrate a positive indirect effect of global corporate brand image on product purchase intention via global product brand image across nations. When the product brand is endorsed by the global corporate brand, consumers identify the global product brand with the MNC (Brexendorf and Keller 2017). Consumers perceive the global product brand image but also supplement it with the global corporate brand image to determine their product purchase intention (Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018). This image transfer is especially strong due to the high recall and availability of global brands (Xie, Batra and Peng 2015). Global corporate brand image also positively directly affects product purchase intention across nations. This is in line with findings of Study 1, because global corporate brands are known to deliver functional and psychological value, which leads to enhanced consumer behavior across nations (Swoboda and Sinning 2020a). However, the indirect effect is stronger than the direct effect. In particular, MNCs benefit most in terms of product purchase intention when applying the endorsed branding strategy.

The degree of country development and national culture, i.e., the cultural value dimension embeddedness, change these effects. The degree of country development positively moderates the indirect effect of global corporate brand image on product purchase intention via global product brand image. In more developed countries, product (vs. corporate) brand attributes gain importance in product purchase situations due to high branded competition (Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016; Hsieh, Pan and Setiono 2004). Additionally, consumers can easily link global corporate and product brand images due to relatively long brand histories (Swoboda, Pennemann and Taube 2012). In contrast, the degree of country development weakens the direct effect of global corporate brand image on product purchase intention. In less developed countries, unbranded competition is high and the global corporate brand image comes into focus (Bahadir, Bharadwaj and Srivastava 2015). Consumers in such countries may not have fundamental brand

knowledge but recognize global corporate brands due to their high standardization and availability and generally prefer them (Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2017; Özsomer 2012). The degree of embeddedness strengthens the indirect effect of global corporate brand image on product purchase intention. Consumers in highly embedded societies value global corporate and product brands as these provide them the feeling of being part of a community and receiving status (Schwartz 1999; Strizhakova and Coulter 2015). As these brands align with such consumers' values, they easier link corporate and product brand images and show increased product purchase intentions. Surprisingly, embeddedness has no significant moderating effect on the direct effect of global corporate brand image on product purchase intention. MNCs' global corporate brand only seems to align with consumers' national cultural values when being linked to the global product brand (Schwartz 1999).

Study 3 targets the third research question by switching to e-commerce firms' perspective of the effects of time-based internationalization process decisions and their dependence on major institutional distances. The results reveal a positive effect of e-commerce firms' internationalization rhythm on firm growth. An irregular internationalization process enables e-commerce firms to increase their annual growth. For e-commerce firms, cross-national coordination becomes easier and the time to build up and integrate prior knowledge less important (e.g., Amit and Han 2017). They can skip traditional internationalization steps and rather follow the trend in e-commerce of exploiting global opportunities in an irregular manner (Monaghan and Tippmann 2018; Monaghan, Tippmann and Coviello 2020). Internationalization speed also positively affects firm growth. The faster e-commerce firms internationalize, the higher their sales growth rates. The use of internet-based technologies allows e-commerce firms to circumvent some traditional international expansion barriers (Nambisan, Zahra and Luo 2019). Organizational learning is facilitated and global opportunities can be captured quickly to gain first-mover and competitive advantages (e.g., Amit and Han 2017).

The effects of e-commerce firms' time-based internationalization process decisions are restricted by important institutional distances. Regulative distance diminishes the effects of internationalization rhythm and speed on firm growth. Regulative institutions force firms to achieve legal conformance to be able to access markets and gain external legitimacy (Dong, Fang and Straub 2017). International expansion becomes more complex and challenging for e-commerce firms, why some of their internationalization advantages are alleviated (e.g., Brouthers, Geisser and Rothlauf 2016; Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016). When regulative distance between the home and the host country is high, the benefits e-commerce firms have due to an irregular and fast internationalization

process in terms of firm growth are weaker. Surprisingly, normative distance does not change the effects of rhythm and speed on firm growth. Normative institutions are said to be rather implicit, which may hamper their explicit influence on e-commerce firms' internationalization (Eden and Miller 2004, pp. 15–16). Cultural-cognitive distance also negatively moderates the effects of rhythm and speed on firm growth. To gain external legitimacy, e-commerce firms have to align with cultural-cognitive institutions through addressing consumers' values, needs, and online preferences (e.g., Kim and Jensen 2014; Rothaermel, Kotha and Steensma 2006). In cultural-cognitive distant countries, e-commerce firms experience greater adaptation efforts (e.g., websites' ease of use, customer service, Bleier, Harmeling and Palmatier 2019), which impedes the exploitation of their internationalization advantages (Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016; Singh, Zhao and Hu 2005). When internationalizing in cultural-cognitive distant countries, e-commerce firms must be aware that an irregular and fast process does not increase firm growth in the same way.

21.2 Theoretical Implications

The following theoretical implications underline the way the present doctoral thesis contributes to theory and research.

Study 1 contributes to the understanding of MNCs' benefits by promoting their PBG across nations. The results confirm the applicability of the accessibility-diagnosticity theory to explain indirect paths from PBG to repurchase intention through functional and psychological value (Feldman and Lynch 1988). The likelihood consumers use PBG information for decision-making depends on its accessibility and diagnosticity. Due to global brands' high recall and availability across countries, consumers perceive PBG to be easily accessible information per se (Xie, Batra and Peng 2015). Consumers then link accessible PBG information to MNCs' offered functional and psychological value, making PBG diagnostic for their repurchase intention across nations. Thereby, this study responds to calls and enhances the generalizability of PBG paths to consumer behavior (e.g., Halkias, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016). By showing stronger PBG paths through psychological value, this study affirms that the diagnosticity of accessible PBG information can vary (enhancing studies analyzing different accessible information, Saini and Lynch Jr 2016). Moreover, these findings enhance research by clarifying previous contradictory results (stronger path through functional value, Akram, Merunka and Akram 2011, vs. stronger path via psychological value, Xie, Batra and Peng 2015).

Study 1 also enriches research by responding to calls for analyzing country-specific boundary conditions of PBG paths (Gürhan-Canli, Sarial-Abi and Hayran 2018). The results support the idea of country development affecting underlying cognitive information processing of accessibility-diagnosticity theory (e.g., Beckert 2010). An increasing degree of country development diminishes accessible PBG's diagnosticity for consumers' repurchase intention. This finding is in line with country comparison studies indicating stronger PBG paths in emerging vs. developed countries (e.g., Randrianasolo 2017). It further extends these studies by providing cross-level interaction effects of country development as a continuous moderator (instead of multi-group analysis, Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, pp. 4–5). Moreover, Study 1 clarifies previous ambiguous results regarding the role of national culture. Going beyond assumptions of country comparison studies (Akaka and Alden 2010) or correlations (De Mooij 2017; Steenkamp 2019a), this study underlines the importance of national culture for PBG paths across nations. Thereby, the rationale of accessibility-diagnosticity theory in dependence of national culture is confirmed. Cultural values influence consumers' cognitive information processing, i.e., the way consumers perceive information and which relevance they attach to it (Aaker 2000; Schwartz 1999). In particular, embeddedness, mastery, and hierarchy act as diagnosticity multipliers, making accessible PBG information even more relevant for repurchase intention through functional and psychological value across nations.

Study 2 enhances the understanding of global endorsed branding across nations. It thereby answers calls for either the analysis of endorsed branding strategy (Brexendorf and Keller 2017), or global brand effects across nations (Samiee 2019). The results support schema theory being applicable to explain global brand effects across nations (Crocker 1984; Halkias 2015). When intending to purchase product brands, consumers primarily activate global product brand schemata. This finding is in line with previous national studies (e.g., Biehal and Sheinin 2007), but goes beyond by shedding light on such effects across nations. When MNCs apply the endorsed branding strategy, consumers can identify the global product brand with the respective MNC (Brexendorf and Keller 2017). In such situations, superordinated global corporate brand schemata leverage subordinated global product brand schemata, leading to higher product purchase intention (Souiden, Kassim and Hong 2006). Thus, brand schemata's hierarchical structure and linkage determine the success of specific branding strategies (Halkias 2015). National studies indicating a positive transfer from corporate to product brand associations (e.g., Fatma, Khan and Rahman 2016) as well as international studies holistically investigating corporate endorsements (Jakubanecs and Supphellen 2012) can be confirmed but enhanced by a higher generalizability across nations.

Moreover, Study 2 responds to studies calling for the analysis of context factors of either global brand effects (e.g., Gürhan-Canli, Sarial-Abi and Hayran 2018), or image transfers between corporate and product brands (Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018). Specifically, this study adds to literature by accounting for the degree of country development as an important, under-researched boundary condition (Wang, He and Barnes 2017). The results confirm the schema theoretical rationale and show how brand schemata development and activation differ due to environmental differences (Halkias 2015; Puligadda, Ross Jr and Grewal 2012). Consumers in more developed countries with well-structured brand schemata easier activate and link superordinated global corporate brand schemata to subordinated product brand schemata, which leads to higher product purchase intention. In contrast, in less developed countries, global corporate brand schemata are either retrieved directly in product purchase situations, being more important than complex endorsed branding strategies. Additionally, national culture plays a significant role for endorsed branding effects. The study's theoretical rationale is confirmed as embeddedness affects consumers' brand schema activation and structure (Crocker 1984; Puligadda, Ross Jr and Grewal 2012). With an increasing degree of embeddedness, consumers have more homogeneous schema structures (Shaw 1990). Such a homogeneous schema structure facilitates activating and linking global corporate and product brand schemata, enhancing product purchase intention. In accordance with and extending previous studies (e.g., Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018; Jakubanecs and Supphellen 2012), the findings underline the role of country development and national culture.

Study 3 contributes to research on the success of e-commerce firms' internationalization process. The results highlight the strategic importance of time-based internationalization process decisions for foreign expansions (Hilmersson et al. 2017). From a theoretical perspective, firm growth is shown to still be dependent on e-commerce firms' internationalization process (Johanson and Vahlne 1977). However, the design of a successful internationalization process differs from the one of traditional MNCs (e.g., Coviello, Kano and Liesch 2017). E-commerce firms have stronger growth rates when internationalizing irregularly and fast. Thereby, e-commerce firms take some of the characteristics of modern firms (Vahlne and Johanson 2017), but digitalization more radically changes this process. Consequently, the shown effects support an enhanced, e-commerce-specific version of the internationalization process theory (e.g., Benmamoun et al. 2019; Schu and Morschett 2017). E-commerce firms can especially profit from a lower need of integrating prior knowledge for further expansion steps and faster organizational learning. These findings confirm studies discussing e-commerce firms' irregular and fast internationalization process (e.g., Luo, Zhao and Du

2005; Nambisan, Zahra and Luo 2019). However, this study extends such studies by responding to several calls (e.g., Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016; Tolstoy et al. 2021). On the one hand, the effect of internationalization rhythm as a further time-based internationalization process decision was analyzed (Hilmersson et al. 2017; Vermeulen and Barkema 2002). On the other hand, inconclusive results regarding the effects of commerce firms' speed were clarified.

Additionally, Study 3 advances research by clarifying contradictory results regarding the role of institutional distances within the context of online internationalization (e.g., Luo, Zhao and Du 2005; Shaheer and Li 2020). Following calls (e.g., Samiee 2020), the results identify regulative and cultural-cognitive distance as important boundary conditions for the effects of internationalization rhythm and speed on firm growth. The higher the regulative distance, the less strongly e-commerce firms can profit from an irregular and fast foreign expansion process. This finding confirms our theoretical rationale of regulative distance still affecting the way e-commerce firms profit from time-based internationalization process decisions (Johanson and Vahlne 2009; Shaheer and Li 2020). When regulative distance is high, an in-depth analysis of regulations and laws is necessary to appropriately adapt to the host country context and gain external legitimacy (e.g., Ang, Benischke and Doh 2015; Dong, Fang and Straub 2017). This complicates organizational learning and managing expansion steps over time. Moreover, aligning with this study's theoretical rationale (Johanson and Vahlne 2009; Kostova et al. 2020), cultural-cognitive distance weakens the effects of e-commerce firms' internationalization rhythm and speed. When cultural-cognitive distance is high, e-commerce firms have to adapt to highly divergent needs, values, and preferences (Kim and Jensen 2014). Going beyond translating websites and providing online-specific offers in accordance with consumers' needs and values takes time and makes foreign expansion complex (Schu and Morschett 2017). These findings align with studies indicating negative effects of distance on speed (e.g., Shaheer and Li 2020). However, they extend these studies by showing cross-level interactions in multilevel models (vs. relying on independent effects, Schwens, Eiche and Kabst 2011).

In summary, this doctoral thesis responds to various calls and, thus, refers to highly relevant topics in research. Based on well-grounded theoretical arguments, it enhances the understanding of the effects of MNCs' PBG and endorsed branding as well as e-commerce firms' internationalization processes. It shows that both MNCs and e-commerce firms must consider important boundary conditions. When being internationally active, host country conditions matter for strategic decisions about global branding or online internationalization.

21.3 Managerial Implications

Both global brand management and online internationalization are highly relevant topics for managers. Respective managerial implications were formulated.

Study 1 encourages managers to rely on a global brand positioning as PBG indirectly leads to increased repurchase intention of consumers. MNCs must be aware that PBG does not directly pay off. In contrast, PBG can only be a source of competitive advantage for international expansion when delivering functional and psychological value across nations (Swoboda and Hirschmann 2016). As the path from PBG through psychological (vs. functional) value is stronger, brand managers should promote their global corporate brand and especially make it emotionally visible (De Meulenaer, Dens and De Pelsmacker 2015; Vuong and Giao 2020). A linkage between the corporate brand and global consumer culture through indications in the logo, slogan, etc. is beneficial (Mandler 2019). Managers further must be aware of country's degree of development and national culture as important levers of how MNCs profit from their PBG. Study 1 recommends focusing on the degree of country development and the national cultural value dimension embeddedness or hierarchy. When knowing the change in PBG paths due to country development, MNCs can play their benefits in growing emerging markets (He and Wang 2017). Especially in emerging countries, like India or China, MNCs profit most from their PBG. Embeddedness has the highest explained variance among national cultural value dimensions (explaining 33.3% of country-specific variance). However, this study suggests relying on hierarchy. Hierarchy stronger affects the path from PBG via functional value to repurchase intention. This enables managers to communicate PBG via psychological or functional value differently.

Study 2 shows that MNCs cannot only profit from the endorsed branding strategy in terms of firm value (Hsu, Fournier and Srinivasan 2016) and facilitated brand extension (He et al. 2016), but also higher product purchase intention. Hence, managers can apply the endorsed branding strategy to compete against MNCs, like Unilever or Nestlé, internationally. Across nations, the global product brand should be still in focus to increase product purchase intention (Hsieh, Pan and Setiono 2004). Additionally, this study recommends managers to make the global corporate brand visible in front of the product package and promote it as the corporate endorser. In this way, MNCs can create spillover effects, provide reassurance for their consumers, and easier monitor their brands (Khojastehpour and Johns 2015). However, brand managers should observe country-specific context factors when applying the endorsed branding strategy (e.g., Heinberg,

Ozkaya and Taube 2018; Jakubanecs and Supphellen 2012). The results especially stress to account for the degree of country development and the national cultural value dimension embeddedness as important levers. When the degree of country development and embeddedness are high, MNCs profit most from the endorsed branding strategy. In general, in countries with lower levels of country development, strengthening solely the global corporate brand seems to be beneficial. In summary, managers should carefully decide whether to use the endorsed branding strategy, primarily focus the global corporate brand, or promote global product brands in dependence of country-specific boundary conditions.

Study 3 shows that to be successful, e-commerce firms should internationalize irregularly and fast. Managers of e-commerce firms can rely on the recognition and exploitation of opportunities instead of emphasizing the integration of prior experiences (Monaghan, Tippmann and Coviello 2020). It is recommendable to be oriented towards competitors and use their decisions as opportunity-capturing heuristics for internationalization (e.g., Bingham and Eisenhardt 2011). Questions regarding the right time of the first foreign country-specific online shop or length of periods of international activity and inactivity can be answered by such heuristics (Monaghan and Tippmann 2018). To stay competitive, knowledge on successful time-based internationalization process decisions and respective heuristics is necessary for e-commerce firms (Schu, Morschett and Swoboda 2016). Such knowledge enables managers to play their benefits internationally and have a better decision base for future foreign investments (Hilmersson et al. 2017; Luo, Zhao and Du 2005). Moreover, Study 3 emphasizes the remaining role of institutional distances in the context of online internationalization. Managers have to be aware that regulative and cultural-cognitive distances weaken the effects of internationalization rhythm and speed on firm growth. Being aware about the leverage of these distances, e-commerce firms may be more competitive in an ever-changing, international business environment. Consequently, when aiming to fully exploit the benefits of an irregular and fast internationalization process, practitioners may avoid entering distant host countries over time and rather operate within one geographical region (like Zalando, Zalando 2021).

In summary, this doctoral thesis provides impactful managerial implications for MNCs' global brand management and e-commerce firms' internationalization processes. Managers can learn that taking Coca Cola and Nike as examples and building strong global corporate brands is beneficial when trying to be ranked among the world's most valuable brands (see Chapter 1, Forbes 2020b). Even if criticism about globalization becomes louder (Mandler, Bartsch and Han 2020), consumers still value MNCs' PBG when being linked to offered functional and psychological value. Moreover, to compete against and differentiate

from MNCs, like Coca Cola or Nike solely promoting their global corporate brand, applying the endorsed branding strategy seems to be advantageous. Managers can learn from highly valuable brands, like Nestlé, and put their global corporate brand in front of the global product package to increase consumers' product purchase intention. When aiming to be one of the world's most valuable brands as an e-commerce firm (like Amazon, Forbes 2020b), this study provides advice for time-based internationalization process decisions. Firm growth can be reached by an irregular and fast internationalization process. Thus, following e-commerce firms, like eBay or Zalando, can help to rise up to the largest e-commerce firms in the world (see Chapter 1). However, all these benefits from MNCs' PGB, endorsed branding, or e-commerce firms' internationalization process decisions are leveraged by country-specific boundaries. Either the degree of country development or national cultural dimensions in the context of MNCs' global brand management or the degree of institutional distances for e-commerce firms' international expansion must be taken into account for respective strategic decisions.

Limitations and Further Research

22

This doctoral thesis has certain limitations suggesting further research directions. Each study's limitations and further research avenues are discussed in the context of the entire doctoral thesis. They are structured according to the database, measurement, conceptual framework, theory, and methodology.

First, broadening the database in all three studies would enhance the generalizability of the results. Study 1 and 2 rely on consumer evaluations of one MNC in major countries. This makes results comparable in terms of MNCs' origin and industry characteristics. Analyzing further MNCs within different industries may provide more insightful results but lead to methodological challenges (adding further levels of analysis, Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, pp. 19–23). In comparison, Study 3 uses secondary data from the leading e-commerce firms operating in Europe. Even if these e-commerce firms have foreign online shops all over the world, a consideration of the worldwide leading e-commerce firms may provide a more generalizable perspective on the effects of their internationalization process decisions (Schu and Morschett 2017). All three studies combine the likely occurring underrepresentation of emerging countries. In Study 1 and 2, consumer evaluations are mainly from developed countries, such from least developing countries are almost missing. In Study 3, e-commerce firms mainly internationalized to leading developed or rather institutionally close countries, not least developing countries. Future research may pay special attention to this imbalance and increase the scope of this doctoral thesis' results (e.g., Randrianasolo 2017). Moreover, examining emerging market MNCs and e-commerce firms could reveal finer-grained insights (e.g., Benmamoun et al. 2019; Liu et al. 2021). Study 2 already accounted for some limitations of Study 1 by incorporating global product brands into analysis. Future research could still consider further product categories or local corporate and product brands (e.g., Özsomer

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2_22

2012). In contrast, Study 3 would especially benefit from matching hard to get annual firm growth data to each year of market entry.

Second, certain measurement issues should be addressed in future research. The cross-sectional design of Study 1 and 2 limits the scope of conclusions. PBG as well as perceptions of the global endorsed branding strategy can vary over time (e.g., Akaka and Alden 2010; Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018). Even if Study 3 analyzes e-commerce firms' internationalization processes over time, comparability and data availability reasons led to a single-point-in-time measure of institutional distances. Future research could conduct longitudinal analysis and capture constructs or variables more dynamically to provide finer-grained results. In Study 1 and 2, effects on consumers' perceptions about their repurchase and product purchase intention were analyzed. Firm growth was chosen as the dependent performance-related variable in Study 3. Including objective consumer purchase data and more asset- and cost-related, even local, performance measures may deliver highly practical implications (e.g., Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018; Mohr and Batsakis 2017). Study 1 relies on the important construct of PBG, measured independently of PBL. Studies showed only low correlations between these two constructs (e.g., Swoboda, Pennemann and Taube 2012), decreasing the need to measure them jointly. Study 2 refers to corporate and product brand image, even if no common agreement about their measurement exists (Plumeyer et al. 2019; Souiden, Amara and Chaouali 2020). Future research could rebuild the conceptualized vertical image transfers with more established constructs, like brand equity (Heinberg, Ozkaya and Taube 2018; Keller 1993). Due to the high number of countries surveyed, only translation-back-translation was applied and slightly modified, imposed etic scales could be used in Study 1 and 2 (Douglas and Craig 2006; Yang, Floyd and Tanner Jr 2019). Study 3 measures internationalization rhythm according to Vermeulen and Barkema (2002). Going beyond this measurement categorizing internationalization processes into regular or irregular would deliver valuable insights for e-commerce firms. Accordingly, internationalization speed should be measured in a multidimensional but still dynamic way in future research.

Third, there are plenty of ways to extend the conceptual frameworks of each empirical study included in this doctoral thesis. For example, it is promising to change the independent variable. The effects of PBL or domestic brands under consideration of the degree of country development and national culture could be analyzed (e.g., Sichtmann, Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2019). Subtypes of the endorsed branding strategy, such as temporal endorsements or co-branding are worth to be investigated (e.g., Åsberg and Uggla 2019). Knowledge on how the endorsed branding strategy is leveraged by, for example, celebrity endorsements,

would help MNCs to even more increase consumers' product purchase intention (e.g., Knoll and Matthes 2017). Comparing the effects of different branding strategies, like house of brands or branded house, may help managers to make well-grounded decisions (e.g., Hsu, Fournier and Srinivasan 2016). In the context of Study 3, it may be insightful to reveal the effects of further internationalization decisions relevant for e-commerce firms (scope, market entry strategies, or setting up own foreign logistics, Chen et al. 2019). Moreover, uncovering antecedents of constructs and variables in all studies would help managers to better understand how to build competitive advantages. We can only recommend MNCs to put global elements to their slogan, logo, etc. but not specify how PBG can be really increased (e.g., De Meulenaer, Dens and De Pelsmacker 2015). Study 2 shows that implementing the endorsed branding strategy is beneficial in terms of consumer behavior. However, the question which factors drive this implementation remains unanswered. Knowledge on the antecedents of e-commerce firms' internationalization rhythm and speed is also scarce but may be advantageous (e.g., Lin and Huang 2012; Luo, Zhao and Du 2005). Additionally, further context factors can be included. In all three studies, the influence of the internet on consumer perceptions as well as e-commerce firms' international expansion opportunities increases. Hence, future research may reveal interesting results regarding the leveraging role of global connectedness, internet usage, or country's degree of e-readiness (e.g., Ashraf, Thongpapanl and Auh 2014; Gürhan-Canli, Sarial-Abi and Hayran 2018).

Fourth, Study 1 and 2 rely on cognitive theoretical rationales, whereas Study 3 is anchored in a management theory. The choice of each theory was justified and reflects common applications within each research context (see Chapter 2). However, the research setting within each study limits the full exploitation of the respective theories. In Study 1, accessibility and diagnosticity are reflected by certain consumer perceptions but not measured directly (Van Herpen and Pieters 2007). In Study 2, global corporate and product brand image deliver an overall impression of consumers' brand schemata (Hoyer, MacInnis and Pieters 2012, p. 108). To reveal the effects suggested by schema theory more in detail, capturing attributes within a schema, schema activation, and schema favorability would be necessary (Halkias 2015). Directly collecting data on firms' organizational learning, operational capabilities, or managers' risk and uncertainty for decision-making as factors underlying Study 3's theoretical argumentation, could be promising (Vahlne and Johanson 2017). Moreover, applying different theories would contribute to research. Studies on PBG and vertical image transfers often apply signaling theory (see Section 2.1. and 2.2.). However, when analyzing consumer responses, signaling theory as an economic theory seems to be less

appropriate (e.g., Connelly et al. 2011). To explain the effects of e-commerce firms' internationalization process decisions, Study 3 relies on an enhanced version of internationalization process theory (e.g., Coviello, Kano and Liesch 2017; Monaghan, Tippmann and Coviello 2020). Further theories, indicating new ways of internationalizing in contrast to traditional MNCs, mainly refer to specific types of firms (international new ventures, born globals, etc., Knight and Cavusgil 2005; Zahra 2005). As Study 3's dataset comprises many different types of firms, it seems to be preferable to choose a more generalized theory.

Finally, all three studies accounted for the nested structure of the datasets by applying multilevel modeling (e.g., Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, pp. 4–13). Enhancing data, for example, by further MNCs or industries may provide valuable insights but increases model complexity through the requirement of an additional level of analysis. In Study 1, all levels of analysis were included. Study 2 has further possible levels of analysis due to the additional observation of global product brands. However, intra-class correlation indicated to neglect this level and conduct a two-level analysis (e.g., Hox, Moerbeek and Van de Schoot 2018, p. 238). Data of Study 3 comprises e-commerce firms being active in several countries but also operating in different industries since various points in time. Again, intra-class correlation led to the decision of a two-level analysis. The application of cross-classified or third-level models may be promising but must be methodologically appropriate.

References

Aaker, J. L. (2000). Accessibility or diagnosticity? Disentangling the influence of culture on persuasion processes and attitudes. *Journal of Consumer Research,* 26(4), 340–357.

Abbey, J. D. & Meloy, M. G. (2017). Attention by design: Using attention checks to detect inattentive respondents and improve data quality. *Journal of Operations Management,* 53(November), 63–70.

Abdellah-Kilani, F. & Zorai, R. (2019). Brand Origin Recall Accuracy (BORECA): A new measure of brand origin salience. *International Marketing Review,* 36(3), 464–482.

Abosag, I. & Farah, M. F. (2014). The influence of religiously motivated consumer boycotts on brand image, loyalty and product judgment. *European Journal of Marketing,* 48(11/12), 2262–2283.

Acedo, F. J. & Jones, M. V. (2007). Speed of internationalization and entrepreneurial cognition: Insights and a comparison between international new ventures, exporters and domestic firms. *Journal of World Business,* 42(3), 236–252.

Ahn, J., Park, J. K., & Hyun, H. (2018). Luxury product to service brand extension and brand equity transfer. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services,* 42(May), 22–28.

Akaka, M. A. & Alden, D. L. (2010). Global brand positioning and perceptions: International advertising and global consumer culture. *International Journal of Advertising,* 29(1), 37–56.

Akram, A., Merunka, D., & Akram, M. S. (2011). Perceived brand globalness in emerging markets and the moderating role of consumer ethnocentrism. *International Journal of Emerging Markets,* 6(4), 291–303.

Alden, D. L., Kelley, J. B., Riefler, P., Lee, J. A., & Soutar, G. N. (2013). The effect of global company animosity on global brand attitudes in emerging and developed markets: Does perceived value matter? *Journal of International Marketing,* 21(2), 17–38.

Alden, D. L., Steenkamp, J.-B. E., & Batra, R. (2006). Consumer attitudes toward marketplace globalization: Structure, antecedents and consequences. *International Journal of Research in Marketing,* 23(3), 227–239.

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

C. Sinning, *International Strategic Management of Brands and Online Firms*, Handel und Internationales Marketing Retailing and International Marketing, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-38050-2

Allman, H. F., Hewett, K., & Kaur, M. (2019). Understanding Cultural Differences in Consumers' Reactions to Foreign-Market Brand Extensions: The Role of Thinking Styles. *Journal of International Marketing,* 27(2), 1–21.

Amazon (2021). *Amazon.com Annual Report 2021.* Seattle: amazon.com.

Amit, R. & Han, X. (2017). Value creation through novel resource configurations in a digitally enabled world. *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal,* 11(3), 228–242.

Amit, R. & Zott, C. (2001). Value creation in e-business. *Strategic Management Journal,* 22(6-7), 493–520.

Anderson, J. C. & Gerbing, D. W. (1988). Structural equation modeling in practice: A review and recommended two-step approach. *Psychological Bulletin,* 103(3), 411–423.

Ang, S. H., Benischke, M. H., & Doh, J. P. (2015). The interactions of institutions on foreign market entry mode. *Strategic Management Journal,* 36(10), 1536–1553.

Antonakis, J., Bendahan, S., Jacquart, P., & Lalive, R. (2014). Causality and Endogeneity: Problems and Solutions, 93–117. In *The Oxford Handbook of Leadership and Organizations,* D. V. Day (ed). New York: Oxford University Press.

Åsberg, P. & Uggla, H. (2019). Introducing multi-dimensional brand architecture: Taking structure, market orientation and stakeholder alignment into account. *Journal of Brand Management,* 26(5), 483–496.

Ashraf, A. R., Thongpapanl, N., & Auh, S. (2014). The application of the technology acceptance model under different cultural contexts: The case of online shopping adoption. *Journal of International Marketing,* 22(3), 68–93.

Asparouhov, T. (2005). Sampling weights in latent variable modeling. *Structural Equation Modeling,* 12(3), 411–434.

Autio, E., Nambisan, S., Thomas, L. D., & Wright, M. (2018). Digital affordances, spatial affordances, and the genesis of entrepreneurial ecosystems. *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal,* 12(1), 72–95.

Autio, E., Sapienza, H. J., & Almeida, J. G. (2000). Effects of age at entry, knowledge intensity, and imitability on international growth. *Academy of Management Journal,* 43(5), 909–924.

Bahadir, S. C., Bharadwaj, S. G., & Srivastava, R. K. (2015). Marketing mix and brand sales in global markets: Examining the contingent role of country-market characteristics. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 46(5), 596–619.

Bale, S. (2018). *BRANDZ: Chinese Global Brand Builders 2018.* Beijing: Google, Kantar Millward Brown, WPP.

Banalieva, E. R. & Dhanaraj, C. (2019). Internalization theory for the digital economy. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 50(8), 1372–1387.

Bartsch, F., Diamantopoulos, A., Paparoidamis, N. G., & Chumpitaz, R. (2016). Global brand ownership: The mediating roles of consumer attitudes and brand identification. *Journal of Business Research,* 69(9), 3629–3635.

Batra, R., Ramaswamy, V., Alden, D. L., Steenkamp, J. B. E., & Ramachander, S. (2000). Effects of brand local and nonlocal origin on consumer attitudes in developing countries. *Journal of Consumer Psychology,* 9(2), 83–95.

Batsakis, G. & Mohr, A. T. (2017). Revisiting the relationship between product diversification and internationalization process in the context of emerging market MNEs. *Journal of World Business,* 52(4), 564–577.

Beckert, J. (2010). How do fields change? The interrelations of institutions, networks, and cognition in the dynamics of markets. *Organization Studies,* 31(5), 605–627.

Benmamoun, M., Singh, N., Lehnert, K., & Lee, S. B. (2019). Internationalization of e-commerce corporations (ECCs): Advanced vs emerging markets ECCs. *Multinational Business Review,* 27(4), 317–338.

Berthon, P., Pitt, L., Cyr, D., & Campbell, C. (2008). E-readiness and trust: Macro and micro dualities for e-commerce in a global environment. *International Marketing Review,* 25(6), 700–714.

Bian, X. & Moutinho, L. (2011). The role of brand image, product involvement, and knowledge in explaining consumer purchase behaviour of counterfeits. *European Journal of Marketing,* 45(1/2), 191–216.

Biehal, G. J. & Sheinin, D. A. (2007). The influence of corporate messages on the product portfolio. *Journal of Marketing,* 71(2), 12–25.

Bingham, C. B. & Eisenhardt, K. M. (2011). Rational heuristics: The 'simple rules' that strategists learn from process experience. *Strategic Management Journal,* 32(13), 1437–1464.

Bleier, A., Harmeling, C. M., & Palmatier, R. W. (2019). Creating effective online customer experiences. *Journal of Marketing,* 83(2), 98–119.

Boisvert, J. & Ashill, N. J. (2018). The impact of branding strategies on horizontal and downward line extension of luxury brands. *International Marketing Review,* 35(6), 1033–1052.

Brexendorf, T. O. & Keller, K. L. (2017). Leveraging the corporate brand: The importance of corporate brand innovativeness and brand architecture. *European Journal of Marketing,* 51(9/10), 1530–1551.

Brouthers, K. D., Geisser, K. D., & Rothlauf, F. (2016). Explaining the internationalization of ibusiness firms. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 47(5), 513–534.

Brouthers, K. D. & Hennart, J.-F. (2007). Boundaries of the firm: Insights from international entry mode research. *Journal of Management,* 33(3), 395–425.

Buechel, E. C. & Townsend, C. (2018). Buying beauty for the long run: (Mis)Predicting liking of product aesthetics. *Journal of Consumer Research,* 45(2), 275–297.

Burgess, S. M. & Steenkamp, J.-B. E. (2006). Marketing renaissance: How research in emerging markets advances marketing science and practice. *International Journal of Research in Marketing,* 23(4), 337–356.

Business Today (2014). The Swoosh of Creativity. https://www.businesstoday.in/magazine/lbs-case-study/nike-marketing-strategies-global-brand/story/207237.html. Accessed 15.11.2019.

Byrne, B. M. & Van de Vijver, F. J. (2010). Testing for measurement and structural equivalence in large-scale cross-cultural studies: Addressing the issue of nonequivalence. *International Journal of Testing,* 10(2), 107–132.

Caldieraro, F., Kao, L.-J., & Cunha Jr, M. (2015). Harmful upward line extensions: can the launch of premium products result in competitive disadvantages? *Journal of Marketing,* 79(6), 50–70.

Camacho, N., De Jong, M., & Stremersch, S. (2014). The effect of customer empowerment on adherence to expert advice. *International Journal of Research in Marketing,* 31(3), 293–308.

Carnevale, M., Luna, D., & Lerman, D. (2017). Brand linguistics: A theory-driven framework for the study of language in branding. *International Journal of Research in Marketing,* 34(2), 572–591.

Casillas, J. C. & Acedo, F. J. (2013). Speed in the internationalization process of the firm. *International Journal of Management Reviews,* 15(1), 15–29.

Casillas, J. C. & Moreno-Menéndez, A. M. (2014). Speed of the internationalization process: The role of diversity and depth in experiential learning. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 45(1), 85–101.

Chan, P., Finnegan, C., & Sternquist, B. (2011). Country and firm level factors in international retail expansion. *European Journal of Marketing,* 45(6), 1005–1022.

Chang, C.-C., Lin, B.-C., & Chang, S.-S. (2011). The relative advantages of benefit overlap versus category similarity in brand extension evaluation: The moderating role of self-regulatory focus. *Marketing Letters,* 22(4), 391–404.

Chang, S.-J., Van Witteloostuijn, A., & Eden, L. (2010). From the editors: Common method variance in international business research. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 41(2), 178–184.

Chao, M. C.-H. & Kumar, V. (2010). The impact of institutional distance on the international diversity–performance relationship. *Journal of World Business,* 45(1), 93–103.

Chen, F. F. (2007). Sensitivity of goodness of fit indexes to lack of measurement invariance. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal,* 14(3), 464–504.

Chen, L., Shaheer, N., Yi, J., & Li, S. (2019). The international penetration of ibusiness firms: Network effects, liabilities of outsidership and country clout. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 50(2), 172–192.

Chen, Y. & Wyer Jr, R. S. (2020). The effects of endorsers' facial expressions on status perceptions and purchase intentions. *International Journal of Research in Marketing,* 37(2), 371–385.

Chetty, S., Johanson, M., & Martín, O. M. (2014). Speed of internationalization: Conceptualization, measurement and validation. *Journal of World Business,* 49(4), 633–650.

Chun, H. H., Park, C. W., Eisingerich, A. B., & MacInnis, D. J. (2015). Strategic benefits of low fit brand extensions: When and why? *Journal of Consumer Psychology,* 25(4), 577–595.

Çilingirtürk, A. M. & Koçak, H. (2018). Human Development Index (HDI) rank-order variability. *Social Indicators Research,* 137(2), 481–504.

Cleveland, M. & Laroche, M. (2007). Acculturaton to the global consumer culture: Scale development and research paradigm. *Journal of Business Research,* 60(3), 249–259.

Coca-Cola Company (2016). Coca-Cola Announces "One Brand" Global Marketing Approach. https://www.coca-colacompany.com/au/media-centre/media-releases/coca-cola-announces-one-brand-global-marketing-approach. Accessed 30.07.2021.

Colton, D. A., Roth, M. S., & Bearden, W. O. (2010). Drivers of international e-tail performance: The complexities of orientations and resources. *Journal of International Marketing,* 18(1), 1–22.

Connelly, B. L., Certo, S. T., Ireland, R. D., & Reutzel, C. R. (2011). Signaling theory: A review and assessment. *Journal of Management,* 37(1), 39–67.

Coviello, N., Kano, L., & Liesch, P. W. (2017). Adapting the Uppsala model to a modern world: Macro-context and microfoundations. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 48(9), 1151–1164.

Cretu, A. E. & Brodie, R. J. (2007). The influence of brand image and company reputation where manufacturers market to small firms: A customer value perspective. *Industrial Marketing Management,* 36(2), 230–240.

Crocker, J. (1984). A Schematic Approach to Changing Consumers' Beliefs. *Advances in Consumer Research,* 11(1), 472–477.

Cutright, K. M., Bettman, J. R., & Fitzsimons, G. J. (2013). Putting brands in their place: How a lack of control keeps brands contained. *Journal of Marketing Research,* 50(3), 365–377.

D'Andrade, R. G. (1981). The cultural part of cognition. *Cognitive Science,* 5(3), 179–195.

Dalmoro, M., Pinto, D. C., Borges, A., & Nique, W. M. (2015). Global brands in emerging markets: The cultural antecedents of global brand preference. *Journal of Brand Management,* 22(9), 721–736.

Davvetas, V. & Diamantopoulos, A. (2016). How product category shapes preferences toward global and local brands: A schema theory perspective. *Journal of International Marketing,* 24(4), 61–81.

Davvetas, V. & Diamantopoulos, A. (2018). "Should Have I Bought the Other One?" Experiencing Regret in Global Versus Local Brand Purchase Decisions. *Journal of International Marketing,* 26(2), 1–21.

Davvetas, V., Sichtmann, C., & Diamantopoulos, A. (2015). The impact of perceived brand globalness on consumers' willingness to pay. *International Journal of Research in Marketing,* 32(4), 431–434.

De Meulenaer, S., Dens, N., & De Pelsmacker, P. (2015). Which cues cause consumers to perceive brands as more global? A conjoint analysis. *International Marketing Review,* 32(6), 606–626.

De Mooij, M. (2017). Comparing dimensions of national culture for secondary analysis of consumer behavior data of different countries. *International Marketing Review,* 34(3), 444–456.

De Mooij, M. (2015). Cross-cultural research in international marketing: Clearing up some of the confusion. *International Marketing Review,* 32(6), 646–662.

Deephouse, D. L., Newburry, W., & Soleimani, A. (2016). The effects of institutional development and national culture on cross-national differences in corporate reputation. *Journal of World Business,* 51(3), 463–473.

Delassus, V. P. & Descotes, R. M. (2012). Brand name substitution and brand equity transfer. *Journal of Product & Brand Management,* 21(2), 117–125.

Deng, Z., Jean, R.-J. B., & Sinkovics, R. R. (2018). Rapid expansion of international new ventures across institutional distance. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 49(8), 1010–1032.

Derdenger, T. P. (2018). Examining the impact of celebrity endorsements across consumer segments: An empirical study of Tiger Woods' endorsement effect on golf equipment. *Marketing Letters,* 29(2), 123–136.

Diamantopoulos, A., Schlegelmilch, B., & Palihawadana, D. (2011). The relationship between country-of-origin image and brand image as drivers of purchase intentions. *International Marketing Review,* 28(5), 508–524.

Digital Commerce 360 (2018). 2018 Digital Commerce 360 Europe 500 Database. https://www.digitalcommerce360.com/product/europe-500-database/?utm_source=Web&utm_campaign=2020-Article&cmp=1&utm_medium=Article. Accessed 11.12.2020.

Digital Commerce 360 (2021). Digital Commerce 360 Research & Data. https://www.digitalcommerce360.com/about-our-research/. Accessed 19.05.2021.

Dimofte, C. V., Johansson, J. K., & Bagozzi, R. P. (2010). Global brands in the United States: How consumer ethnicity mediates the global brand effect. *Journal of International Marketing,* 18(3), 81–106.

Dimofte, C. V., Johansson, J. K., & Ronkainen, I. A. (2008). Cognitive and affective reactions of US consumers to global brands. *Journal of International Marketing,* 16(4), 113–135.

DiStefano, C., Zhu, M., & Mindrila, D. (2009). Understanding and using factor scores: Considerations for the applied researcher. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation,* 14(20), 1–11.

Dong, M. C., Fang, Y., & Straub, D. W. (2017). The impact of institutional distance on the joint performance of collaborating firms: The role of adaptive interorganizational systems. *Information Systems Research,* 28(2), 309–331.

Douglas, S. P. & Craig, C. S. (2006). On improving the conceptual foundations of international marketing research. *Journal of International Marketing,* 14(1), 1–22.

Drogendijk, R. & Slangen, A. (2006). Hofstede, Schwartz, or managerial perceptions? The effects of different cultural distance measures on establishment mode choices by multinational enterprises. *International Business Review,* 15(4), 361–380.

Dwivedi, A., McDonald, R. E., & Johnson, L. W. (2014). The impact of a celebrity endorser's credibility on consumer self-brand connection and brand evaluation. *Journal of Brand Management,* 21(7–8), 559–578.

Dwivedi, A., Merrilees, B., & Sweeney, A. (2010). Brand extension feedback effects: A holistic framework. *Journal of Brand Management,* 17(5), 328–342.

eBay (2020). 2020 Annual Report. https://ebay.q4cdn.com/610426115/files/doc_financials/2020/ar/2020-Annual-Report.pdf. Accessed 30.07.2021.

ecommerceDB (2021). eCommerce Revenue Analytics. https://ecommercedb.com/en/store/apple.com?currency=EUR. Accessed 30.07.2021.

Eden, L. & Miller, S. R. (2004). Distance matters: Liability of foreignness, institutional distance and ownership strategy, 187–221. In *Theories of the Multinational Enterprise: Diversity, Complexity and Relevance,* M. A. Hitt and J. L. C. Cheng (eds). Vol. 16. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Eggers, F., O'Dwyer, M., Kraus, S., Vallaster, C., & Güldenberg, S. (2013). The impact of brand authenticity on brand trust and SME growth: A CEO perspective. *Journal of World Business,* 48(3), 340–348.

Elosge, C., Oesterle, M.-J., Stein, C. M., & Hattula, S. (2018). CEO succession and firms' internationalization processes: Insights from German companies. *International Business Review,* 27(2), 367–379.

Erdem, T., Swait, J., & Valenzuela, A. (2006). Brands as signals: A cross-country validation study. *Journal of Marketing,* 70(1), 34–49.

Erfgen, C., Zenker, S., & Sattler, H. (2015). The vampire effect: When do celebrity endorsers harm brand recall? *International Journal of Research in Marketing,* 32(2), 155–163.

Essoussi, L. H. & Merunka, D. (2007). Consumers' product evaluations in emerging markets: Does country of design, country of manufacture, or brand image matter? *International Marketing Review,* 24(4), 409–426.

Estes, Z., Gibbert, M., Guest, D., & Mazursky, D. (2012). A dual-process model of brand extension: Taxonomic feature-based and thematic relation-based similarity independently drive brand extension evaluation. *Journal of Consumer Psychology,* 22(1), 86–101.

Fatma, M., Khan, I., & Rahman, Z. (2016). How does corporate association influence consumer brand loyalty? Mediating role of brand identification. *Journal of Product & Brand Management,* 25(7), 629–641.

Feldman, J. M. & Lynch, J. G. (1988). Self-generated validity and other effects of measurement on belief, attitude, intention, and behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology,* 73(3), 421.

Felix, R. & Borges, A. (2014). Celebrity endorser attractiveness, visual attention, and implications for ad attitudes and brand evaluations: A replication and extension. *Journal of Brand Management,* 21(7–8), 579–593.

Ferguson, J. L. & Mohan, M. (2020). Use of celebrity and non-celebrity persons in B2B advertisements: Effects on attention, recall, and hedonic and utilitarian attitudes. *Industrial Marketing Management,* 89(August), 594–604.

Finch, H. & Bolin, J. (2017). *Multilevel Modeling Using Mplus.* Boca Raton: CRC Press.

Fiske, S. T. & Taylor, S. E. (1991). *Social Cognition.* Vol. 2. New York: Mcgraw-Hill Book Company.

Forbes (2020a). More Customers Are Shopping Online Now Than At Height Of Pandemic, Fueling Need For Digital Transformation. https://www.forbes.com/sites/blakemorgan/2020/07/27/more-customers-are-shopping-online-now-than-at-height-of-pandemic-fueling-need-for-digital-transformation/?sh=15677c306bb9. Accessed 31.07.2021.

Forbes (2019). The World's Most Valuable Brands. https://www.forbes.com/powerful-brands/list/. Accessed 07.07.2019.

Forbes (2020b). The World's Most Valuable Brands 2020. https://www.forbes.com/the-worlds-most-valuable-brands/#683755e4119c. Accessed 30.07.2021.

Ford, J. B., Merchant, A., Bartier, A.-L., & Friedman, M. (2018). The cross-cultural scale development process: The case of brand-evoked nostalgia in Belgium and the United States. *Journal of Business Research,* 83(February), 19–29.

Frank, P. & Watchravesringkan, K. T. (2016). Exploring antecedents and consequences of young consumers' perceived global brand equity. *Journal of Product & Brand Management,* 25(2), 160–170.

García-García, R., García-Canal, E., & Guillén, M. F. (2017). Rapid internationalization and long-term performance: The knowledge link. *Journal of World Business,* 52(1), 97–110.

Garcia-Lillo, F., Claver-Cortés, E., Marco-Lajara, B., & Úbeda-García, M. (2017). Mapping the intellectual structure of research on 'born global' firms and INVs: A citation/co-citation analysis. *Management International Review,* 57(4), 631–652.

Gassmann, O. & Keupp, M. M. (2007). The competitive advantage of early and rapidly internationalising SMEs in the biotechnology industry: A knowledge-based view. *Journal of World Business,* 42(3), 350–366.

Gaur, A. S., Delios, A., & Singh, K. (2007). Institutional environments, staffing strategies, and subsidiary performance. *Journal of Management,* 33(4), 611–636.

Gaur, A. S. & Lu, J. W. (2007). Ownership strategies and survival of foreign subsidiaries: Impacts of institutional distance and experience. *Journal of Management,* 33(1), 84–110.

Geldhof, G. J., Preacher, K. J., & Zyphur, M. J. (2014). Reliability estimation in a multilevel confirmatory factor analysis framework. *Psychological Methods,* 19(1), 72–91.

Goetz, D. M., Fassnacht, M., & Rumpf, K. (2014). Extending downward is not always bad: Parent brand evaluations after brand extension to higher and lower price and quality levels. *Journal of Brand Management,* 21(4), 303–324.

Gonçalves, H. M., Lourenço, T. F., & Silva, G. M. (2016). Green buying behavior and the theory of consumption values: A fuzzy-set approach. *Journal of Business Research,* 69(4), 1484–1491.

Gray, E. R. & Balmer, J. M. (1998). Managing corporate image and corporate reputation. *Long Range Planning,* 31(5), 695–702.

Guo, X. (2013). Living in a global world: Influence of consumer global orientation on attitudes toward global brands from developed versus emerging countries. *Journal of International Marketing,* 21(1), 1–22.

Guo, X., Heinberg, M., & Zou, S. (2019). Enhancing Consumer Attitude Toward Culturally Mixed Symbolic Products from Foreign Global Brands in an Emerging-Market Setting: The Role of Cultural Respect. *Journal of International Marketing,* 27(3), 79–97.

Gupta, S., Pansari, A., & Kumar, V. (2018). Global customer engagement. *Journal of International Marketing,* 26(1), 4–29.

Gupta, S. & Wright, O. (2019). How Global Brands Can Respond to Local Competitors. https://hbr.org/2019/02/how-global-brands-can-respond-to-local-competitors. Accessed 12.01.2021.

Gürhan-Canli, Z., Sarial-Abi, G., & Hayran, C. (2018). Consumers and brands across the globe: Research synthesis and new directions. *Journal of International Marketing,* 26(1), 96–117.

Hagen, B. & Zucchella, A. (2014). Born global or born to run? The long-term growth of born global firms. *Management International Review,* 54(4), 497–525.

Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., Anderson, R. E., & Tatham, R. L. (2018). *Multivariate Data Analysis.* Vol. 8. Hampshire: Cengage.

Halkias, G. (2015). Mental representation of brands: a schema-based approach to consumers' organization of market knowledge. *Journal of Product & Brand Management,* 24(5), 438–448.

Halkias, G., Davvetas, V., & Diamantopoulos, A. (2016). The interplay between country stereotypes and perceived brand globalness/localness as drivers of brand preference. *Journal of Business Research,* 69(9), 3621–3628.

Halkias, G., Micevski, M., Diamantopoulos, A., & Milchram, C. (2017). Exploring the effectiveness of foreign brand communication: Consumer culture ad imagery and brand schema incongruity. *Journal of Business Research,* 80(November), 210–217.

Hanssens, D. M. & Pauwels, K. H. (2016). Demonstrating the value of marketing. *Journal of Marketing,* 80(6), 173–190.

Hausman, J. A. (1978). Specification tests in econometrics. *Econometrica,* 46(6), 1251–1271.

Hayes, A. F. (2017). *Introduction to Mediation, Moderation, and Conditional Process Analysis: A Regression-Based Approach.* New York: Guilford Publications.

He, J. & Wang, C. L. (2017). How global brands incorporating local cultural elements increase consumer purchase likelihood: An empirical study in China. *International Marketing Review,* 34(4), 463–479.

He, X., Brouthers, K. D., & Filatotchev, I. (2013). Resource-based and institutional perspectives on export channel selection and export performance. *Journal of Management,* 39(1), 27–47.

He, Y., Chen, Q., Tam, L., & Lee, R. P. (2016). Managing sub-branding affect transfer: The role of consideration set size and brand loyalty. *Marketing Letters,* 27(1), 103–113.

Heinberg, M., Ozkaya, H. E., & Taube, M. (2018). Do corporate image and reputation drive brand equity in India and China?—Similarities and differences. *Journal of Business Research,* 86(May), 259–268.

Heinberg, M., Ozkaya, H. E., & Taube, M. (2017). The influence of global and local iconic brand positioning on advertising persuasion in an emerging market setting. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 48(8), 1009–1022.

Heller, R., Rosenbaum, P. R., & Small, D. S. (2009). Split samples and design sensitivity in observational studies. *Journal of the American Statistical Association,* 104(487), 1090–1101.

Hennart, J.-F., Majocchi, A., & Hagen, B. (2021). What's so special about born globals, their entrepreneurs or their business model? *Journal of International Business Studies,* in press.

Henseler, J., Horváth, C., Sarstedt, M., & Zimmermann, L. (2010). A cross-cultural comparison of brand extension success factors: A meta-study. *Journal of Brand Management,* 18(1), 5–20.

Hilmersson, M. (2014). Small and medium-sized enterprise internationalisation strategy and performance in times of market turbulence. *International Small Business Journal,* 32(4), 386–400.

Hilmersson, M. & Johanson, M. (2020). Knowledge acquisition strategy, speed of capability development and speed of SME internationalisation. *International Small Business Journal,* 38(6), 536–556.

Hilmersson, M. & Johanson, M. (2016). Speed of SME internationalization and performance. *Management International Review,* 56(1), 67–94.

Hilmersson, M., Johanson, M., Lundberg, H., & Papaioannou, S. (2017). Time, temporality, and internationalization: The relationship among point in time of, time to, and speed of international expansion. *Journal of International Marketing,* 25(1), 22–45.

Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values.* Beverly Hills: Sage.

Holt, D. B., Quelch, J. A., & Taylor, E. L. (2004). How global brands compete. *Harvard Business Review,* 82(9), 68–75.

Hox, J. J., Moerbeek, M., & Van de Schoot, R. (2018). *Multilevel Analysis: Techniques and Applications.* New York: Routledge.

Hoyer, W. D., MacInnis, D. J., & Pieters, R. (2012). *Consumer Behavior.* Vol. 6. Mason: South-Western College Publishing.

Hsieh, L., Child, J., Narooz, R., Elbanna, S., Karmowska, J., Marinova, S., Puthusserry, P., Tsai, T., & Zhang, Y. (2019). A multidimensional perspective of SME internationalization speed: The influence of entrepreneurial characteristics. *International Business Review,* 28(2), 268–283.

Hsieh, M.-H., Pan, S.-L., & Setiono, R. (2004). Product-, corporate-, and country-image dimensions and purchase behavior: A multicountry analysis. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science,* 32(3), 251–270.

Hsu, L., Fournier, S., & Srinivasan, S. (2016). Brand architecture strategy and firm value: How leveraging, separating, and distancing the corporate brand affects risk and returns. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science,* 44(2), 261–280.

Hu, J., Liu, X., Wang, S., & Yang, Z. (2012). The role of brand image congruity in Chinese consumers' brand preference. *Journal of Product & Brand Management,* 21(1), 26–34.

Huber, F., Lenzen, M., Meyer, F., & Weihrauch, A. (2013). Brand extensions in the platform countries of Asia–Effects of fit, order of market entry and involvement. *Journal of Brand Management,* 20(5), 424–443.

Hult, G. T. M., Ketchen, D. J., Griffith, D. A., Chabowski, B. R., Hamman, M. K., Dykes, B. J., Pollitte, W. A., & Cavusgil, S. T. (2008). An assessment of the measurement of performance in international business research. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 39(6), 1064–1080.

Hussein, R. & Hassan, S. (2018). Antecedents of global brand purchase likelihood: Exploring the mediating effect of quality, prestige and familiarity. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing,* 30(5), 288–303.

Hutzschenreuter, T., Kleindienst, I., Guenther, C., & Hammes, M. (2016). Speed of Internationalization of New Business Units: The Impact of Direct and Indirect Learning. *Management International Review,* 56(December), 849–878.

Hutzschenreuter, T., Kleindienst, I., & Lange, S. (2016). The concept of distance in international business research: A review and research agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews,* 18(2), 160–179.

Hutzschenreuter, T. & Voll, J. C. (2008). Performance effects of "added cultural distance" in the path of international expansion: The case of German multinational enterprises. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 39(1), 53–70.

Iglesias, O., Markovic, S., Singh, J. J., & Sierra, V. (2019). Do customer perceptions of corporate services brand ethicality improve brand equity? Considering the roles of brand heritage, brand image, and recognition benefits. *Journal of Business Ethics,* 154(2), 441–459.

Ilicic, J., Baxter, S. M., & Kulczynski, A. (2016). The impact of age on consumer attachment to celebrities and endorsed brand attachment. *Journal of Brand Management,* 23(3), 273–288.

Institute for Management Development (2018). *IMD World Competitiveness Yearbook 2018.* Lausanne: Institute for Management Development.

Interbrand (2020). *Best Global Brands 2020 Report.* New York: Interbrand.

Iversen, N. M. & Hem, L. E. (2011). Reciprocal transfer effects for brand extensions of global or local origin: Evidence from Norway. *International Marketing Review,* 28(4), 365–411.

Jak, S., Oort, F. J., & Dolan, C. V. (2013). A test for cluster bias: Detecting violations of measurement invariance across clusters in multilevel data. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal,* 20(2), 265–282.

Jakubanecs, A. & Supphellen, M. (2012). Blank endorsement: The added value of unknown corporate brands. *Journal of Brand Management,* 19(9), 788–800.

Jean, R.-J. B. & Tan, D. (2019). The effect of institutional capabilities on E-business firms' international performance. *Management International Review,* 59(4), 593–616.

Jiang, G., Kotabe, M., Zhang, F., Hao, A. W., Paul, J., & Wang, C. L. (2020). The determinants and performance of early internationalizing firms: A literature review and research agenda. *International Business Review,* 29(4), 101662.

Jiang, R. J., Beamish, P. W., & Makino, S. (2014). Time compression diseconomies in foreign expansion. *Journal of World Business,* 49(1), 114–121.

Jin, Z., Lynch, R., Attia, S., Chansarkar, B., Gülsoy, T., Lapoule, P., Liu, X., Newburry, W., Nooraini, M. S., & Parente, R. (2015). The relationship between consumer ethnocentrism, cosmopolitanism and product country image among younger generation consumers: The moderating role of country development status. *International Business Review,* 24(3), 380–393.

Johanson, J. & Vahlne, J.-E. (1977). The internationalization process of the firm—a model of knowledge development and increasing foreign market commitments. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 8(1), 23–32.

Johanson, J. & Vahlne, J.-E. (2009). The Uppsala internationalization process model revisited: From liability of foreignness to liability of outsidership. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 40(9), 1411–1431.

Johansson, J. K. & Ronkainen, I. A. (2005). The esteem of global brands. *Journal of Brand Management,* 12(5), 339–354.

Johnson, B. (2011). The CEO of Heinz on powering growth in emerging markets. *Harvard Business Review,* 89(10), 47–50.

Johnson, Z. S., Mao, H., Lefebvre, S., & Ganesh, J. (2019). Good Guys Can Finish First: How Brand Reputation Affects Extension Evaluations. *Journal of Consumer Psychology,* 29(4), 565–583.

Kaufmann, D., Kraay, A., & Mastruzzi, M. (2005). Governance matters IV: Governance indicators for 1996–2004. *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper Series,* 3630.

Keller, K. L. (2012). Brand Strategy, 289–305. In *Handbook of Marketing Strategy,* V. Shankar and G. S. Carpenter (eds). Northhampton: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Marketing,* 57(1), 1–22.

Kellogg's (2019). 2019 Annual Report. https://investor.kelloggs.com/Cache/IRCache/75664203-bf77-5639-5384-379afa55e05c.PDF?O=PDF&T=&Y=&D=&FID=75664203-bf77-5639-5384-379afa55e05c&iid=4133514. Accessed 03.06.2020.

Kennedy, G. J. & Tuckman, B. W. (2013). An exploration into the influence of academic and social values, procrastination, and perceived school belongingness on academic performance. *Social Psychology of Education,* 16(3), 435–470.

Khan, S. N. & Mohsin, M. (2017). The power of emotional value: Exploring the effects of values on green product consumer choice behavior. *Journal of Cleaner Production,* 150(1), 65–74.

Khojastehpour, M. & Johns, R. (2015). The role of MNC's subsidiaries in creating multinational corporate brand. *Journal of Strategic Marketing,* 23(6), 512–525.

Kim, H. & Jensen, M. (2014). Audience heterogeneity and the effectiveness of market signals: How to overcome liabilities of foreignness in film exports? *Academy of Management Journal,* 57(5), 1360–1384.

Kim, H., Wu, J., Schuler, D. A., & Hoskisson, R. E. (2020). Chinese multinationals' fast internationalization: Financial performance advantage in one region, disadvantage in another. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 51(November), 1076–1106.

Kim, J., Spence, M. T., & Marshall, R. (2018). The color of choice: The influence of presenting product information in color on the compromise effect. *Journal of Retailing,* 94(2), 167–185.

Kim, K. & Park, J. (2019). Cultural influences on brand extension judgments: Opposing effects of thinking style and regulatory focus. *International Journal of Research in Marketing,* 36(1), 137–150.

Kirca, A. H., Randhawa, P., Talay, M. B., & Akdeniz, M. B. (2020). The interactive effects of product and brand portfolio strategies on brand performance: Longitudinal evidence from the US automotive industry. *International Journal of Research in Marketing,* 37(2), 421–439.

Kline, R. B. (2015). *Principles and Practice of Structural Equation Modeling.* New York: The Guilford Press.

Knight, G. A. & Cavusgil, S. T. (2005). A taxonomy of born-global firms. *Management International Review,* 45(3), 15–35.

Knoll, J. & Matthes, J. (2017). The effectiveness of celebrity endorsements: A meta-analysis. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science,* 45(1), 55–75.

Konara, P. & Shirodkar, V. (2018). Regulatory institutional distance and MNCs' subsidiary performance: Climbing up vs. climbing down the institutional ladder. *Journal of International Management,* 24(4), 333–347.

Kostova, T., Beugelsdijk, S., Scott, W. R., Kunst, V. E., Chua, C. H., & van Essen, M. (2020). The construct of institutional distance through the lens of different institutional perspectives: Review, analysis, and recommendations. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 51(4), 467–497.

Kotha, S., Rindova, V. P., & Rothaermel, F. T. (2001). Assets and actions: Firm-specific factors in the internationalization of US Internet firms. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 32(4), 769–791.

Kromidha, E. & Robson, P. J. (2021). The role of digital presence and investment network signals on the internationalisation of small firms. *International Small Business Journal,* 39(2), 109–129.

Kumar, V. & Pansari, A. (2016). National culture, economy, and customer lifetime value: Assessing the relative impact of the drivers of customer lifetime value for a global retailer. *Journal of International Marketing,* 24(1), 1–21.

Kumaraswamy, A., Mudambi, R., Saranga, H., & Tripathy, A. (2012). Catch-up strategies in the Indian auto components industry: Domestic firms' responses to market liberalization. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 43(4), 368–395.

Kwon, M., Saluja, G., & Adaval, R. (2015). Who said what: The effects of cultural mindsets on perceptions of endorser–message relatedness. *Journal of Consumer Psychology,* 25(3), 389–403.

Laforet, S. & Chen, J. (2012). Chinese and British consumers' evaluation of Chinese and international brands and factors affecting their choice. *Journal of World Business,* 47(1), 54–63.

Lane, V. R. & Fastoso, F. (2016). The impact of repeated ad exposure on spillover from low fit extensions to a global brand. *International Marketing Review,* 33(2), 298–318.

Lee, R., Lockshin, L., & Greenacre, L. (2016). A memory-theory perspective of country-image formation. *Journal of International Marketing,* 24(2), 62–79.

Leroi-Werelds, S. (2019). An update on customer value: State of the art, revised typology, and research agenda. *Journal of Service Management,* 30(5), 650–680.

Lin, P.-C. & Huang, Y.-H. (2012). The influence factors on choice behavior regarding green products based on the theory of consumption values. *Journal of Cleaner Production,* 22(1), 11–18.

Lin, W.-T. (2012). Family ownership and internationalization processes: Internationalization pace, internationalization scope, and internationalization rhythm. *European Management Journal,* 30(1), 47–56.

Lin, W.-T. (2014). How do managers decide on internationalization processes? The role of organizational slack and performance feedback. *Journal of World Business,* 49(3), 396–408.

Lin, W.-T. & Cheng, K.-Y. (2013). Upper echelon compensation, performance, and the rhythm of firm internationalization. *Management Decision,* 51(7), 1380–1401.

Lindell, M. K. & Whitney, D. J. (2001). Accounting for common method variance in cross-sectional research designs. *Journal of Applied Psychology,* 86(1), 114–121.

Liu, H., Schoefer, K., Fastoso, F., & Tzemou, E. (2021). Perceived brand globalness/localness: A systematic review of the literature and directions for further research. *Journal of International Marketing,* 29(1), 77–94.

Liu, Y., Foscht, T., Eisingerich, A. B., & Tsai, H.-T. (2018). Strategic management of product and brand extensions: Extending corporate brands in B2B vs. B2C markets. *Industrial Marketing Management,* 71(May), 147–159.

Luo, Y. (2021). A general framework of digitization risks in international business. *Journal of International Business Studies,* in press.

Luo, Y., Zhao, J. H., & Du, J. (2005). The internationalization speed of e-commerce companies: An empirical analysis. *International Marketing Review,* 22(6), 693–709.

Lynch Jr, J. G. (2006). Accessibility-diagnosticity and the multiple pathway anchoring and adjustment model. *Journal of Consumer Research,* 33(1), 25–27.

Lynch Jr, J. G., Marmorstein, H., & Weigold, M. F. (1988). Choices from sets including remembered brands: Use of recalled attributes and prior overall evaluations. *Journal of Consumer Research,* 15(2), 169–184.

Mandler, T. (2019). Beyond reach: An extended model of global brand effects. *International Marketing Review,* 36(5), 647–674.

Mandler, T., Bartsch, F., & Han, C. M. (2020). Brand credibility and marketplace globalization: The role of perceived brand globalness and localness. *Journal of International Business Studies,* in press.

Marsh, H. W., Lüdtke, O., Robitzsch, A., Trautwein, U., Asparouhov, T., Muthén, B., & Nagengast, B. (2009). Doubly-latent models of school contextual effects: Integrating multilevel and structural equation approaches to control measurement and sampling error. *Multivariate Behavioral Research,* 44(6), 764–802.

Martinez, C. A. & Williams, C. (2010). National Institutions, Entrepreneurship and Global ICT Adoption: A Cross-Country Test Of Competing Theories. *Journal of Electronic Commerce Research,* 11(1), 73–91.

Maxham III, J. G. & Netemeyer, R. G. (2002). A longitudinal study of complaining customers' evaluations of multiple service failures and recovery efforts. *Journal of Marketing,* 66(4), 57–71.

Maydeu-Olivares, A. (2017). Maximum likelihood estimation of structural equation models for continuous data: Standard errors and goodness of fit. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal,* 24(3), 383–394.

Meyers-Levy, J. & Tybout, A. M. (1989). Schema congruity as a basis for product evaluation. *Journal of Consumer Research,* 16(1), 39–54.

Milberg, S. J., Sinn, F., & Goodstein, R. C. (2010). Consumer reactions to brand extensions in a competitive context: does fit still matter? *Journal of Consumer Research,* 37(3), 543–553.

Miller, D. I. & Halpern, D. F. (2014). The new science of cognitive sex differences. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences,* 18(1), 37–45.

Miniard, P. W., Jayanti, R. K., Alvarez, C. M., & Dickson, P. R. (2018). What brand extensions need to fully benefit from their parental heritage. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science,* 46(5), 948–963.

Mohr, A. & Batsakis, G. (2014). Intangible assets, international experience and the internationalisation speed of retailers. *International Marketing Review,* 31(6), 601–620.

Mohr, A. & Batsakis, G. (2017). Internationalization speed and firm performance: A study of the market-seeking expansion of retail MNEs. *Management International Review,* 57(2), 153–177.

Mohr, A., Batsakis, G., & Stone, Z. (2018). Explaining the effect of rapid internationalization on horizontal foreign divestment in the retail sector: An extended Penrosean perspective. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 49(7), 779–808.

Monaghan, S. & Tippmann, E. (2018). Becoming a multinational enterprise: Using industry recipes to achieve rapid multinationalization. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 49(4), 473–495.

Monaghan, S., Tippmann, E., & Coviello, N. (2020). Born digitals: Thoughts on their internationalization and a research agenda. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 51(1), 11–22.

Monga, A. B. & Gürhan-Canli, Z. (2012). The influence of mating mind-sets on brand extension evaluation. *Journal of Marketing Research,* 49(4), 581–593.

Moore, C. B., Payne, G. T., Bell, R. G., & Davis, J. L. (2015). Institutional distance and cross-border venture capital investment flows. *Journal of Small Business Management,* 53(2), 482–500.

Muroyiwa, O., Abratt, R., & Mingione, M. (2017). The effect of vertical brand extensions on consumer-brand relationships in South Africa. *Journal of Business Management,* 48(1), 1–10.

Musteen, M., Francis, J., & Datta, D. K. (2010). The influence of international networks on internationalization speed and performance: A study of Czech SMEs. *Journal of World Business,* 45(3), 197–205.

Nagase, M. & Kano, Y. (2017). Identifiability of nonrecursive structural equation models. *Statistics & Probability Letters,* 122(3), 109–117.

Nambisan, S., Zahra, S. A., & Luo, Y. (2019). Global platforms and ecosystems: Implications for international business theories. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 50(9), 1464–1486.

Nicolau, J. L. & Santa-María, M. J. (2013). Celebrity endorsers' performance on the "ground" and on the "floor". *Marketing Letters,* 24(2), 143–149.

Nijssen, E. J. & Douglas, S. P. (2011). Consumer world-mindedness and attitudes toward product positioning in advertising: An examination of global versus foreign versus local positioning. *Journal of International Marketing,* 19(3), 113–133.

Nike (2021). About Nike. https://about.nike.com/. Accessed 30.07.2021.

O'Brien, R. M. (2007). A caution regarding rules of thumb for variance inflation factors. *Quality & Quantity,* 41(5), 673–690.

Oh, C. H., Sohl, T., & Rugman, A. M. (2015). Regional and product diversification and the performance of retail multinationals. *Journal of International Management,* 21(3), 220–234.

Oppenheimer, D. M., Meyvis, T., & Davidenko, N. (2009). Instructional manipulation checks: Detecting satisficing to increase statistical power. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology,* 45(4), 867–872.

Oxley, J. E. & Yeung, B. (2001). E-commerce readiness: Institutional environment and international competitiveness. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 32(4), 705–723.

Ozdemir, V. E. & Hewett, K. (2010). The effect of collectivism on the importance of relationship quality and service quality for behavioral intentions: A cross-national and cross-contextual analysis. *Journal of International Marketing,* 18(1), 41–62.

Özsomer, A. (2012). The interplay between global and local brands: A closer look at perceived brand globalness and local iconness. *Journal of International Marketing,* 20(2), 72–95.

Park, C. W., Jaworski, B. J., & MacInnis, D. J. (1986). Strategic brand concept-image management. *Journal of Marketing,* 50(4), 135–145.

Parker, J. R., Lehmann, D. R., Keller, K. L., & Schleicher, M. G. (2018). Building a multicategory brand: When should distant brand extensions be introduced? *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science,* 46(2), 300–316.

Patel, P. C., Criaco, G., & Naldi, L. (2018). Geographic diversification and the survival of born-globals. *Journal of Management,* 44(5), 2008–2036.

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

Pedersen, M. J. & Nielsen, C. V. (2016). Improving survey response rates in online panels: Effects of low-cost incentives and cost-free text appeal interventions. *Social Science Computer Review,* 34(2), 229–243.

Philips (2019). Philips retains its top-50 best global brand ranking. https://www.philips.com/a-w/about/news/archive/standard/news/articles/2019/20191018-philips-retains-its-top-50-best-global-brand-ranking.html. Accessed 09.11.2019.

Plumeyer, A., Kottemann, P., Böger, D., & Decker, R. (2019). Measuring brand image: A systematic review, practical guidance, and future research directions. *Review of Managerial Science,* 13(2), 227–265.

Pogrebnyakov, N. & Maitland, C. F. (2011). Institutional distance and the internationalization process: The case of mobile operators. *Journal of International Management,* 17(1), 68–82.

Puligadda, S., Cronley, M., & Kardes, F. (2013). Effects of advertising cues on brand extension evaluation: A global versus focused processing style account. *Journal of Brand Management,* 20(6), 473–487.

Puligadda, S., Ross Jr, W. T., & Grewal, R. (2012). Individual differences in brand schematicity. *Journal of Marketing Research,* 49(1), 115–130.

Putrevu, S. & Lord, K. R. (1994). Comparative and noncomparative advertising: Attitudinal effects under cognitive and affective involvement conditions. *Journal of Advertising,* 23(2), 77–91.

Ramanathan, J. & Velayudhan, S. K. (2015). Consumer evaluation of brand extensions: Comparing goods to goods brand extensions with goods to services. *Journal of Brand Management,* 22(9), 778–801.

Randrianasolo, A. A. (2017). Global brand value in developed, emerging, and least developed country markets. *Journal of Brand Management,* 24(5), 489–507.

Raudenbush, S. W. & Bryk, A. S. (2002). *Hierarchical Linear Models: Applications and Data Analysis Methods.* Vol. 2. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Riefler, P. (2012). Why consumers do (not) like global brands: The role of globalization attitude, GCO and global brand origin. *International Journal of Research in Marketing,* 29(1), 25–34.

Rodrigo, P., Khan, H., & Ekinci, Y. (2019). The determinants of foreign product preference amongst elite consumers in an emerging market. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services,* 46(January), 139–148.

Rothaermel, F. T., Kotha, S., & Steensma, H. K. (2006). International market entry by US internet firms: An empirical analysis of country risk, national culture, and market size. *Journal of Management,* 32(1), 56–82.

Roy, S., Guha, A., & Biswas, A. (2015). Celebrity endorsements and women consumers in India: How generation-cohort affiliation and celebrity-product congruency moderate the benefits of chronological age congruency. *Marketing Letters,* 26(3), 363–376.

Roy, S., Guha, A., Biswas, A., & Grewal, D. (2019). Celebrity endorsements in emerging markets: Align endorsers with brands or with consumers? *Journal of International Business Studies,* 50(3), 295–317.

Ryu, E. (2015). The role of centering for interaction of level 1 variables in multilevel structural equation models. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal,* 22(4), 617–630.

Ryu, E. & West, S. G. (2009). Level-specific evaluation of model fit in multilevel structural equation modeling. *Structural Equation Modeling,* 16(4), 583–601.

Saini, Y. K. & Lynch Jr, J. G. (2016). The effects of the online and offline purchase environment on consumer choice of familiar and unfamiliar brands. *International Journal of Research in Marketing,* 33(3), 702–705.

Salinas, E. M. & Pérez, J. M. P. (2009). Modeling the brand extensions' influence on brand image. *Journal of Business Research,* 62(1), 50–60.

Salthouse, T. (2012). Consequences of age-related cognitive declines. *Annual Review of Psychology,* 63(4), 201–226.

Samiee, S. (2020). International marketing and the internet: A research overview and the path forward. *International Marketing Review,* 37(3), 425–436.

Samiee, S. (2019). Reflections on global brands, global consumer culture and globalization. *International Marketing Review,* 36(4), 536–544.

Satta, G., Parola, F., & Persico, L. (2014). Temporal and spatial constructs in service firms' internationalization patterns: The determinants of the accelerated growth of emerging MNEs. *Journal of International Management,* 20(4), 421–435.

Schu, M. & Morschett, D. (2017). Foreign market selection of online retailers—A path-dependent perspective on influence factors. *International Business Review,* 26(4), 710–723.

Schu, M., Morschett, D., & Swoboda, B. (2016). Internationalization speed of online retailers: A resource-based perspective on the influence factors. *Management International Review,* 56(5), 733–757.

Schuiling, I. & Kapferer, J.-N. (2004). Real differences between local and international brands: Strategic implications for international marketers. *Journal of International Marketing,* 12(4), 97–112.

Schwartz, S. H. (1994). *Beyond Individualism/Collectivism: New Cultural Dimensions of Values*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Schwartz, S. H. (2014). National culture as value orientations: Consequences of value differences and cultural distance, 547–586. In *Handbook of the Economics of Art and Culture,* V. A. Ginsburgh and D. Throsby (eds). Vol. 2. North Holland: Elsevier.

Schwartz, S. H. (1999). A Theory of Cultural Values and Some Implications For Work. *Applied Psychology,* 48(1), 23–47.

Schwens, C., Eiche, J., & Kabst, R. (2011). The moderating impact of informal institutional distance and formal institutional risk on SME entry mode choice. *Journal of Management Studies,* 48(2), 330–351.

Scott, M. A., Simonoff, J. S., & Marx, B. D. (2013). *The SAGE Handbook of Multilevel Modeling*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Scott, W. R. (2014). *Institutions and Organizations.* Vol. 4. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Scott, W. R. (1991). Unpacking Institutional Arguments, 164–182. In *The New Intitutionalism in Organizational Analysis,* W. W. Powell and P. J. DiMaggio (eds). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Sebri, M. & Zaccour, G. (2017). Cross-country differences in private-label success: An exploratory approach. *Journal of Business Research,* 80(November), 116–126.

Selig, J. P., Card, N. A., & Little, T. D. (2008). Latent variable structural equation modeling in cross-cultural research: Multigroup and multilevel approaches, 93–119. In *Multilevel Analysis of Individuals and Cultures,* F. J. R. van de Vijer, D. A. van Hemert and Y. H. Poortinga (eds). New York: Taylor & Francis Group.

Shaheer, N., Li, S., & Priem, R. (2020). Revisiting location in a digital age: How can lead markets accelerate the internationalization of mobile apps? *Journal of International Marketing,* 28(4), 21–40.

Shaheer, N. A. & Li, S. (2020). The CAGE around cyberspace? How digital innovations internationalize in a virtual world. *Journal of Business Venturing,* 35(1), 105892.

Shams, R., Alpert, F., & Brown, M. (2015). Consumer perceived brand innovativeness. *European Journal of Marketing,* 49(9/10), 1599–1615.

Shaw, J. B. (1990). A cognitive categorization model for the study of intercultural management. *Academy of Management Review,* 15(4), 626–645.

Sheth, J. N. (2011). Impact of emerging markets on marketing: Rethinking existing perspectives and practices. *Journal of Marketing,* 75(4), 166–182.

Shneor, R. & Flåten, B.-T. (2008). The Internet-enabled internationalization process: A focus on stages and sequences. *Journal of e-Business,* 8(1), 45–52.

Sichtmann, C., Davvetas, V., & Diamantopoulos, A. (2019). The relational value of perceived brand globalness and localness. *Journal of Business Research,* 104(November), 597–613.

Sichtmann, C. & Diamantopoulos, A. (2013). The impact of perceived brand globalness, brand origin image, and brand origin–extension fit on brand extension success. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science,* 41(5), 567–585.

Siegel, J. I., Licht, A. N., & Schwartz, S. H. (2013). Egalitarianism, cultural distance, and foreign direct investment: A new approach. *Organization Science,* 24(4), 1174–1194.

Singh, N., Zhao, H., & Hu, X. (2005). Analyzing the cultural content of web sites: A cross-national comparision of China, India, Japan, and US. *International Marketing Review,* 22(2), 129–146.

Souiden, N., Amara, N., & Chaouali, W. (2020). Optimal image mix cues and their impacts on consumers' purchase intention. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services,* 54(May), 1–12.

Souiden, N., Kassim, N. M., & Hong, H. J. (2006). The effect of corporate branding dimensions on consumers' product evaluation: A cross-cultural analysis. *European Journal of Marketing,* 40(7/8), 825–845.

Spiggle, S., Nguyen, H. T., & Caravella, M. (2012). More than fit: Brand extension authenticity. *Journal of Marketing Research,* 49(6), 967–983.

Spiller, S. A., Fitzsimons, G. J., Lynch Jr, J. G., & McClelland, G. H. (2013). Spotlights, floodlights, and the magic number zero: Simple effects tests in moderated regression. *Journal of Marketing Research,* 50(2), 277–288.

Steenkamp, J.-B. (2017). *Global Brand Strategy: World-Wise Marketing in the Age of Branding.* New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Steenkamp, J.-B. (2019a). Global versus local consumer culture: Theory, measurement, and future research directions. *Journal of International Marketing,* 27(1), 1–19.

Steenkamp, J.-B. (2019b). Reflections on defining global brands, fragmentation and segmentation, and the emergence of richer brandscapes. *International Marketing Review,* 36(4), 553–555.

Steenkamp, J.-B. E., Batra, R., & Alden, D. L. (2003). How perceived brand globalness creates brand value. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 34(1), 53–65.

Steenkamp, J.-B. E. & Baumgartner, H. (1998). Assessing measurement invariance in cross-national consumer research. *Journal of Consumer Research,* 25(1), 78–90.

Steenkamp, J.-B. E. & de Jong, M. G. (2010). A global investigation into the constellation of consumer attitudes toward global and local products. *Journal of Marketing,* 74(6), 18–40.

Steenkamp, J.-B. E. & Geyskens, I. (2006). How country characteristics affect the perceived value of web sites. *Journal of Marketing,* 70(3), 136–150.

Stock, J. H. & Watson, M. W. (2019). *Introduction to Econometrics.* Vol. 4. Boston: Pearson.

Stokburger-Sauer, N., Ratneshwar, S., & Sen, S. (2012). Drivers of consumer–brand identification. *International Journal of Research in Marketing,* 29(4), 406–418.

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

Strizhakova, Y., Coulter, R. A., & Price, L. L. (2011). Branding in a global marketplace: The mediating effects of quality and self-identity brand signals. *International Journal of Research in Marketing,* 28(4), 342–351.

Suarez, M. & Belk, R. (2017). Cultural resonance of global brands in Brazilian social movements. *International Marketing Review,* 34(4), 480–497.

Suh, J. C. & Youjae, Y. (2006). When brand attitudes affect the customer satisfaction-loyalty relation: The moderating role of product involvement. *Journal of Consumer Psychology,* 16(2), 145–155.

Sujan, M. & Bettman, J. R. (1989). The effects of brand positioning strategies on consumers' brand and category perceptions: Some insights from schema research. *Journal of Marketing Research,* 26(4), 454–467.

Sweeney, J. C. & Soutar, G. N. (2001). Consumer perceived value: The development of a multiple item scale. *Journal of Retailing,* 77(2), 203–220.

Swoboda, B. & Batton, N. (2019). National cultural value models and reputation of MNCs. *Cross Cultural & Strategic Management,* 26(2), 166–198.

Swoboda, B. & Hirschmann, J. (2016). Does being perceived as global pay off? An analysis of leading foreign and domestic multinational corporations in India, Japan, and the United States. *Journal of International Marketing,* 24(3), 1–30.

Swoboda, B., Morbe, L., & Hirschmann, J. (2018). International strategy's effects on retailers' local implementation and performance. *International Business Review,* 27(3), 642–653.

Swoboda, B., Pennemann, K., & Taube, M. (2012). The effects of perceived brand globalness and perceived brand localness in China: Empirical evidence on Western, Asian, and domestic retailers. *Journal of International Marketing,* 20(4), 72–95.

Swoboda, B., Puchert, C., & Morschett, D. (2016). Explaining the differing effects of corporate reputation across nations: A multilevel analysis. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science,* 44(4), 454–473.

Swoboda, B. & Sinning, C. (2020a). How country development and national culture affect the paths of perceived brand globalness to consumer behavior across nations. *Journal of Business Research,* 118(9), 58–73.

Swoboda, B. & Sinning, C. (2020b). Internationalisierung – Wachsende Nachfrage und zunehmendes Angebot, 265–292. In *HandelsMonitor: Mega-Trends 2030+. Der Handel auf dem Weg in ein neues Zeitalter,* T. Foscht, D. Morschett, H. Schramm-Klein and B. Swoboda (eds). Frankfurt a. M.: Deutscher Fachverlag GmbH.

The Economist (2019). Is this the era of slowbalisation? https://www.economist.com/podcasts/2019/01/24/is-this-the-era-of-slowbalisation. Accessed 30.07.2021.

The New York Times (2020). It's the End of the World Economy as We Know It. https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/16/upshot/world-economy-restructuring-coronavirus.html. Accessed 30.07.2021.

Thompson, F. M., Newman, A., & Liu, M. (2014). The moderating effect of individual level collectivist values on brand loyalty. *Journal of Business Research,* 67(11), 2437–2446.

Tolstoy, D., Nordman, E. R., Hånell, S. M., & Özbek, N. (2021). The development of international e-commerce in retail SMEs: An effectuation perspective. *Journal of World Business,* 56(3), 101165.

Trudgen, R. & Freeman, S. (2014). Measuring the performance of born-global firms throughout their development process: The roles of initial market selection and internationalisation speed. *Management International Review,* 54(4), 551–579.

United Nations Development Programme (2017). Human Development Index. http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/HDI. Accessed 04.11.2018.

United Nations Development Programme (2018). Human Development Index. http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2019.pdf. Accessed 10.01.2020.

UPS (2021). *Unternehmensfakten.* Atlanta: UPS.

Vahlne, J.-E. & Johanson, J. (2017). From internationalization to evolution: The Uppsala model at 40 years. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 48(9), 1087–1102.

Vaid, S. S. & Ahearne, M. (2018). When does CEO endorsement of sales & marketing leaders help firms? The role of heavy marketing emphasis. *Industrial Marketing Management,* 69(February), 185–197.

Van der Lans, R., van Everdingen, Y., & Melnyk, V. (2016). What to stress, to whom and where? A cross-country investigation of the effects of perceived brand benefits on buying intentions. *International Journal of Research in Marketing,* 33(4), 924–943.

Van Herpen, E. & Pieters, R. (2007). Anticipated identification costs: Improving assortment evaluation by diagnostic attributes. *International Journal of Research in Marketing,* 24(1), 77–88.

Van Vaerenbergh, Y., Larivière, B., & Vermeir, I. (2012). The impact of process recovery communication on customer satisfaction, repurchase intentions, and word-of-mouth intentions. *Journal of Service Research,* 15(3), 262–279.

Vermeulen, F. & Barkema, H. (2002). Pace, rhythm, and scope: Process dependence in building a profitable multinational corporation. *Strategic Management Journal,* 23(7), 637–653.

Visentin, M., Pizzi, G., & Pichierri, M. (2019). Fake News, Real Problems for Brands: The Impact of Content Truthfulness and Source Credibility on consumers' Behavioral Intentions toward the Advertised Brands. *Journal of Interactive Marketing,* 45(February), 99–112.

Voss, K. E. & Mohan, M. (2016). Corporate brand effects in brand alliances. *Journal of Business Research,* 69(10), 4177–4184.

Vuong, B. N. & Giao, H. N. K. (2020). The Impact of Perceived Brand Globalness on Consumers' Purchase Intention and the Moderating Role of Consumer Ethnocentrism: An Evidence from Vietnam. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing,* 32(1), 47–68.

Wagner, G., Schramm-Klein, H., & Steinmann, S. (2020). Online retailing across e-channels and e-channel touchpoints: Empirical studies of consumer behavior in the multichannel e-commerce environment. *Journal of Business Research,* 107(February), 256–270.

Walsh, G., Beatty, S. E., & Shiu, E. M. (2009). The customer-based corporate reputation scale: Replication and short form. *Journal of Business Research,* 62(10), 924–930.

Wang, C. L., He, J., & Barnes, B. R. (2017). Brand management and consumer experience in emerging markets: Directions for future research. *International Marketing Review,* 34(4), 458–462.

Wang, C. L., Li, D., Barnes, B. R., & Ahn, J. (2012). Country image, product image and consumer purchase intention: Evidence from an emerging economy. *International Business Review,* 21(6), 1041–1051.

Wang, H., Wei, Y., & Yu, C. (2008). Global brand equity model: Combining customer-based with product-market outcome approaches. *Journal of Product & Brand Management,* 17(5), 305–316.

Wang, X. & Yang, Z. (2008). Does country-of-origin matter in the relationship between brand personality and purchase intention in emerging economies? *International Marketing Review,* 25(4), 458–474.

Warrens, M. J. (2015). On Cronbach's Alpha as the Mean of All Split-Half Reliabilities, 293–300. In *Quantitative Psychology Research,* R. Millsap, D. Bolt, L. van der Ark and W. Wang (eds). Wiesbaden: Springer.

Watkins, L. (2010). The cross-cultural appropriateness of survey-based value (s) research: A review of methodological issues and suggestion of alternative methodology. *International Marketing Review,* 27(6), 694–716.

Westjohn, S. A., Arnold, M. J., Magnusson, P., & Reynolds, K. (2016). The influence of regulatory focus on global consumption orientation and preference for global versus local consumer culture positioning. *Journal of International Marketing,* 24(2), 22–39.

Westjohn, S. A., Singh, N., & Magnusson, P. (2012). Responsiveness to global and local consumer culture positioning: A personality and collective identity perspective. *Journal of International Marketing,* 20(1), 58–73.

Wilkie, D. C., Johnson, L. W., & White, L. (2015). The line extension dilemma: Greater difference or similarity to existing products? *Journal of Brand Management,* 22(6), 534–550.

Williams, L. J., Hartman, N., & Cavazotte, F. (2010). Method variance and marker variables: A review and comprehensive CFA marker technique. *Organizational Research Methods,* 13(3), 477–514.

Winit, W., Gregory, G., Cleveland, M., & Verlegh, P. (2014). Global vs local brands: How home country bias and price differences impact brand evaluations. *International Marketing Review,* 31(2), 102–128.

World Bank (2018). Worldwide Governance Indicators. https://databank.worldbank.org/source/worldwide-governance-indicators. Accessed 12.12.2020.

World Economic Forum (2019). The Global Competitiveness Report 2017–2018. https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-competitiveness-report-2017-2018. Accessed 11.11.2018.

World Economic Forum (2018). *The Global Competitiveness Report 2018.* Cologny/Geneva: World Economic Forum.

Worldbank Databank (2019). World Development Indicators. https://data.worldbank.org/. Accessed 15.07.2019.

Xie, Y., Batra, R., & Peng, S. (2015). An extended model of preference formation between global and local brands: The roles of identity expressiveness, trust, and affect. *Journal of International Marketing,* 23(1), 50–71.

Xu, D., Pan, Y., & Beamish, P. W. (2004). The effect of regulative and normative distances on MNE ownership and expatriate strategies. *Management International Review,* 44(3), 285–307.

Yamin, M. & Sinkovics, R. R. (2006). Online internationalisation, psychic distance reduction and the virtuality trap. *International Business Review,* 15(4), 339–360.

Yang, Z., Floyd, K., & Tanner Jr, J. F. (2019). Effects of antismoking messages from media on adolescent smoking: The roles of family, school, and culture. *Journal of Business Research,* 103(October), 222–231.

Young, J. (2021). Global online sales reach nearly $4.29 trillion in 2020. https://www.digitalcommerce360.com/article/global-ecommerce-sales/. Accessed 28.04.2021.

Yuan, K.-H. & Bentler, P. M. (2000). Three likelihood-based methods for mean and covariance structure analysis with nonnormal missing data. *Sociological Methodology,* 30(1), 165–200.

Zabkar, V., Arslanagic-Kalajdzic, M., Diamantopoulos, A., & Florack, A. (2017). Brothers in blood, yet strangers to global brand purchase: A four-country study of the role of consumer personality. *Journal of Business Research,* 80(November), 228–235.

Zaheer, S., Schomaker, M. S., & Nachum, L. (2012). Distance without direction: Restoring credibility to a much-loved construct. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 43(1), 18–27.

Zahra, S. A. (2005). A theory of international new ventures: A decade of research. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 36(1), 20–28.

Zalando (2021). Unternehmensprofil: Wer wird sind. https://corporate.zalando.com/de/unternehmen/wer-wir-sind. Accessed 30.04.2021.

Zhang, Y. & Khare, A. (2009). The impact of accessible identities on the evaluation of global versus local products. *Journal of Consumer Research,* 36(3), 524–537.

Zhou, L. (2007). The effects of entrepreneurial proclivity and foreign market knowledge on early internationalization. *Journal of World Business,* 42(3), 281–293.

Zhou, L. & Wu, A. (2014). Earliness of internationalization and performance outcomes: Exploring the moderating effects of venture age and international commitment. *Journal of World Business,* 49(1), 132–142.

Zhou, L., Yang, Z., & Hui, M. K. (2010). Non-local or local brands? A multi-level investigation into confidence in brand origin identification and its strategic implications. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science,* 38(2), 202–218.

Zhu, L. & Thatcher, S. (2010). National information ecology: A new institutional economics perspective on global e-commerce adoption. *Journal of Electronic Commerce Research,* 11(1), 53–72.