



Evaluation of international brand alliances: Brand order and consumer ethnocentrism[☆]

Yan Li^a, Hongwei He^{b,*}

^a Norwich Business School, University of East Anglia, Norwich, Norfolk NR4 7TJ, UK

^b University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 7AL, UK

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 1 June 2010

Received in revised form 1 November 2010

Accepted 1 February 2011

Available online 6 August 2011

Keywords:

Brand alliances

International brand alliances

Branding order

Brand attitude

Consumer ethnocentrism

ABSTRACT

This study investigates how native consumers evaluate international brand alliances (IBA) between a foreign brand and a native brand. The empirical results support the moderating effects of both brand order and consumer ethnocentrism (CET) on the effects of foreign and the native partner brand attitudes on the attitude towards an international brand alliance (IBA). The partner brand (regardless of its being a native or foreign brand) attitude has a stronger effect on the attitude towards an IBA when the partner brand appears first in the IBA than when appearing second. CET enhances the effect of the native brand attitude on IBA attitude unconditionally; but attenuates, only when foreign brand fit is low, the effect of the foreign brand attitude on IBA attitude.

© 2011 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Brand alliances involve “the short- or long-term association or combination of two or more individual brands, products, and/or other distinctive proprietary assets” (Simonin & Ruth, 1998, p. 30). Brand alliances have become a popular branding and market growth strategy and received growing academic attention (e.g., He & Balmer, 2006; Lafferty, 2009; Rao, Qu, & Ruekert, 1999; Simonin & Ruth, 1998; Voss & Gammoh, 2004; Votolato & Unnava, 2006). Prior research has accumulated ample evidence on the effects of partner brand (member brand of a brand alliance) attitudes on the alliance attitude and its spillover effect on the partner brand attitudes. Yet, the extant literature pays little attention to two important issues: international brand alliances and the effect of brand order (A-B vs. B-A). This study contributes to the literature on brand alliances by examining the brand order (i.e. the sequence of individual brand names) effect and consumer ethnocentrism (CET) effect on the effects of both native and foreign brand attitudes on native consumers' evaluation of international brand alliances.

International brand alliances (IBA) are common phenomena nowadays (Cooke & Ryan, 2000). Besides conventional benefits of

brand alliances (e.g. quality signal), international brand alliances offer extra benefits such as ease of international market entry (Abratt & Motlana, 2002), immediate brand awareness and equity for local customers (Voss & Tansuhaj, 1999), and leverage of country of origin images (Bluemelhuber, Carter, & Lambe, 2007). International brand alliances also have the potential advantage of alleviating the effect of native consumers' ethnocentric tendency in their responses to international brands. However, empirical research in this area is rare. Brand alliances are not without risks. The potential risks of brand alliances include image tarnishing, contractual issues, opportunity costs, and negative impact from partner brands' behaviors.

Two main approaches exist regarding partnering international and native brands. The first one is A-B, such as the cases of Sony-Ericson and HP-Compaq; and the second one is composite branding (A product by B). Previous research has examined composite branding (Park, Jun, & Shocker, 1996) and ingredient co-branding, such as ‘Intel inside’ (Desai & Keller, 2002; Venkatesh & Mahajan, 1997). The present study focuses on the case of A-B. When two brands join together to form an A-B brand alliance, one of the major issues is to decide the sequence of partner brand names appearing in the alliance. For example, would Nike + iPod vs. iPod + Nike in the alliance between Nike and iPod make any differences regarding consumer attitude towards the new alliance? Knowing how such brand order affects the initial formation of consumer attitude towards a brand alliance is an important issue, since the results will have significant implications for managerial decision on naming a brand alliance. Previous research has confirmed that partner brand attitudes have positive effects on the attitudes towards brand alliances (e.g., Lafferty & Goldsmith, 2005; Rao &

[☆] The authors thank the anonymous reviewers and participants at 2010 Thought Leaders International Conference in Brand Management in Lugano, Switzerland for their comments on an earlier version of the paper.

* Corresponding author at: Warwick Business School, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 7AL, UK.

E-mail addresses: li.yan@uea.ac.uk (Y. Li), hongwei.he@wbs.ac.uk (H. He).

Ruekert, 1994; Simonin & Ruth, 1998; Washburn, Till, & Priluck, 2004). However, the extant literature is thin on how brand order affects the magnitude of the effect of a focal partner brand attitude on brand alliance attitude. For an international brand alliance, the transfer of partner brand attitudes to the brand alliance does not only depend on the brand order, but also on other factors, such as consumer ethnocentrism (CET)—consumers' beliefs about the appropriateness and morality of buying foreign-made products (Shimp & Sharma, 1987). CET is especially relevant for international brand alliances where the domestic brand has a strong native base, as prior research has found that although CET could affect both domestic and foreign brand attitudes, CET tends to have stronger effects on domestic brand attitudes (Supphellen & Rittenburg, 2001).

This study contributes to the literature by empirically, for the first time, examining the brand order effect and consumer ethnocentrism (CET) on the transfer of partner brand attitudes to international brand alliances (IBA). By doing so, this study sheds some important insights on the issues of IBA and CET. First, this research is a pioneer study on the brand order effect in an international context. Given the increasing popularity of cross-border brand alliances and joint ventures, and the salient issue of branding for international alliances and joint ventures, this study accentuates the role of brand order in the initial process of consumer attitude formation. Second, the study for the first time examines the effect of CET in the context of IBA. Given the nature of IBA involving both domestic and foreign brands, examining the effect of CET is particularly interesting in not only extending knowledge on CET's impact but also testing the moderating effect of CET on brand attitude dynamism within an IBA. Third, this study further tests how CET and brand-specific fit together moderates the brand order effect. Knowing the effects of the above factors has clear implications for managerial decision in international brand expansion and brand naming strategy for international alliances.

2. Literature review and hypotheses development

2.1. Brand alliances

Compared to direct brand extensions or introduction of new brands, brand alliances offer multiple benefits: such as multiple quality and image endorsements, and complementary brand associations for the new products. A brand partner can signal incremental product quality, because a brand alliance conveys the message that only a high quality brand would be combined with another high quality brand (Rao & Ruekert, 1994). Three major themes of research exist in this growing body of literature: effects on brand alliances, effects of brand alliances and international brand alliances. Studies on the effect on brand alliances focus on the various factors influencing the formation of attitude towards the newly formed brand alliances (e.g., Lafferty, Goldsmith, & Hult, 2004; Park et al., 1996; Voss & Gammoh, 2004; Washburn, Till, & Priluck, 2000). For example, Washburn et al.'s (2004) study examines the effect of customer-based brand equity of partner brands on the evaluation of a brand alliance and the evaluation of the search, experience, and credence attribute performance of the alliance brand. Voss and Gammoh (2004) examine how adding one more ally to the brand alliances can enhance brand evaluation of the focal unknown brand. Desai and Keller (2002) find that cobranded ingredient (as compared to self-branded ingredient), in general, facilitates initial brand extension acceptance; whilst Venkatesh and Mahajan (1997) warn that products with branded components need not necessarily lead to better price premium if incongruity between branded components exists or if domination of one of the components over the other is present.

Research on the effects of brand alliances examines the spillover effects of brand alliances on subsequent attitudes towards the partner brands (Gammoh, Voss, & Chakraborty, 2006; Lafferty & Goldsmith, 2005). Lafferty and Goldsmith (2005) investigate how cause-brand

alliances influence both the causes and the brands. They find that forming an alliance with a familiar brand improves the image of an unfamiliar cause, but not a familiar cause; whereas forming an alliance with a cause improves brand attitude regardless of the cause's familiarity. Some studies examine both the effects of and on brand alliances at the same time. Simonin and Ruth (1998) examine how partner brands' attitudes and familiarities affect brand alliances attitudes, and how brand alliances attitudes produce spillover effects on subsequent partner brands attitudes. In addition, Votolato and Unnava (2006) investigate how one partner's negative behavior (immorality vs. incompetence) affects the other partner brand. Gammoh et al.'s (2006) study demonstrates how levels of cognitive elaboration and message argument strength of a reputed brand partner affect consumers' evaluation of an unknown brand.

International brand alliances (IBA) are common phenomena nowadays (Cooke & Ryan, 2000). Companies can use a number of different branding strategies to launch new products into an international market. These strategies include direct brand extension of an existing brand to the new product, introducing a new brand for the new product, and collaborating with a local brand (or another foreign brand) to establish a brand alliance for the new product. Collaborating with a native brand has the benefits of quickly gaining trust, local knowledge, expertise/know-how, established distribution channels, native brand's brand value and category reputation (Abratt & Motlana, 2002; Bluemelhuber et al., 2007; Voss & Tansuhaj, 1999). Similarly, for a native brand, collaborating with an international brand to launch a new product is also a viable strategy, since local brand can also benefit from international brand's global reputation and expertise/know-how.

The above review of the literature on (international) brand alliances suggests that research on the following two areas is rather thin: (a) the effect of brand naming sequence (brand order) on brand alliance attitude; and (b) brand alliances at an international context, despite its popularity in practice. Although brand attitudes are transferable across different brand categories in the context of brand alliances, how they are transferable with different brand strategies is not clear. The present study fills this gap by exploring the moderating effects of brand order and consumer ethnocentrism (CET) on the effects of partner brand attitudes on IBA attitude. Fig. 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of this study.

2.2. Brand order and the effect of partner brand attitude

Prior research finds that partner brand attitudes influence brand alliances attitude (Lafferty et al., 2004; Park et al., 1996; Rodrigue & Biswas, 2004; Simonin & Ruth, 1998). In the case of IBA, such a positive

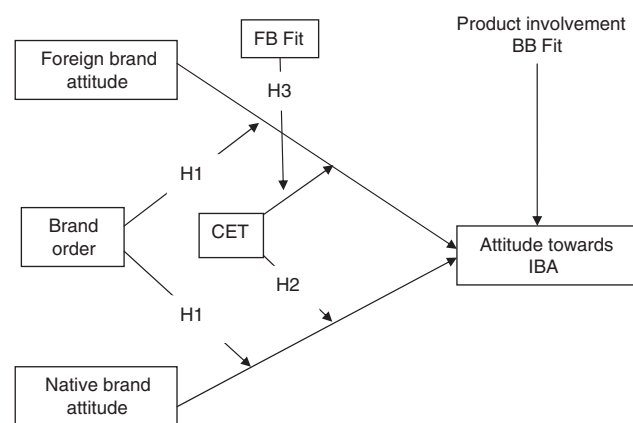


Fig. 1. Research framework. Note: FB=Foreign Brand; NB=Native Brand; BB=Between-Brand; CET=Consumer Ethnocentric Tendency; IBA=International Brand Alliance.

effect could also exist. An important issue of brand alliances is brand order—the sequence of partner brand names that appear in the brand alliances. Research on brand order of brand alliances is rare with exception of Park et al.'s (1996) study on composite brand extension. Some differences exist between composite brand extension and the type of brand alliances of A-B. First, composite brand extension clearly indicates the ownership/producer of the product (i.e. "...by Brand B"). Unlike composite brand extension, A-B brand alliances (i.e. Brand A - Brand B) do not assume ownership of the product, but could imply status or significance of partner brands to the alliances via the sequence of their brand names appearing in the alliances. For example, the alliance of Nike + iPod does not assume Nike is the owner of the brand alliance. Second, composite brand extension suggests explicitly the header and modifier in the composite concepts (Brand A as the header and Brand B as the modifier); whereas A-B brand alliances (in the case of Nike + iPod, for instance) do not.

When two equal brands join like A-B, the effect of header vs. modifier does not hold. Instead, the brand order (A-B) could indicate the relative powers, responsibilities, and controls of the partner brands over the alliance. When a joint venture or a merger establishes a brand alliance, normal practice is that the brand of the party with stronger power and dominance would precede the brand of the other party. In the case of Sony-Ericson handset, consumers would see Sony having more control and power over the handset. Since, power and control associate with responsibility, consumers would perceive the brand that is at the preceding position being more responsible for the performance (e.g. quality) of the alliance product.

According to signaling theory and brand equity theory (Erdem & Swait, 1998; Kirmani & Rao, 2000; Rao et al., 1999), brand equity and brand allies, like other market signals (e.g., price, advertising, and warranties), can send signals to consumers about the quality, identity, and status of the focal products. These brand signals in turn affect consumer evaluation. For example, strong and favourable brand identity and brand identification affect customer perceived value, trust, and brand loyalty (He, Li, & Harris, 2011; He & Li, 2011). Rao et al. (1999) extend this signaling perspective to brand alliances. They argue that adding a credible brand ally enhances consumer evaluation of the new product, due to the potential loss that the brand partner would incur by consumer punishment (via not buying the products from the focal brands in the future) if the product performance does not live up to the brand promise and consumer expectation. In other words, partner brand attitude positively relates to brand alliance attitude (see also Simonin & Ruth, 1998). However, prior research does not apply signaling perspective to examine the situation where the partner brands could ally in different orders (i.e., A-B vs. B-A). Extending the logic and principle of signaling utility of brand names, similarly the branding order (A-B vs. B-A) of a brand alliance also signals the relative impacts (e.g., power, responsibilities, and control) of partner brands on a brand alliance. In other words, the preceding brand has a stronger signaling power for consumers to evaluate the brand alliance. Therefore, the preceding brand attitude would have a stronger effect on brand alliances attitude.

An order effect may exist simply because of a primacy effect in impression formation. Primacy effect refers to a cognitive bias deriving from overrated salience of initial information (stimuli or observations) for evaluation and judgment. Primacy effect suggests that the first piece of information exposed to participants carries the highest weight in the formation of impression on the focal object (Anderson, 1965). For example, the first word in a sequence of words could have a greater effect in forming impressions of personality. Primacy effect is applicable to many evaluation and judgment tasks. For example, Lind et al. (2001) apply primacy effect to justice judgments and find that justice judgments are more sensitive to early fairness-relevant information than to later fairness-relevant information. Scarpi (2004) finds that the first product (between two products) that the sales representatives present to the shoppers

tends to receive more favourable evaluations in terms of quality and price-quality ratio. Xu and Kim (2008) find that consumers accord more attention to vendors appearing earlier in an online comparison list than to those listed later. Thus in the case of A-B brand alliance, brand A could have a stronger effect on the evaluation the brand alliance. Hence:

H1. Attitude toward a focal brand has a stronger effect on attitude toward IBA when the focal brand precedes the partner brand in the IBA than when the focal brand follows. Such effect exists regardless of whether the focal brand is a foreign or a native brand.

2.3. Consumer ethnocentrism

When native consumers evaluate a brand alliance that involves a foreign brand partner and a native brand partner, the evaluation is likely to be subject to consumer ethnocentrism (CET). CET refers to consumers' beliefs about the appropriateness and morality of foreign-made products (Shimp & Sharma, 1987). Consumers who have stronger ethnocentric orientation in their buying behavior believe that purchasing foreign products is wrong because doing so hurts the native economy, causes loss of jobs, and is unpatriotic (Shimp & Sharma, 1987). Many studies support the positive relationship between CET and preference to native products, and negative relationship between CET and attitudes towards and willingness to buy foreign products (Netemeyer, Durvasula, & Lichtenstein, 1991; Nijssen & Douglas, 2004; Sharma, Shimp, & Shin, 1995; Shimp & Sharma, 1987). However, the effect of CET on brand evaluation can be different from product evaluation. Supphellen and Rittenburg (2001) examine the impact of CET on foreign and native brands (not just products) and find that CET has a stronger positive relationship with native brand perception, but little or no relationship with foreign brand perception.

2.4. CET and the effect of native brand attitude

Although CET associates positively with attitudes towards native products, CET does not necessarily have a direct main effect on evaluating products that involve both native and foreign brands. People with different levels of CET may go through different evaluation processes to evaluate IBA that involves both native and foreign brands. Both native and foreign brands are potential pieces of information for IBA evaluation. Accessibility-diagnostics perspective of information processing suggests that information is more likely to be influential when the information is more accessible in a person's memory; when the information is more relevant, useful and diagnostic for the task; and when competing information is less accessible (Feldman & Lynch, 1988; Lynch, Marmorstein, & Weigold, 1988). First, in general, consumers with higher (lower) CET tend to favour native brands more (less) (Supphellen & Rittenburg, 2001). Such positive feeling and effect can then engender positive and more favourable attitude towards the IBA. Broniarczyk and Alba (1994) have confirmed such attitude transfer in the context of brand extensions (see also e.g., Salinas & Pérez, 2009 for the feedback attitude transfer from brand extension to brand image). Therefore, consumers with higher CET tend to pay more attention to the native brand within a brand alliance than those with lower CET. Attitude favourability relates positively to its accessibility and diagnostics (Feldman & Lynch, 1988; Lynch et al., 1988). Native brand attitude is more likely to be stronger and more favourable for consumers with higher CET (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2004; Supphellen & Rittenburg, 2001; Wang & Chen, 2004). Therefore, consumers with higher CET (than by consumers with lower CET) are more prone to apply native brand attitude to evaluate international brand alliances.

Second, according to social identification perspective, CET associates strongly with national identification (Balabanis, Diamantopoulos, Mueller, & Melewar, 2001). Prior research on social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1985) suggests that when social identification (a social identity becomes salient and important part of self) happens, the focal social identity cues (i.e. the native brand in the case of IBA) will be more accessible (accessibility) and more likely to be utilised (diagnosticity) for evaluation (Reed, 2002, 2004). Hence, for consumers with higher CET, their attitudes towards the native brand are more likely to influence their attitudes towards the brand alliance, as compared to consumers with lower CET. In addition, consumers in less-developed countries with higher CET would feel more proud of the native brand being associating with and preceding prestige foreign brands in an alliance, because alliance in such a way may arouse and reinforce the national identification from people with higher CET (Balabanis et al., 2001). Thus, they are more prone to pay more attention to the native brand to evaluate the brand alliances. Hence:

H2. CET enhances the effect of native brand attitude on attitude towards IBA, in that native brand attitude has a stronger (weaker) effect on IBA attitude for consumers with higher (lower) CET.

2.5. CET, Brand-Specific Fit, and the Effect of Foreign Brand Attitude

The enhancing effect of CET on the effect of native brand attitude does not necessarily suggest that CET could reduce the effect of foreign brand attitude on IBA attitude. Although native brand attitude could have a stronger effect on IBA attitude for consumers with higher CET (regardless of the native brand-specific fit), consumers with higher CET do not necessarily automatically pay less attention to the foreign brand (in other words, the foreign brand becomes less diagnostic). Consumers with higher CET could simultaneously rely more on the native brand (than consumers with lower CET) as well as rely similarly on the foreign brand (as compared to consumers with lower CET) to evaluate the IBA. As noted earlier, although CET tends to positively associate with domestic brand attitude, CET tends to have a weak negative effect on foreign brands (Supphellen & Rittenburg, 2001). Therefore, the potential alleviating effect of CET on the effect of foreign brand attitude on IBA attitude tends to be further conditional on some additional factors that influence the relevance and diagnosticity of the foreign brand for IBA evaluation. Foreign brand-specific fit is potentially such a factor. This study's proposition is that when foreign brand-specific fit is low, due to the negative association of low foreign brand-specific fit with brand cue diagnosticity, foreign brand attitude will have a weaker effect on IBA attitude for consumers with higher CET.

Previous studies suggest that perceived fit is a major determinant of attitude towards brand alliances (e.g., Kumar, 2005; Levin & Levin, 2000; Park et al., 1996; Rao et al., 1999; Simonin & Ruth, 1998). For brand alliances, perceived fit has multiple aspects. First, consumers would assess how relevant the different partner brands are for the product category associating with a brand alliance. This *brand-specific fit* involves the comparison between the partner brands' typical product categories and the product category associating with the brand alliance. Second, consumers would assess the fit between the images of partner brands (between-brand fit/congruity) (e.g., Lafferty, 2007; Simonin & Ruth, 1998; Walchli, 2007) in terms of whether these two brands are sensible to be together. Both brand-specific fit and between-brand fit relate positively to IBA evaluation. Operationalising fit as two components (brand-specific fit and between-brand fit) already expands prior brand alliances research's sole focus on overall between-brand image fit, although other types of fit could also be relevant for the context of brand alliances (e.g., actual product portfolio-actual product portfolio fit and attributes-level fit). The present study focuses on overall brand-specific fit as an initial test, as prior research suggests that an overall brand fit tends to have an

immediate effect on consumer responses (Berens, van Riel, & van Bruggen, 2005; Park, Milberg, & Lawson, 1991). Similarly, Monga and John (2010) and Ahluwalia (2008) used overall brand fit in their studies on brand stretch evaluation.

Brand-specific fit will be a more relevant factor to moderate the relative contributions of partner brand attitudes to the formation of IBA attitude, as brand-specific fit has a perceptual locus on a particular brand. First, both the brand-specific fit and the focal partner brand attitude relate to the same brand (foreign or native), which strength consumer sense-making of the focal brand's involvement with the focal product. Fit perception is a sense-making process, where consumers search for the meanings and rationales of the focal brands' decision (Berens et al., 2005; Czellar, 2003; Monga & John, 2010). Fit perception itself is also an information cue for consumers' subsequent evaluation (Czellar, 2003; He & Li, 2010).

When the foreign brand-specific fit is high, because both foreign brand-specific fit and foreign brand attitude point to the same brand, the focal brand attitude becomes a more salient and assessable information and cue (Feldman & Lynch, 1988; Lynch et al., 1988) for consumers' subsequent evaluation of the brand alliance. Therefore, foreign brand-specific fit will shield against the potential alleviating effect of CET on the foreign brand attitude's contribution to the brand alliance. On the other hand, between-brand image fit involves both foreign and native brands, whilst the focal partner brand attitude only locates in the focal brand. Due to this disparity and inconsistency of locus between between-brand fit and the foreign brand attitude, the between-brand fit will have limited capacity in strengthening the relevance or diagnosticity of the focal foreign brand attitude for IBA evaluation. Therefore, when foreign brand-specific fit is high, due to its capability of enhancing the signaling capacity of the focal foreign brand (high salience and diagnosticity), foreign brand-specific fit will neutralise the potential alleviating effect of CET on the effect of foreign brand attitude on IBA attitude. When foreign brand-specific fit is low, the alleviating effect of CET on the effect of the foreign brand attitude on IBA attitude will be stronger. Hence:

H3. CET reduces the effect of foreign brand attitude on attitude towards IBA, in that foreign brand attitude has a weaker (stronger) effect on IBA attitude for consumers with higher (lower) CET, only when foreign brand-specific fit is low.

3. Method

3.1. Data collection and sample

This study used two real brands to form fictitious brand alliances. The foreign brand was Heineken from the Netherlands, and the native brand was Uni-President from Taiwan. Heineken is a well-known foreign brand in Taiwan's beverage market, whilst Uni-president enjoys high familiarity with native root in Taiwan's beverage market. Brand familiarities were 4.32 and 4.41 on a five-point scale for Heineken and Uni-President, respectively, in the final sample. The product of the brand alliances was beer-flavored "cha" (tea). To enhance external validity, the study chose beer-flavored tea, instead of tea-flavored beer, because the former is more realistic and actually already exists in the Taiwanese market, and bear-flavored tea fits the product categories associated with both beverage brands. The study developed two brand alliances. The first one was Heineken-Uni-President to represent the Foreign-Native (F-N) brand alliance, and the second one was Uni-President-Heineken to represent the Native-Foreign (N-F) brand alliance. Two hundred and sixty consumers (one hundred and thirty for each brand alliance) in Taipei, Taiwan participated in this study. The study recruited participants from an adult English language school. The research assistant distributed the two versions of the questionnaire randomly in the class. The sample has similar profiles for both groups (group one answered the 'Heineken-Uni-President' brand alliance; and

group two answered the 'Uni-President-Heineken' brand alliance). The authors checked the potential random biases that could occur due to assigning participants to groups by testing significant mean differences for all independent variables. None of the independent variables is significantly different across the two groups.

The sample consists of 46.9% consumers from 20 to 30 and 53.1% over 30 for group one (Heineken-Uni-President); 54.6% from 20 to 30 and 45.4% over 30 for group two (Uni-President-Heineken); 56.0% male and 44.0% female for group one; and 53.1% male and 46.9% female for group two. The authors prepared the questionnaires in English and then translated them into Chinese following the double-translation method. The study measured brand attitudes toward both Heineken and Uni-President at the beginning of the questionnaires. Demographic questions and CETScale followed brand attitudes questions. Starting from a new page, the questionnaire presents the brand alliance with the new product. The questionnaire presents a statement of "Heineken decides to cooperate with Uni-President and have a new product named 'Heineken-Uni-President'" (sample for F-N brand alliance), before asking respondents to answer questions regarding their attitudes towards the product associated with the brand alliance. The questionnaire then asks questions regarding attitude toward the brand alliance, brand-specific fits, and between-brand fit.

3.2. Measures

This study measured brand attitudes toward both partner brands and the brand alliance with bipolar scales (1–5): bad/good, negative/positive, dislikeable/likeable, unfavourable/favourable (Berens et al., 2005). The study used 5-point Likert scales to measure other variables (1 equals strongly disagree and 5 equals strongly agree). The study measured perceived fits by three items. The study measured brand-specific fit twice (one for each brand) with the following item: "The product fits the brand image of the partner brand". The measure of between-brand fit was "The two brands have similar brand image". The study used the 10-item CETSCALE (Klein, Ettenson, & Morris, 1998) to measure consumer ethnocentrism. Klein et al.'s (1998) scale is a shortened version of the original CETSCALE (Shimp & Sharma, 1987). This scale has demonstrated strong construct validities (see Klein et al., 1998). Recent studies have used even fewer items (e.g., four items by Alden, Steenkamp, & Batra, 2006) to measure consumer ethnocentrism. This practice is common in measuring CET, because the internal correlations between CET items are very high (see, e.g., Klein, 2002).

This study also controls for the effect of consumer involvement on attitude towards IBA. Although consumer involvement has received little attention in studies on brand alliances, consumer involvement showed relevance in studies on brand extension and corporate brand associations (Berens et al., 2005; Czellar, 2003). Involvement refers to "an unobservable state of motivation, arousal, or interest evoked by a particular stimulus" (Jain & Srinivasan, 1990, p. 594). Product involvement thus refers to consumers' interest in the product category, and motivation to buy such products. Hence, consumers with higher product involvement are more prone to buy products within the category (Coulter, Price, & Feick, 2003; Mittal & Myung-Soo, 1988). People who have a stronger interest in a product category are also more prone to possess favourable attitude towards the brands of that product category. For example, Coulter et al. (2003) propose that consumers could develop involvement with branded products, and that product involvement leads to higher brand commitment. Therefore, consumers with higher involvement with the product category associated with a brand alliance are more likely to develop positive attitude towards the focal brand alliance. This study measured product involvement with two items of the relevance subscale from the involvement profile (Jain & Srinivasan, 1990), which Berens et al. (2005) also adopted as a cognitive product involvement.

3.3. Scale validation

The authors computed item-to-total correlations and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to purify the measures. As a result, the study removed item #3 ('purchasing foreign-made product is un-Taiwanese') from CET scale and item #4 (socially responsible) of IBA attitude, due to low item-to-total correlations and low factor loadings. CFA of the final scales produced satisfactory results: Standardised RMR = 0.052, CFI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.058, $\chi^2 = 372.369$ (199), $\chi^2/DF = 1.871$. Cronbach's alphas for multiple-item measures are as follows: foreign brand attitude (0.88), native brand attitude (0.91), brand alliance attitude (0.74), CET (0.89), and product involvement (0.67). All exceed or are close to the recommended 0.70 threshold. In addition, all factor loadings exceed or are very close to the threshold of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2006) and are significant at $p < 0.001$. Table 1 presents the measurement model results. Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics. No significant difference in the measures of the two fits exists across two groups.

This study tested the hypotheses by moderated hierarchical multiple regression models. To enhance the interpretability of interaction effects, the study mean-centered all continuous variables before creating the interaction products (Jaccard, Wan, & Turrissi, 1990). Table 3 presents the results.

4. Results

Step 1 of the model shows that both foreign brand attitude and native brand attitude positively relate to IBA attitude ($\beta = 0.27^{***}$ and 0.21^{***} respectively). Step 2 shows the coefficient of the interaction between group and foreign brand attitude is significantly negative ($\beta = -0.18^*$), which means that the effect of foreign brand attitude is weaker when group dummy is 1 (i.e. D-F IBA). The coefficient of the interaction between group and native brand attitude is significantly

Table 1
CFA measurement model results.

Items	Factor loading	AVE
<i>FB attitude</i>	0.87	0.66
FB attitude 1		
FB attitude 2	0.88	
FB attitude 3	0.83	
FB attitude 4	0.66	
<i>NB attitude</i>	0.88	0.71
NB attitude 1		
NB attitude 2	0.86	
NB attitude 3	0.87	
NB attitude 4	0.75	
<i>P.I.</i>	0.82	0.53
P.I.1		
P.I.2	0.62	
<i>CET</i>	0.67	0.47
CET1		
CET 2	0.66	
CET 4 ^a	0.75	
CET 5	0.78	
CET 6	0.75	
CET 7	0.71	
CET 8	0.65	
CET 9	0.55	
CET 10	0.64	
<i>IBA attitude</i>	0.80	0.51
IBA attitude1		
IBA attitude 2	0.75	
IBA attitude 3	0.58	

Note: FB = Foreign Brand; NB = Native Brand; BB = Between-Brand; CET = Consumer Ethnocentric Tendency; IBA = International Brand Alliance; P.I. = Product Involvement; AVE = Average Variance Extracted.

^a CET3 is deleted due to low factor loading.

Table 2
Descriptive statistics and correlations of variables.

Total sample	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. IBA attitude	3.9	0.63	1							
2. FB attitude	4.1	0.71	0.46**	1						
3. NB attitude	4.0	0.77	0.42*	0.31**	1					
4. FB fit	3.5	0.77	0.34**	0.19**	0.17**	1				
5. NB fit	3.3	0.82	0.22**	0.09	0.13*	0.31**	1			
6. BB fit	3.4	0.87	0.35**	0.20**	0.14*	0.48**	0.40**	1		
7. CET	2.7	0.61	0.14*	0.10	0.13*	0.09	0.11	0.17**	1	
8. P. I.	3.6	0.67	0.42**	0.13*	0.17**	0.41**	0.31**	0.39**	0.09	1
<i>F + N brand alliance</i>										
1. IBA attitude	3.9	0.54	1							
2. IB attitude	4.1	0.67	0.50**	1						
3. NB attitude	4.0	0.82	0.28**	0.19*	1					
4. IB fit	3.4	0.77	0.32**	0.27**	0.18*	1				
5. NB fit	3.2	0.76	−0.04	0.01	0.12	0.08	1			
6. BB fit	3.4	0.80	0.25**	0.13	0.10	0.46**	0.18*	1		
7. CET	2.7	0.54	−0.01	−0.13	0.06	0.08	0.04	0.09	1	
8. P. I.	3.6	0.58	0.24**	0.12	0.10	0.27**	−0.00	0.27**	0.02	1
<i>N + F brand alliance</i>										
1. IBA attitude	4.0	0.71	1							
2. FB attitude	4.1	0.76	0.44**	1						
3. NB attitude	4.0	0.72	0.58**	0.44**	1					
4. FB fit	3.5	0.78	0.37**	0.12	0.16	1				
5. NB fit	3.4	0.85	0.40**	0.14	0.13	0.52**	1			
6. BB fit	3.5	0.93	0.41**	0.26**	0.17*	0.51**	0.57**	1		
7. CET	2.7	0.67	0.23**	0.26**	0.19*	0.10	0.16	0.22*	1	
8. P. I.	3.6	0.75	0.52**	0.14	0.24**	0.52**	0.53**	0.47**	0.14	1

Notes: FB = Foreign Brand; NB = Native Brand; BB = Between-Brand; CET = Consumer Ethnocentric Tendency; IBA = International Brand Alliance; P.I. = Product Involvement; F-N = Foreign Brand-Native Brand; N-F = Native Brand-Foreign Brand; S.D. = Standard Deviation.

** $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed). * $p < 0.05$ (2-tailed).

positive ($\beta = 0.29^{***}$), which means that the effect of native brand attitude is stronger when group dummy is 1 (i.e. D-F IBA). Fig. 2 demonstrates these results. These results support that the brand order affects IBA attitude in that a partner brand preceding the IBA has a stronger effect on IBA attitude regardless of the partner brand being a foreign or native brand, which supports H_1 .

Step 2 shows that CET enhances the effect of native brand attitude on IBA attitude ($\beta = 0.15^*$). Following the customary practice, the authors take one standard deviation above/below the means of focal independent variables as the high/low level to calculate the scores of the dependent variable under different high/low level conditions. As Fig. 3 shows, the native brand attitude has a stronger effect on IBA attitude for consumers with higher CET, which supports H_2 . Step 2 further shows that the interaction between CET and foreign brand attitude is insignificant, which suggests that on average, CET does not reduce the effect of foreign brand attitude on IBA attitude.

H_3 proposes that CET reduces the effect of foreign brand attitude on IBA attitude only when foreign brand-specific fit is low. Step 3 with three-way interactions tests this hypothesis. Step 3 shows that the three-way interaction of foreign brand-specific fit, CET and foreign brand attitude is positive and significant ($\beta = 0.22^*$). Fig. 4 (Panels A and B) shows that CET attenuates the effect of foreign brand attitude on IBA attitude only when foreign brand-specific fit is low ($p < 0.05$ with slope difference test); when foreign brand-specific fit is high, CET does not moderate the effect of foreign brand attitude ($p > 0.10$ with slope difference test), which supports H_3 . Step 3 also shows that the three-way interaction among native brand attitude, CET and native brand-specific fit is not significant, meaning that CET enhances the effect of native brand attitude regardless of native brand-specific fit.

In sum, brand order effect (i.e., the partner brand has a stronger effect on brand alliance attitude when the partner brand precedes the other partner brand) exists for both native and foreign brand. CET enhances the effect of native brand attitude unconditionally; but

attenuates the effect of foreign brand attitude on IBA attitude, only when foreign brand-specific fit is low.

5. Discussion

5.1. Theoretical Implications

Branding issue in international alliances is an important but unexplored territory. International brand alliances are becoming a popular international management practice, since branding international alliances offer many benefits to both the international firms and native firms. This study addresses two important issues in international brand alliances: the brand order effect and the CET effect. Specifically, this study makes the following contributions to the literature.

First, the study finds that brand order effect (i.e., the partner brand has a stronger effect on brand alliance attitude when the partner brand precedes the other partner brand) does exist in international brand alliances. A brand has a stronger impact on international brand alliance attitude when the brand appears at the preceding position of the brand alliance than when the brand appears at the following position. Such brand order effect exists for both foreign and native brands. Given the increasing popularity of cross-border brand alliances and joint ventures, and the salient issue of branding for international brand alliances and joint ventures, this study accentuates the role of brand order in the initial process of consumer attitude formation. Although the context of this study is international brand alliances, the brand order effect for both foreign and native brands suggests that such brand order effect could exist for general brand alliances.

Second, this study suggests that in the domain of international brand alliances, besides brand order effect, CET effect is also significant. Taking on board the moderating effects of CET and brand order on the effect of partner brands on IBA is an original application of CET theory to explain international branding phenomena. CET enhances the effect

Table 3
Regression results.

	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
	b	b	b
(Constant)	3.94	3.94	3.94
Foreign brand attitude (FB)	0.27***	0.34***	0.35***
Native brand attitude (NB)	0.21***	0.08	0.07
International brand fit (FB Fit)	0.07	0.08	0.09
Native brand fit (NB Fit)	0.01	-0.06	-0.05
Between-brand fit (BB Fit)	0.07	0.05	0.05
CET	0.03	0.03	0.01
Brand order (Group)	-0.01	-0.03	-0.03
Product involvement	0.24***	0.17***	0.20***
<i>Two-way interactions</i>			
Group × FB Fit		0.01	-0.01
Group × DB Fit		0.12	0.10
Group × BB Fit		0.02	0.02
Group × FB (H1)		-0.18*	-0.15
Group × NB (H1)		0.34***	0.36***
Group × CET		0.10	0.10
FB Fit × FB		-0.15**	-0.13*
NB Fit × NB		-0.07	-0.09
BB Fit × NB		-0.10*	-0.12
BB Fit × IB		0.14*	0.13
CET × FB		-0.08	-0.13
CET × NB (H2)		0.15*	0.09
FB Fit × CET		-0.05	-0.17
NB Fit × CET		-0.15*	-0.06
BB Fit × CET		0.16*	0.26*
<i>Three-way interactions</i>			
Group × FB Fit × CET			0.15
Group × NB Fit × CET			-0.16
FB Fit × CET × FB (H3)			0.22*
NB Fit × CET × NB			-0.08
Group × CET × FB			0.13
Group × CET × NB			-0.02
Group × BB Fit × FB			0.01
Group × BB Fit × NB			0.04
Group × BB Fit × CET			-0.13
R ²	0.43	0.53	0.55

Group = Brand order (Dummy variable, 0 = F-N brand alliance, 1 = N-F brand alliance).
****p* < 0.001. ***p* < 0.01. **p* < 0.05.

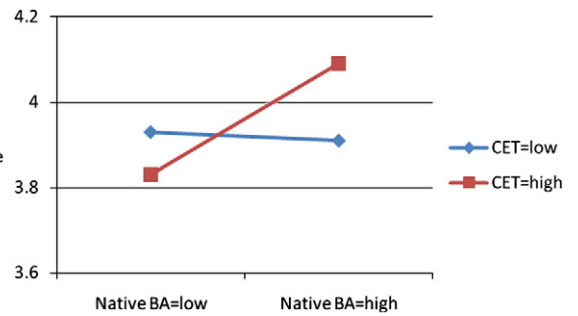


Fig. 3. Moderating effect of CET on the effect of native brand attitude on IBA attitude.

of native brand attitude unconditionally; whilst CET attenuates the effect of foreign brand attitude on IBA attitude, only when foreign brand fit is low. The success of testing the moderating effect of CET supports that CET affects information processing (i.e., accessibility and diagnosticity of a certain piece of information) that involves national cues, such as domestic brands. Social identity theory suggests that people with stronger social identification with a certain social category (e.g., CET) are more likely to pay more attention to the social category related cues (Reed, 2002, 2004). In addition, CET research has found that CET positively affects native brand attitude, but does not affect foreign brand attitude. Therefore, CET enhances the effect of the native brand on international brand alliances, regardless of the brand-specific fit of the native brand. Although this study finds that CET reduces the effect of the foreign brand, such effect exists only when brand-specific fit of the foreign brand is low. In other words, enhancing the fit of foreign brand to the brand alliance can actually neutralise the alleviating effect of CET on the foreign brand's contribution to international brand alliance attitude.

Third, in alignment with the results of previous studies on brand alliances (Lafferty et al., 2004; Park et al., 1996; Rodrigue & Biswas, 2004; Simonin & Ruth, 1998), this study finds that the brand attitudes towards partner brands have significant main effects on the attitude

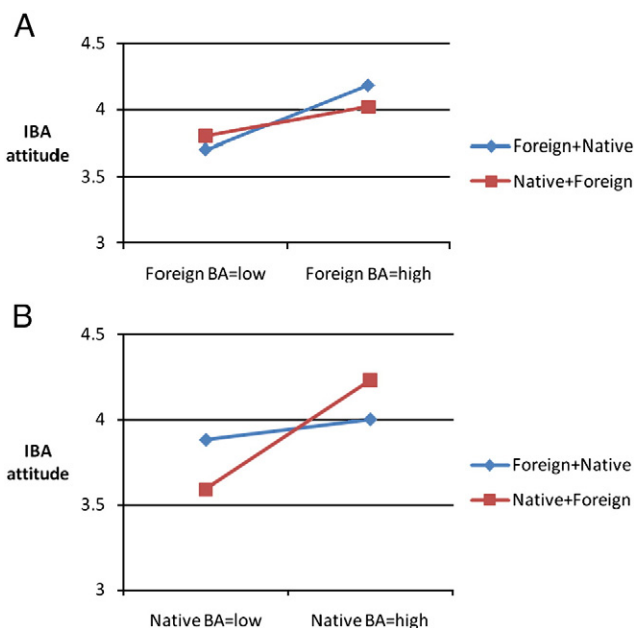


Fig. 2. Panel A: moderating effect of brand order on foreign brand attitude. Panel B: moderating effect brand order on native brand attitude.

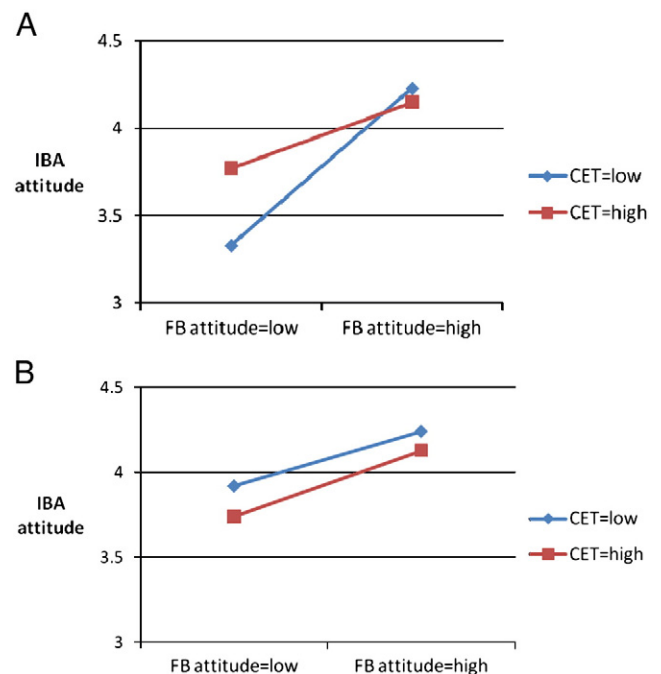


Fig. 4. Panel A: moderating effect of CET on foreign brand attitude when FB fit is low. Panel B: moderating effect of CET on foreign brand attitude when FB fit is high.

towards an international brand alliance. This result confirms brand alliances' advantage of having multiple brand endorsements for international alliances. Another contribution of this study is that the study operationalises fit for brand alliances as two-dimensional: brand-specific fit and between-brand fit. The study finds that between-brand fit, but not brand-specific fit, has a significant main effect on IBA attitude; but brand-specific fit of the foreign brand moderates the moderating effects of both brand order and CET on the effect of foreign brand attitude on international brand alliance attitude.

5.2. Managerial implications

This study has implications for both international brand managers and native brand managers regarding branding strategies of international brand alliances. The major rationale of international brand alliances is to leverage and synthesise the brand meanings and equities of both native and foreign brands. However, partner brands do not necessarily contribute equally to the initial attitude towards an international brand alliance. In addition, controlling the relative contributions of partner brands to the alliances is an important managerial issue, depending on the purposes of the alliances and the relevance of partner brand equities to the alliance products. The present study suggests that the relative contributions of partner brands do not only depend on the sequence of partner brands (brand order effect), but also ethnocentric tendency of the consumers (CET effect). Brand managers should not make decision on the sequence of partner brand names in the alliances arbitrarily or without considering its potential impact on initial attitude towards the alliance product.

For international brand managers, the study suggests that if a brand alliance desires for more contribution from a foreign partner brand, the foreign brand should precede native brand in the alliance. In addition, international brand managers should consider and monitor the CET of potential target customers of the alliance products, as CET can reduce the effect of foreign partner brand attitude when foreign partner brand-specific fit is low. Therefore, enhancing the fit of the foreign brand to an alliance becomes particularly important, if the foreign brand is desirable to contribute more to the alliance, since its fit can reduce the negative CET effect on the effect of foreign brand attitude on IBA attitude. A number of ways exist to enhance the fit of the foreign brand to the alliance. First, foreign brand managers should be more careful in deciding the type of alliance (e.g., the associated product) to get involved so that higher fit between the foreign brand and the product is present from the beginning. Second, marketing communications materials (i.e., packaging, advertising message, etc) can highlight the foreign brand fit in order to enhance consumer fit perception of the foreign brand in the alliance.

For native brand managers, the study suggests that if more contribution from a native brand is more desirable to the new alliance product, the native brand should precede foreign brand in the alliance. Similarly, monitoring the CET of potential target customers of the alliance products are important, since CET can enhance the effect of native partner brand attitude on the attitude toward brand alliances. Therefore, if a native brand is more desirable to contribute more to an alliance, the advice is to highlight the native partner brand especially to those consumers who possess higher level of CET.

5.3. Limitations and future research

The present study has the following limitations, which create opportunities for future studies. First, this study's research context is Taiwan, which has a high level of international trade and relatively low level of consumer ethnocentrism. Future study should examine consumers in other regions, where CET is ubiquitous. Would CET have a significant main negative effect on attitude towards IBA in those regions? Second, the study chooses a Dutch brand as the foreign brand partner. Since Netherlands has a national image of producing high

quality products, future research should examine international brand alliances with brands from less developed countries or countries whose products has lower image in quality. Third, future research can examine brand alliances where all partner brands are international brands, and assess the effect of country of origin images of partner brands. Fourth, although the procedure of randomly assigning participants between the two groups alleviates the concern for sample representation and enhances the power of hypotheses testing, the sample representativeness of this study is a limitation. Future research should apply and test the study's model with more representative samples.

Fifth, the study applies fictitious brand alliances for the advantages of internal validity and being a valid and conventional approach by many prior brand alliances and brand extension studies, but this approach has limitations of external validity and realism. Therefore, future research should test the study's hypotheses with both fictitious brand alliances and existing brand alliances. Sixth, although using one product category and focusing on a few familiar brands have the advantages of internal validity and enhanced power in detecting significant effect within a given sample size, future research should apply this study's model to other product categories. When larger sample size is possible, future study should use multiple product categories. Seventh, this study examines only one type of brand alliances: A-B. Future study should investigate how the sequence of brand names in other types of brand alliances affects the relative contributions of native and foreign brands to attitude towards those brand alliances. For example, another brand strategy for international brand alliances is to introduce new brand names for the new products, and endorse the new brands with partner brands. The present study does not examine such a brand strategy. Future research should examine how native consumers evaluate such brand alliances. Moreover, this study focuses on the initial brand alliances evaluation. Although the initial brand name strategy can have an immediate impact on brand alliances evaluation, the long-term effect is unknown. Future study should examine this long-term effect. Brand alliances attitude is not only a function of a short-term brand naming strategy, but also of subsequent brand communications. Future studies can examine how initial brand naming strategy interacts with subsequent brand communications in influencing attitude formation.

Finally, examining consumer attitude formation is only one angle (albeit important and relevant) to look at the issue of international brand alliances. Other angles include (a) examining the managerial decision of entering brand alliances; (b) the potential image spillover effect from one partner brand to another partner brand; and (c) the issue of number of alliances in international alliances. A-B brand alliances only involve two partner brands. Brand alliances with more than two partners become increasingly popular. Future research should examine how many partner brands can satisfy the 'diagnosticity threshold' so that the remaining partner brands play little role in evaluating multiple-partners brand alliances.

References

- Abratt R, Motlana P. Managing co-branding strategies: global brands into local markets. *Bus Horiz* 2002;45(5):43–50.
- Ahluwalia R. How far can a brand stretch? Understanding the role of self-construal. *J Mark Res* 2008;45(3):337–50.
- Alden DL, Steenkamp J-BEM, Batra R. Consumer attitudes toward marketplace globalization: structure, antecedents and consequences. *Int J Res Mark* 2006;23(3):227–39.
- Anderson NH. Primacy effects in personality impression formation: using a generalized order effect. *J Pers Soc Psychol* 1965;2(1):1–9.
- Balabanis G, Diamantopoulos A. Domestic country bias, country-of-origin effects, and consumer ethnocentrism: a multidimensional unfolding approach. *J Acad Mark Sci* 2004;32(1):80–95.
- Balabanis G, Diamantopoulos A, Mueller RD, Melewar TC. The impact of nationalism, patriotism and internationalism on consumer ethnocentric tendencies. *J Int Bus Stud* 2001;32(1):157–75.

- Berens G, van Riel CBM, van Bruggen GH. Corporate associations and consumer product responses: the moderating role of corporate brand dominance. *J Mark* 2005;69(3):35–48.
- Bluemelhuber C, Carter L, Lambe C. Extending the view of brand alliance effects: an integrative examination of the role of country of origin. *Int Mark Rev* 2007;24(4):427–43.
- Broniarczyk SM, Alba JW. The importance of the brand in brand extensions. *J Mark Res* 1994;31(2):214–28.
- Global and transnational brand alliances: a conceptual investigation of typologies. In: Cooke S, Ryan P, editors. Chicago, IL: American Marketing Association; 2000.
- Coulter RA, Price LL, Feick L. Rethinking the origins of involvement and brand commitment: insights from postsocialist Central Europe. *J Consum Res* 2003;30(2):151–69.
- Czellar S. Consumer attitude toward brand extensions: an integrative model and research propositions. *Int J Res Mark* 2003;20(1):97–115.
- Desai KK, Keller KL. The effects of ingredient branding strategies on host brand extendibility. *J Mark* 2002;66(1):73–93.
- Erdem T, Swait J. Brand equity as a signaling phenomenon. *J Consum Psychol* 1998;7(2):131–57.
- Feldman JM, Lynch JG. Self-generated validity and other effects of measurement on belief, attitude, intention, and behavior. *J Appl Psychol* 1988;73(3):421–35.
- Gammoh BS, Voss KE, Chakraborty G. Consumer evaluation of brand alliance signals. *Psychol Mark* 2006;23(6):465–86.
- Hair JF, Black WC, Babin BJ, Anderson RE, Tatham RL, editors. *Multivariate Data Analysis*. 6th ed. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc; 2006.
- He H, Balmer JMT. Alliance brands: building corporate brands through strategic alliances? *J Brand Manage* 2006;13:242–56.
- He H, Li Y. Consumer evaluation of technology-based vertical brand extension. *Eur J Mark* 2010;44:1366–83.
- He H, Li Y. CSR and Service Brand: The Mediating Effect of Brand Identification and Moderating Effect of Service Quality. *Journal of Business Ethics* 2011;100(4):673–88.
- He H, Li Y, Harris L. Social identity perspective on brand loyalty. *J Bus Res* 2011. doi: 10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.03.007.
- Jaccard J, Wan CK, Turrissi R. The detection and interpretation of interaction effects between continuous variables in multiple regression. *Multivar Behav Res* 1990;25(4):467–78.
- An Empirical Assessment of Multiple Operationalizations of Involvement. In: Jain K, Srinivasan N, editors. Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research, vol. 17. ; 1990.
- Kirmanian A, Rao AR. No pain, no gain: a critical review of the literature on signaling unobservable product quality. *J Mark* 2000;64(2):66–79.
- Klein JG. Us versus them, or us versus everyone? Delineating consumer aversion to foreign goods. *J Int Bus Stud* 2002;33(2):345–63.
- Klein JG, Ettenson R, Morris MD. The animosity model of foreign product purchase: an empirical test in the People's Republic of China. *J Mark* 1998;62(1):89–100.
- Kumar P. The impact of cobranding on customer evaluation of brand counter-extensions. *J Mark* 2005;69(3):1–18.
- Lafferty BA. The relevance of fit in a cause-brand alliance when consumers evaluate corporate credibility. *J Bus Res* 2007;60:447–53.
- Lafferty BA. Selecting the right cause partners for the right reasons: the role of importance and fit in cause-brand alliances. *Psychol Mark* 2009;26:359–82.
- Lafferty BA, Goldsmith RE. Cause-brand alliances: does the cause help the brand or does the brand help the cause? *J Bus Res* 2005;58(4):423–9.
- Lafferty BA, Goldsmith RE, Hult GTM. The impact of the alliance on the partners: a look at cause-brand alliances. *Psychol Mark* 2004;21(7):509–31.
- Levin IP, Levin AM. Modeling the role of brand alliances in the assimilation of product evaluations. *J Consum Psychol* 2000;9(1):43–52.
- Lind EA, Kray L, Thompson L. Primacy Effects in Justice Judgments: Testing Predictions from Fairness Heuristic Theory. *Organ Behav Hum Decis Processes* 2001;85(2):189–210.
- Lynch JG, Marmorstein H, Weigold MF. Choices from sets including remembered brands: use of recalled attributes and prior overall evaluations. *J Consum Res* 1988;15:169–84. September.
- Mittal B, Myung-Soo L. Separating brand-choice involvement from product involvement via consumer involvement profiles. *Adv Consum Res* 1988;15(1):43–9.
- Monga AB, John DR. What makes brands elastic? The influence of brand concept and styles of thinking on brand extension evaluation. *J Mark* 2010;74:80–92.
- Netemeyer RG, Durvasula S, Lichtenstein DR. A cross-national assessment of the reliability and validity. *J Mark Res* 1991;28(3):320–7.
- Nijssen EJ, Douglas SP. Examining the animosity model in a country with a high level of foreign trade. *Int J Res Mark* 2004;21(1):23–38.
- Park CW, Jun SY, Shocker DA. Composite branding alliances: an investigation of extension and feedback effects. *J Mark Res* 1996;33(4):453–66.
- Park CW, Milberg S, Lawson R. Evaluation of brand extensions: the role of product feature similarity and brand concept consistency. *J Consum Res* 1991;18(2):185–94.
- Rao AR, Qu L, Ruekert R. Signaling unobservable product quality through a brand ally. *J Mark Res* 1999;36(2):258–68.
- Rao AR, Ruekert RW. Brand alliances as signals of product quality. *Sloan Manage Rev* 1994;36(1):87–97.
- Reed II A. Social identity as a useful perspective for self-concept-based consumer research. *Psychol Mark* 2002;19(3):235–66.
- Reed II A. Activating the self-importance of consumer selves: exploring identity salience effects on judgments. *J Consum Res* 2004;31:286–95. September.
- Rodrigue CS, Biswas A. Brand alliance dependency and exclusivity: an empirical investigation. *J Prod Brand Manage* 2004;13(7):477–87.
- Salinas EM, Pérez JMP. Modeling the brand extensions' influence on brand image. *J Bus Res* 2009;62(1):50–60.
- Scarpi D. Effects of presentation order on product evaluation: an empirical analysis. *Int Rev Retail Distrib Consum Res* 2004;14:309–19.
- Sharma S, Shimp TA, Shin J. Consumer ethnocentrism: a test of antecedents and moderators. *J Acad Mark Sci* 1995;23(1):26–37.
- Shimp TA, Sharma S. Consumer ethnocentrism: construction and validation of the CETSCALE. *J Mark Res* 1987;24(3):280–9.
- Simonin BL, Ruth JA. Is a company known by the company it keeps? Assessing the spillover effects of brand alliances on consumer brand attitudes. *J Mark Res* 1998;35(1):30–42.
- Supphellen M, Rittenburg TL. Consumer ethnocentrism when foreign products are better. *Psychol Mark* 2001;18(9):907–27.
- Tajfel H, Turner JC. The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In: Worchel S, Austin WG, editors. *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*. 2nd ed. Chicago: Nelson-Hall; 1985. p. 7–24.
- Venkatesh R, Mahajan V. Products with branded components: an approach for premium pricing and partner selection. *Mark Sci* 1997;16(2):146–65.
- Voss KE, Gammoh BS. Building brands through brand alliances: does a second ally help? *Mark Lett* 2004;15(2–3):147–59.
- Voss KE, Tansuhaj P. A consumer perspective on foreign market entry: building brands through brand alliances. *J Int Consum Mark* 1999;11(2):39–58.
- Votolato NL, Unnava HR. Spillover of negative information on brand alliances. *J Consum Psychol* 2006;16(2):196–202.
- Walchli SB. The effects of between-partner congruity on consumer evaluation of co-branded products. *Psychol Mark* 2007;24(11):947–73.
- Wang CL, Chen ZX. Consumer ethnocentrism and willingness to buy domestic products in a developing country setting: testing moderating effects. *J Consum Mark* 2004;21(6):391–400.
- Washburn JH, Till BD, Priluck R. Co-branding: brand equity and trial effects. *J Consum Mark* 2000;17(7):591–604.
- Washburn JH, Till BD, Priluck R. Brand alliance and customer-based brand-equity effects. *Psychol Mark* 2004;21(7):487–508.
- Xu Y, Kim H-W. Order effect and vendor inspection in online comparison shopping. *J Retailing* 2008;84(4):477–86.