

Research Design: Ethnocentrism on Purchase Intention of Fast Fashion Co-branding in China



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This study examines the influence of Chinese consumers' ethnocentrism on the compatibility of fashion-co-branded products, focusing specifically on international fast fashion brands. This study examines fast fashion co-branding cases in the Chinese market, specifically focusing on the spillover effect and the influence of ethnocentrism. This study utilises the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) as the theoretical framework, along with Yoo and Donthu's (2001) brand equity model and validated research scales. The objective is to assess the impact of perceived quality, brand awareness, association, and loyalty on the co-branding match-up. This study incorporates the concept of the spillover effect of the emotion transfer theory as a moderating factor in the association between co-branding match-ups and consumers' purchase intentions. The objective is to examine the purchasing behaviour and potential purchase intentions of Chinese consumers towards fast fashion co-brands. The present study aims to investigate the potential impact of ethnocentrism on Chinese consumers. To achieve this objective, the questionnaire design will be based on the CET scale, which is widely recognised and utilised in academic research. The primary focus of this investigation is to examine the role of ethnocentrism as a moderator in the aforementioned relationship. The global fast fashion industry tends to appropriate and dilute local cultural elements as it expands into new markets. This study offers pertinent references for international fast-fashion brands seeking to enter the Chinese market. Brands can successfully penetrate the Chinese market by comprehending the impact of ethnocentrism. This study examines the alignment of brand equity and potential co-branding intentions, with a focus on the specific co-branding factors relevant to the Chinese market.

Keywords: Fast Fashion, Co-Branding, Ethnocentrism, Spillover Effect, Brand Equity

1. Introduction

Co-branding is an essential strategy employed by fast fashion brands to enhance consumer intent to purchase and facilitate international market expansion (Paydas Turan, 2021). Fast fashion brands have successfully utilised luxury co-branding and designer co-branding to drive sales and expand their presence in the Chinese market (Park & Chang, 2022). According to Jin and Choi (2023), the Chinese market consumption report indicates a significant 91.8% growth in the sales of co-branded fast fashion in 2021. Millennial women are the primary demographic driving the growth of sales of co-branded products, particularly those offered by H&M and Uniqlo. These brands have experienced the most rapid growth in sales through collaborations with popular cartoon franchises such as Disney, Hello Kitty, and Doraemon (Jin & Choi, 2023).

Many Chinese consumers engage in impulsive, ethnocentric consumption. They tend to favour products that showcase Chinese culture and actively boycott brands that are perceived as insulting China (Laroche et al., 2021). Zhang, Chen, and Lin (2022) found that Huawei and Li Ning, as national brands, hold a substantial market share in China. Chinese consumers boycotted and closed numerous H&M stores in response to perceived insults towards Chinese customs and behaviours (Hong et al., 2023). Fast fashion co-branding is influenced by public opinion and ethnocentrism, which necessitates consideration of the perceived quality of products from a nationalistic perspective and the incorporation of cultural elements (Nguyen et al., 2023).

Mitchell and Balabanis (2021) suggested that consumers' subjective perception of the brand, encompassing factors such as co-branded product quality, design, concept, and word-of-mouth impression, influences their perceived quality of the co-branded product. Strong brand association and loyalty can enhance the perceived quality of the co-branded product (Zhang et al., 2022). The failure of co-branding can be attributed to a lack of recognition and association. For instance, in 2018, the Chinese fast fashion brand Matterson. we collaborated with characters from the movie Havoc in Heaven, but this partnership lacked visibility (Ho et al., 2019). The failure can be attributed to the millennial generation's lack of understanding regarding the design concept as well as their limited recognition of the value and importance of co-branded products (Wang et al., 2020).

According to Park and Chang (2022), fast fashion brand awareness refers to consumers' level of awareness regarding fashion co-branding attributes as well as their initial perception of quality and brand association. Therefore, when developing fast fashion co-branding in China, it is important to consider the measurement dimensions outlined in the brand equity models proposed by Aaker (1996) and Yoo and Donthu (2001). These dimensions encompass the brand equity model, brand perceived quality, brand association, brand awareness, and brand loyalty (Chan, 2022; Cornwell, Humphreys, & Kwon, 2023; Tanveer & Lodhi, 2016).

The fast fashion co-branding match-up is a crucial and pressing aspect of the co-branding process. Fast fashion brands employ articulating match-up strategies to address product flaws and garner favourable consumer reviews (Eiras & Azevedo, 2019). Iglesias et al. (2020) found that the match-up between brands regulates the emotional transmission of consumers and influences their evaluation of co-brands. Currently, scholars posit that the pairing of original brands enhances the impact of co-branding (Zollo et al., 2020). The absence of suitable product and brand pairings is the primary factor contributing to the adverse effects of co-branding (Shaw, Chovancová, & Bejtkovský, 2022).

Some scholars believe that unknown co-branded participants are more likely to have unexpected spillover effects in brand associations whose main elements do not match (Song et al., 2021). In addition, Balmer and Podnar (2021) argue that the spillover bias of co-branding depends on the degree of fit between the collaborating brands. Therefore, based on the above research gap, this study explores the regulatory role of spillover effects on consumer perception of co-branding, provides data support from China for co-branding research, and improves the spillover effect theory of fast fashion co-branding.

The influence of ethnocentrism on consumer purchasing decisions is growing due to the sale of products and cultural values by international multinational corporations (Shan, Lu, & Cui, 2022). Ethnocentrism has led to significant financial losses for certain companies. The boycott of Xinjiang cotton by H&M resulted in widespread protests in China, leading to a significant decline of 23% in H&M sales in the Chinese market in 2021. Consequently, H&M was compelled to remove its products from all digital platform stores in China (Chen, 2022). Chinese customers boycotted and protested against Dior's fall 2022 horse-face skirt, following accusations of cultural appropriation (Shan et al., 2022). Durmusoglu (2022) suggests that disregarding ethnocentrism in brand development can result in increased competitive opportunities for rival companies. This study examines the impact of Chinese consumers' ethnocentrism on the suitability of fashion-co-branded products, focusing on international fast fashion brands.

The globalisation of the fast fashion industry can lead to the appropriation of local culture in host countries. This study offers pertinent references for international fast-fashion brands seeking to enter the Chinese market. Brands can successfully penetrate the Chinese market by comprehending the impact of ethnocentrism. This study examines the alignment of brand equity and potential co-branding intentions, with a specific focus on the Chinese market and its co-branding requirements. However, this study provides an opportunity for consumers to enhance their understanding of co-branding and critically evaluate its worth and the potential impact it may have on other related entities.

When confronted with ethnocentric public sentiment, individuals have the ability to approach emotional consumption impulsivity with greater composure. Public media practitioners have the potential to utilise the insights presented in this article in order to promote the widespread adoption of fast fashion co-branding and foster a culture of appreciation for diverse consumption patterns. Practitioners have the opportunity to enhance their sensitivity towards the resistance exhibited by pertinent consumers, thereby augmenting their popularity through the mitigation of co-branding match-up weaknesses.

The entry of the international fast fashion industry into other countries will inevitably lead to the appropriation of local culture. This study offers pertinent references for international fast fashion brands seeking to enter the Chinese market. Brands can successfully penetrate the Chinese market by comprehending the impact of ethnocentrism. This study examines the alignment of brand equity and potential co-branding intentions, with a specific focus on the Chinese market and its co-branding requirements. Consumers can enhance their understanding of co-branding and assess its value and spillover effects by referring to this study. Consumers can respond to impulsive emotional consumption more calmly in the presence of ethnocentric public opinion.

This article provides insights for public media practitioners on how to promote fast fashion co-branding and encourage diverse consumption. Practitioners should consider consumer resistance and address co-branding match-up weaknesses to enhance popularity. This study examines strategies for efficient co-branding and promoting ethnocentric purchasing behaviours in the fast fashion industry. It considers the perspectives of existing and potential co-brands, consumers, public media, and practitioners. The study focuses on combining co-brand equity with the unique characteristics of the Chinese market, particularly elements of national sentiment.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Framework

2.1 The Co-Branding Categories

Pinello, Picone, and Mocciaro Li Destri (2022) utilised the four co-branding categories proposed by Blackett and Russell (2000) to classify fast fashion co-branding into cognitive, value-approved, elemental, and complementary co-branding. Fashion enterprises prioritise the associative significance of co-branding and select collaborative brands to fulfil this objective (Nguyen et al., 2019). Cognitive co-branding refers to the collaboration between brands that share similar values, particularly in the context of evaluating brand value through feedback from the target customers (Decker & Baade, 2016). The collaboration between H&M and Karl Lagerfeld has played a crucial role in enhancing H&M's brand equity through cognitive association (Decker & Baade, 2016). Cognitive co-branding has the potential to rapidly enhance popularity within a limited timeframe and with minimal financial resources (Wang et al., 2020). Fast fashion brands in the industry demonstrate a notable level of innovation as they promptly capitalise on fashion associations with Karl Lagerfeld to cater to consumers' desire for affordable and stylish clothing (Mrad, Farah, & Haddad, 2019).

2.2 Consumer Purchase Intention of Co-Branding

Ringle, Da Silva, and Bido (2015) conducted a case study that identified a limited correlation between consumers' perceptions and prior help experiences. Additionally, Straughan and Desara et al. (2021) provided an explanation, stating that both internal and external sales environments have a direct impact on consumption. Consumers develop attitudes towards new products by considering product compliance and cognition (Husain, Paul, & Koles, 2022). Consumer attitudes are characterised by submissiveness, a tendency to be easy-going, and internalisation (Samuelsen, Olsen, & Keller, 2015). Malhotra (2011) emphasised the significance of product or brand attitude as a key determinant of consumer purchasing behaviour. Consumers tend to make purchasing decisions based on products that effectively leverage the benefits associated with brand attributes (Park & Park, 2016; Schnittka et al., 2017).

Consumers' purchase intention and behaviour are directly influenced by their brand preference when selecting a brand attitude for brand purchase (Desara et al., 2021; Kotler & Keller, 2006). Consumers develop brand attitudes and assess brand attributes using evaluation criteria (Agnes & Darmawan, 2020). Studying consumers' attitudes towards co-branded characteristics, co-branded awareness, and purchase intentions can lead to more accurate predictions. This study examines the role of brand equity dimensions in shaping consumer cognition and attitudes. According to Foroudi (2019),

class beliefs play a significant role in shaping individuals' thinking styles, values, and consumption outlook. These scholars propose that consumption decisions are influenced by external factors such as culture and beliefs. This study aligns with [Mishra et al. \(2023\)](#) in examining the cultural influence of ethnocentrism on consumer purchase intentions.

2.3 Brand Equity

Brand awareness refers to the extent to which consumers retain information about a brand and its associated symbols. This retention is achieved through a range of communication strategies aimed at intensifying consumer perception ([Cornwell et al., 2023](#); [Pitta, 2012](#)). Furthermore, drawing upon Krishnan's (1996) model, [Parris and Guzmán \(2023\)](#) have extrapolated from the theory of association network memory to propose a framework for assessing brand image. This framework encompasses four key dimensions: the quantity of brand associations, the favourability of associations, the distinctiveness of associations, and the origin of associations ([Chan, 2022](#); [Lee & Soman, 2008](#)). Brand loyalty refers to the affinity that consumers have towards a particular brand, their inclination to make purchases from that brand, and their patterns of consumption ([González-Mansilla, Serra-Cantalops, & Berenguer-Contrí, 2023](#); [Nowlis, Kahn, & Dhar, 2002](#)). Word-of-mouth marketing, media advertising, or a deeper understanding of the brand as a whole can all have an impact on how consumers perceive a product's quality, functionality, and design ([Cornwell et al., 2023](#); [Guagnano, Stern, & Dietz, 1995](#)).

In the realm of brand equity research, the majority of scholars have emphasised the significance of the co-branding match-up as an essential criterion. In relation to the influence of product match-up on brand associations, it is widely accepted among scholars that there exists a positive correlation between the level of product match-up and consumers' perception of brand association ([Ahn, Kim, & Forney, 2010](#)). The concept of product collocation primarily pertains to the interdependence and correlation between co-branded products ([Shen, Choi, & Chow, 2017](#)). The product match-up effect has traditionally been assessed through the use of complementarity as the primary measure in prior research.

2.4 Spillover Effect

Scholars generally agree that the combined influence of brand product functions and attributes has an impact on consumers' brand evaluation, known as the spillover effect of brand associations. [Desara et al. \(2021\)](#) emphasised the importance of assessing product applicability across three dimensions: complementarity among co-branded products, substitutability, and technology transferability in manufacturing. Product complementarity refers to the ability to use co-branded products together. Product substitutability refers to the extent to which co-branded products can be interchanged with one another ([Koschate-Fischer, Hoyer, & Wolframm, 2019](#)). Technology transferability refers to the ability of co-branded products to provide technical support to one another ([Ringle et al., 2015](#)).

[Swaminathan, Reddy, and Dommer \(2012\)](#) aimed to establish a relationship between joint product promotion and increased sales for firms through the utilisation of product complementarity. Cooperating brands can enhance consumer messaging by

strategically aligning their products (Zhang et al., 2022). Consumer cognition plays a crucial role in establishing complementary and coordinated brand images within the fast fashion industry (Childs & Jin, 2020). The strong cognitive response of consumers towards the original cooperative brand is enhanced by the significant level of brand match-up, resulting in an increase in positive spillover effects (Zhang et al., 2022).

The alignment between brand image and consumer image represents a reciprocal relationship that complements the practise of co-branding, thereby indirectly amplifying the impact of co-branding efforts and generating spillover effects (Yu, Robinson, & Lee, 2021). Hence, this study posits that there exists a significant relationship between the match-up effect of co-branding and spillover effects.

2.5 Ethnocentrism

Nguyen et al. (2023) were the first to incorporate ethnocentrism into consumer behaviour research. They examined this phenomenon through the lens of consumer ethnocentrism, which encompasses consumers' perceptions and emotional associations with foreign products, particularly their emotional and moral attitudes as well as moral appropriateness. Consumer ethnocentrism explains consumer xenophobia, as it involves consumers perceiving the purchase of foreign products as unpatriotic and potentially detrimental to the domestic economy, causing economic recession and higher unemployment rates (Nguyen et al., 2023). Hong et al. (2023) expanded on the notion of consumer ethnocentrism by examining its manifestation among Chinese consumers.

They specifically focused on how consumer ethnocentrism influences Chinese consumers' preference for domestic products, as well as their moral adherence and reduced inclination towards purchasing foreign products. Ethnic-centric consumers oppose purchasing imported products due to concerns about unpatriotic behaviour, which they believe can result in detrimental consequences such as the erosion of domestic industries and the rise in unemployment rates (Kapferer & Valette-Florence, 2021). Consumers exhibiting strong ethnocentric tendencies tend to exhibit a preference for domestic products, while consumers with weak ethnocentric tendencies base their purchasing decisions solely on the tangible characteristics of the product, irrespective of its country of origin (Eastwood, Snook, & Luther, 2012; Shan et al., 2022).

3. Research Hypotheses

Shimp and Sharma (1987) identified three key attributes of consumer ethnocentrism, with the inclination to purchase foreign goods being the most unfavourable. Consumers with high levels of ethnocentrism tend to prefer purchasing foreign products, which can be influenced by various factors such as economic and moral considerations (Baruk, 2019; Punyatoya, 2013). Ethnocentrism is rooted in the patriotic sentiment of consumers, leading them to refrain from purchasing foreign goods in order to protect their economic interests (Richards, 2007; Yen, 2018). Consumers who possess strong patriotism tend to prioritise domestic products over foreign ones, even when the quality of the latter surpasses that of the former (Hatch & Schultz, 2010; Trivedi, Tapar, & Dharmani). Ethnocentrism is evident as a personality trait when individuals stereotype foreign products. These three characteristics account for the varying degrees of consumer ethnocentrism prevalence among consumers.

Consumer ethnocentrism influences the decision-making process in product purchases (He & Wang, 2015; Lee, Lee, & Li, 2017). According to Shimp and Sharma (1987), consumers with low ethnocentrism are more inclined to purchase imported products rather than domestically produced ones (Laroche et al., 2021). The majority of research on ethnocentrism has focused on the United States and Europe, with limited attention given to the study of Chinese consumers.

Han and Guo (2018) employed Shimp and Sharma (1987) Consumer Ethnocentric Tendency Scale (CETSCALE) to assess consumer ethnocentrism. The scale assesses consumer attitudes towards specific products and their inclination to purchase foreign products (Balabanis, Stathopoulou, & Qiao, 2019). Previous research has found a significant positive correlation between attitudes, preferences, and willingness to purchase domestic products and the intensity of consumer ethnocentrism (CET). However, it is important to note that ethnocentrism also moderates consumer purchase intentions towards a brand (Balabanis et al., 2019; Han & Guo, 2018; Ma, Yang, & Yoo, 2020; Yen, 2018). Therefore, the following assumptions are made based on all the above factors:

H1. *There is a significant relationship between perceived quality and co-branding match-up in the fast fashion industry.*

H2. *There is a significant relationship between the brand association and co-branding match-up in the fast fashion industry.*

H3. *There is a significant relationship between brand awareness and co-branding match-up in the fast fashion industry.*

H4. *There is a significant relationship between brand loyalty and the co-branding match-up in the fast fashion industry.*

H5. *The match-up of co-branded products as a mediating variable between brand equity and consumer purchase intention of fast fashion co-branded products.*

H6. *There is a significant relationship between brand equity and consumer purchase intention of fast fashion co-branded products.*

H7. *The moderating role of the spillover effects on the relationship between co-branding match-up and consumer purchase intention of fast fashion co-branded products.*

H8. *The moderating role of ethnocentrism between co-branded products match-up and consumers' purchase intention of fast fashion co-branded products.*

4. Research Methodology

Based on the hypothetical framework of the above factors, this paper mainly conducts research design and further plans the research direction and future prospects of data analysis.

4.1 Research Paradigm and Design

Positivist research utilises established theories to generate testable hypotheses (Saliya, 2023). It predominantly employs quantitative methods, such as social surveys and structured questionnaires (Saliya, 2023). This study utilises the positivist paradigm and incorporates theories such as consumer behaviour theory and ethnocentrism theory. This study investigates the causal relationship between brand equity and consumer purchase intention in the Chinese market, specifically focusing on the fast fashion co-branding match-up. The research methodology involves a cross-sectional questionnaire survey.

This study employs a positivist research approach to examine the causal link between fast fashion co-branded product equity and consumers' purchase intentions. The investigation is conducted through a cross-sectional survey. The research hypotheses encompass three additional variables: match-up, spillover, and ethnocentrism effects. Previous co-branding studies have raised concerns about the reliability of conclusions drawn by scholars due to their reliance on assumptions about the research objects, which raises questions about their validity (Ho et al., 2019). This study aims to analyse consumers' purchase intentions through the interpretation of real-life examples of fast fashion co-branding. The survey design consists of two stages. In the first stage, four brands related to the fast fashion industry are selected based on pre-research. The second stage involves testing the questionnaire's validity and reliability to improve it for the actual study.

4.2 Population and Sample

According to the CNPA (2022), millennials and Generation Z are projected to make up 84.8% of the fashion industry's national consumption, which is estimated to reach 1.1 trillion yuan by 2022. Consumption in first-tier cities in China primarily consisted of consumers engaging in fast fashion (CNPA, 2022). This study employed non-probability sampling based on statistical data. This study focuses on the selection and screening of millennials and Generation Z in first-tier cities and universities in China, including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Dongguan, Xi'an, and other locations. The participants of this study are specifically those who engage in the consumption of fast fashion co-branded products.

G*Power compensates for the lack of adherence to the ten times rule by effectively determining the appropriate sample size for this study. The study employs a multi-group factor and utilises the F test from the Test family for conducting analysis of variance. The study includes four independent variables, one mediating variable, and two moderating variables that exhibit significant correlations. The study utilises multiple linear regression, specifically the fixed model, and tests for a deviation of zero in the R2 statistic. Next, the study selects a priori to compute the required sample size and sets $\alpha=0.05$ as the standard value, power (1- β) error probability greater than 0.8 (i.e., 0.9), and effect size ($f^2= 0.15$). Since the number of predictor variables in this paper is seven, the minimum sample size is 130, as shown in Figure 1.1.

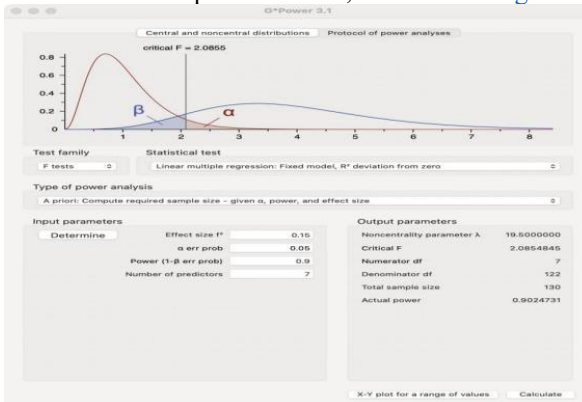


Figure 1.2. The minimum sample was calculated by using G*Power software

This study focuses on analysing millennials and Generation Z consumers. These groups exhibit a desire for brands, possess relevant learning abilities, and demonstrate novel cognition and evaluation skills (Zickar & Keith, 2023). According to Dimock (2019) of the Pew Research Centre, millennials are individuals born between 1981 and 1996, while Generation Z refers to those born between 1997 and 2012. Generation Z in China accounts for 69.1% of total fashionable clothing consumption, spending 2-3 times per month (CNPA, 2022). Typically, they possess future-oriented consumption preferences and a comprehensive knowledge of fashion trends (CNPA, 2022).

Millennials and Generation Z are characterised as innovative consumers with a strong emphasis on education and elevated fashion product expectations (Chen, 2022). These younger generations possess the necessary sensitivity and creativity to engage with fashion products (Cham et al., 2018). The selection of fast fashion by individuals influences the purchasing intentions of other generations and contributes to the expansion of the fast fashion industry in the Chinese market (CLH, 2023). Innovative consumers make purchasing decisions by considering their values and judgement criteria (Gholami et al., 2019).

This study employs a mixed-methods approach by utilising both online and offline questionnaires to collect data from the target population. The online questionnaires are distributed through national online platforms, while the offline questionnaires are administered within the university community (i.e., staff and students).

4.3 Questionnaire Items and Measures

The study's questionnaire consists of two sections: a screening section and a topic survey section. Section A consists of mandatory screening questions aimed at gaining insight into the concept of fast fashion co-branding. In order to ensure the authenticity and validity of the thematic survey data, it is essential for this study to carefully select respondents who possess knowledge in the areas of fast fashion and co-branding. In order to engage in a deeper analysis of relevant factors, it is necessary for respondents to possess a fundamental comprehension of fast fashion co-branding. Promotional pictures will be used in the screening questionnaire to stimulate consumers' recollection and facilitate thorough evaluations.

The primary questionnaire comprises five sections. Section B includes the independent variables of this study, which are associated with brand equity content (Yoo & Donthu, 2001). The theory of perceived quality is based on the comprehensive evaluation of product quality, design, function, and other factors as discussed by Cornwell et al. (2023) and Guagnano et al. (1995). The questionnaire survey incorporates the measurement of perceived quality, which encompasses quality, design, impression, and function, as defined by Shan et al. (2022) and Shuai (2016) in their studies on fashion brand perception. According to Parris and Guzmán (2023), there are a number of factors that affect consumer brand associations, including the quantity, preferences, uniqueness, and sources of associations.

This study utilised the questionnaire developed by Shan et al. (2022) and Shuai (2016) to investigate brand equity theory within the context of the fashion industry. This study examines how co-branding influences consumers'

perceptions of personalisation, taking into account Chan (2022) framework. Brand awareness refers to the extent to which consumers possess a strong perception of a brand's external appearance and their assessment of its attributes, qualities, and characteristics (Shan et al., 2022). This study examines the key features of fast fashion co-branding, including the identification of shared brand symbols, the evaluation of brand elements, the distinct brand impression, and the preferred design of co-branded fast fashion products. González-Mansilla et al. (2023) examine brand loyalty by assessing the frequency of purchases and intentions to determine the degree of liking and purchase tendency. According to Husain et al. (2022), consumer brand loyalty can be demonstrated through their willingness to recommend a brand.

Section C primarily examines consumer perceptions of the match-up effect in co-branding (Ahn et al., 2010).

Scholars posit that co-branding can be categorised into two situations: complementarity and correlation (Branská et al., 2016; Eiras & Azevedo, 2019; Shen et al., 2017). Shaw et al. (2022) argue that there is a complementary relationship between perceived quality and brand loyalty. On the other hand, Oeppen and Jamal (2014) propose that there is a consistent relationship between brand association and awareness. This study utilises the questionnaire design of Ahn et al. (2010) to assess co-branding match-ups. A five-point Likert scale is employed for measurement.

Section D examines the spillover effect of co-branding and the influence of ethnocentric consciousness. As stated by Zhang et al. (2022), the co-branded match-up is expected to generate positive spillover effects. These factors include product complementarity, popularity recognition, additional recognition, and brand image coordination, which were assessed using a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire items used to measure ethnocentrism in this study are based on the Cross-Cultural Ethnocentrism Tendency (CET) scale (Han & Guo, 2018; Shimp & Sharma, 1987). The questionnaire assesses the impact of Chinese-themed products on personal will and cultural context using a five-point Likert scale (Baber et al., 2022; Ma et al., 2020; Sun, Gonzalez-Jimenez, & Wang, 2021).

Section E seeks to gain insights into consumers' actual consumption patterns and their potential intentions to make future purchases. Consumer purchase intentions are influenced by various factors, including personal, motivational, cognitive, educational, and economic factors (Agnes & Darmawan, 2020; Hanna & Wozniak, 2001; Laroche et al., 2021; Mullen & Johnson, 2013; Sheth, 2011). The questionnaire employs a five-point Likert scale to assess the willingness of individuals to purchase co-branded products in the fast fashion industry.

Table 1.1 displays the precise design of the constructs in the questionnaire, spanning from Section B to Section E. Section F collects demographic information such as age, gender, education level, occupation, income, and city. Conducting demographic surveys can help in refreshing the existing audience database for fast fashion co-brands. The questionnaire research is designed based on previous research data and direction as a reference.

Table 1.1. *Specific measurement questions*

| Authors and Year | Variables | Item Description | Coding | Adapted and Rephrased Items | Loading factor from the previous study | Reliability Coefficients |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------|--------|--|--|--|
| (Shan et al., 2022; Shuai, 2016) | Section B: Perceived Quality | Quality | PQ1 | I like to buy fast fashion co-branded products with premium quality | 0.97 | $\alpha = 0.96$ (Shan et al., 2022) $\alpha = 0.98$ (Shuai, 2016) |
| | | Design | PQ2 | I like to buy fast fashion co-branded products with outstanding stylish designs | 0.99 | |
| | | Impression | PQ3 | I like to buy fast fashion co-branded products that impress me | 0.94 | |
| | | Function | PQ4 | I like to buy fast fashion co-branded products with great features | 0.98 | |
| (Parris & Guzmán, 2023; Shan et al., 2022; Shuai, 2016) | Section B: Brand Association | Fashion Expectation | BAS1 | I think fast fashion co-branded products always exceed my expectations of fashion product | 0.81 | $\alpha = 0.82$ (Shuai, 2016) |
| | | Fashion Preference | BAS2 | I prefer fast fashion co-branded products over generic brands | 0.78 | |
| | | Associated image | BAS3 | I usually can predict the image of a fast fashion co-branded product based on the original style of the brand. | 0.81 | |
| | | Uniqueness | BAS4 | I like fast fashion co-branded elements that perform my unique style | 0.94 | $\alpha = 0.97$ (Shan et al., 2022) |
| (Shuai, 2016) | Section B: Brand Awareness | Symbol | BAW1 | I can recognize the original brand symbol of fast fashion co-branded | 0.93 | $\alpha = 0.96$ (Shuai, 2016) |
| | | Element | BAW2 | I can distinguish the combined elements of fast fashion co-branded product from the original brand | 0.92 | |
| | | Impression | BAW3 | I can recognize the co-brand by the characteristics of the fast fashion co-branded product | 0.97 | |
| | | Type | BAW4 | I know what kind of fast fashion co-branded product I like | 0.93 | |
| (Shan et al., 2022); (González-Mansilla et al., 2023; Husain et al., 2022; Shuai, 2016) | Section B: Brand Loyalty | Purchase Propensity | BL1 | I tend to choose fast fashion co-branded products when shopping | 0.97 | $\alpha = 0.96$ (Shan et al., 2022); (Shuai, 2016) |
| | | Liking degree | BL2 | I will actively search for relevant information to purchase fast fashion co-branded products | 0.93 | |
| | | purchase frequency | BL3 | I have purchased fast fashion co-branded products several times | 0.98 | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|--|------|--------------------------------------|
| | | recommendation willingness | BL4 | I will recommend fast fashion co-branded products | 0.98 | |
| (Ahn et al., 2010; Shaw et al., 2022) | Co-branding Match-up | Complementary of Perceived Quality | CM1 | Fast fashion co-branded products with complementary qualities are attractive to me | 0.91 | $\alpha = 0.92$ (Ahn et al., 2010) |
| | | Consistency of Brand Association | CM2 | I like fast fashion co-branding with a wide range of categories, this intrigues me | 0.91 | |
| | | Consistency of Brand Awareness | CM3 | It is very important to me that the brands in Fast fashion co-branding are all famous | 0.92 | |
| | | Complementary of Brand Loyalty | CM4 | If my favourite brand had a collaboration then I would definitely buy it | 0.92 | |
| (Zhang et al., 2022) | Spillover Effect | Product Complementary | SE1 | I think the complementary fast fashion co-branded products are worth buying | 0.95 | $\alpha = 0.97$ (Zhang et al., 2022) |
| | | Recognition of Popularity | SE2 | I think the combination of Fast fashion and luxury goods has increased the value of the Fast fashion brand | 0.96 | |
| | | Additional Recognition | SE3 | When the degree of the match-up is high, I think buying fast fashion co-branded products has additional benefits | 0.96 | |
| | | Coordination of Brand Image | SE4 | I proactively learn about unknown brands when well-known and unknown brands join forces | 0.92 | |
| (Baber et al., 2022; Han & Guo, 2018; Ma et al., 2020; Shimp & Sharma, 1987; Sun et al., 2021) | Ethnocentrism | Ethnocentrism in China | ETH1 | Fast fashion co-branded products with Chinese elements are more attractive to me | 0.81 | $\alpha = 0.83$ (Han & Guo, 2018) |
| | | | ETH2 | As a Chinese, I am more willing to support China's Fast fashion co-branded product | 0.83 | |
| | | | ETH3 | Foreign products entering China should be taxed more | 0.71 | |
| | | | ETH4 | Chinese people should buy Fast fashion co-branded products that respect Chinese culture | 0.81 | |
| (Agnes & Darmawan, 2020) | Consumer Purchase Intention | Consumer Purchase Intention | CPI1 | I am going to buy fast fashion co-branded products. | 0.95 | |
| | | | CPI2 | I will try to buy fast fashion co-branded products in the future | 0.99 | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|------|--|------|--|
| | | | CPI3 | If I see fast fashion co-branded products, I plan to buy or consider buying | 0.94 | |
| | | | CPI4 | If I see a fast fashion co-branded retail store, I plan to go to that store to buy products. | 0.94 | |

4.4 Pre-Testing and Data Analysis Method

Pre-testing is a valuable method for enhancing questionnaire accuracy and preventing data errors during the actual data collection process (Boparai, Singh, & Kathuria, 2018). A pre-test is conducted to minimise the potential for unclear data resulting from ambiguous questions and to ensure that respondents can easily answer the questionnaire (Rahi, Alnaser, & Abd Ghani, 2019). The pre-test in this study examines the sequence, content, and measurement of questionnaire items. The study includes pre-survey responses and feedback from six experts.

This study employs IBM SPSS version 27 and Smart PLS 4.0.9.2 for data analysis. The researcher employs IBM SPSS to analyse demographic data and uses SMART-PLS to validate hypotheses and establish causal relationships within the model. SMART-PLS has the capability to handle over 30 small samples and offers superior drawing functionality compared to AMOS (Memon et al., 2021). AMOS has been shown to effectively handle large sample sizes (Hair et al., 2019); however, it is not suitable for the current study. CB-SEM necessitates the use of well-developed questionnaires and model foundations (Dash & Paul, 2021), whereas VB-SEM emphasises the verification of conceptual models. This study aligns with the directions of VB-SEM as it is based on newly proposed hypotheses for developing the questionnaire and model.

4.5 Assessing Measurement Model

This study employs SPSS descriptive analysis to present respondent profiles and PLS-SEM to evaluate measurement and structural models, as well as test reliability and validity. Internal structural models refer to models that focus on the internal structure of a system or entity. The external model examines the connection between observed variables and latent variables, while the internal model examines the relationship between variables and endogenous latent variables (Mohamad et al., 2019).

The PLS-SEM model encompasses reflective and formative indices, as well as mixed models (Afthanorhan, Awang, & Aimran, 2020). A reflective index model has several assessments: Indicator loadings, Cronbach's alpha (CA), composite reliability (CR), and average extracted variation (AVE) as measures (Hair, Howard, & Nitzl, 2020; Manley et al., 2021). According to Sarstedt et al. (2020), the acceptable indicator loading is 0.708 or higher, and any loadings below 0.4 should be excluded from the analysis. The formative index model includes various indicators such as the Fornell-Larcker criterion, cross-loading, collinearity variance inflation factor (VIF), confidence interval, and facet correlations (Dash & Paul, 2021; Sarstedt et al., 2020).

4.6 Reliability Test and Validity Test

The initial step in the PLS-SEM analysis involves assessing the reliability of the observed and latent variables (Hair et al., 2019). According to Afthanorhan et al. (2020), a

Cronbach's alpha (CA) of 0.70 or higher, or a composite reliability (CR) of 0.70 or higher, indicates a satisfactory level of internal consistency reliability (Manley et al., 2021).

Convergent validity is assessed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value, while discriminant validity is evaluated using the heterotrait-monotrait ratio. A convergent validity is indicated by an average variance extracted (AVE) of 0.5, which explains the variability among the items within the construct. Additionally, the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) should fall within the range of 0 to 1 (Hair et al., 2020).

This study employs the reflective measurement model, following the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) of a threshold greater than 0.7. Additionally, cross-load analysis and an examination of the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) with a threshold below 0.9 are both carried out in accordance with Sarstedt et al.'s (2020) recommendations. Table 1.2 presents the measurement criteria for the reflective variables.

Table 1.2. Criteria for the measurement of variables

| Measure Type | | Criterion | Description | References |
|--------------|----------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Reliability | Indicator Reliability | Indicator Loadings | ≥ 0.708 | (Hair et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2020) |
| | Internal Consistency Reliability | Cronbach's Alpha (CA) | $CA \geq 0.70$ | (Afthanorhan et al., 2020; Hair et al., 2019; |
| | | Composite Reliability (CR) | $CR \geq 0.70$ | Manley et al., 2021) |
| Validity | Convergent Validity | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) | $AVE \geq 0.50$ | (Hair et al., 2019; Afthanorhan et al., 2020) |
| | Discriminant Validity | Fornell-Larcker criterion | The correlations of the other constructs must be less than the square of each construct's AVE. | (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2019) |
| | | Cross-loadings | Other structures are loaded lower than the indicator on its assigned structure | (Hair et al., 2019) |
| | | The heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) | < 0.90 | (Hair et al., 2020; Manley et al., 2021; Sarstedt et al., 2020) |

4.7 Assessing Structural Model

The evaluation of the structural model entails the examination of the relationships between variables and the determination of the significance and relevance of path coefficients. The assessment comprises the collinearity variance (VIF), coefficient of determination (R^2), and path coefficients. The VIF is a measure of the correlation strength among independent variables. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) should be less than 5.

As part of evaluating the structural model, the relationships between variables and the importance and usefulness of path coefficients must be looked at. The assessment comprises the collinearity variance (VIF), coefficient of determination (R^2), and path coefficients. The VIF is a measure of the correlation strength among independent variables. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) should be less than 5 (Afthanorhan et al., 2020).

The path coefficients indicate the potential relationship between variables. The values of f^2 correspond to effect sizes, with weak being 0.02, moderate being 0.15, and strong being 0.35. A positive f^2 signifies a positive association between the dependent variable (DV) and independent variable (IV), whereas a negative f^2 indicates a negative association (Cohen, 1988). The predictive significance of the endogenous constructs relies on Q^2 values, which must be greater than zero ($Q^2 > 0$). A higher value of Q^2 indicates stronger variable interpretation ability and a better fit between the model and the data, while a lower value of Q^2 indicates a poorer fit between the model and the data (Mohamad et al., 2019).

4.8 Moderating Analysis and Mediating Analysis

The moderator variable investigates the circumstances in which the independent variable influences the dependent variable. It serves as a study of boundary conditions (Murphy, 2021). This study aims to examine the impact of spillover and ethnocentrism on the relationship between co-branding matchup and purchase intention. The research methodology involves using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to determine the R^2 in the hierarchical regression analysis. If the R^2 value is significant, it suggests that the adjustment effect is statistically significant (Abu-Bader & Jones, 2021).

The mediating effect primarily investigates the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable through a mechanism study (Murphy, 2021). In this study, the authors employ PLS-SEM and the Bootstrap algorithm to assess the significance of the coefficient in the equation (Kent et al., 2020). The presence of a co-branding match-up has an impact on the relationship between brand equity and purchase intention. The regression equation can also indicate the impact of the mediating variable. Complete mediation occurs when the correlation or regression coefficient between the independent and dependent variables is substantially reduced (Abu-Bader & Jones, 2021).

5. Conclusion

This study primarily focuses on the factors influencing consumer willingness to engage in fast fashion co-branding and proposes a research methodology. Existing research on the co-branding strategy in the fast fashion industry and its impact on consumer

purchase intentions provides insights for further investigation into brand equity match-ups and spillover effects. The integration of the brand equity model and spillover effects theory considers the cultural influence of Chinese consumers, incorporates ethnocentrism as a mediating factor, and proposes research hypotheses. Create measurement scale items using a sound approach to instrument and questionnaire design. This paper elucidates the research methods employed and the subsequent data analysis. This study utilises and modifies the design of the measurement scale from prior research.

The researcher assesses and modifies the scale to establish its validity and reliability, elucidates the process of data collection, and outlines the methodology for data analysis. To address the research gap on the relationship between fast fashion co-branding and ethnocentrism, it is necessary to conduct pre-set investigation and verification for future research findings. This study is limited by the wide range of factors that can influence consumers' purchase intentions, and the factors considered in this study may not be exhaustive. Future research could explore the potential impact of utilitarianism on ethnocentric purchase intentions.

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