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A Study on the Impact of Perceived Characteristics on Purchase Intention towards Collaboration Products between Foreign Brands and China Chic IPs

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: In recent years, with the continuous development of the China Chic economy, an increasing number of foreign brands have partnered with China Chic intellectual property (IP) to introduce collaborative products. Although collaboration products between foreign brands and China Chic IPs have been consistently introduced, there is still a limited amount of research focusing on these products. This empirical study aims to investigate the factors that influence consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions towards foreign brands and China Chic IPs collaboration products.

Design/methodology/approach: This study is based on the conceptual model of factors that determine behavioral intentions to buy co-branded products constructed by Helmig et al. (2007) to verify the effects of perceived brand localness, perceived product innovativeness, perceived fit, and perceived psychological distance on consumer attitudes towards the foreign brand - China Chic IP collaboration products. This study is based on Helmig et al.'s (2007) conceptual model, which examines the factors that determine consumers' behavioral intention to purchase co-branded products. Combined with the research context this study verifies the effects of perceived brand localness, perceived product innovativeness, perceived fit and perceived psychological distance on consumer attitudes towards foreign brands and China Chic IPs collaboration products are examined and verified. The relationships among these variables were assessed through the Structural Equation Model and the SPSS macro process model.

Findings: The results indicate that consumer attitudes are positively influenced by perceived product innovativeness and perceived brand localness. On the other hand, perceived psychological distance has a negative impact on attitudes. However, the impact of perceived fit on attitudes has not been conclusively determined. Furthermore, consumer ethnocentrism moderates the relationship between perceived brand localness and attitudes, displaying a negative effect. Lastly, the analysis reveals a positive association between attitudes and purchase intentions for foreign brands and China Chic IPs collaboration products.

Research limitations/implications: This study demonstrates that the marketing strategy of collaborating with China Chic IP has a positive impact on Chinese consumers' attitudes towards such collaboration products and their willingness to make purchases. This collaborative strategy serves as a catalyst for stimulating consumers' buying behavior and enhancing the market presence of foreign brands in China. However, this study does have limitations, including the absence of a specific focus on a particular product category and not including variables related to consumers' attitudes towards foreign brands and the country of origin.

Originality/value: This study contributes to the research of brand and cultural collaboration strategies. From a marketing perspective, it provides insights on how foreign brands can enhance their collaboration strategy with China Chic IPs in a more systematic and efficient manner.

Keywords: China Chic IPs, collaboration products, perceived brand localness, perceived product innovativeness, perceived psychological distance

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I. Introduction

The utilization of brand collaboration has garnered considerable attention as a prominent marketing strategy, enabling companies to expand their presence in unexplored consumer markets, enhance their brand reputation, and uphold their brand image. This approach, which prioritizes the needs and preferences of consumers, facilitates a seamless integration of diverse brand resources, ultimately resulting in increased value. Through partnerships with peers or cross-border brands from different industries, brands have effectively achieved favorable marketing outcomes.

The collaboration of intellectual properties (IPs) serves as a vehicle to introduce a product that amplifies the inherent value of both IPs. As evidenced by the '2020 Tmall Double 11 Shopping Festival IP E-Commerce Index Report,' the sales growth rate of IP-licensed goods during the Double 11 period in 2020 reached an impressive 76%. Not only has there been an increase in the number of IP-licensed products, merchants, and purchasers, but IP products have also witnessed a steady rise in popularity and recognition among consumers. A survey conducted by iMedia Consulting in 2022 unveiled that 63.3% of Chinese consumers exhibited a heightened inclination to purchase co-branded daily essentials. Moreover, in 2021, cartoon animation accounted for the largest proportion (28.2%) of IP categories in the Chinese brand licensing market, followed by art and culture at 18.5%.

In scholarly discussions, there is no standard definition for the term "China Chic." However, if we were to interpret it based on its literal meaning, it encompasses the fusion of "national culture" and "trend fashion." In recent years, China Chic has gained substantial momentum and widespread popularity. This is evident in a search data report released by Baidu in 2021, which highlights a remarkable surge of 528% in the search popularity for content related to the China Chic trend compared to 2011. Foreign brands are actively pursuing collaborations with China Chic IPs to augment their presence and growth

in the Chinese market. This innovative co-branding strategy has garnered significant interest from Chinese consumers. A notable example is the successful partnership between Oreo and the Palace Museum, which has contributed to their expanded market penetration in China. The products resulting from this collaboration sold an impressive 760,000 packs on the day of their release, while the brand acquired 260,000 new followers within a single day. This outstanding achievement has led to a year-on-year sales increase of over 30%, underscoring the influential impact of China Chic IPs in driving consumer engagement and sales for foreign brands.

Previously, there has been limited research on the topic of China Chic IP in scholarly literature. However, in recent years, a few studies have emerged in this area. For instance, Oh, H. J (2022) conducted a comprehensive analysis on the growing popularity of China Chic IPs. The study focuses on the collaboration between China Chic IPs and traditional Chinese brands, highlighting the effectiveness of partnering with China Chic IPs as a brand marketing strategy through case study methodology. However, the study primarily focused on the collaborative between China Chic IPs and domestic Chinese brands, overlooking its potential collaboration impacts with foreign brands; Huang, Y. Y. & Koo, J. J (2022) explored the factors influencing the purchasing decisions of millennial female consumers regarding China Chic cosmetic brands. However, this study was limited to specific product categories and consumer group; X. Chen & Xu(2022) investigated the relationship between content marketing and consumer brand loyalty of 'New-China-Chic' brands through questionnaires distributed to fan groups of various brands and offline stores. It is important to note that the fundamental nature of "New Chinese Fashion" brands remains inherently Chinese. Therefore, previous research seems to have overlooked the impact of cooperation between China Chic IPs and foreign brands. Chinese consumers naturally tend to embrace products resulting from collaborations between Chinese brands and China Chic IPs, which significantly impacts positive marketing outcomes in the Chinese market.

However, there has been a lack of in-depth research on how Chinese consumers perceive and behave regarding the purchase of products resulting from collaborations between foreign brands and China Chic IPs. While previous research on co-branded collaborative products has primarily focused on collaborations between brands (Bluemelhuber et al., 2007; DelVecchio & Smith, 2005; Helmig et al., 2007; Simonin & Ruth, 1998), recent studies have expanded their scope to include collaborations between brands and artists (Baumgarth, 2018; Jiaru & Kim, 2020; Polfuß, 2021). Additionally, there has been a case study conducted on collaborations between luxury brands and cultural (Radón, 2012). In a systematic review by Pinello et al. (2022), they analyzed 190 papers on co-branding alliances and identified nine types of co-branding, with co-branding in the arts representing a mere 0.05% of the total. With the rise of globalization and brand marketing, collaborations involving intellectual properties (IPs) have gained popularity in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Notable examples include Converse's partnership with Pokémon, Uniqlo's collaboration with artist KAWS, Coca-Cola's alliance with Stranger Things, and Hermès' joint venture with photographer Hiroshi Sugimoto. Although brands continuously combine with cross-cultural artistic IPs to create unique products or experiences, limited research have applied the theory of brand co-branding to the collaborative products between brands and arts and culture IPs that have become common and popular in recent years. Helmig et al. (2007) introduced the purchase intention variable based on the Simonin/Ruth model to comprehensively examine consumers' attitudes and purchasing tendencies toward brand alliances. However, it is important to note that this conceptual model is not entirely applicable to the study of purchase intentions for collaborations between brands and cultural artistic IPs. Art and cultural IP licensing ranks second in share within the vast Chinese market, making it crucial to investigate the key factors influencing Chinese consumers' purchasing behavior of this particular type of collaborative product. Therefore, this study aims to investigate collaborative activities that specifically

focus on the influence of collaboration products between foreign brands and China Chic IPs on purchase intentions.

The objective of this study is to examine the factors that influence consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions towards collaboration products between foreign brands and China Chic IPs. The specific aims of this study are as follows: firstly, to verify the impact of perceived brand localness, perceived product innovativeness, perceived fit, and perceived psychological distance on consumers' attitude towards the China Chic IP collaboration product, based on the model of factors that determine behavioral intentions to buy co-branded products constructed by Helmig et al. (2007); secondly, to investigate whether consumer ethnocentrism moderates the effect of perceived brand localness on attitude towards such collaboration products; thirdly, to validate the path model that demonstrates the influence of consumers' attitudes towards collaboration products on purchase intentions through their perceptions of the product characteristics. Therefore, this study aims to address the existing gaps in research gaps the study of brand and culture, through optimizing collaborations with China Chic IP, augmenting consumer awareness, and fostering a heightened consumer perception. Furthermore, these variables holistically encompass consumer attitudes and purchase intentions towards collaborative brand products, as well as the nuances of cross-cultural integration and the strategic positioning of the brand within the competitive market landscape. These variables are crucial in understanding the current market dynamics and potentially function as pivotal determinants of success within this product category. The study aims to provide valuable insights and strategic directions for foreign brands in selecting collaborative IPs, thereby facilitating the production of collaboration products. By offering valuable insights and practical implications, this study intends to guide foreign brands in enhancing consumer engagement and promoting the purchase of such collaboration products.

II. Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

A. Perceived Product Innovativeness

Perceived product innovativeness refers to the extent to which consumers believe that a new product possesses distinctive and original characteristics compared to other products within the same category (Fu et al., 2008; Y. Wu et al., 2004). Danneels & Kleinschmidt (2001) defined consumer perceived product innovativeness as the extent to which consumers perceive the value of the product's innovation, the risk associated with its use, and the degree to which consumers can alter their existing behavior patterns. According to Lafferty & Goldsmith (2004), consumers' perception of product innovativeness has a positive relationship with their intention to purchase. Additionally, Sorescu & Spanjol (2008) conducted a study on over 20,000 new products in the consumer packaged goods industry and found a positive correlation between innovation and a firm's financial performance. In a comprehensive study conducted by T.-K. Lee et al. (2016), it was substantiated that the implementation of marketing innovation endeavors significantly enhances marketing performance among a sample of 2,149 manufacturing companies in Korea. These findings highlight the significance of perceived product innovativeness in influencing consumer behavior and its potential impact on a company's success.

In 2018, a new era of China Chic emerged, marked by the collaborative efforts of numerous Chinese fashion brands during the "China Day" event at New York Fashion Week. This event showcased the fusion of traditional Chinese elements with contemporary fashion, resulting in unique and captivating apparel designs that garnered worldwide attention. The cooperation between foreign brands and China Chic IPs has been increasing in recent years, representing a relatively new type of collaboration. The importance of innovation in modern market competition is evident, as it signifies a brand's leading position and competitiveness. Drawing on the research background and prior studies, hypothesis H1 is proposed:

H1: Perceived product innovativeness positively influences consumer attitude towards collaboration products between foreign brands and China Chic IPs.

B. Cultural IP Co-branding and Perceived Fit

In a research conducted by Johnsson (2012), it was found that the emergence of a new cultural IP co-branding phenomenon can be attributed to the co-branding practices within the European museum culture industry. Initially, there was a surge in traditional cultural, artistic, and religious IP co-branding, which gained popularity alongside the rise of pop culture IP co-branding in the United States. Similarly, the cultural IP co-branding trend in China can be traced back to the market expansion efforts of the museum cultural industry. The extensive development of cultural and creative products by the Palace Museum played a significant role in the growth of cultural IP co-branding and the China Chic trend in China (Liu, S. L., 2018).

Within the realm of consumer goods, China Chic IPs refer to a specific category of intellectual property that draws inspiration from Chinese traditional culture, historical traditions, folk elements, cultural symbols, and styles. These elements are then incorporated into various consumer goods through innovative design processes and technological advancements. China Chic IPs serve as a medium for spreading cultural self-confidence and culture of quality. They evoke a strong sense of belonging and align with the aesthetic values of the Chinese populace. Moreover, compared to other Chinese IPs, China Chic IPs often embody profound historical and traditional values, carrying the tradition and spirit of Chinese culture. They also cater to the preferences of the younger Chinese audience through creative designs that align with their individuality, fashion sense, and desire for enjoyable consumer products. Although there may be a discernible disparity in the global prominence of China Chic IPs compared to some other well-recognized IPs, they possess an unparalleled allure

and potential for growth in the market due to their unique characteristic of embodying the quintessence of Chinese culture within the realm of intellectual property.

Oreo, as a prime example of successful collaboration between an international brand and China Chic IP, has launched six new royal-flavors that were created in collaboration with Beijing's Forbidden City, formally known as the Palace Museum (Figures 1-3).



Figure 1. Collaboration products between Oreo and the Palace Museum



Figure 2. Collaboration products between Oreo and the Palace Museum



Figure 3. Collaboration products between Oreo and the Palace Museum

These flavors include 'Green Tea Cake,' 'Red Bean Cake,' and 'Hawthorn Berries,' as well as 'Lychee-Rose Cake,' which was said to be a favorite of the Qing emperor Kangxi. Consumers can buy the full assortment in a two-tiered box - which resembles the packaging of traditional Chinese pastries, such as moon cakes - incorporating the Forbidden City's treasured painting 'The Twelve Beauties' into its design. They can also choose to purchase single-flavor boxes or gift sets that come with a special-edition Oreo Music Box, a cardboard record player that plays traditional Chinese music when consumers place an Oreo cookie on top. This collaboration conveys Oreo's recognition of Chinese traditional culture, inspires people's resonance of cultural confidence, and thus spreads the innovative new products of Chinese and western culture.

China Chic IP co-branding marketing represents a novel form of crossover co-branding, targeting consumer segments that may be challenging to reach through conventional co-branding strategies. To start with, these collaborations amalgamate the design principles and fashion trends of foreign brands with the quintessence of Chinese traditional culture, art, and history, resulting in the creation of singular products imbued with transcultural traits. Secondly, this collaboration involves a convergence and fusion of design and creativity between the participating entities, giving rise to a fresh perspective on Chinese culture and fashion through distinctively innovative designs. This fusion stimulates innovation, leading to the development of imaginative and novel products. Additionally, this collaborative endeavor contributes to the dissemination of Chinese cultural values, historical significance, and unique allure. Through these products, individuals acquire enhanced insights into and perceptions of China's history, traditions, and fashion evolution, thereby amplifying the international influence of China Chic IPs. Furthermore, foreign brands can expand their brand influence and attract new audiences by partnering with China Chic IPs. The exceptional appeal of China Chic IPs can assist foreign brands in further penetrating the Chinese market while also garnering international attention

towards China Chic IPs. These facets render the collaboration between foreign brands and China Chic IPs a unique phenomenon within the industry, yielding co-branded products with profound cultural connotations and global impact.

Although collaboration between foreign brands and China Chic IP is a relatively recent phenomenon, previous research on co-branding provides valuable theoretical foundations for studying the collaboration between foreign brands and China Chic IP products. The co-branding attitude evaluation model developed by Simonin & Ruth (1998) is widely utilized as the primary theoretical framework in co-branding product research. In contrast, Helmig et al. (2007) proposed a new theoretical framework that incorporates the variable of purchase intention. This model provides a theoretical foundation for examining the relationship between attitudes towards brand collaboration and consumers' purchase intentions. Furthermore, Helmig's research validates the model by demonstrating that consumers' attitudes towards co-branding account for 70% of their purchase intentions. Among the factors that influence consumers' attitudes towards co-branding, perceived fit has the most substantial impact. Numerous previous studies have indicated that perceived fit affects brand extension cognition, trust, brand attitude and evaluation, as well as consumer behavior, including purchase intention. Simonin & Ruth (1998) highlighted the strong and positive correlation between consumers' familiarity with the original brand and the collaborating brand, and their joint evaluations. Washburn et al. (2000) that when consumers hold a positive attitude towards a brand's products, this positive attitude extends to co-brands and collaborator brands when they are consistently associated with the brand. DelVecchio & Smith (2005) emphasized the importance of perceived fit in enhancing positive value for consumers and reducing the likelihood of negative outcomes when purchasing co-branded products or services. In summary, perceived fit plays a critical role in shaping consumers' attitudes towards collaboration products, and a higher perceived fit leads to a more favorable evaluation of such products. This study specifically

focuses on collaboration products between foreign brands and China Chic IP, which represent the collision and intermingling of two cultures. Consequently, it is anticipated that perceived fit will exert a significant influence on attitudes towards this particular type of collaboration product. Building upon this, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H2: Perceived fit positively influences consumer attitudes towards collaboration products between foreign brands and China Chic IPs.

C. Perceived Psychological Distance

The concept of psychological distance was initially introduced by psychologist Bullough, and its application in the field of business marketing began in 1956 (Beckerman, 1956). Prior to that, research on psychological distance in the first half of the 20th century primarily focused on aesthetics. Beckman's research emphasized that the length of psychological distance is influenced by various factors such as the amount of information obtained, gaps in perceptions regarding the current state of the industry, decision-makers' or employees' personal and educational experiences, and the influence of transnational business culture. These factors contribute to the expansion of psychological distance and influence decision-making processes. While Beckman's research expanded the concept of psychological distance to the business domain but still focused only on the firm level and did not pay attention to the impact of psychological distance on consumers (Dow, 2000). Studies conducted by Phipps (1979) and Coshall (1985) revealed that physical distance accounts for approximately 44% to 73% of the variability in psychological distance variables. Therefore, clothing retail stores located closer to consumers will be closer to them in terms of psychological distance than more distant retail stores, thus positively influencing consumers' purchasing behavior.

Construal level theory, rooted in social psychology, provides insights into the intricate relationship between psychological distance and the extent to

which individuals engage in abstract or concrete thinking (Liberman & Trope, 1998; Trope & Liberman, 2003). Changes in construal level can induce shifts in consumer mindset (Liberman & Trope, 1998), preferences (Basoglu & Yoo, 2015), choices (Kim, K. H. et al., 2013), and self-concept (Kivetz & Tyler, 2007). Empirical evidence from Trope & Liberman (2010)'s research empirically demonstrates the bidirectional impact of explanatory hierarchy and psychological distance, emphasizing that marketing behaviors influence both factors, ultimately shaping consumer attitudes and specific behaviors. A study by Vries et al. (2020) using food brands as an example, confirms that significant local brand positioning strategies, which diminish psychological distance, result in reduced levels of explanation compared to significant global brand positioning strategies. These disparities in the level of explanation significantly impact consumer behavior and purchase impulses. By strategically partnering with China Chic IP, it becomes feasible to skillfully manipulate and diminish consumer construal levels through familiar design elements that deeply resonate with the target consumer. Consequently, this contributes to a decrease in consumer psychological distance, subsequently influencing their attitudes. Therefore, hypothesis 3 is proposed:

H3: Perceived psychological distance negatively influences consumer attitudes towards collaboration products between foreign brands and China Chic IPs.

D. Perceived Brand Localness and Consumer Ethnocentrism

Despite the increasing influence of globalization, local culture continues to play a significant role in shaping consumer behavior and personal identity (EM Steenkamp et al., 2003). Consumers tend to identify more with local lifestyles, attitudes, and behaviors rather than global ones (Alden et al., 2006). The concept of perceived brand localness refers to the extent to which a brand is seen as relevant to the

local country and actively participating in its consumer culture (Swoboda et al., 2012). When a brand is perceived as embodying the local culture, it may gain a competitive advantage in terms of cultural resources (EM Steenkamp et al., 2003), as it is better aligned with local consumer preferences (Dimofte et al., 2008). This positive impact of brand localness on brand attitudes is particularly significant not only in developed countries but also in emerging markets like China and India (Özsomer, 2012). X. Chen & Lee, (2021) focused on cultural heritage tourism, proposing that practitioners can incorporate local innovative designs and employ local handicraft skills when developing tourist souvenirs, thereby strengthen regional cultural characteristics. Collaborating with China Chic IP to launch products is expected to enhance foreign brands' perceived localness among consumers. Previous research suggests that this heightened perception of localness is likely to have a positive influence on consumer attitudes and subsequently increase purchase intentions. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Perceived brand localness positively influences consumer attitudes towards collaboration products between foreign brands and China Chic IPs.

The concept of consumer ethnocentrism can be traced back to the concept of ethnocentrism in the realm of social psychology. Initially introduced by Sumner in 1906, ethnocentrism refers to the psychological tendency of individuals to view their specific group as the center of everything around them exaggerating the superiority of their own group while holding negative attitudes towards people from other groups (Sumner, 1940). Building upon this foundation, Shimp & Sharma (1987) extended the concept to consumer behavior and defined consumer ethnocentrism as "the beliefs held by consumers about the appropriateness, and even the morality, of purchasing foreign-made products". Their study suggests that consumers' preference for domestic products and rejection of imported products are influenced by consumer ethnocentrism when faced with choices between domestic and imported goods. One of the

most notable contributions of this study is the creation of a systematic measure known as the Consumer Ethnocentrism (CET) Scale, which assesses the extent to which consumers display ethnocentric tendencies. The CET Scale has been found to have a strong negative correlation with the likelihood of purchasing foreign products, while exhibiting a positive correlation with the inclination to purchase domestic products. Netemeyer et al., (1991) applied the CET Scale to various consumer markets in both Eastern and Western countries, demonstrating its reliability and internal consistency across cultures with diverse historical backgrounds. These findings highlight the broad applicability of the study's results in cross-cultural settings. Oh et al., (2020) conducted a survey on a sample of 220 general Korean consumers and demonstrated that the levels of ethnocentrism do affect consumers' perceptions of the quality of imported services. In a study conducted by J. Wu et al.(2010), it was found that tradition culture significantly influences Chinese consumers. The research findings indicated that consumers with higher levels of consumer ethnocentrism are more inclined to choose domestic products over foreign alternatives when faced with a choice between the two. It is hypothesized that consumers with lower levels of ethnocentrism, in comparison to those with higher levels, may perceive a higher degree of brand localization when presented with collaboration products between a foreign brand and China Chic IP. As a result, their attitude towards such collaboration products may

become more positive. Based on this, hypothesis 5 is formulated:

H5: Consumer ethnocentrism negatively moderates the effect of perceived brand localness on attitudes towards collaboration products between foreign brands and China Chic IPs.

E. Attitude Towards Foreign brand-China Chic IP collaboration Product and Purchase Intention

According to the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), the individual's overall attitude towards an object plays a significant role in determining their intention to engage in a behavior towards that object(Ajzen, 1980). Purchase intention, serving as a crucial indicator, is used to measure an individual's inclination to engage in a specific behavior related to a product. This measure holds considerable importance for marketers(Berkowitz, 1987) as it can forecast an individual's actual behavior, predict an individual's actual behavior, including purchasing and product usage. A recent scholarly investigation conducted on the Chinese hotel industry revealed that the attitude of customers towards utilizing Self-Service Technologies (SSTs) exerted a substantial influence on their behavioral intention to employ such technologies (Yang et al., 2021). According to TRA, it is established that positive attitudes towards a product are positively associated with higher purchase intentions, whereas

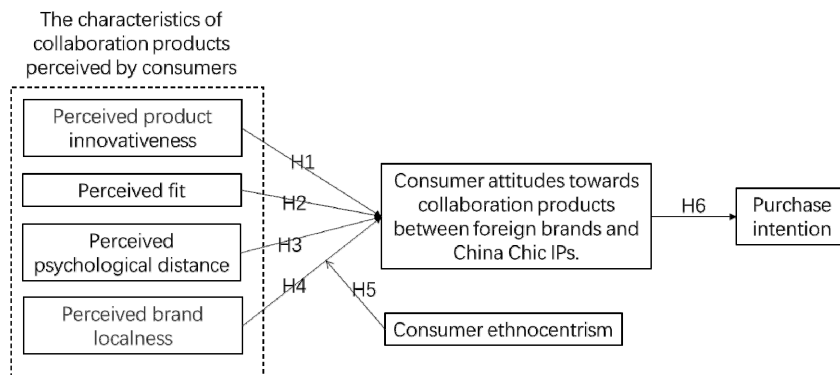


Figure 3. Research Model

negative attitudes towards a product are associated with lower purchase intentions. Based on this, hypothesis H6 is proposed:

H6: Consumers' attitudes towards collaboration products between foreign brands and China Chic IPs positively influence their willingness to purchase these products.

The proposed model in Figure 3 illustrates the objectives and hypotheses in the given framework.

III. Research Methodology

A. Measures

The scales employed in this investigation were carefully chosen from well-established and validated scales that have been documented in previous pertinent scholarly works. Some minor adjustments were made to terminologies to ensure their suitability within the specific research framework. Nonetheless, the core essence and intention of the items were preserved. A comprehensive summary of the items utilized in this study, along with their respective sources, can be found in Table 1. All items were

Table 1. Questionnaire Items

Constructs	Item	Reference
Perceived Product Innovativeness	The collaboration products of foreign brands and China Chic IP are novel.	Stock, R. M., & Zacharias, N. A. (2013)
	The collaboration products of foreign brands and China Chic IP are inventive.	
	The collaboration products of foreign brands and China Chic IP differ significantly in terms of their newness from existing products/services of competitors.	
	The collaboration products of foreign brands and China Chic IP are exceptional.	
	The collaboration products of foreign brands and China Chic IP are not predictable.	
Perceived fit	There is a good fit between foreign brands and China Chic IP.	DelVecchio, D., & Smith, D. C. (2005)
	It is logical for foreign brands to cooperate with China Chic IP.	
	It is appropriate for foreign brands to cooperate with China Chic IP.	
Perceived psychological distance	Cooperating with China Chic IP reduces the distance between me and foreign brands.	Xue, J., Liang, X., Xie, T., & Wang, H. (2020)
	Cooperating with China Chic IP brings my heart closer to foreign brands.	
	Cooperating with China Chic IP reduces my strangeness toward foreign brands.	
Perceived brand localness	I associate this collaboration products of foreign brands and China Chic IP with things that are "Chinese."	EM Steenkamp, J. B., Batra, R., & Alden, D. L. (2003)
	To me, this collaboration products of foreign brands and China Chic IP represents what "China" is about.	
	To me, this collaboration products of foreign brands and China Chic IP is a very good symbol of "China."	
Consumer Ethnocentrism	Chinese products, first, last, and foremost.	Klein, J. G., Ettenson, R., & Morris, M. D. (1998)
	Purchasing foreign-made products is un-Chinese.	
	It is not right to purchase foreign products, because it puts Chinese out of jobs.	
	We should purchase products manufactured in China instead of letting other countries get rich off of us.	
	We should buy from foreign countries only those products that we cannot obtain within our own country.	
Attitude	Chinese consumers who purchase products made in other countries are responsible for putting their fellow Chinese out of work.	Seltene, M., & Brunel, O. (2008)
	I like the collaboration products of foreign brands and China Chic IP.	
	I appreciate the collaboration products of foreign brands and China Chic IP.	
Purchase intention	I am positive about the collaboration products of foreign brands and China Chic IP.	Helmig, B., Huber, J. A., & Leeftang, P. (2007)
	It is very likely that I will buy the collaboration products of foreign brands and China Chic IP.	
	If the collaboration products of foreign brands and China Chic IP will be launched, I will buy the collaboration product the next time I need that kind of product type.	
	I will definitely try the collaboration products of foreign brands and China Chic IP.	

measured using a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from "1 = strongly disagree" to "7 = strongly agree".

B. Sample and Data Collection

To ensure participant anonymity and overcome limitations related to time and location, this study utilized an online survey as the data collection method. The survey specifically targeted Chinese consumers who possess knowledge about collaborative products. In order to maintain participant anonymity and overcome constraints related to time and location, this study employed an online survey as the data collection method. The survey specifically targeted

Chinese consumers who are knowledgeable about the collaborative products. To maintain the integrity of the data and prevent duplicate responses, participants were restricted to submitting their responses only once. Data collection took place from May 19, 2023, to June 2, 2023, resulting in a total of 386 questionnaires being collected. After excluding questionnaires with missing values or low reliability, a dataset of 363 questionnaires was used for the final analysis. The demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Characteristic	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	177	48.8
	Female	186	51.2
Age	<20	33	9.1
	20-30	95	26.2
	30-40	115	31.7
	40-50	46	12.7
	50-60	48	13.2
	>60	26	7.2
Education	Junior Middle school and below	54	14.9
	High school	82	22.6
	College	57	15.7
	University degree	118	32.5
	Graduate degree	41	11.3
	Doctoral degree	11	3.0
Occupation	Student	65	17.9
	Employee	140	38.6
	Civil servant	53	14.6
	Self-employed	31	8.5
	Freelance	59	16.3
	Others	15	4.1
Incomes (RMB)	<2000	47	12.9
	2000-3999	108	29.8
	4000-5999	127	35.0
	6000-7999	40	11.0
	>8000	41	11.3

IV. Data Analysis and Results

A. Participant Characteristics

In this study, a frequency analysis was conducted on 363 valid questionnaires to analyze the characteristics of the survey respondents. Out of the 363 participants, 51.2% were women. In terms of age, 57.9% were young adults aged 20-40. Additionally, 32.5% of the participants held a bachelor's degree, 17.9% were students, and 38.6% were employed by companies. The majority of participants' income fell within the range of 2,000 RMB to 5,999 RMB, accounting for 64.8%. Table 2 shows the detailed overview of the

demographic characteristics of the respondents.

B. Reliability and Validity of the Measurement

In this study, the reliability and validity of the collected questionnaire data were assessed using SPSS 28.0 software and Amos 24.0 software. The reliability of the measurements was evaluated using Cronbach's α , composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE).

Initially, exploratory factor analysis was conducted using SPSS 28.0, and the findings, as presented in Table 3, indicated that all items exhibited Cronbach's

Table 3. Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis

Construct	Measured Variable	Component							Cronbach's alpha
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Consumer Ethnocentrism	CE3	0.867							0.934
	CE4	0.853							
	CE6	0.844							
	CE5	0.841							
	CE2	0.840							
	CE1	0.776							
Perceived Product Innovativeness	PPI1		0.831						0.929
	PPI2		0.817						
	PPI5		0.816						
	PPI3		0.814						
	PPI4		0.764						
Perceived Brand Localness	PBL2			0.815					0.902
	PBL3			0.812					
	PBL1			0.789					
Perceived Fit	PF2				0.830				0.908
	PF3				0.800				
	PF1				0.787				
Purchase Intention	PI3					0.800			0.908
	PI1					0.802			
	PI2					0.801			
Perceived Psychological Distance	PPD2						0.798		0.884
	PPD1						0.776		
	PPD3						0.772		
Attitude	AT2							0.796	0.992
	AT1							0.789	
	AT3							0.782	
Eigenvalue		11.512	3.196	1.711	1.398	1.242	1.102	1.004	

alpha values greater than 0.8. Additionally, each construct demonstrated Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.6, indicating a high level of internal consistency.

Next, confirmatory factor analysis was conducted using AMOS 24.0 to validate the convergent validity and discriminant validity of the measurement items. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Conceptual Reliability (ICR: Internal Consistency Reliability) were calculated. The results, presented in Table 4, indicated that the AVE values ranged from 0.7036 to 0.8001, surpassing the threshold value of 0.50.

Additionally, the Construct Reliability (CR) values ranged from 0.8874 to 0.9343, exceeding the threshold value of 0.70. These findings suggest that the convergent validity was achieved. The fit indices of the confirmatory factor analysis results are also presented in Table 4. In this study, all of the fit indices, except for AGFI, met the recommended fit criteria, thereby indicating the appropriateness of the validated factor analysis model.

In order to evaluate the discriminant validity among the variables, the Pearson's correlation coefficient values obtained from the correlation matrix analysis

Table 4. Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Construct	Measured Variable	Standardization Coefficient	AVE	CR
Perceived Product Innovativeness	PPI1	0.919	0.7247	0.9293
	PPI2	0.839		
	PPI3	0.841		
	PPI4	0.820		
	PPI5	0.834		
Perceived Fit	PF1	0.938	0.7672	0.9079
	PF2	0.829		
	PF3	0.857		
Perceived Psychological Distance	PPD1	0.917	0.7251	0.8874
	PPD2	0.795		
	PPD3	0.838		
Perceived Brand Localness	PBL1	0.932	0.7566	0.9029
	PBL2	0.845		
	PBL3	0.829		
Attitude	AT1	0.947	0.8001	0.9230
	AT2	0.874		
	AT3	0.860		
Purchase Intention	PI1	0.950	0.7718	0.9100
	PI2	0.835		
	PI3	0.846		
Consumer Ethnocentrism	CE1	0.794	0.7036	0.9344
	CE2	0.841		
	CE3	0.873		
	CE4	0.844		
	CE5	0.825		
	CE6	0.854		
Model-fit indices	χ²/df =1.770, p=0.000, GFI:0.904, AGFI:0.878, IFI:0.973, CFI:0.973, TLI:0.968, NFI:0.940, RMSEA:0.046, RFI:0.930, SRMR: 0.0372			

conducted in SPSS were compared with the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) values. As depicted in Table 5, it is apparent that the square root of the AVE values for each construct exceeds the corresponding correlation coefficients with other constructs. This provides confirmation of the discriminant validity, indicating that each construct is distinct from the others.

C. Structural Model

After assessing the measurement model, the structural model was employed to examine the hypothesized relationships depicted in Figure 1. The fit indices of the structural equation model are presented in Table 6. This suggests the overall suitability of the structural equation model in this

study. Additionally, Table 6 provides the standardized path coefficients and p-values for the model in this research. These coefficients represent the strength and direction of the relationships between variables, while the p-values indicate the statistical significance of these relationships.

The results of the analysis support H1 and H4, indicating that perceived product innovativeness ($\beta = 0.267$, $p < 0.05$) and perceived brand localness ($\beta = 0.280$, $p < 0.05$) are positively associated with attitude. Furthermore, the results support H3, showing that perceived psychological distance ($\beta = -0.223$, $p < 0.05$) is negatively associated with attitude. Contrary to H2, the results indicate that Perceived Fit ($\beta = 1.000$, $p > 0.05$) does not have a significant impact on attitude. Finally, H6 is also supported, as attitude has a significant positive effect on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.644$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 5. Correlation Matrix and Discriminant Validity

Factor	Perceived Product Innovativeness	Perceived Fit	Perceived Psychological Distance	Perceived Brand Localness	Attitude	Purchase Intention	Consumer Ethnocentrism
Perceived Product Innovativeness	0.8513						
Perceived Fit	0.521	0.8759					
Perceived Psychological Distance	-0.519	-0.589	0.8515				
Perceived Brand Localness	0.525	0.496	-0.522	0.8698			
Attitude	0.558	0.494	-0.536	0.556	0.8945		
Purchase Intention	0.505	0.524	-0.516	0.514	0.424	0.8785	
Consumer Ethnocentrism	0.333	0.336	-0.350	0.357	0.388	0.570	0.8389

Table 6. Results of Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis	Path relationship	Standardized coefficient	p-value	Result
H2	Perceived Fit \rightarrow Attitude	0.100	0.103	Rejected
H1	Perceived Product Innovativeness \rightarrow Attitude	0.267	0.000	Supported
H3	Perceived Psychological Distance \rightarrow Attitude	-0.223	0.000	Supported
H4	Perceived Brand Localness \rightarrow Attitude	0.280	0.000	Supported
H6	Attitude \rightarrow Purchase Intention	0.644	0.000	Supported
Model-fit indices	$\chi^2/df = 1.709$, GFI: 0.930, AGFI: 0.907, IFI: 0.981, CFI: 0.973, RMSEA: 0.044, NFI: 0.956, RFI: 0.948, SRMR: 0.0648			

Table 7. Moderator Effect Results

	β	S.E.	t	p-value	LLCI	ULCI
constant	5.3896	0.0585	92.0815	0.0000	5.2745	5.5047
Perceived Brand Localness	0.437	0.0494	8.8392	0.0000	0.3398	0.5343
Consumer Ethnocentrism	0.2454	0.0455	5.3911	0.0000	0.1559	0.3349
PBL*CE	-0.1167	0.0317	-3.679	0.0003	-0.1792	-0.0543
R=0.6250, R ² = 0.3907, ΔR^2 =0.0230, F=13.5353						

To test the moderating effect of consumer ethnocentrism on the association between perceived brand localness and attitude, this study used the SPSS macro process model 1 for analyzing the moderating effect. The results, as presented in Table 7, support H5 at a 95% confidence interval. Specifically, consumer ethnocentrism negatively moderates the association between perceived brand localness and attitude.

V. Discussion and Conclusion

This study examines consumer responses to collaborative products between foreign brands and China Chic IPs. The aim is to examine changes in consumer attitudes and provide insights for foreign brands seeking strategic opportunities in the Chinese market. The study confirms several key findings. Specifically, first, as antecedents of attitudes, the positive effects of perceived product innovativeness and perceived brand localness on attitudes have been confirmed, indicating that consumers view innovative products and brands aligned with local culture more favorably. Moreover, the negative effects of perceived psychological distance on attitudes suggest that consumers have a more positive attitude when they perceive less psychological distance between themselves and the collaborative products of foreign brands and China Chic IPs. However, the study did not find evidence to support the effect of perceived fit on attitudes, indicating that the perceived fit between foreign brands and China Chic IPs does not influence consumers' attitudes. Furthermore, the

study examines the impact of attitudes on purchase intention for collaborative products between foreign brands and China Chic IPs. The findings suggest that consumers' positive attitudes towards these collaboration products contribute to a greater intention to purchase. Additionally, the study explores the moderating effect of consumer ethnocentrism on the relationship between perceived brand localness and attitude. The results indicate that consumer ethnocentrism negatively moderates this relationship, implying that consumers with higher levels of ethnocentrism are less influenced by the perceived brand localness when forming their attitudes.

A. Theoretical and Practical Implications

The findings of this study offer interesting insights for scholars regarding collaborative products between foreign brands and China Chic IPs.

First, the study demonstrates that the marketing strategy of collaborating with foreign brands and China Chic IPs has a positive impact on Chinese consumers' attitudes towards such collaboration products and their willingness to make purchases. This collaboration strategy proves to be an effective tool for foreign brands seeking to market their products in China. The research reveals that consumers' attitudes towards collaboration products between foreign brands and China Chic IPs are primarily influenced by the perceived brand localness and psychological distance. Hence, foreign brands already operating in the Chinese market can enhance consumers' perception of brand localness by incorporating traditional Chinese cultural design elements into their

existing products or developing new collaboration products with China Chic IPs. This approach improves consumers' attitudes towards the collaboration products, promoting purchase behavior and increasing the market share of foreign brands in China. For foreign brands aiming to enter the Chinese market, the strategy of collaborating with China Chic IP can significantly enhance consumers' perception of brand localness in collaboration products and reduce the perceived psychological distance between the brand and Chinese consumers. To develop a scientifically and effective collaboration strategy with China Chic IPs, foreign brands can conduct consumer research beforehand and select popular China Chic IPs or those that have not yet been utilized by similar foreign companies as co-branding targets.

Second, as a relatively new approach in the co-branding strategy, the perceived product innovativeness of collaboration products between foreign brands and China Chic IPs has had a significant impact on consumers' attitudes. Perceived brand innovativeness is a positive perception of the brand by consumers, which in turn promotes their willingness to purchase the collaborative products. To enhance consumers' awareness of the innovation in collaboration products, corporations can effectively communicate the innovative features of these products through various channels, capturing consumers' attention and generating interest in such collaboration products.

However, in contrast to previous studies (DeVecchio & Smith, 2005; Helmig et al., 2007; Simonin & Ruth, 1998; Washburn et al., 2000), the present study found that perceived fit did not have a significant impact on attitudes towards collaboration products. We speculate that this finding may be associated with the Uncertainty Avoidance Index, which reflects the extent to which individuals in a culture feel discomfort in unfamiliar or unstructured situations and the degree to which society attempts to control the uncontrollable. In high uncertainty avoidance culture, individual try to reduce uncertainty and prefer future to be predictable, meanwhile in low uncertainty avoidance culture individual are more willingly accept risk and relatively comfortable in

unstructured situations. According to Hofstede(2001), China has a relatively low score of 30, indicating that Chinese consumers are more receptive to embracing unfamiliar and foreign cultures. Han's study further confirms that China's culture of low uncertainty serves as a protective measure to mitigate risk (Han, 2019). As our world becomes more diverse, consumers have the ability to continuously learn about and accept new cultures from around the world. Chinese consumers are open and receptive to unfamiliar foreign brands when encountering collaborations between foreign brands and China Chic IPs. Given this cultural openness, foreign brands should consider integrating Chinese elements into their products to enhance their appeal and attractiveness in the Chinese market. By embracing the merging of foreign and Chinese cultures, foreign brands can effectively engage Chinese consumers and achieve greater success in the Chinese market.

Fourth, the acceptance of foreign products among consumers varies depending on individual characteristics such as gender, age, income, occupation, region, and personal experience. These factors can influence the level of consumer ethnocentrism. This study revealed that consumer ethnocentrism negatively moderates the relationship between perceived brand localness and attitude. Therefore, it is crucial for foreign brands collaborating with China Chic IPs to conduct thorough research on the level of ethnocentrism within different consumer segments across various regions. This will enable the brands to effectively tailor their marketing strategies, including product offerings and advertisements, to cater to the specific needs and preferences of each consumer group. For instance, when targeting consumer segments with strong ethnocentrism, foreign brands should prioritize promoting China Chic IPs while minimizing the emphasis on brand globalization. Conversely, for consumer segments with low ethnocentrism, foreign brands can adopt a more balanced approach by highlighting both foreign elements and China Chic IPs.

B. Limitations and Future Research

This study provides valuable insights into the collaboration between foreign brands and China Chic IPs, but it also has certain limitations that warrant further investigation in future research.

One limitation of this study is the absence of a specific product category focus. Previous research has shown that consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions can vary depending on the type of product when co-branded with other brands, specifically functional and hedonic products a period. In fact, many studies have found that when functional and hedonic products are co-branded with other brands, there are differences in consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions depending on the type of product (Ahn et al., 2020; Jun et al., 2014; Wason & Charlton, 2015). Therefore, future research can conduct empirical research on the cooperation between functional foreign products and hedonic foreign products and China Chic IP and specify the choice of brands, providing more specific insights into brand choices and consumer responses.

Another limitation of this study is the omission of variables such as consumers' attitudes towards specific foreign brands and the countries of origin of these brands. Previous studies have demonstrated that consumers' attitudes towards specific foreign brands, as well as the actual brand country of origin, can significantly influence consumers' evaluations (H.-L. Chen, 2011; J. K. Lee et al., 2013). Therefore, future studies could explore the influence of consumers' attitudes towards specific foreign brands and the countries of origin on their attitudes and purchase intentions towards foreign brands and China Chic IPs collaboration products. By including these variables, a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior in the context of collaboration products can be achieved.

Finally, it is important to note that there is limited existing research on China Chic IPs and collaborations between foreign brands and China Chic IPs and there is a lack of a precise definition and theoretical background for China Chic IPs. This study attempted

to address this gap by identifying variables that may influence attitudes towards collaborations between foreign brands and China Chic IPs based on the literature on co-branding. Furthermore, since previous studies on co-branding predominantly originate from foreign literature, it would be valuable to examine previous research on co-branding in an Asian context, considering the cultural differences that exist between countries.

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