

# A Similarity Contingency Model of Country Stereotypes: Agonistic Emotions and Punitive Intent Following Company Misconduct

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## **Abstract**

We test a novel similarity contingency model of country stereotypes to assess the effects of country stereotypes, perceived country similarity, and their interplay on punitive intent towards a foreign wrong-doing company. Study 1 shows that positive country stereotypes of warmth and competence mitigate punitive intent by diminishing agonistic emotions of contempt, anger, and disgust. Study 2 demonstrates that perceived similarity with a wrong-doing company's country of origin moderates the direct and the indirect effects of country stereotypes on agonistic emotions and punitive intent, such that the higher (lower) the perceived country similarity, the weaker (stronger) the direct and the indirect effects of country stereotypes on agonistic emotions and punitive intent are. The results provide companies with relevant insights into how to counterbalance the negative effects of company misconduct by harmonizing elements of countries' warmth, competence, and perceived country similarity.

**Keywords:** *country stereotypes; perceived country similarity; company misconduct*

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