Scale development for consumer repulsion: A consumers' individual identity-expressiveness perspective

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Abstract: In a number of emerging markets such as China, native consumers may avoid certain domestic products when foreign products are available. However, the studies on the unfavorable attitudes toward the products of one's own country are not sufficient. This article aims to develop a construct to explain this phenomenon. The measurement scale was developed and validated using responses from 318 Chinese consumers with respect to electronics and clothing. The judgment sampling method produced representative distributions in terms of age and gender. The items were first generated and refined based on the content validity. Exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and convergent and discriminant validity were then established. Finally, this study investigates relationships among consumer repulsion, domestic product ownership, and negative word of mouth, to confirm the nomological validity. This study develops a construct—consumer repulsion—that can be used to articulate native consumers' unfavorable attitudes toward domestic products from consumers' individual identity-expressiveness perspective. First, this study develops a scale for consumer repulsion. The scale shows good reliability, unidimensionality, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and nomological validity. The scale helps explain the nature and impact of country biases, and integrates and expands current studies in this field, which should prove helpful in further research on this topic. Furthermore, this study proposes a three-dimensional model of consumer repulsion consisting of affective repulsion, cognitive repulsion, and conative repulsion. Finally, these findings have shown that linking domestic products to social identity and self-identity will likely influence domestic product ownership and word of mouth of native consumers.

People need to express themselves and gain identity. One way to gain identity and maintain self-image is to connect themselves with specific groups. Previous research has suggested that consumers' identification is becoming increasingly important, as it positively affects consumers' judgments and behaviors (Escalas & Bettman, 2003). In fact, consumer identification is also one of most important reasons of judgments and behaviors of domestic or foreign products (e.g., Klein, Ettenson, & Morris, 1998; Shimp & Sharma, 1987).

Many studies have suggested that consumers in developed countries are willing to choose domestic products due to national identity (e.g., Good & Huddleston, 1995);

however, few studies have focused on developing countries. In emerging markets like China's, native consumers often do not like to consume domestic products when foreign products are available, even though domestic products may offer better quality at a lower price (Gerth, 2003; Mueller, Liu, Wang, & Cui, 2016). Conversely, consumers in developing countries may have strong aspirations for foreign products (Han & Won, 2018), as purchasing them could develop and maintain a favorable self-image (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2016). Despite this phenomenon's importance, its impact is still not fully understood. It is of great practical and theoretical significance to understand negative bias of native consumers toward domestic products.

From the management point of view, the quality of products in developing countries is becoming increasingly better; domestic products are no longer labeled with poor quality but there are still some domestic residents refusing to purchase these products. It is essential to solve the dilemma and improve the brand image of domestic brands. In addition, a better understanding of these issues can provide useful insights for developing effective marketing strategies of foreign brands.

From the perspective of theoretical research, although some studies have discussed related attitudes toward one's own country and foreign countries by focusing on several helpful constructs, most relevant scholarly efforts have been discussed on negative attitudes toward imported products by focusing on constructs such as consumer ethnocentrism (Shimp & Sharma, 1987; Siamagka & Balabanis, 2015) and animosity (Klein, Etteson, & Morris, 1998). Against this background, Josiassen (2011) made an important theoretical contribution by introducing the idea of disidentification to describe unfavorable attitudes toward domestic products, and incorporated this construct into a matrix useful for discussing non-quality-based country bias. However, his work only addressed disidentification among immigrants who reject a product to distinguish themselves from the typical domestic consumer. Focusing on immigrants says little about the larger number of native consumers who do not have the same motivation to distinguish themselves from other natives as immigrants do. For instance, immigrants' disapproval of products of their immigration country may come from their disapproval of national culture, but the native consumers motivation may not be for this reason.

Therefore, why do residents reject domestic products? Is the reason why the residents reject their products because they disagree with the country? What preferences do residents have for domestic and foreign products, and how does the matrix proposed by Josiassen (2011) need to be revised and expanded? This issue should be further discussed (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2016; Mueller et al., 2016).

Against this background, this study has four research objectives. First, it provides a conceptualization for the construct of consumer repulsion to describe native consumers' repulsion toward domestic products. Second, a scale has been developed to measure this construct. Third, the reliability and validity of the consumer repulsion scale is demonstrated. Finally, the study discusses the research's

implications and limitations as well as future research directions.

Introducing consumer repulsion

In our study, consumer repulsion is regarded as a negative judgment, feeling and an unwanted desire toward domestic products. Thus, we use the term *repulsion* to describe and investigate native residents' unfavorable attitude toward the products made in their own countries.

The human's repulsion is generated from various stimuli (Cohen, Kim, & Hudson, 2018; Singh & Soo, 2000). Previous research has documented that people's repulsion to a group can be explained by the dissimilarity–repulsion model, and dissimilarity promotes group repulsion (Chen & Kenrick, 2002). Similarity or dissimilarity bias is decided by individual's perception. If people do not have a sense of belonging, they may establish a separation from and repulsion for it (Durvasula, Andrews, & Netemeyer, 1997; Elsbach & Bhattacharya, 2001).

Previous research has documented that repulsion can be regarded as reaction to negative judgments and feelings (Cohen et al., 2018; Singh & Soo, 2000), and how people deal with feelings could be explained by the theory of reaction formation (Cohen et al., 2018). Freud (1936) viewed reaction formation as motives that become transformed into their opposite. He suggested that people use reaction formation to fend off what would be dissimilar thoughts and unwanted desires (Baumeister, Dale, & Sommer, 1998). Consumers' attraction or repulsion toward one specific country will influence product-related judgments and willingness to buy (Josiassen, 2011). Consumer repulsion investigates the unfavorable attitude toward domestic products and what will influence the domestic product ownership; such a reaction can be explained by the theory of reaction formation.

This study defines "consumer repulsion" as consumer's active rejection toward products from their own country. Based on the attitude theory proposed by Rosenberg and Hovland (1960), the attitude consists of a cognitive aspect, an affective aspect, and a conative or behavioral aspect. Attitude theory has been widely used in previous studies. Some studies have focused on one component of attitude. For example, Der-Karabetian and Ruiz (1997) developed scales to measure the affective component of Latino, American, and global-human identities among first- and

second-generation Mexican American adolescents. They proposed that the affective component was independent and positively related to acculturation, which supports the necessity to separately study the three dimensions. In our study, consumer repulsion is such an attitude; thus, we propose three possible dimensions: affective repulsion, cognitive repulsion, and conative repulsion (as shown in Figure 1). Affective repulsion describes a consumer's negative emotional attitudes toward domestic products. Cognitive repulsion describes a consumer's belief that domestic products are not worth buying from an objective perspective. Conative repulsion refers to the intent of a consumer to reject domestic products.

Conceptual background and hypotheses

Social identity, self-categorization theory, and self-identity

A previous study has defined social identity as "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1974, p. 69). This theory states that social classification of self leads to self-attraction and self-esteem (Hogg, 1993) because groups require certain boundaries between "in" and "out". As a result, ingroups usually
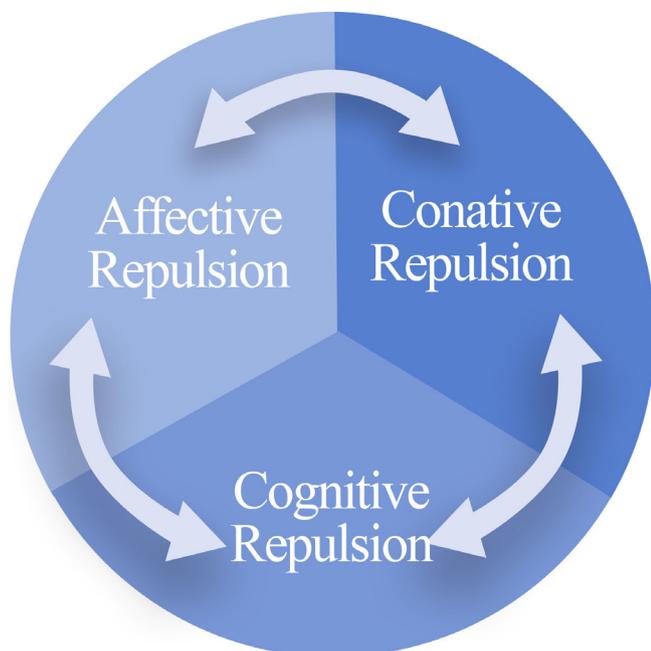

Figure 1. Consumer repulsion.

represent individuals' identification or at least those associated with them (Turner, 2010).

Social identity is composed of cognitive, affective, and evaluative elements (Van Dick et al., 2004). Bergami and Bagozzi (2000) applied the three dimensions of social identity to organizations and suggested that organizational reputation and organizational stereotypes can affect employees' identification with organizations and thus provide incentive power for their citizenship behavior. Their research extends the application of social identity theory, showing that this theory can be applied to enterprises as well.

Hogg, Abrams, Otten, and Hinkle (2004) proposed that a social group is a group in which the members have the same social identity—they think they can use the same way to define their roles, attributes, and their differences from special outside groups. Group membership is a matter of collective self-perception—"we," "us," and "them."

Bagozzi and Lee (2002) suggested two different types of social tendencies. The "I" intention is to explain an individual's behavior through an individual level whereas the "we" intention is to see oneself as part of a social representation when an individual acts in a group. The "we" intention is similar to the group membership suggested by Hogg et al. (2004).

Previous research has noted that the formation of social identity is driven by self-enhancement and uncertainty reduction. In terms of self-enhancement, people try to improve the status as well as prestige of their group because self-evaluation is affected by group evaluation, and it is a prestigious, high-status group which has a more general positive effect on self-esteem. In terms of reducing uncertainty, people associate social identity with their cognition and behavior in an effort to reduce uncertainty about their social position (Hogg et al., 2004).

Brewer and Gardner (1996) made a detailed distinction between three components of the self: the individual self (a personal trait that distinguishes oneself from others), the relational self (a two-person relationship in which one assimilates oneself with a significant other), and the collective self (a group member that distinguishes "us" from "them").

Kashima and Hardie (2000) had similar conclusions. Their research has shed light on the links between the three-part self model and the more traditional two-part self model. The concepts of interdependent self-construction and collectivism suggest that each of these concepts contains an emphasis on relational and collective self-aspects.

Horizontal and vertical individualists are autonomous and goal-oriented. Horizontal collectivism has been shown to resemble the relational self-aspect in that they emphasize peer and kinship relationships whereas vertical collectivism has been shown to resemble the collective self-aspect in that they emphasize hierarchy and status consciousness.

Previous studies have suggested that the concept of collective self corresponds to the social identity as represented in social identity theory and self-categorization theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). These different aspects of the self refer to the inclusion of different levels of the self-concept—a shift from "I" to "we" and central to self-definition.

People need to express themselves. Establishing connections between themselves and specific groups is a form of self-expression. Khallouli and Gharbi (2013) found that people's belief in their confidence to perform specific behaviors is created by the self-expression that causes them to form self-identity.

Individuals want to belong to a group that can make a positive contribution to self-esteem (Tajfel, 1974), and if people identify with an object, their relationship with the object will be improved (McAlexander, Schouten, & Koenig, 2002).

Conversely, individuals will be reluctant to identify with groups that make negative contributions to self-esteem because belonging to a negatively distinguished ingroup will not make a positive contribution to an individual's self-identity and self-image (Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999). "Not me" is also a part of oneself and represents the group that one rejects (Hogg, 1993). The undesirable self is the most undesirable self that an individual consistently rejects and is due to an unfavorable nature, experiences, or feelings (Bosnjak & Rudolph, 2008).

Self-identity is regarded as the strongest influence factor on consumers' attitudes; the product especially reflects their self-image and fit for their characteristics (Salem & Salem, 2018). People can establish their self-identity by possessing products that represent and display their self-image (Salem & Salem, 2018). Individuals may not reject products due to their reluctance to be identified with their avoidance group (Englis & Solomon, 1995).

Therefore, based on social identity theory, this study focuses on the influence of consumers' social identity on domestic product avoidance due to their disidentification with the group that uses domestic products.

Consumer country bias: Distinctions, integration, and extension

Consumer Attraction–Repulsion Matrix

A product's country of origin is found as an indicator of product quality and brand image, especially when a product category is not well-known to the consumer or the consumer lacks the incentive to process information about the product (Josiassen, 2011; Maheswaran, 1994; Strizhakova & Coulter, 2015; Tseng, Balabanis, & Liu, 2018; Tseng, Huang, & Liu, 2021). Josiassen (2011) proposed a Consumer Attraction–Repulsion Matrix which has four quadrants: *consumer ethnocentrism*, *consumer affinity*, *animosity*, and *consumer disidentification* (as shown in Figure 2). Consumer ethnocentrism refers to attraction to the domestic country; consumer affinity describes attraction to foreign countries; and consumer disidentification and animosity explain repulsion for the domestic country and foreign countries. He suggested that it is necessary to distinguish the structure of group attraction and exclusion.

Consumer ethnocentrism

Consumer ethnocentrism has been defined as "beliefs held by consumers about the appropriateness and indeed morality of purchasing foreign-made products" (Shimp & Sharma, 1987, p.280). The term describes an economic form of ethnocentrism; they used it to discuss which purchase decisions are agreeable or disagreeable to an ingroup; moreover, the term analyzes why consumers have a negative attitude toward products made outside their own country.

	Attraction	Repulsion
Domestic Country	Consumer ethnocentrism	Consumer disidentification
Foreign	Consumer affinity	Animosity

Figure 2. Consumer Attraction–Repulsion Matrix.

Some studies have proposed the concept of negative ethnocentrism; however, there is disagreement over the definition of this variable. Swartz (1961) proposed the concept of negative ethnocentrism, which is defined as a low degree of ethnocentrism and worship of foreign culture. Figueredo, Andrzejczak, Jones, Smith-Castro, and Montero (2011) developed a scale to describe negative ethnocentrism. They believed that negative ethnocentrism shows the exclusion of external groups.

Ethnocentrism is divided into the internal expressions of four groups: group preference, superiority, purity and exploitation, and the group cohesion and dedication expressed within the two groups (Bizumic, Duckitt, Popadic, Dru, & Krauss, 2009). Previous studies have suggested the factors that determine consumer preferences across local (domestic) and foreign products. Specifically, collectivist practices and patriotic/conservative behavior are positively related to ethnocentrism wheras cultural tolerance, education, and higher incomes show negative correlations with ethnocentrism (Sharma, Shimp, & Shin, 1995).

In previous studies, we learned that the influence of prejudice against a country can be explained by cognitive or normative reasons (e.g., Maher & Carter, 2011). Consumer ethnocentrism is a normative behavior and national responsibility, which is not necessarily the same as consumer repulsion-emphasizing the expression of individual self-concept. As far as the overall sense of identity is concerned, nationality is not the only influencing factor under certain circumstances (Sussman, 2000). Thus, this construct is distinct with consumer repulsion.

Consumer affinity

Oberecker, Petra, and Adamantios (2008) introduced the term consumer affinity to refer to a "feeling of liking, sympathy, and even attachment toward a specific foreign country" (p. 26). It can result from a consumer's direct personal experience or group norms, and is positively related with a consumer's purchase behavior toward products from that country. Cakici and Shukla (2017) examined the moderating role of consumer affinity between country-of-origin misclassification awareness and consumers' behavioral intentions. They demonstrated a significant decrease in behavioral intentions among experts relative to novices in the low-affinity condition, and the reverse in the high-affinity condition.

Consumer affinity discusses the attitudes toward a specific country. Balabanis, Diamantopoulos, Mueller, and Melewar (2001) suggested that a consumer with high affinity toward a specific outgroup may not necessarily reject domestic products; therefore, consumer repulsion is distinct from consumer affinity.

Animosity

Conversely, consumers might avoid products from a particular country not because of concern about their quality but for reasons such as a history of conflict, political disagreement, violence or terrorism, or ethnic and cultural differences (Klein et al., 1998). This attitude is labeled animosity—"the remains of antipathy toward a particular country associated with previous or current military, political or economic actions that the consumer finds hard to forget and forgive" (Klein et al., 1998, p. 90). Research has shown the significant negative relationship between consumer animosity and buying intentions (Meng, Meng, & Liu, 2012; Park & Yoon, 2017). However, these findings differ from those of country-of-origin studies: Consumer animosity will not affect judgments on product characteristics or conduct quality evaluation. Consumers uncouple their ill feelings about a nation and their evaluation of that country's products. In other words, hostile consumers do not doubt the quality of the target foreign country's products; they simply do not purchase them (Klein et al., 1998).

Similar with consumer affinity, animosity is proposed as attitudes toward products from one specific country. The effects of animosity on consumer preferences exist even when consumer repulsion remains constant; it is therefore distinct from consumer repulsion.

Consumer disidentification

Josiassen (2011) defined consumer disidentification as a consumer's active rejection of and distancing from his or her perception of the typical domestic consumer. The term is adapted from national disidentification (Verkuyten & Yildiz, 2007). National disidentification describes native people's positive or negative orientation toward their own country (Portes & Zhou, 1993). Immigrants with high consumer disidentification disagree with typical consumers in the country they immigrate to and regard themselves as distinct from the mainstream (Josiassen, 2011; Shoham, Segev, & Gavish, 2017).

Although Josiassen (2011) developed a reliable scale to measure this construct, his study still has some limitations. First, consumer disidentification focuses on the rejection of domestic consumer culture and the typical behavior of local

people, not the domestic products; thus, its content-related validity is not ideal. Further interest should be discovered from the perspective of the rejection of local products. Second, the samples are exclusively second-generation immigrants. The construct may thus not be applicable to native inhabitants.

Other related constructs

To date, there have been many research efforts on positive bias to a domestic country, but little attention has been given to consumers who have ingroup derogation, such as consumer disidentification. Country-of-origin research has provided some evidences on a bias for foreign products or a neutral attitude toward domestic products (e.g., Cannon & Yaprak, 2001, 2002; Der-Karabetian & Ruiz, 1997; Mueller et al., 2016; Riefler & Diamantopoulos, 2009; Riefler, Diamantopoulos, & Siguaw, 2012; Strizhakova & Coulter, 2019; Swartz, 1961).

Consumer xenocentrism

Consumer xenocentrism is an intermediary phenomenon that leads to a class of people who worship foreign brands even if their domestic counterparts may be better (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2016; Mueller et al., 2016). Xenocentric consumers prefer "products from a country (or region) other than their own and who rates and scales products in reference to the foreign country and not their own" (Mueller & Broderick, 2010). Consumer xenocentrism explains outgroup favoritism among consumers, particularly among members of low-status groups (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2016). Positive and negative effects are distinctive dimensions and will lead to different types of responses (Larsen, McGraw, & Cacioppo, 2001). Balabanis et al. (2001) suggested that positive attitudes toward one's country may not necessarily imply negative attitudes toward other countries. This research also stated that a positive bias toward domestic products does not have to be related with a negative one for imported products, which could provide evidence that positive attitude toward a foreign country is not equal to repulsion toward domestic products.

Global-human identity

In this globalized world, it is possible for consumers not only to belong to and connect to their local culture but also to integrate into the global culture by consuming products and brands, ideas, and experiences from all over the world (Strizhakova & Coulter, 2019).

Early studies of world identity were started by Der-Karabetian and Ruiz (1997). Their study put forward the global-human identity and applied this construct to describe the relationship with the world. They analyzed that the closer to the society and the longer the contact time, the higher the global-human identity tendency of an individual. On the contrary, more ethnic participation may strengthen the identity of the ingroup and weaken the global-human identity.

Cosmopolitanism

Cosmopolitanism refers to internationalism, openness to foreign cultures, worldliness, or global openness (Riefler et al., 2012). A cosmopolitan is one with "a willingness to engage with the other, an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness toward divergent cultural experiences" (Hannerz, 1990, p. 239), along with a talent for grasping an alien culture (Hannerz, 1990) and whose consumption traits surpassed any certain cultural characteristics (Cannon & Yaprak, 2002). Merton (1957) suggested that people with high cosmopolitanism would consider themselves "citizens of the world" rather than a specific nation—as belonging to a broader, heterogeneous group rather than a narrow geographic or cultural one, and appreciate the diversity brought about by the availability of products of different national and cultural origins (Riefler et al., 2012; Riefler & Diamantopoulos, 2009).

Cannon and Yaprak (2001) discussed degree of cosmopolitan orientation of different consumers; namely, cosmopolites and parochials. Cosmopolitans often see the world from an objective perspective whereas parochials will be inclined to observe the world from a narrow-minded perspective. Additionally, Cannon and Yaprak (2001) proposed a framework which has four cells, global cosmopolites, local cosmopolites, global parochials, and local parochials to simulate issues of local and cross-national segmentation. The framework studies the interaction effects between global segmented membership and marketing strategies, and one kind of advertising strategy is suggested for each type of consumer.

Cosmopolitanism has been shown to have a positive impact on attitudes toward global products, and consumer cosmopolitanism and ethnocentrism have different impacts on willingness to purchase foreign products (Dogan & Yaprak, 2017). Cleveland, Laroche, and

Papadopoulos (2009) verified that cosmopolitanism is positively related with the purchase frequency of luxury goods and global fashion clothing. Consumers with a high degree of ethnocentrism tend to buy traditional foods and have a lower tendency to choose international trend products.

Cannon and Yaprak (2002) summarized the motivations of cosmopolitans as the pursuit of diversity and quality. They believed that cosmopolitans are sophisticated consumers, and their choices are more objective.

Cosmopolitanism does not necessarily indicate rejection but rather that national identity is not important to a person (Kreiner & Ashforth, 2004; Verkuyten & Yildiz, 2007). Thus, typical cosmopolitans do not necessarily have a low score on localism (or on the contrary) (Riefler et al., 2012, p. 299). Thus, cosmopolitanism may affect consumers' attitudes toward the products from their own country as well as foreign countries.

Integration and extension

Based on the aforementioned discussion, we found that previous scholars have done much research on consumers' preference for a country. Country bias is regarded as an important influence factor of purchasing domestic or foreign products (e.g., Klein et al., 1998; Shimp & Sharma, 1987).

This study extends the Consumer Attraction–Repulsion Matrix (see Figure 3). The extended matrix revealed that consumer ethnocentrism and consumer repulsion describe favorable and unfavorable feelings toward one's domestic country. Consumer affinity and xenocentrism represent a positive preference for products of foreign countries, and animosity represents a negative bias for products of a certain foreign country. On the other hand, consumer cosmopolitanism and global-human identity represent neutral attitudes toward both domestic and foreign products. It has been noted in previous research that consumer dis-identification is to explore the attitude of immigrants toward their own country, and more likely to point out the exclusion of domestic consumer behavior and culture, whereas other variables within the original matrix are to explore the propensity of domestic residents to products, so it is not exactly relevant to this matrix. From the perspective of consistency, consumer repulsion is regard as avoidance toward domestic products, which is more suitable for integrating into the same framework as other variables.

The concept of repulsion is based on other related concepts. Like consumer ethnocentrism, consumer repulsion expresses an attitude for domestic products; however, one of them is positive whereas the other is negative. Previous research has shown that positive and negative effects are distinct dimensions (Verlegh, 2007) and therefore have differences.

Both repulsion and animosity refer to the negative attitudes of native consumers; however, their research objects are for their own country and other countries, which are different. On the other hand, repulsion is also closely related to consumer affinity and xenocentrism. High-level consumer affinity and xenocentrism are more likely to exhibit consumer repulsion; thus, we can use these two scales to test the validity of each other. For example, the differences of these constructs' effects on willingness for domestic products could be examined and compared.

Consumer cosmopolitanism and global-human identity express neutral attitudes toward both domestic and foreign products, and consumers with this tendency regard themselves as citizens of the world. Repulsion and these two variables belong to different dimensions of attitudes toward domestic or foreign products.

The extended matrix holds that the research on consumers' national preference is not only from the perspective of attraction and repulsion but also from a negative attitude through neutral to positive. There are only two attitudes—positive and negative—in the original matrix, which cannot be comprehensive in the study of national preference. Many consumers have no extreme attitudes toward domestic and foreign products; they are considered "internationalized" consumers. Consumers who hold a neutral attitude toward domestic and foreign products are high-potential groups; thus, the framework should include a neutral dimension.

Figure 3.   Extended Consumer Attraction–Repulsion Matrix.

The article by Strizhakova and Coulter (2019) also gave our research valuable inspiration. They summarized some local cultural identity beliefs, including national identity, nationalism, consumer ethnocentrism, and so on, as well as some global-related expressions of identity, such as global-human identity and cosmopolitanism. Thus, consumer cosmopolitanism and global-human identity were integrated into our new matrix. The original dimensions of attraction and rejection or global and local expressions were changed to three dimensions (from negative through neutral to positive). The extended matrix will provide a deeper explanation of the reaction of native consumers to domestic goods and goods imported from other nations.

Research hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

National biases have been shown to influence purchase intentions and actual purchasing behavior (Abdul-Latif & Abdul-Talib, 2017; Josiassen, 2011; Klein, 2002; Klein et al., 1998; Oberecker et al., 2008; Shimp & Sharma, 1987; Souiden, Ladhari, & Liu, 2018; Strizhakova & Coulter, 2015; Thelen, John, Earl, & Honeycutt, 2006). Consumer repulsion has been proposed in this study as an attitude toward own country and native consumers, which has some similarities with constructs such as cosmopolitanism and consumer disidentification. Cosmopolitanism is related to evaluations of and intentions to purchase the products from a certain country (Zeugner-Roth, Zabkar, & Diamantopoulos, 2015). Consumer dis-identification will significantly relate to consumers' actual purchases (Josiassen, 2011). As a result, this study proposes:

Hypothesis 1a (H1a):. Affective repulsion has a negative effect on ownership of domestic products.

Hypothesis 1b (H1b):. Cognitive repulsion has a negative effect on ownership of domestic products.

Hypothesis 1c (H1c):. Conative repulsion has a negative effect on ownership of domestic products.

Hypothesis 2

Previous research has concluded that behavioral intentions, such as consumption behavior and word of mouth, are directly affected by attitudes toward a country's products (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006). This study has argued that evaluations include affective, cognitive, and conative components. Some previous studies have supported this opinion. Previous studies have concluded that affect will have an important impact on information processing and consumption (Westbrook, 1987) because affect can occur without extensive cognitive encoding, and can occur sooner (Zajonc, 1980, p. 151). Cross-sectional study on the relationship between emotions and consumer behavioral intentions has been substantial, and the results overwhelmingly support a valence congruent relationship (Ladhari, 2007; Westbrook, 1987). In terms of word-of-mouth support for a product or brand, Nyer (1997) found that affect accounted for 58% of variation in the level of positive word-of-mouth support. Studies also have examined the effect of cognition on behavior. Morris, Woo, Geason, and Kim (2002) proposed that cognition can influence attitude and even predict behavioral intention. Dalzotto, Basso, Costa, and Baseggio (2016) proposed that cognitive antecedents (distrust) are antecedents of negative word of mouth. Erevelles (1998) reported that behavior is mainly triggerd by cognition. The consumer repulsion identified in the present study is an attitude that involves a consumer's affect, beliefs, and intentions. Intention can also be regarded as an outcome of belief and evaluations. Accordingly, this study proposes:

Hypothesis 2a (H2a):. Affective repulsion has a positive effect on negative word of mouth.

Hypothesis 2b (H2b):. Cognitive repulsion has a positive effect on negative word of mouth.

Hypothesis 2c (H2c):. Conative repulsion has a positive effect on negative word of mouth.

The two groups of hypotheses are closely related. Word of mouth reflects the attitude toward the product, and ownership represents the actual purchase behavior of the product (Liu, Xue, & Liu, 2021). Ownership will trigger word

of mouth, and word of mouth will also invisibly influence behavior.

The reasons for negative word of mouth are more biased toward emotional disagreement or cognitive disagreement. Therefore, this kind of disagreement can easily produce a willingness to disseminate a negative word of mouth. However, there are many factors behind the actual behavior, not only cognitive or affective disagreement but also other reasons such as the unavailability of channels and economic factors. The antecedents may be different between word of mouth and actual behavior.

The three dimensions of consumer repulsion are cognitive repulsion, affective repulsion, and conative repulsion. They correspond to the three levels of cognition, emotion, and behavior, so we selected these two dependent variables to test the effects of consumer repulsion from different perspectives.

Method

This study centers on developing and validating a measurement scale for consumer repulsion according to established scale development procedures (Churchill, 1979; Churchill & Iacobuoci, 2002) that have been widely followed in previous studies in this field (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2016; Josiassen, 2011). The target population consists of Chinese consumers who have the opportunity and ability to choose between buying foreign and domestic goods.

This study consists of focus group interviews, the pilot study, and the main study. All procedures received ethical approval from the Institute for Sustainable Development at Macau University of Science and Technology. Each participant in this study gave written informed consent before the study.

Research setting and prestudy interviews

This study focuses on two product contexts—clothing and electronics—which are important items for expressing fashion and self-image. Electronics is a high-risk–high-price product, so it is ideal for testing consumer repulsion. Clothing is a low-risk product; the purpose of choosing it is to test whether consumer repulsion occurs with low-risk products.

Two focus groups interviews with eight participants, respectively, were conducted as a prestudy. All had

previously bought clothing and electronics. The main purpose of these interviews was to generate items for consumer repulsion.

Item generation

To develop a new scale for quantifying the consumer repulsion construct, a pool of 17 items was used, such as "It is our right to purchase foreign products." "We should buy from foreign countries only those products that we cannot obtain within our own country." "When purchasing the same type of product, a domestic product is the obligatory choice for me." These items were adapted from the measures used by Shimp and Sharma (1987), Granzin and Olsen (1998), Josiassen (2011), and Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2016).

The focus group with eight consumers was used to generate items. The participants were provided with a definition and examples of consumer repulsion and were required to list statements that best described the definition. To avoid overleading, the focus group participants were not informed about the items from previous research and the three dimensions of consumer repulsion. We deleted the duplicate items, which resulted in 33 items left. The responses with regard to the 17 items were then transcribed onto cards and examined for their content validity. The items were developed in two ways: Some items were developed in Chinese, and the other ones were translated from English and then back-translated to Chinese. This procedure was conducted based on Brislin's (1980) study.

Content validity

To test the content and face validity, the content validity of the items was evaluated by three marketing experts. The authors told the three experts the definitions of consumer repulsion and the possible dimensions, and then the authors asked the experts to judge whether the items are related with the information through the following scale: 3 (*fully related*), 2 (*partial related*), and 1 (*not related*) (Zaichkowsky, 1985). Finally, 25 items rated 2 or higher than 2 were retained.

Pilot study

The sample consisted of 100 consumers, who were enlisted (see Table 1) and asked to rate each of the 25 items using a 5-point Likert scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). All of them had previously bought clothing and electronics. The measure refinement process was applied

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of Respondents in Pilot Study and Formal Study

Measures	Item	Pilot study (N = 100)		Formal study (N = 318)	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	42.00	42.00	161.00	50.60
	Female	58.00	58.00	157.00	49.40
Age	20–29	30.00	30.00	78.00	24.50
	30–39	31.00	31.00	87.00	27.40
	40–49	22.00	22.00	72.00	22.60
	50–59	10.00	10.00	53.00	16.70
	≥60	7.00	7.00	28.00	8.80
Education	High school or below	7.00	7.00	40.00	12.60
	Associate	28.00	28.00	68.00	21.40
	Bachelor	29.00	29.00	125.00	39.30
	Master	17.00	17.00	66.00	20.80
	Doctoral	19.00	19.00	19.00	6.00
Personal income RMB	<3,000	5.00	5.00	39.00	12.30
	3,000–4,999	22.00	22.00	63.00	19.80
	5,000–6,999	31.00	31.00	80.00	25.20
	7,000–8,999	19.00	19.00	59.00	18.60
	9,000–9,999	6.00	6.00	43.00	13.50
	≥10,000	17.00	17.00	34.00	10.70

for the initial measures based on the research of Churchill (1979) and Churchill and Iacobuoci (2002). Six items did not work well for either of the two products, as its (sub-construct) item-to-total correlations were below 0.3. All three marketing researchers agreed that deleting the item would not influence the content validity of the scale, so these items were deleted. Therefore, 19 items were left for the main study: nine for affective repulsion, four for cognitive repulsion, and six for conative rejection.

Data collection

The main study used a sample consisting of Chinese citizens. This study's review of the related literature has shown that consumers' negative bias against their own countries appears to occur in larger numbers in emerging market countries (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2016; Tseng et al., 2018). Thus, the market of a developing country is an ideal context for research on consumer repulsion. Products made in China, one of the largest developing countries, face fierce competition from foreign products. As China's management level and technology are constantly improving, many local products have improved in quality and are able to compete with imports. However, Chinese consumers still have a negative impression of local products and thus reject them, and the domestic market has suffered as a result. Therefore, the Chinese market is representative.

Street intercepts were conducted at shopping malls and the border gate between mainland China and Macau, based on judgment sampling. After the deletion of incomplete questionnaires, we collected 318 valid questionnaires (see Table 1). The response rate was 95.50%. Gender and age of consumers will have an effect on product-related judgments and intentions; thus, the distribution of gender and age should be dispersive. According to Table 1, the data have shown that the judgment sampling method produced representative distributions of Chinese consumers in terms of gender and age.

Reliability and validity

Exploratory factor analysis

An exploratory factor analysis was performed to determine the factor structure. The result of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test for the electronics sample was .80, and the chi-square of Bartlett's test of sphericity was 203.75, $df = 66.00$, $p < .00$; the result of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test for the clothing sample was .78, and the chi-square of Bartlett's test of sphericity was 1553.84, $df = 66.00$, $p < .00$. According to Hair, Rolph, Ronald, and William (1998), the data of this study were appropriate for factor analysis. The results have shown that 70.64% of the total variance was explained for electronics and 63.90% for clothing. Compared with clothing, electronic products are high-involvement products. For high-involvement products,

consumers' purchase decisions will be affected by more factors such as national identity or social identity. Therefore, this scale has a better interpretation of electronic products. This study extracted factors based on common factor analysis and the oblique rotation method (Hair et al., 1998). We deleted items based on three criteria. First, the factor loading of the items were lower than .50. Second, the items have high cross-factor loadings on multiple factors. Third, the contents of the reserved items are not in conformity with the other items loaded on the same factor. According to Hair et al. (1998), the item's minimum loading must be reached, .40 or greater. The research results meet the requirement.

Using this procedure, three factors with 12 items were retained: three for Factor 1, four for Factor 2, and five for Factor 3. Each factor had an eigenvalue greater than 1.0. About 70.64% of the total variance was explained for electronics and 63.90% for clothing. The results of the exploratory factor ananlysis are consistent with the three dimensions proposed in the previous section.

Dimensions of consumer repulsion

This study defines Factor 1 as affective repulsion, which describes a consumer's negative emotional attitudes toward domestic products. If a consumer feels strong affective repulsion, he or she will dislike domestic products and feel uncomfortable buying them. This study defines Factor 2 as cognitive repulsion, which describes a consumer's belief that domestic products are not worth buying from an objective perspective. If a consumer believes that the domestic products are not worth buying, he or she exhibits cognitive repulsion. Factor 3 is conative repulsion, which is the intent of a consumer to reject domestic products. A consumer may feel strong affective and cognitive repulsion toward domestic products, yet may not reject them because of economic considerations, a need to conform, ethnic identification, or other reasons. Moreover, the specific dimensions of a consumer's repulsion may have different effects on purchasing behavior.

Confirmatory factor analysis

This study tests the construct validity of the consumer repulsion with AMOS Version 24.0 (IBM Corporation, New York). Only the electronics data were used initially, and model specifications were made according to the modification indices. The fit indices were in the acceptable range, $\chi^2 = 78.80$, $p < .00$, $df = 45.00$, $\chi^2/df = 1.75$, root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .05,

normed fit index (NFI) = .96, incremental fit index (IFI) = .98, comparative fit index (CFI) = .98, suggesting that the model fits well with the data (Hair et al., 1998). For the clothing data, the fit indices were satisfactory, $\chi^2 = 74.70$, $p < .01$, $df = 48.00$, $\chi^2/df = 1.56$, RMSEA = .04, NFI = .95, IFI = .98, CFI = .98. These results are shown in Table 2.

Based on the methods of Anderson and Gerbing (1988), this study used electronics and clothing samples to test whether the three-factor model was the optimal measurement model for consumer repulsion. In this study, we compare the three-factor model, the single-factor model, and three two-factor models. Tables 3 and 4 show that the three-factor model is the most suitable solution.

Scale reliability

Cronbach's αs for the electronics data were .90 for affective repulsion, .82 for cognitive repulsion, and .86 for conative rejection, and those for the clothing data were .75, .83, and .86, respectively. The composite reliability estimates for each dimension were .91, .81, and .86 for the electronics data, and .76, .82, and .86 for the clothing data. Both sets of reliability estimates were therefore deemed acceptable.

Convergent validity and discriminant validity

The average variances extracted (AVEs) for the electronics data were .77 for affective repulsion, .52 for cognitive repulsion, and .56 for conative rejection, and those for the clothing data were .51, .55, and .56, respectively. All values of the AVEs were larger than .50, and these results indicated that convergent validity was acceptable Garbarino & Johnson, 1999.

Discriminant validity was assessed by comparing the AVEs with the squared correlation between constructs (Fornell & David, 1981). The squared correlations between pairs of the three dimensions of consumer repulsion were less than the AVEs, suggesting discriminant validity (see Table 5).

Nomological validity

To verify the proposed scale's nomological validity, the correlations were measured between consumer repulsion and two measures related to purchasing behavior: domestic product ownership and negative word of mouth (Hypotheses 1 & 2).

To measure product ownership, three items were modified from Dimofte, Johansson, and Bagozzi (2010); to

Table 2
Factor Loadings for the Consumer Repulsion Scale (N = 318)

		Factor loadings	
Item	Items, relevant dimensions, and construct	Electronics sample (N = 318)	Clothing sample (N = 318)
	Affective repulsion		
1.	I don't like the products made in China.	.81	.70
2.	As a domestic product user, I feel proud. (reverse-coded).	.91	.66
3.	I have no feelings for domestic products.	.91	.79
	Cognitive repulsion		
1.	Domestic products have a worse price/performance ratio than any imports.	.80	.87
2.	In the long run, buying domestic products is not a good choice.	.81	.88
3.	From the economic perspective, the domestic product is not a preferred option.	.61	.55
4.	Domestic products seem to be cheap with good quality. (reverse-coded)	.64	.61
	Conative repulsion		
1.	I reject buying domestic products.	.88	.89
2.	I will buy foreign products if an imported alternative exists.	.67	.66
3.	I shop at retail stores that make a special effort to offer foreign brands.	.73	.72
4.	I will try to purchase only imported products.	.57	.57
5.	I would like to spend more time to know the origin of a product so as to avoid purchasing domestic products.	.86	.86

measure negative word of mouth, three items were adapted from Verhoef (2003). Structural equation models were conducted by using the two data sets for electronics and clothing. Tables 6 and 7 show the correlation matrix for the variables analyzed.

For the electronics sample, model specifications were identified. The fit indices are acceptable, $\chi^2 = 218.98$, $p < .001$, $df = 111.00$, $\chi^2/df = 1.97$, RMSEA = .06, NFI = .94, IFI = .97, CFI = .97, suggesting that the model fit the data well (Hair et al., 1998). The results show that the path from affective repulsion to product ownership was significant and negative, .23, $p < .01$, supporting H1a. The path from cognitive repulsion to product ownership was also significant and negative, .18, $p < .01$, supporting H1b. The path from conative

repulsion to product ownership was also significant and negative, .21, $p < .001$, supporting H1c.

The path linking affective repulsion to negative word of mouth was shown to be significant and positive, .57, $p < .001$, supporting H2a. Greater affective repulsion thus predicts negative word of mouth. Cognitive repulsion showed a very similar relationship with negative word of mouth, .230, $p < .001$, supporting H2b. Greater cognitive repulsion thus predicts negative word of mouth. However, the path linking conative repulsion and word of mouth was not significant, .02, $p > .05$, and H2c was not supported (see Table 8).

For the clothing sample, model specifications were identified. The fit indices are satisfactory, $\chi^2 = 180.11$, $p < .001$, $df = 104$, $\chi^2/df = 1.73$, RMSEA = .05, NFI = .94,

Table 3
A Comparison of Alternative Measurement Models of Consumer Repulsion (Electronics Sample)

Model	X^2/df	NFI	IFI	RMSEA	CFI
One-factor model	5.47	.88	.90	.12	.90
Two-factor model					
Affective Repulsion = Cognitive Repulsion	4.50	.90	.92	.11	.92
Cognitive Repulsion = Conative Repulsion	4.27	.91	.93	.10	.93
Affective Repulsion = Conative Repulsion	3.29	.93	.95	.09	.95
Three-factor model (proposed model)	2.05	.96	.98	.06	.98

Note. NFI = normed fit index; IFI = incremental fit index; RMSEA = root-mean-square error of approximation; CFI = comparative fit index.

Table 4
A Comparison of Alternative Measurement Models of Consumer Repulsion *(Clothing Sample)*

Model	X^2/df	NFI	IFI	RMSEA	CFI
One-factor model	4.84	.97	.98	.11	.98
Two-factor model					
Affective Repulsion = Cognitive Repulsion	2.47	.96	.98	.07	.98
Cognitive Repulsion = Conative Repulsion	1.98	.96	.98	.06	.98
Affective Repulsion = Conative Repulsion	2.56	.96	.97	.07	.97
Three-factor model (proposed model)	1.56	.95	.98	.04	.98

Note. NFI = normed fit index; IFI = incremental fit index; RMSEA = root-mean-square error of approximation; CFI = comparative fit index.

IFI = .97, CFI = .97, suggesting that the model fit the data well (Hair et al., 1998). The results show that the path from affective repulsion to product ownership was significant and negative, .57, $p < .001$, supporting H1a. The path from cognitive repulsion to product ownership was also significant and negative, .15, $p < .05$, supporting H1b. The path from affective repulsion to negative word of mouth was significant and positive, 0.16, $p < .001$, supporting H2a, as was the path from cognitive repulsion to negative word of mouth, .28, $p < .001$, supporting H2b. However, the paths from conative repulsion to product ownership, .04, $p > .05$, and from conative repulsion to negative word of mouth, .03, $p > .05$, were not significant. Thus, H1c and H2c were not supported (see Table 8).

Each construct has a significant and positive effect on the two dimensions of consumer repulsion, which indicated an acceptable level of nomological validity for the proposed measurement scale (Shi, Shi, Chan, & Wang, 2009).

Discussion

Theoretical contribution
Previous studies have shown that unfavorable attitudes toward the products of one's own country have not received sufficient attention. Developing a valid scale to measure the concept and determine factors that affect consumers'

negative bias toward domestic products is thus essential; doing so was the objective of this study. The scale shows good content validity and internal consistency, in addition to desirable convergent and discriminant validity.

This new construct could be regarded as a category of attraction and repulsion of country and products, which composed a complete picture for describing attitude toward domestic or foreign products with other constructs that we discussed in the previous section. As discussed earlier, replacing consumer identification with consumer repulsion is more suitable for the original Attraction–Repetition Matrix.

This study further extends the matrix, and the original dimensions were changed to three dimensions (from negative through neutral to positive). Combined with the consumer repulsion developed by this research, a more objective and complete model has been formed.

Second, this study provides a more useful perspective for social identity theory, as the measurement scale for consumer repulsion helps explain the nature and impact of country biases from consumers' individual identity-expressiveness perspective. According to the theory of social identity, many scholars have suggested that one's own country is usually regarded as the ingroup whereas the foreign country represents the outgroup (Shankarmahesh, 2006; Verlegh, 2007). Consumer repulsion puts forward the idea of identifying the native consumers as an

Table 5
Discriminant Validity Test for Dimensions of Consumer Repulsion

	Electronics sample		Clothing sample	
Pair of dimensions ($\Phi = 1$)	Average variance extracted	Square of correlation	Average variance extracted	Square of correlation
Affective repulsion vs. cognitive repulsion	.77	.00	.51	.02
Cognitive repulsion vs. conative repulsion	.52	.01	.55	.00
Conative repulsion vs. affective repulsion	.56	.19	.56	.00

Table 6
Construct Correlations for Electronics Sample

		Electronics Sample				
Construct	M (SD)	Affective repulsion	Cognitive repulsion	Conative rejection	Product ownership	Negative word of mouth
Affective repulsion	3.82 (1.07)	1.00 (1.00)				
Cognitive repulsion	2.40 (.84)	.05 (.36)	1.00 (1.00)			
Conative rejection	3.04 (1.02)	.43** (.00)	−.10 (.08)	1.00 (1.00)		
Product ownership	2.93 (.91)	−.19** (.00)	−.06 (.30)	−.44** (.00)	1.00 (1.00)	
Negative word of mouth	3.31 (1.14)	.41** (.00)	.24** (.00)	.13* (.02)	−.46** (.00)	1.00 (1.00)

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

outgroup, which enriches the relevant research in the field of national identity and social identity.

Third, this study proposed a three-dimensional model of consumer repulsion involving affective repulsion, cognitive repulsion, and conative repulsion. The three-dimensional model describes repulsion, including consumers' feelings, cognitive repulsion, and intention toward domestic products. The structure of consumer repulsion was supported by the attitude theory proposed by Rosenberg and Hovland (1960). This theory has an affective component, a cognitive component, and a conative component (Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960); it is widely used as a theoretical foundation for developing new scales and predicting consumer behavior (Makanyeza, 2014). Previous studies have suggested that these three components are not always highly correlated, and therefore that measures of attitude based on only one or two response classes are not complete (Lawton, Conner, & Parker, 2007). In this study, consumer repulsion similarly involves affective repulsion, cognitive repulsion, and conative rejection, which provides a solid theoretical foundation for future empirical research.

Finally, these findings highlight dimensions of consumer repulsion that are important for influencing domestic product ownership and negative word of mouth. The results show that stronger affective repulsion and cognitive repulsion can lead to lower domestic product ownership and negative word of mouth whatever the high- or low-risk product. This evidence also enriches the literature in the field of consumer behavior. We analyze unsupported hypotheses in Table 8. The insignificant association between conative repulsion and word of mouth may due to the fact that electronics and clothing are symbols of self-expression. For some consumers, electronic products and clothing are important items for expressing fashion and self-image, so whether or not to produce positive feeling will have an impact on word of mouth. On the other hand, electronic and clothing are products with a higher proportion of consumer spending, so cognitive repulsion is related to word of mouth. Therefore, emotional and cognitive repulsion will cause them to pass on negative word of mouth. However, there are many reasons behind the conative repulsion, and the behavioral refusal may only be due to objective reasons such as few purchase channels and economic impossibility. Thus, conative repulsion does not mean the consumer dislikes or disagrees with the domestic products. It can be easily accepted that if one person has

Table 7
Construct Correlations for Clothing Sample

		Clothing sample				
Construct	M (SD)	Affective repulsion	Cognitive repulsion	Conative rejection	Product ownership	Negative word of mouth
Affective repulsion	3.48 (1.08)	1.00 (1.00)				
Cognitive repulsion	2.40 (.85)	.15** (.00)	1.00 (1.00)			
Conative rejection	3.03 (1.03)	−.15** (.00)	−.03** (.61)	1.00		
Product ownership	3.00 (.86)	−.54** (.00)	−.23** (.00)	−.11* (.05)	1.00 (1.00)	
Negative word of mouth	2.61 (.68)	.22** (.00)	.64** (.00)	−.05 (.40)	−.40** (.00)	1.00 (1.00)

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Table 8
Structural Model Testing Results

Path	Hypothesis	Electronics sample			Clothing sample		
		Estimates	z	Supported	Estimates	z	Supported
Affective repulsion → Product ownership	H1a	−.23	−3.02**	Y	−.57	−7.16***	Y
Cognitive repulsion → Product ownership	H1b	−.18	−2.68**	Y	−.15	−2.59*	Y
Conative rejection → Product ownership	H1c	−.21	−3.99***	Y	.04	.69	N
Affective repulsion → Negative word of mouth	H2a	.57	7.39***	Y	.16	3.86***	Y
Cognitive repulsion → Negative word of mouth	H2b	.23	3.45***	Y	.28	4.45***	Y
Conative rejection → Negative word of mouth	H2c	−.02	.66	N	.03	1.17	N
Model Fit		$\chi^2 = 218.98$, $df = 111$, $\chi^2/df = 1.97$, RMSEA = .06, NFI = .94, IFI = .97, CFI = .97.			$\chi^2 = 180.11$, $df = 104$, $\chi^2/df = 1.73$, RMSEA = .05, NFI = .94, IFI = .97, CFI = .97.		

Note. Y = supported; N = not supported. RMSEA = root-mean-square error of approximation; NFI = normed fit index; IFI = incremental fit index; CFI = comparative fit index.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

no negative emotion or evaluation toward one product, he or she would not disseminate negative word of mouth toward it.

The association between conative repulsion and ownership is insignificant for the clothing sample. The reason may be that the name and logo of domestic clothing brands are not obvious enough, so consumers may unconsciously buy domestic clothing brands. However, if consumers are cognitively and emotionally repelling, they will consciously avoid buying domestic clothing brands. This can explain why conative repulsion has no significant effect on ownership.

Managerial implications

This study offers marketers some guidelines to help them understand and better manage consumer repulsion by providing managers with a useful new strategic tool. Indeed, they might use consumer repulsion as their main measure for evaluating consumers' attitudes toward domestic products. Once the level of repulsion has been determined, strategies can be developed to decrease its incidence and strength, or firms can decide whether they should promote the national ties of their products. For consumers not demonstrating repulsion, plans could be devised to retain them.

The consumer repulsion scale could also be useful in market segmentation and positioning, helping enterprises to more accurately identify and target consumer segments. As consumers may regard brands to be a symbol of their social

identity and self-identity. Firms need to apply appropriate strategies to benefit consumers, and make them match their identity expressiveness appeals, which may help consumers to show their social status in society and then improve their self-image. Using the consumer repulsion scale in isolation is not realistic; consumer repulsion scores should be used in conjunction with actionable segmentation variables (e.g., demographic, personality, and lifestyle variables), and marketing communication programs could then be directed to those market segments via appropriate media and channels.

Foreign brands will find this scale useful. Consumers with high scores in consumer repulsion may be a profitable market. Thus, foreign companies planning to enter a particular market segment can measure consumer repulsion in advance to get a clear understanding of which consumers to target and what their needs are.

The hypothesis proposed by this study will give marketers a clearer picture of how consumer repulsion plays an important role in ownership of domestic products and negative word of mouth. The results show that consumer repulsion occurs in connection with both high-risk and low-risk products. Having information on all three dimensions of consumer repulsion can be very useful in developing such plans. The two very different products studied show the potential generalizability of this technique.

Common promotional tools such as sales promotions and advertisements are unlikely to be effective if consumer

repulsion is high. The appropriate strategy, therefore, may use global branding. This effort might include adopting a foreign brand-name to make a product look foreign, position the brand as an international brand instead of a local one, or even import the product rather than produce it domestically if doing so influences consumers' quality perceptions. Importing car engines from Germany may be effective marketing, for example.

Domestic brands have another way to decrease repulsion. Some Asian countries, for instance, allow much lower but low-quality production, which brings negative reputation. The negative reputation could not help consumers maintain a favorable self-image, which leads to repulsion. Thus, domestic products should improve their quality and fundamentally change the fixed image of domestic products. Huawei, for example, has improved the quality and brand image of domestic products by advanced technology, and it has become a favorite and popular brand of the Chinese.

Consumers' word of mouth is difficult to manage and control because it occurs outside the firm. In addition, negative word of mouth spreads very easily among one's social network such as Weibo, WeChat, and Tik Tok. Thus, it should be necessary to develop a customer feedback system with social media monitoring.

Limitations and future research directions

Some limitations of the study reduce the generality of the findings. First, since the scale applies a self-report approach, which causes the possibility of common method variance. Although previous research has shown that this method is commonly used (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), it should be admitted that more objective measures should be added to measure the perceptual measures.

Second, the cross-sectional nature of this study can support its conclusions at the moment, but they may not be supported in the future. A longitudinal study could provide more information because the consumer repulsion can change over time; product quality in a developing country is especially increasing.

Third, consumer identification also provides us much inspiration. Future research should also consider whether there is a huge gap between immigrants' consumer ethnocentrism, consumer affinity, and consumer animosity with their own residents.

Fourth, antecedents of consumer repulsion are waiting to be discovered. Although previous studies have discussed the positive attitude of domestic consumers toward foreign products, the preference of domestic consumers for foreign products may be their cultural preference or worship of their economic development level. However, this is not equivalent to the rejection of domestic products, and thus, the antecedents can be totally different with consumer repulsion. Moreover, it is worth studying the impact of consumer repulsion on foreign product purchases in the future.

Finally, this study does not explore the differences of consumer repulsion with different characteristics. In future research, we should discuss whether consumers with different characteristics, such as innovative consumers, are more likely to reject domestic products. At the same time, considering the influence of subculture is also worth studying.

Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

Acknowledgments

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