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## Post-Travel Consumption

### – Country-of-Origin Effects of International Travel Experiences

Consumers sometimes take the country of origin of a product into account in purchase situations. The main purpose of the present thesis is to contribute to the country-of-origin research by increasing the knowledge of the impact of international travel experiences on consumers' attitudes towards sojourn countries, and consumers' attitudes, intentions, and consumption-related behaviours regarding products from those countries. The thesis has two sub-purposes: (i) to develop and test a research model in order to measure the impact of international travel experiences on consumers' attitudes towards sojourn countries, and consumers' attitudes, intentions, and consumption-related behaviours regarding products from those countries, and (ii) to describe changes in, and relationships between, attitudes, intentions to purchase, and behaviours due to international travel experiences, funded on results originating from the tests of the model.

Based on a qualitative pilot-study and an extensive review of the country-of-origin literature, the travel and tourism literature, attitude theory, and consumer behaviour within marketing, a first version of the model was developed. Ten hypotheses were deduced starting from the variables and the hypothesized relationships between them. The research model was tested using a quasi-experimental design, single group pre- and post-test design. The sample consisted of international travellers (international students) who filled in a questionnaire in their home countries before and after a sojourn abroad. The mail survey resulted in 730 usable pre- and post-sojourn questionnaires.

By means of exploratory factor analyses, five country-related and seven product-related factors were identified and validated. Among the country-related factors, three factors that concerned international travel, not discussed in previous research, were identified, viz. *touristic attractiveness*, *hospitality*, and *lifestyle/country attractiveness*. After the sojourn, the respondents' attitudes had become more negative regarding all product-related factors, except a factor labelled *likeability*. The results of the survey also revealed that in spite of the more negative attitudes, the respondents behaved more positively towards the products from the sojourn countries, which indicates that consumers' positive feelings about products can override negative beliefs.

The main theoretical contribution was a research model including ten hypotheses, and the results of the tests of the hypotheses. Furthermore, three counterpart dimensions concerning the country- and product-related factors were identified due to their significant relationships. These counterparts were an important contribution to the country-of-origin literature. Also, the survey showed significant relationships between attitudes towards countries and products, which implies that it is of great interest for countries to receive and treat international travellers in a satisfying way, so that they will become more positive towards the products of the sojourn countries as well.

*Key words:* international travel, experiences, country-of-origin effects, product-country images, country image, international tourism, consumer behaviour, attitudes, attitude change, experimental designs, attitude scale development, causality