

## Private Labels, Product Harm Crises, and Cross-Brand Learning

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## **Abstract**

This paper combines the literature streams on private labels (PL) and product harm crises (PHC) in the context of cross-brand learning. In an experiment, we investigate how a PHC about a PL affects (a) consumer evaluations of the defective product, (b) whether consumer evaluations of a competing retailers' PL, and (c) a national brand within the same product category are affected. We find that the defective PL product suffers from dramatic reductions in attitude, perceived quality, trust, and purchase intent. Furthermore, the PHC of one retailer's PL negatively affects consumer evaluations of other retailers' PL but not the national brand.

**Keywords:** *Private Labels; Product Harm Crisis; Cross Brand Learning*