

Brand endorsement by International Organizations – How valued common heritage can enhance within-group cooperation

Torsten Bornemann

Goethe University Frankfurt

Sophie Feldner

Goethe University Frankfurt - Faculty of Economics and Business Administration -
Marketing Department

Elina Carmen Sanchez Garcia

Goethe University Frankfurt

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Abstract

This research examines countries (superordinate group) encompassing regional entities (subordinate group) with varying superordinate group identification (e.g., Scots in the UK). In such contexts, national identification (the feeling of “WE”) as a driver of cooperative attitudes towards the country is often lacking. Using the concept of collective psychological ownership (“OURS”), we argue that perceptions of jointly owned heritage considered valuable can substitute identification in driving cooperative attitudes. We propose external recognition (i.e., via brand endorsement through UNESCO designation) as an important lever to enhance value of the jointly owned heritage. We empirically test our framework in the UK and show that for Scots with low levels of identification with the UK, perceptions of jointly owning heritage can compensate for a lack of identification in driving cooperative attitudes—but only if the value of such jointly owned heritage is also recognized externally.

Keywords: National Identity, Collective Psychological Ownership, Brand Endorsement

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