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COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN EFFECTS ON ONLINE PURCHASE DECISION-MAKING: A SCOPING REVIEW

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Abstract

This study aims to provide a scoping review of the impact of country-of-origin on online purchase decisions through a critical synthesis of conceptual, methodological, and empirical dimensions in the existing literature. A total of 38 scholarly articles from business and management literature published between 2006 and 2025 were identified using a scoping review methodology to assess the current state of research and reveal future directions. Most studies adopt formalized, hypothesis-driven approaches, while a smaller share is exploratory. Statistical techniques based on secondary data and online questionnaires are widely used, whereas case studies are less common. Cross-sectional and longitudinal studies are almost equally represented, providing both static and dynamic perspectives on country-of-origin effects. Geographically, the research predominantly focuses on North America, Asia, and Europe. There is a stronger emphasis on consumer goods compared to services and industrial products. Sampling procedures are frequently underreported, and multivariate statistical methods are the most commonly employed analysis techniques. This review advances the understanding of the country-of-origin's role in online consumer behavior by consolidating key findings, identifying methodological limitations, and proposing avenues for future research within the field of international marketing.

Keywords: *online country-of-origin; country-of-origin; scoping review; international marketing*

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MENŞE ÜLKE ETKİSİNİN ÇEVİRİMİÇİ SATIN ALMA KARARLARI ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİLERİ: KAPSAMLI BİR DERLEME

Öz

Bu çalışma, menşe ülke kavramının çevrimiçi satın alma kararları üzerindeki etkisini kapsamlı bir şekilde incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu doğrultuda, mevcut bilgi birikimi içindeki kavramsal ve metodolojik yaklaşımlar ile ampirik boyutlar detaylı bir şekilde analiz edilerek sentezlenmiş ve eleştirel bir değerlendirmeye tabi tutulmuştur. İşletme ve yönetim literatüründen 2006-2025 yılları arasında yayımlanmış 38 makaleye ulaşılmıştır. Literatürdeki güncel durumu belirlemek ile gelecekteki araştırma yönelimlerini ortaya koymak için kapsamlı bir derleme çalışması yapılmıştır. İncelenen makalelerin çoğu hipotez odaklı ve yapılandırılmış olup, daha az bir kısmı keşifsel niteliktedir. Çoğunlukla ikincil verilere dayalı istatistiksel teknikler ve çevrimiçi anketler kullanılırken, vaka çalışmaları daha az tercih edilmiştir. Kesitsel ve boylamsal araştırmalar neredeyse eşit düzeyde temsil edilerek çevrimiçi menşe ülke etkilerine dair hem statik hem de dinamik içgörüler sunmaktadır. Coğrafi açıdan, araştırmalar daha çok Asya, Kuzey Amerika ve Avrupa ülkelerine odaklanmaktadır. Çalışmalarda tüketici ürünlerine, hizmetler ve endüstriyel ürünlerden daha fazla önem verildiği gözlemlenmektedir. Örneklem yöntemleri genellikle yetersiz açıklanmış olup, en yaygın kullanılan veri analiz tekniği çok değişkenli istatistiklerdir. Bu araştırma, uluslararası pazarlama literatürüne katkıda bulunarak mevcut çalışmaları gözden geçirmek, daha fazla inceleme gerektiren boşlukları vurgulamak ve gelecekteki araştırmalar için olası yönelimler önermek amacıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: çevrimiçi menşe ülke; menşe ülke; derleme; uluslararası pazarlama

1. INTRODUCTION

The country-of-origin (COO) plays a crucial role in the complex landscape of consumer decision-making by significantly impacting the preliminary phases before the purchase. As demonstrated by Pharr (2005), consumers' perceptions of the country of origin play a crucial role in shaping perceived brand equity, brand image, product evaluation, and perceived value, which in turn collectively drive purchase intention. Within the decision-making context, individuals and industrial buyers are both consistently exposed to various product information that stirs emotions, feelings, imagery, and fantasies, shaping their perceptions and influencing purchase decisions (Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999), and COO information acts as an important agent in this process.

Concurrently, the online landscape introduces a distinct dynamic, with numerous unfamiliar firms vying for attention in the global

marketplace, and to partake in the surge of online transactions, businesses must navigate a competitive terrain, emphasizing the need to establish a reputable presence (Loane et al., 2004). While there exists, numerous research investigating the influence of COO on purchasing behavior across both industrial and consumer sectors, it can be noted that empirical studies focusing on the COO impact on online purchases need extra attention due to offline shopping is mainly characterized by tangible experiences and spontaneous purchases, whereas online shopping is convenient, flexible and informed due to relevant information on products and services. Hence, the processing of COO information and the power of the COO effect may vary in different shopping settings. However, online COO studies are comparatively scarce within these realms. It is worth noting that research in this field has grown steadily over the past few years. Consequently, it is crucial to ascertain the current state of research examining the COO effect in the rapidly evolving realm of online purchasing and to delineate future research paths that can guide the increasing research efforts. Accordingly, even though there is an upsurge in the number of scholarly efforts that aim to examine the influence of COO on online purchase decisions, there exists a need for an extensive analysis of the extant body of empirical research on online COO effect, with the purpose of: (1) evaluating and specifying trends in the methodological and thematic aspects of this domain; (2) consolidating and revealing the status of extant knowledge (3) pinpointing research gaps; (4) proposing future research directions. Accordingly, this review aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the existing online COO effect literature by examining research designs, scope, sampling and data collection methods, data analysis techniques, and thematic areas. It seeks to assess the current state of the field, identify research gaps, and suggest directions for future studies.

This study contributes to the marketing literature by offering an organized and comprehensive analysis of the existing empirical research focusing on the online COO literature. Additionally, the outcomes of this research obtain a structured and recent knowledge about literature, also emphasizing novel methodologies and themes. Additionally, this study provides insights for future studies in the domain by highlighting the existing research gaps and proposing strategies for addressing them. In practical terms, the review informs decision-makers and practitioners about the critical role of the COO in online consumer behavior, thereby assisting in the development of informed strategies and decisions in the business and marketing domains.

The remainder of the article is organized as follows: it begins with a brief overview of the impact of the COO on online purchase decision-making. The methodology section details the scope of the review, data collection process, and data analysis procedures. In the sequel, findings,

contributions, and implications of the study are provided, and directions for future research are proposed.

2. BACKGROUND

The first research on COO has been dating back to the 1930s, where it was based on stereotypes and perceptions of nations (Roth and Diamantopoulos, 2009). In the 1960s, a novel perspective was introduced concentrating on the relationship between the country of origin of a product and its acceptance and success (Dichter, 1962). Some scholars explained it as the geographical location of the company's headquarters (Johansson et al., 1985), or the geographical location of the manufacturing and assembly operations (Han and Terpstra, 1988; Bilkey and Nes, 1982). In broader terms, COO is an extrinsic cue (Olson, 1972), serving to convey product attributes (Steenkamp, 1990), attribute symbolic and emotional meanings to products (Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999), and shape consumers' beliefs, perceptions, and purchasing decisions regarding these products (Bilkey and Nes, 1982). For instance, German cars might be perceived more favorably because of technological developments and the expertise levels in Germany. Consumers associate a country's perceived strength with the required product manufacturing skills (Roth and Romeo, 1992). Personal experiences with foreign countries, mass media, and national biases influence the consumers' evaluation of a foreign product (Obermiller and Spangenberg, 1989; Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999; Fong et al., 2014). A sensation of pride and prestige is conveyed to consumers when they own a product from a particular nation (Hirschman, 1985; Fournier, 1998). For example, in nations such as India, people develop a favorable attitude towards anything associated with Western culture (Batra et al., 2000). From a normative perspective, the consumer may favor or prefer to boycott the nation where the product from the nation's government behaves. Likewise, consumer ethnocentrism is a factor which leads to the increased purchase of home country products (Shimp and Sharma, 1987), on the other hand, consumer animosity is a factor that results in negative perceptions about foreign products (Fong et al., 2014). Therefore, the evaluation of products and brands entails the capacity to pinpoint the categorization of their roots (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos, 2011).

The literature on COO (Heslop et al., 2008; Samiee et al., 2016) explores its use to predict consumer behavior and consists of research directions such as influence on decision-making (Chandrasen and Paliwoda, 2009), promotional activities, and foreign brand stores (Chaney and Gamble, 2008), demographic and psychographic characteristics (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos, 2004), perception towards foreign countries and products (Demirbag et al., 2010; Diamantopoulos et al.,

2011), and finally, the exploration of product-related factors (d'Astous et al., 2008). These areas have been discussed in previous COO research studies.

Consumer behavior and attitude towards buying a product are dissimilar whether it is done physically or online. Offline shopping presents an opportunity to touch, feel, and communicate with the sellers, all of which can lead to the formation of an emotional connection and, therefore, trust (Grewal et al., 2017). Offline shopping is also related to higher levels of impulse buying as influenced by promotions within the physical store and product exposure (Peck and Childers, 2006). In contrast, the online shopping environment provides consumers with the benefits of convenience, anytime and anywhere shopping, and easy access to product information and reviews through the internet, to help them make informed decisions (Chiu et al., 2014; Jiang et al., 2013). Nonetheless, the decision-making process is more complex when it comes to online shopping because of the search and evaluation stage.

Online shopping and e-commerce have become critical, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic (Bhatti et al., 2020). Thus, to understand the online buying behavior of individuals and industrial buyers, varied studies have emerged. For instance, internet adoption (Varma Citrin et al., 2000), perceived usefulness and convenience (Varma Citrin et al., 2000; Jiang and Rosenbloom, 2005), prior experiences (Brown et al., 2003), perceived risk (Bhatnagar et al., 2000), and trust level (Kim, 2012) product type (Brown et al., 2003), cultural values, and norms (Park and Jun, 2003), consumer demographics (Zaffene and Cheek, 1993; Teo, 2001), design and atmospherics of online shopping channel (Ganguly et al., 2010; Koo and Ju, 2010), e-WOM activities (Fong and Burton, 2008; Schuckert et al., 2019; Zhu and Zhang, 2010), and country image, brand image, and country of origin (Mody et al., 2017).

Industrial buying behavior is influenced by the complexity of the buying process, including decision-makers, negotiation time, and suppliers (Doyle et al., 1979). E-procurement, facilitated by digital marketing, has become standard, enhancing efficiency and cost-effectiveness (Pandey et al., 2020; Büyüközkan and Göçer, 2018). Companies benefit from global visibility through online channels, enhancing local and foreign brand presence (Levitt, 1983; Zhou et al., 2007).

Today, e-commerce and digital marketing tools are commonly preferred by businesses, thus they require a deeper understanding (Ramkumar and Ellie Jin, 2019). Despite the changing marketplace dynamics, both individual and industrial buyers seem to continue to utilize COO as a cue to guide their beliefs, product evaluations, and purchase intentions (Hui and Zhou, 2002; Ghalandari and Norouzi, 2012). The impact of COO cues on buyer behavior varies significantly between

traditional and online settings. In traditional settings, factors such as product quality, intrinsic and extrinsic cues, and cultural aspects heavily influence consumer decisions. Studies have shown that COO plays a critical role in product evaluation and purchase intention, as consumers often use COO as a heuristic to gauge product quality, especially in international marketing contexts (Insch and McBride, 2004; Liu and Du, 2019). In online settings, however, the landscape is more complex due to the increased availability and accessibility of information through digital platforms. These contextual cues in the online shopping environment, such as website feedback mechanisms and product reviews, impact consumers' product evaluation and purchase intentions. Bao et al. (2021) revealed that in addition to the contextual cues reflecting the global product image, country image also influences foreign consumers' acceptance of products and their subsequent purchase decisions in digital environments. In this regard, COO cues used in online channels attract the attention of researchers and marketers. Hence, the online COO effect has gained momentum in recent times, warranting further research. Thus, this paper aims to review current studies and propose future research directions.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study aims to conduct a scoping review focusing on the field of online COO literature to identify available studies, examine the existing body of knowledge, and provide a future research agenda (Munn et al., 2018). In that way, it is aimed to take an overview of online COO effect and map the extent body of literature (Pham et al., 2014). Accordingly, the scoping review steps proposed by Arksey and O'Malley (2005) are followed while identifying and synthesizing the existing literature on online COO. As the first step, specific research queries were formulated to investigate the employed research designs, the breadth of literature coverage, methodologies for sampling, data collection, and analysis, as well as the prevalent themes and concepts addressed within the online COO literature. The overarching research question is "What is the status of extant research on COO within an online setting?". In this regard, the authors defined the specific research questions of the study as follows: (1) Which research designs have been used? (2) What is the scope of research within the relevant literature? (3) What is the nature of sampling, data collection, and data analysis procedures? (4) Which themes and concepts have been tackled in the COO literature within online settings?

Following Arksey and O'Malley's (2005) recommendations, the second step involved identifying relevant studies; thus, the searching strategy was developed. The data were collected from Scopus due to its

emphasis on high-impact publications. Notably, all but one of the retrieved articles (Huo et al., 2017) were also indexed in the Web of Science.

This study identified relevant literature by utilizing keywords of “country image”, “country of origin”, “country-of-origin”, “brand origin” and “online”, “internet”, “electronic”, “e-commerce”, “e-retailing”, “e-tailing”, “online purchasing”, “online purchase”, “online purchase decision making”, “online purchase decision-making”, “online shopping”. Moreover, search results were confined to abstracts, titles, or keywords. Parameters were set to include documents in the "Business, Management & Accounting" discipline, categorized as "Article," and published in English, without temporal restrictions. A total of 271 articles published until 03.07.2025 were identified as a result.

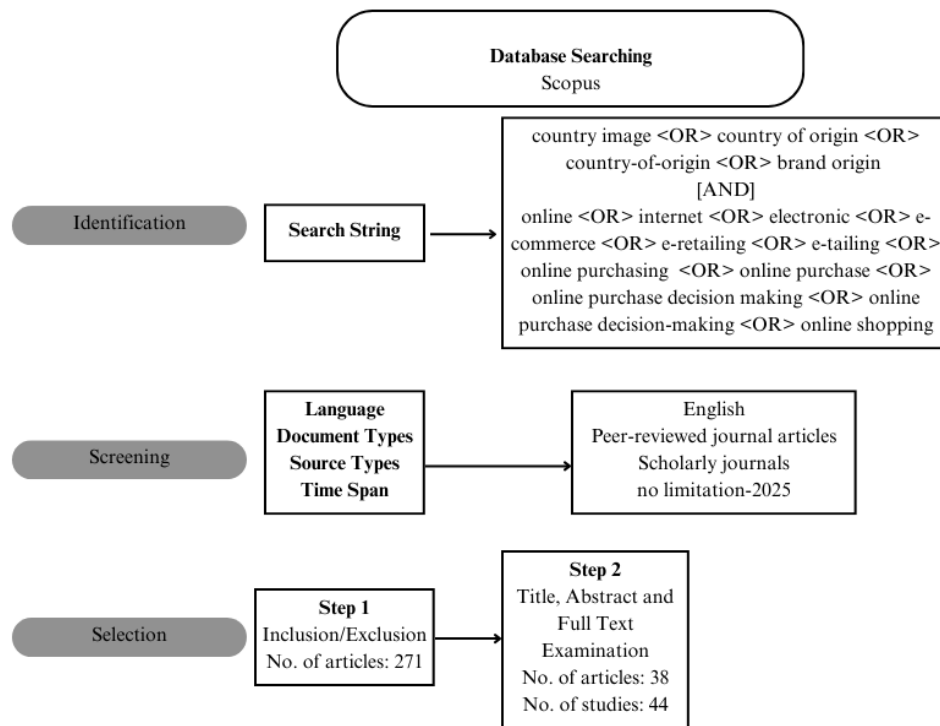


Figure 1: Selection Protocol

Source: Authors' own elaboration

Subsequent to the identification of articles, the third step involved subjecting the collected literature to a stringent assessment, adhering to predefined inclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria were: (a) having been published in a journal listed in the 2024 Academic Journal Guide of the Chartered Association of Business Schools (CABS), (b) focusing

exclusively on COO within an online context, and (c) having an empirical article format.

The quality criteria were used as the first step of the inclusion/exclusion decision. Thus, 72 articles were excluded at the end of the quality assessment. One of the studies was duplicated among the results, and it was also removed. Two of the studies were excluded because they were inaccessible, and one was excluded because it was an abstract article published as a summary of a doctoral dissertation. As a result, 195 studies have been started to analyze.

The studies related to consumer COO, domestic COO, travelers COO, user COO, and destination COO were excluded. Ultimately, a final sample of 44 studies within 38 articles was deemed eligible for inclusion. Cross-referencing did not change the final sample. Since the oldest article published within this field and aligning with the scope of this review study dates back to 2006, it can be stated that this review encompasses the analysis of 38 articles published between 2006 and 2025. Among those 38 articles, some of them (e.g., Hu and Wang, 2010; Moriuchi, 2021; Yu et al., 2022) have multiple studies, thus the final sample has 44 studies.

In the fourth step, selected studies were chartered. In the fifth step, data extraction from the selected articles ensued. Employing content analysis, the researchers identified codes and conducted assessments across four principal categories: research design, scope of research, methodologies for sampling, data collection and analysis, and research topics. For categories related to research design, scope, and methodologies, the coding frame from Aykol and Leonidou (2018) was adapted. Additionally, thematic analysis identified and categorized examined topics and concepts. While identifying and categorizing the research topics, researchers approached qualitative study analysis and followed content analysis steps. In this regard, in the first step, 38 articles were read independently by researchers, and possible research topics were determined. In the second step, the researchers came together and checked and discussed the possible research topic pools. In the third step, researchers reached a consensus about the final version of the research topics. In the following step, the coding procedure was conducted, and each article was evaluated whether that specific research topic did have or not (1=exist, 0=do not exist). In the final step, based on coding results, similar research topics were grouped, and the group names were determined. While the content analysis steps were followed and reached to end, data were systematically recorded and subsequently subjected to descriptive analyses, with the outcomes presented in the ensuing section through tables and detailed explanations.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Research Design

The formulation of problem statements in research predominantly followed a formalized approach, with hypotheses incorporated in 37 out of the 44 studies (e.g., Butt et al., 2022; Van Esch et al., 2018; Mody et al., 2017), as shown in Table I. Conversely, only 7 of the studies (e.g., Chiang and Yang, 2018; Hadjikhani et al., 2011; Huo et al., 2017) were exploratory. Most research on online COO phenomena employed a structured approach, testing specific predictions, while a smaller portion adopted an exploratory perspective. Given the distinct nature of online versus offline domains and the relative novelty of online consumption experiences, prioritizing exploratory studies in future research may yield valuable insights.

Methodologically, 40 studies (e.g., Huang et al., 2022; Moriuchi, 2021; Shin et al., 2012) utilized statistical approaches, primarily relying on secondary data and online surveys. Case studies accounted for only 4 out of 44 studies (e.g., Aichner and Shaltoni, 2018; Hadjikhani et al., 2011; Hu and Checchinato, 2015). While statistical methods effectively identify patterns and correlations, methodological diversification (e.g., experimental design, neuroscientific methods, focus groups) could enhance understanding of the phenomena.

Regarding study design, 28 out of 44 studies employed a cross-sectional approach (e.g., Brand and Baier, 2022; Schuckert et al., 2019; Wandarley et al., 2008), collecting data at a single point in time, while 16 studies adopted a longitudinal design (e.g., Bhattacharya et al., 2022a; Higueta and Remaud, 2023; Kim et al., 2018), utilizing secondary data sources for a dynamic perspective on COO effects. This balance provides both snapshot views and longitudinal insights.

Furthermore, the majority of the studies (41 out of 44 studies) (e.g., Hu and Wang, 2010; Lehdonvirta et al., 2019; Ruparel et al., 2010) established causal relationships, employing statistical techniques for validation, whereas only 3 studies (e.g., Aichner and Shaltoni, 2018; Fong and Burton, 2006; Johansson et al., 2018) were descriptive, primarily within exploratory research.

Table 1: Research Design of Articles on Online COO Effect

Research design	Number of Articles
Problem crystallization	
Exploratory	7
Formalized	37
Topical scope	
Statistical	40
Case study	4
Time dimension	
Cross-sectional	28
Longitudinal	16
Variable association	
Descriptive	3
Causal	41

Source: Authors' own elaboration

4.2. Scope of Research

The 30 out of the 44 studies focused on a single country (e.g., Bhattacharya et al., 2022b; Chiang and Yang, 2018; Yu et al., 2022) (see Table II), limiting geographic scope and generalizability. Only 5 studies examined two countries (e.g., Fong and Burton, 2006; Zhao et al., 2019), while 8 studies examined three or more (e.g., Hu and Wang, 2010; Won et al., 2023). Additionally, 74 out of 44 studies did not clearly mention the study locations, as a negative outcome for reliability and comparability of the studies (e.g., Lehdonvirta et al., 2019; Reuber and Fischer, 2011; Stamolampros et al., 2020). This underscores the need for cross-national studies with greater transparency.

Geographically, most of the research concentrates on Asia (e.g., Butt et al., 2022; Moriuchi, 2021), North America (e.g., Schuckert et al., 2019; Yu et al., 2022), with 21 studies, and Europe (e.g., Hadjikhani et al., 2011; Higuert and Remaud, 2023) with 15 studies. However, some regions like Oceania, Latin America, and Africa remain underrepresented. In addition to them, some of the studies, whether they mention the location of the studies or not, also have some inconsistencies while reporting the COO of sellers, respondents, and objects (e.g., Ghorbanzadeh and Shabbir, 2023; Kim et al., 2018; Huang et al., 2022). Given variations in ethnocentrism,

institutional and cultural distance, and industry familiarity, future research must enhance geographic coverage and render COO reporting transparent.

Consumer goods are predominantly researched in 32 out of 44 studies (e.g., Ghorbanzadeh and Shabbir, 2023; Johansson et al., 2018), i.e., wine, digital items, and automobiles (e.g., Fong and Burton, 2006; Higuert and Remaud, 2023). Nevertheless, services like software development, internet retailing, and accommodation (e.g., Lehdonvirta et al., 2019; Ruparelia et al., 2010) and industrial goods (e.g., Wandarley et al., 2008) get limited consideration. Given the expanding extent of internet-based buying, future research must examine industrial purchasing and service transactions to determine the full impact of COO across industries.

With regard to units of analysis, 27 out of 44 studies focus on consumers (e.g., Sun et al., 2021; Zimand-Sheiner et al., 2020), while 6 studies examine online interactions (e.g., Kim et al., 2018; Stamolampros et al., 2020). Consumer-generated content is important in shaping COO perceptions. In addition, 7 of the studies evaluate transactional factors like price, shipping costs, and product features (e.g., Chiang and Yang, 2018; Hu and Baldin, 2018). It necessitates a more systemic approach, intertwining consumer attitudes with transactional relationships for an understanding of the depth of COO effects.

Table 2: Scope of Research in Articles on Online COO Effect

Scope of research	Number of Articles	Scope of research	Number of Articles
Countries involved		Seller COO	
One	30	North America	15
Two	5	Europe	8
Three or more	8	Asia	21
Not available	4	Oceania	2
Focus region		Latin America	1
North America	17	Africa	2
Europe	9	Not available	22
Asia	30	Respondent COO	
Oceania	4	North America	8
Latin America	1	Europe	2
Africa	1	Asia	17
Not available	4	Oceania	2
Product emphasis		Latin America	0
Consumer	32	Africa	0
Industrial	1	Not available	19
Services	11	Object COO	
Not available	7	North America	9

Unit of analysis		Europe	11
Customer Generated Online Content	6	Asia	17
Service provider/Firm	3	Oceania	3
Transaction record	7	Latin America	3
Customer	27	Africa	1
Other	1	Not available	22

Source: Authors' own elaboration

4.3. Research Methodology

4.3.1 Sampling and Data Collection

This review identified key strengths and weaknesses in sampling and data collection. Among the strengths, non-probability sampling methods dominated with 10 studies (e.g., Ghorbanzadeh and Shabbir, 2023; Mody et al., 2017; Ramkumar and Ellie Jin, 2019), reflecting a practical approach to online data collection. Researchers also engaged diverse key informants (e.g., customers, experts, sellers) to capture multiple perspectives. Furthermore, the widespread use of secondary data sources (e.g., Hu and Baldin, 2018; Huo et al., 2017; Won et al., 2023), including online reviews and transaction records, highlights recognition of digital footprints' richness. Sample sizes varied, with most studies (100–499 participants) (e.g., Li et al., 2024; Butt et al., 2022; Hu and Wang, 2010) (Table III).

However, notable transparency issues emerged. The 29 out of 44 studies did not specify their sampling method (e.g., Chiang and Yang, 2018; Zhao et al., 2019; Zimand-Sheiner et al., 2020), and 11 studies failed to report response rates, raising concerns about reliability and validity (e.g., Bhattacharya et al., 2022a; Van Esch et al., 2018; Ghorbanzadeh and Shabbir, 2023). Additionally, key informant profiles in 16 studies and response rates in 19 studies were not reported or were deemed irrelevant due to reliance on secondary data (e.g., Fong and Burton, 2008; Higuert and Remaud, 2023; Lehdonvirta et al., 2019; Johansson et al., 2018; Schuckert et al., 2019). Future research should enhance transparency, clearly report response rates, and adopt innovative data collection methods integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches.

Table 3: Sampling and Data Collection Procedures in Articles on Online COO Effect

Sampling/Data Collection Procedures	Number of Articles
Sampling design	
Whole population	0
Probability sample	5
Non-probability sample	10
Not available	29
Data collection	
Online survey	15
Offline survey	3
Personal Interview	4
Experiment	6
Other (telephone, focus group, observation and etc.)	3
Secondary data	19
Sample size	
99 or less	4
100–249	15
250–499	14
500 –999	4
1000 or more	9
Not available	2
Response rate	
19 or less	2
20–29	0
30–39	0
40 or more	8
Not applicable	19
Not available	11
Key informant	
Consumer	25
Experts	3
Seller	1
Not applicable	16

Source: Authors' own elaboration

4.3.2 Data Analysis

Common method bias was addressed in only 4 studies (Ghorbanzadeh and Shabbir, 2023; Moriuchi, 2021; Zimand-Sheiner et al., 2020). Construct reliability was examined in 19 studies, and validity was

addressed in 21 studies (e.g., Mody et al., 2017; Ramkumar and Ellie Jin, 2019; Sun et al., 2021), with 16 out of the 44 studies calculating Cronbach's alpha. However, studies using secondary data rarely assessed reliability and validity (e.g., Chiang and Yang, 2018; Fong and Burton, 2008; Schuckert et al., 2019), whereas primary data studies did (e.g., Mody et al., 2017; Sun et al., 2021). Notably, no study examined non-response or key informant bias.

Survey-based data collection was used in total 18 out of 44 studies (e.g., Aichner and Shaltoni, 2018; Bhattacharya et al., 2022b; Moriuchi, 2021), and multivariate statistical techniques were the most employed analysis method in 35 out of 44 studies (e.g., Butt et al., 2022; Huang et al., 2022; Nguyen et al., 2025). Less common methods included qualitative analysis (4 studies) (e.g., Hu and Checchinato, 2015; Johansson et al., 2018; Lehdonvirta et al., 2019), descriptive analysis (3 studies) (e.g., Aichner and Shaltoni, 2018; Fong and Burton, 2008; Higuert and Remaud, 2023), univariate/bivariate analysis (2 studies) (e.g., Van Esch et al., 2018; Fong and Burton, 2006), and modeling (2 studies) (e.g., Chiang and Yang, 2018; Zhao et al., 2019). Table IV summarizes the employed data analysis techniques.

Table 4: Employed Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis	Number of Articles
Controlling for bias	
Non-response bias	0
Key informant bias	0
Common method bias	4
Construct evaluation	
Cronbach's alpha	16
Reliability	19
Validity	21
Not applicable	7
Not available	17
Statistical technique	
Descriptive	3
Uni/Bivariate	2
Multivariate	35
Modeling	2
Qualitative	4

Source: Authors' own elaboration

4.4. Research Topics

The identified studies were categorized into eight thematic areas: foreign online consumer behavior, customer reaction, firm outcomes, brand, online marketing strategies, country image/country-of-origin (COO) perception, online platform characteristics, and others. The related themes are summarized below.

4.4.1. Foreign Online Consumer Behavior

Foreign online consumer behavior emerged as a key research focus, covering the majority of the identified themes. Sub-themes include customer evaluations, purchase intention, and attitude (Table V). COO and perceived risk in Internet marketing directly influence customer evaluations, with COO and country of delivery (CDO) effects mediated by perceived risk (Shin et al., 2012). COO also impacts online customer evaluations of luxury accommodation services, with international brands receiving more positive e-reviews due to superior facility and service quality (Schuckert et al., 2019). Even within a single country, spatial heterogeneity in online evaluations of foreign brands persists despite similar COO effects across neighboring regions (Kim et al., 2018). Cultural orientation influences online evaluations of domestic brands, reinforcing domestic bias (Stamolampros et al., 2020). In China, nationalism enhances positive online evaluations of domestic brands by increasing their perceived social value, surpassing patriotism in impact (Yu et al., 2022).

Although Ghorbanzadeh and Shabbir (2023) found no correlation between country-of-origin image (COI) and product attitude, other studies highlight COO's influence on attitudes. Consumers with neutral attitudes toward renowned foreign brands prefer high- and low-involvement products from reputable countries, with COI enhancing this preference (Brand and Baier, 2022). Ethical attitudes toward online native advertising (NA) are also moderated by COO (Zimand-Sheiner et al., 2020). COO cues and sellers' online reputation shape consumer attitudes, with negative COO signals harming perceptions of both sellers and intermediaries, while positive cues enhance purchase intentions (Moriuchi, 2021).

COO significantly impacts product attitudes and purchase intentions in Internet marketing, with perceived risk acting as a mediator. Even as an extrinsic cue, CDO negatively influences online perceived risk (Shin et al., 2012). Perceived risk further moderates the relationship between negatively stereotyped COO signals and customers' online reputational evaluations (Reuber and Fisher, 2011). Additionally, an online retailer's COO influences consumers' privacy perceptions (Bhattacharya et al., 2022b), with demographic differences shaping privacy concerns—young

consumers prioritize product availability, whereas adults focus on security (Hadjikhani et al., 2011). Trust in developed-country e-shopping companies enhances adoption in developing countries (Butt et al., 2022). Customer engagement in e-shopping shows minimal variation between domestic and foreign brands (Huang et al., 2019), while positive electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) strengthens consumer ethnocentrism for domestic brands but weakens it for foreign brands (Sun et al., 2021).

COO information use varies between online and offline retail environments. Online, it is referenced less frequently, with brand image and quality taking precedence (Hu and Checchinato, 2015). However, COO information enhances product satisfaction and the overall shopping experience by informing product descriptions and reviews (Esch et al., 2018). Adult consumers rely more on COO knowledge for trust compared to younger shoppers (Hadjikhani et al., 2011).

Online purchase intention is influenced by multiple factors. COO effects on purchase intention are mediated by perceived risk (Shin et al., 2012), while trust and satisfaction also play key roles (Bhattacharya et al., 2022a). Positive perceptions of e-retailers boost purchase intention (Bhattacharya et al., 2022b). COO is also relevant for disabled consumers, influencing perceived quality, security, and reliability (Aichner and Shaltoni, 2018). Perceived value in international online outshopping (IOO) depends on trust, transaction utility, and product uniqueness, with country image moderating these relationships (Ramkumar and Ellie Jin, 2019). Lastly, alignment between international brand personalities and consumer traits enhances purchase likelihood (Chiang and Yang, 2018).

4.4.2. Customer Reaction

Customer reactions such as e-WOM, loyalty, and satisfaction are shaped by the COO in online environments. In China, e-WOM discussions reflect national animosity toward certain COOs, independent of product quality (Fong and Burton, 2008). Both positive and negative e-WOM influence consumer ethnocentrism and brand equity across brand origins (Sun et al., 2021). However, in the case of vaccine brands during the pandemic, the COO had no effect on consumer attitudes despite e-WOM's role (Ghorbanzadeh and Shabbir, 2023).

The COO also influences brand image, which in turn shapes customer loyalty (Mody et al., 2017). For certain products like wine, COO has a stronger impact on online customer loyalty compared to brick-and-mortar stores (Higuete and Remaud, 2020). Additionally, management response strategies to negative reviews are more effective in improving satisfaction for domestic service providers than for international ones (Schuckert et al., 2019). In online retailing, trust in foreign-origin retailers

(FOOR) and customer service quality are key drivers of satisfaction, which in turn boosts purchase intention (Bhattacharya et al., 2022a).

4.4.3. Firm Outcomes

COO influences firm outcomes, including sales performance, reputation, customer lifetime value, and transaction volume. Strong online reputations are built through positive reviews and high ratings, while firms must manage negative e-WOM effectively (Schuckert et al., 2019). Reputation signals help consumers assess unfamiliar brands and sellers (Reuber and Fischer, 2011).

COO also affects sales performance, as seen in online wine sales in China (Hu and Baldin, 2018). Perceptions of product quality and trustworthiness, shaped by the COO, influence cross-border e-commerce markets (Huo et al., 2017). Moreover, user-generated content reflects COO effects, shaping brand perceptions and market dynamics over time (Won et al., 2023). Enhancing a country's image can positively impact transaction volume (Zhao et al., 2019). Additionally, international brand personalities linked to COO traits align with customer traits, enhancing loyalty and purchase behavior (Chiang and Yang, 2018).

Table 5: Research Topics of Reviewed Articles

Research Topic	Number of Articles	Research Topic	Number of Articles
Foreign Online Consumer Behavior	37	Other	8
Purchase intention	8	Online COO in B2B	2
Country of origin information use	6	Source credibility	2
Customer evaluation	6	Geographic distance	1
Attitude	5	International online outshopping (IOO)	1
Patriotism/Nationalism	2	Product satisfaction	1
Consumer online perceived risks	2	Market structure perception	1
Consumer privacy	2	Firm Outcomes	4
Customer adoption	1	Sales performance	3
Customer engagement	1	Firm reputation	2
Consumer ethnocentrism	1	Customer lifetime value	1
Consumer personality traits	1	Transaction quantity	1
Consumer perceived value	1	Online Platform Characteristics	6
Product involvement	1	E-tailer reputation	4
Customer Reaction	9	Perceived usefulness	1
e-WOM	5	Perceived ease of use	1

Customer loyalty	2	Brand	6
Customer satisfaction	2	Brand trust	3
Country Image/Country-of-Origin Perception	5	Brand positioning	1
Product-Country Image (PCI)	3	Brand equity	1
Country of delivery origin (CDO)	1	Brand perception	1
Country of ownership (COOW)	1	Online Marketing Strategies	6
Ethical country image	1	Pricing strategies	4
Country reputation	1	Promotional strategies	2
COO personality trait	1		

Source: Authors' own elaboration

5. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The scoping review of the influence of online COO effect on online purchase decisions produces several key recommendations for practitioners, firms, and marketers. It is necessary to understand the influence of online COO effect on consumer attitudes and buying behavior. The online COO concept can be employed as a quality cue, which influences brand association and perceived value. Marketers need to integrate the COO into marketing and branding activities, utilizing only positive characteristics of the product's origin to enhance company image and induce consumer purchase. The alignment of marketing communications with the cultural meaning of the COO enhances the effectiveness of the strategy. Notification of consumers about a product's origin via labeling and communications instills trust, particularly in electronic commerce, where there is no physical contact with the product.

The online COO concept usage in branding enables companies to position products according to their country of origin's positive attributes. Emphasizing certain characteristics, like German engineering or Italian style, can further distinguish products. It is critical, however, to ensure the authenticity of COO claims to prevent erosion of consumer trust and brand reputation. Positive attitudes toward the online COO effect can lead to brand loyalty, particularly in competitive online environments.

There must be regular market research to gauge consumer perceptions of various COOs in order to tailor marketing efforts appropriately. COO research also indicates promising markets and possibilities for growth. Marketing communications need to resonate with the target market, with web-based technologies being used to target those who are particularly influenced by COO cues. Content marketing also focuses on the unique history and narrative surrounding the country of origin of the product, adding value to the online COO of the product.

Other tactics involve optimizing e-commerce site design for COO emphasis, i.e., on photos and films, and using consumer reviews for credibility building. It is crucial to take cultural diversity in COO perceptions into account and align marketing efforts accordingly to represent the local values. Activating local opinion leaders can also validate the customer's perspective of origin authenticity.

By incorporating these tactics, companies can use COO to impact consumer attitudes and attain a competitive advantage in the international marketplace. This inclusive strategy guarantees that the COO takes center stage in formulating efficient marketing strategies. Conversely, highlighting positive elements of the COO can enhance global brand image and trust. Open communication, quality controls, and good brand storytelling mitigate negative COO effects, especially for markets such as China. Offering competitive pricing, clear COO details, and enhancing customer awareness also enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty in global online markets.

6. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this research contribute to both theoretical frameworks and practical applications in international marketing and business. By highlighting the central role of online COO cues, the study underscores their critical implications and emphasizes the importance of evaluating and synthesizing existing knowledge to gain insights into complex phenomena.

Findings of this study highlight the significant role of online purchase decision-making within the online COO context. The reviewed literature points out that decision-making processes are significantly affected by COO cues through mechanisms such as perceived risk, trust, satisfaction, and attitude formation. Additionally, the literature highlights that these constructs mediate the impact of COO on consumers' intentions and behaviors in online purchasing environments. Understanding the complex nature of online purchase decision-making can deepen our understanding of consumers' responses to various cues in digital marketplaces. Accordingly, it may support the integration of decision-making theories with COO frameworks. This highlights an important area for further theoretical development and empirical exploration.

This study is subject to several limitations, many of which stem from the constraints observed in the sources it draws upon. Firstly, the geographic distribution of the reviewed studies is highly concentrated in specific regions, raising concerns regarding the generalizability of the findings to other cultural and regional contexts. Similarly, a

methodological imbalance was observed, as many studies favored certain statistical techniques over others, thereby compromising methodological heterogeneity. Moreover, transparency in sampling procedures and the reporting of response rates was often lacking, which calls into question the reliability and validity of the included studies.

In addition to these externally derived limitations, the paper itself is not without its own weaknesses. While these may not constitute limitations in the strict methodological sense, they do reflect areas where the research could be strengthened. Accordingly, future research could replicate this study using a broader range of databases, incorporating multiple languages and diverse publication types to enhance robustness and comprehensiveness. Although both COO and online consumer behavior have received significant attention, this review reveals that the relationship between these areas is still in its early stages. Therefore, collaboration among institutions, scholars, and international businesses is essential for expanding our understanding. Such cooperation can be fostered through seminars, conferences, and workshops, benefiting scholars with research agendas and practitioners with practical applications. Editors and research groups can also guide efforts towards underexplored areas within the online COO effect-consumer behavior nexus. Encouraging graduate research on new aspects of the online COO effect, as outlined in our review, can advance the field. Furthermore, interdisciplinary collaboration with economics, psychology, and sociology would enhance multi-level and multi-faceted research.

7. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

A comprehensive review was conducted to consider the current condition of COO research in virtual settings and identify potential future lines of research. Several potential lines of inquiry hold the potential to enrich our understanding of online COO literature. Firstly, combining qualitative and quantitative research methods alongside neuroscientific strategies can be more revealing. In addition, cross-cultural examination and research within under-researched communities has the potential to uncover cultural differences and enhance diversity. Precise definitions of COO variables and examination of various units can enhance precision and provide a full picture. Finally, keeping an eye on methodological strictness and exploring unexamined variables can assist us in better comprehending the role of the COO in online purchasing decisions.

7.1. Methodological Expansion

Mixing qualitative and quantitative methods can broaden the range of insights. For instance, qualitative interview data and quantitative surveys or customer-generated content can test the impact of COO cues (e.g., country reputation, product origin) on perceptions and purchase intentions. Experimental designs can test cause-and-effect relationships between COO cues and consumer responses in web-based contexts. Neuroscientific methods, like fMRI, can reveal implicit responses and emotional reactions to COO cues, such as trust and purchase decision-making.

7.2. Cross-Cultural Design and Geographical Expansion

Investigating cultural variations in COO effects can reveal differences in the significance of COO cues. For example, comparing Western and Eastern consumers can shed light on the cultural values' moderating role. Expanding research into underrepresented regions, such as Oceania, Latin America, and Africa, will contribute to a more globally inclusive knowledge base. Researchers can explore COO communication strategies, national stereotypes, and government policies' influence on online consumer behavior across regions.

7.3. Definition of COO Variables

Clear definitions of COO variables will improve precision, facilitate cross-study comparisons, and support meta-analyses, allowing more accurate assessments of COO's influence on consumer perceptions.

7.4. Varied Units of Analysis

While much of the literature focuses on consumer goods, online services, and industrial transactions also warrant attention. Future studies can explore how COO cues affect trust, quality, and purchase intentions in service industries (e.g., online banking) and industrial sectors (e.g., B2B platforms). Investigating the COO's role in brand positioning, market entry, and policy analysis will provide a more comprehensive perspective on its impact across different sectors, such as fashion, electronics, and food.

7.5. Enhancing Methodological Rigor

Providing detailed information about the sample population, sampling techniques, and response rates will improve study transparency and reliability. Incentives and reminders can help increase response rates and reduce biases.

7.6. Exploration of Untapped Variables

Future research should examine how underexplored factors—such as consumer and COO personality traits, emotional responses, cultural symbolism, and sensory modalities—interact with online purchase decision-making to deepen our understanding of online COO dynamics.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

CONTRIBUTION RATE	EXPLANATION	CONTRIBUTORS
Idea	Pointing out the research idea or forming hypotheses	Author 1
Review of Literature	Conducting the literature review	Authors 1 & 2
Research Design	Forming research methodology	Author 1
Data Collection and Editing	Data collection, editing, and analyzing	Authors 1 & 2
Findings and Discussion	Reporting and discussing the findings	Authors 1 & 2

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest between the authors in the study.

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*Those articles were evaluated in the scoping review.