

Will You Support or Oppose? The Impact of Region-of-Origin Bias on Oppositional Loyalty

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This study analyzed two in-group bias variables (regional identification and ethnocentrism) and examined their rarely explored behavioral differences in triggering in-group support (brand defense) and out-group resistance (oppositional loyalty). Regional animosity was investigated as a moderating variable. Data were collected from 602 food and beverage buyers. Results indicated that both identification and ethnocentrism triggered brand defense, while only ethnocentrism induced oppositional loyalty. Brand defense mediated identification/ethnocentrism relationships with oppositional loyalty. Animosity moderated model relationships with oppositional loyalty. Oppositional loyalty and brand defense are also explored as consequences of place-of-origin constructs, enriching the literature and examining unexplored relationships in this context.

Keywords: in-group identification and ethnocentrism; out-group animosity; brand defense; oppositional loyalty; food and beverage industry

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Introduction

With the impact of globalization and free trade on the current business environment, many international marketing studies have directed their attention toward comprehending the effects market openness has on consumer behavior within local and foreign marketplaces (Fong et al. 2021; Holdershaw and Konopka 2018), acknowledging the importance of a product's origin information in comprehending consumers' biased behaviors toward brands from home or elsewhere (Fernández-Ferrín et al. 2020). The "origin bias" notion, known as the made-in effect, is any positive or negative effect endured by a product's place-of-manufacture on consumer preferences and choices (Wegapitiya and Dissanayake 2018). Discussions on this topic have primarily focused on the international level, where plenty of research has studied the influence of origin bias (e.g., national identity, ethnocentrism, and animosity) in stimulating favorable versus unfavorable purchase decisions and choices (e.g., Fazli-Salehi et al. 2020; Fong et al. 2021; Hoang et al. 2022; Kim and Li 2020).

Another stream of research has paid attention to the topic from a regional perspective, referring to the topic as "place-of-origin" or "region-of-origin" instead of the well-known terminology "country-of-origin," highlighting the fact that group diversity and membership does not only happen on a national scale but could also take place within the same community (i.e., region; Fernández-Ferrín et al. 2020).

Researchers claim that regions within one country should not be treated as homogenous or unified when they comprise citizens of various regional diversities, cultures, languages, history, or ethnic identities (García-Gallego and Chamorro Mera 2016). Thus, ethnocentric variations, regionalism, and animosity, among other factors, can cause in- or out-group preferences or biases, which should be significantly considered when discussing consumer perceptions and attitudes toward brands of different

(regional) origins (e.g., Abdelwahab, San-Martín, and Jiménez 2022; Fernández-Ferrín et al. 2020). The region-of-origin topic has been previously discussed in the German (Ahmed, Hinck, and Felix 2018), Taiwanese (Huang, Lin, and Yen 2015), and Spanish (García-Gallego and Chamorro Mera 2016) regional contexts.

Grounded in social identity theory (Tajfel 1982), this study attempts to understand the mechanism of group membership through regional identification and ethnocentrism. It discusses the differences between the two constructs in triggering supportive behavior toward regional brands (i.e., brand defense) and resistance behavior toward non-regional brands (i.e., oppositional loyalty). To the best of our knowledge, this research is a pioneering work in the field of place-of-origin, as it introduces two variables not extensively studied in marketing (brand defense and oppositional loyalty) to the place-of-origin literature and discusses novel relationships that have not yet been tested. This study deepens the knowledge of both researchers and practitioners regarding the dynamics of the origin bias phenomenon, particularly in a regional setting.

The objectives of this study are thus threefold. First, it examines the impact of regional identification and ethnocentrism in inducing regional brand defense. Second, it highlights the different behavioral paths of regional identification and ethnocentrism by analyzing ethnocentrism's distinct role in generating non-regional brand resistance (i.e., oppositional loyalty). Lastly, this study investigates the moderating impact of regional animosity on the relationship that regional ethnocentrism and brand defense have with oppositional loyalty.

Theoretical background and proposed hypotheses

Region-of-origin bias

Comprehending the origin bias phenomenon from a regional lens is essential to

understand how consumers behave when dealing with brands of the same country but different regions (Fernández-Ferrín et al. 2020). In fact, because regions are more homogeneous than countries, region-of-origin bias might induce a more severe impact on purchase behavior than country-of-origin bias (García-Gallego and Chamorro Mera 2016). Regions are more consistent and have better recognizable in-group features based on territorial attributes and human characteristics than countries (Fernández-Ferrín et al. 2018). Consequently, in- or out-group biases can be much stronger in the regional setting, particularly in countries with highly heterogeneous regions and regional conflicts (García-Gallego and Chamorro Mera 2016).

This study discusses group membership through two distinct origin bias constructs: regional identification and ethnocentrism. Additionally, it employs Tajfel's (1982) social identity theory as the study's theoretical framework. This theory is frequently used in place-of-origin literature (e.g., Fazli-Salehi et al. 2020; Fernández-Ferrín et al. 2020; Fong et al. 2021; Kuo and Hou 2017; Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos 2015). Based on this theory, individuals classify themselves and others according to their membership in a certain group, in which the in-group (i.e., the individual's own group) is favorably perceived, while the out-group (i.e., all other social groups) is viewed as relatively unfavorable or indifferent.

One origin bias variable is in-group identification, which is the feeling of belonging to one's own community (Wang et al. 2018; Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos 2015), whether this community is a country, region, neighborhood, or family. Individuals who strongly identify themselves as members of a certain community often perceive their in-group as a source of pride and a positive addition to their self-concept (Wang et al. 2018). They are also more likely to develop a strong sense of uniqueness and distinctiveness toward their own community as compared to

other groups (Wang et al. 2018). This distinction might consequently result in a higher evaluation (i.e., favorable bias) of local brands with which consumers proudly associate themselves (Huang, Lin, and Yen 2015). This study discusses a favorable bias toward one's home region, referred to as regional identification. Driven by Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos's (2015) definition of national identity, regional identification can be defined as the positive feeling of affiliation and the inner bond that consumers share toward a specific region.

Another origin bias variable discussed in this study is in-group ethnocentrism, which is "the beliefs held by [...] consumers about the appropriateness, indeed morality, of purchasing foreign-made products." (Shimp and Sharma 1987, 280). It can be described as an in-group favorable bias, along with a strong sense of resistance to outsiders (Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos 2015). Highly ethnocentric individuals share not only a preference for the in-group but also a tendency to resist other groups (Wang et al. 2018). Ethnocentric consumers consider it a moral obligation to buy locally, whereas foreign purchases are considered inappropriate acts that may harm the local economy and cause job losses for locals (Vuong and Khanh Giao 2020; Wang et al. 2018). This study specifically highlights the ethnocentrism presented within one community, namely, regional ethnocentrism. Specifically, regional ethnocentrism refers to "the perceived importance of the origin of products from the region where the consumer lives" (Bryła 2019, 4).

In the marketing literature, the two concepts (i.e., identification and ethnocentrism) have mostly been used interchangeably, with no appropriate distinction between the two (Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos 2015). Some studies have tried to highlight the differences by displaying a strong association between ethnocentrism and the moral obligation to buy local, in addition to the inappropriateness

of purchasing foreign products (Fernández-Ferrín et al. 2020; Ulker-Demirel, Yuruk-Kayapinar, and Kayapinar 2021; Wang et al. 2018; Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos 2015). In addition, it highlights the primary orientation of in-group identification to favor in-group and local production, which represents part of consumers' social identity (Verlegh 2007; Wang et al. 2018). Particularly, Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos (2015) described in-group identification as a pro-in-group variable and ethnocentrism as both an anti-out-group and pro-in-group variable.

In the context of this study, the two variables of regional identification and regional ethnocentrism are discussed in an attempt to understand the complexity of the origin bias phenomenon and their distinct impact on consumer behavior, specifically to engage in a regional supportive act versus non-regional resistance behavior.

Regional brand defense

One brand-supportive behavior discussed in this study is regional brand defense. Specifically, brand defense refers to the “consumers’ protective behavior for their favorite brands” (Javed, Roy, and Mansoor 2015, 40). It can be described as a positive view of a brand expressed by members of one community (Ilhan, Kübler, and Pauwels 2018), and it is an extreme form of positive word-of-mouth (Dalman, Buche, and Min 2019), in which consumers actively defend brands they support through positive brand affirmations (Ilhan, Kübler, and Pauwels 2018). This research specifically discusses “regional brand defense,” described as a favorable supportive opinion expressed by regional consumers toward regional brand purchases.

Group membership has long been found to impact (or alter) consumers’ purchase decisions, especially in place-of-origin studies (Abdelwahab, San-Martín, and Jiménez 2022; Ahmed, Hinck, and Felix 2018; Fernández-Ferrín et al. 2020; Kuo and

Hou 2017). Regional identification and ethnocentrism each has a distinct nature and orientation, which this study intends to highlight.

Consistent with social identity theory, consumers who highly identify with their in-group defend their group and domestic brands in the same manner they defend themselves (Sharma et al. 2022). In-group brands are considered part of the consumer's extended self and a source of their pride (Wang et al. 2018). Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos (2015) explained that consumers who highly identify themselves with their in-group show a preference for products from the home origin that highlight the distinctiveness of their group, compared with other groups. In this sense, consumers strongly identified with their region are more likely to stand by their in-group and defend their choice of buying regionally.

Additionally, ethnocentrism is often expressed as in-group protectionism toward the local economy and in-group job opportunities (Aktan and Anjam 2022; Bizumic 2019). Ethnocentric consumers believe it a moral obligation to stand by their in-group, often by supporting local production and defending it against threats to local interests or domestic jobs (Han and Guo 2018). Therefore, based on social identity theory, consumers who demonstrate a strong sense of regional ethnocentrism are likely to act in a defensive manner toward regional brands.

Thus, we propose the following hypotheses:

H1: Regional identification has a positive impact on regional brand defense.

H2: Regional ethnocentrism has a positive impact on regional brand defense.

Oppositional loyalty to non-regional brands

This study also discusses a brand resistance variable, namely, non-regional oppositional loyalty. Oppositional loyalty is described as “a psychological phenomenon observed among members of a brand community who hold negative and opposing views about

rival brands, and even exhibit antagonistic behaviors toward them” (Kuo and Hou 2017, 254). Oppositional loyalty is a relatively novel anti-consumption concept that has been explored in the context of the brand community (Kuo and Hou 2017), gaming (Wright 2016), and sports teams (Olson 2018). It is a barely discussed construct in the marketing literature (e.g., Kuo and Hou 2017; Olson 2018; Zhang and Zheng 2021) and in the social identity theory framework (Liao et al. 2021); nevertheless, none of the studies has been examined in the origin-bias context, despite the variable’s high association with community membership and in- and out-group bias (Djedidi 2016).

Muniz and Hamer (2001) introduced the concept of oppositional loyalty, stating that members of a particular community do not solely define themselves by who they are, but also by who they are not (Kuo and Hou 2017). To rephrase, consumers of a certain community define themselves by what they choose to purchase as well as what they avoid purchasing. Oppositional loyalty can be noticed in consumers’ refusal to buy brands from an out-group, which, in some cases, is manifested in offensive or hostile behavior toward rival out-group brands (Kuo and Hou 2017). Oppositional loyalty has a distinct feature of being an active (not passive) rejection of out-group brands based on the degree of membership in a particular community (Nandy and Sondhi 2020).

Grounded in social identity theory, the literature acknowledges that strong in-group membership (through ethnocentrism, for instance) might increase the likelihood of a consumer holding oppositional loyalty against out-groups (Liao et al. 2021; Wright 2016; Zhang and Zheng 2021). A high association between the consumer and the in-group may direct consumers to act against out-group brands and encourage anti-buying behavior toward such brands, even if these brands provide better quality (Kuo and Hou 2017).

Since group membership is an essential element in the formulation of oppositional loyalty (Djedidi 2016; Liao et al. 2021), ethnocentrism is believed to be the best origin bias variable (examined in this study) that can evoke such behavior, given the fact that ethnocentrism has traits of being anti-out-group (Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos 2015). Ethnocentric consumers believe that it is morally wrong to buy brands from an out-group origin, as it may harm the local economy and cause domestic job losses (Fernández-Ferrín et al. 2020), and consequently avoid products from foreign origins (Acikdilli, Ziemnowicz, and Bahhouth 2018). In contrast, in-group identification is only described as an in-group favorable bias, without any out-group reflection (Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos 2015). Having a preference for local brands does not explicitly mean unfavorability toward out-group brands (Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos 2015). In this sense, this study hypothesizes that ethnocentrism stimulates higher oppositional loyalty toward non-regional brands.

Furthermore, the literature highlights that consumers who actively advocate in-group brands are more likely to develop resistance to foreign brands in the form of oppositional loyalty (Kuo and Feng 2013). Local brand supporters view in-group brands positively and often try to strengthen and promote favorable features about their brands, while rival out-group brands are viewed as inferior, in which consumers tend to express negativity or show resistance toward such brands (Kuo and Hou 2017; Wright 2016). In other words, oppositional loyalty is a subsequent behavior that follows consumers' positive reaction toward in-group brands, as explained by Kuo and Hou (2017). Consumers who support in-group brands may reject out-group brands and hold oppositional loyalty against such brands (Kuo and Feng 2013). This study hypothesizes that consumers who exhibit protective behavior—in the form of ethnocentrism and brand defense—toward their home region and its brands and actively advocate regional

purchases might resist buying non-regional brands and develop oppositional loyalty against such brands.

Therefore, based on the above argument, the following is hypothesized:

H3: Regional ethnocentrism has a positive impact on oppositional loyalty to non-regional brands.

H4: Regional brand defense has a positive impact on oppositional loyalty to non-regional brands.

The moderation effect of regional animosity

As a global concept, consumer animosity can be described as negativity (or even hostility) toward a particular out-group origin, triggered by an outbreak of conflict between two communities (Klein, Ettenson, and Morris 1998). Shimp, Dunn, and Klein (2004) introduced the concept of regional animosity to the marketing literature by investigating the impact of the American Civil War on consumer behavior in the Southern and Northern states. Regional animosity is defined as the “near-hostile feelings among citizens of one nation” (Hinck 2005, 89). Animosity has not been fairly discussed as a moderating variable in place-of-origin literature (Fong, Lee, and Du 2015; Magnusson, Westjohn, and Sirianni 2019). The current study attempts to address this gap by examining the moderating power of regional animosity in the relationship between ethnocentrism and brand defense and oppositional loyalty.

Past research on consumer ethnocentrism has mainly focused on exploring the antecedent and consequent factors affecting the construct, while relatively fewer studies have discussed variables that can moderate the ethnocentrism effect on consumer behavior (e.g., Balabanis and Siamagka 2017; Fernández-Ferrín and Bande-Vilela 2013; Hoang et al. 2022; Lee et al. 2016). For instance, “perceived economic threat” was identified by Sharma, Shimp, and Shin (1995) as a moderating factor that influences the

relationship between ethnocentrism and the attitude toward foreign products. The authors explained that ethnocentrism could have a stronger effect on foreign product purchases when in-group welfare is threatened, as concerns about losing jobs and local opportunities may affect consumers' reactions toward foreign products and cause stronger prejudices against out-group products. Similarly, the presence of a perceived threat (e.g., animosity outbreak) toward the welfare of the home region might strengthen consumers' tendency to resist purchasing non-regional brands, depending on the degree of ethnocentrism toward their own region. This signifies that ethnocentric consumers may strongly feel that buying non-regional brands is a highly immoral act that contradicts their values and show more opposition toward non-regional brands in the presence of strong animosity toward one region.

Furthermore, we believe that consumers who actively support and promote home-region brands (i.e., brand defense), in the condition of holding strong animosity toward a target region, are more likely to feel an urgent need to behave in opposition to out-groups and associated products. This opposition could be executed by refusing to purchase any non-regional brands in an attempt to support home-region brands against threats imposed on the in-group (Wright 2016). Thus, the impact of antecedents (ethnocentrism and brand defense) on oppositional loyalty is expected to be amplified in the presence of strong regional animosity.

H5: The impact of regional ethnocentrism (H5a) and regional brand defense (H5b) on oppositional loyalty to non-regional brands is moderated by regional animosity.

The proposed research model and related hypotheses are presented in Figure 1.

{Insert Figure 1 here }

Research methodology

This study assessed the product categories of food and beverages. A highly competitive market (Meixner and Knoll 2012), with a wide range of options that have little or no differences among them, creates an intense level of competition between alternative brands. In addition, the clues of origin in this specific product category are of great significance for purchase decisions (Fernández-Ferrín et al. 2020; Orth et al. 2020). In our data, the sample included meat (28.4%), milk (28.4%), cheese (15.5%), water (2.5%), fruits and vegetables (6.5%), cereals (5.5%), honey (3.5%), spiritual drinks (8.1%), and others (1.6%).

This study was carried out in the Spanish regional context, in which the region of Castilla y León represented the home region. Meanwhile, Catalonia demonstrated an animosity-targeted region. On the one hand, the home region of Castilla y León is known for its high quality and diverse brands of food and beverage (“Castilla y León” 2020; Junta de Castilla y León 2021). Among regions, Castilla y León ranks second (11.8% of the national production) in agricultural production (López del Paso et al. 2019; “Agri-food sector generates” 2021). The region is famous for producing cereals, potatoes, meat, milk, fruits, and vegetables (“Castilla y León” 2020; Belloso Pérez 2019). Moreover, the region runs a quality program, known as “Tierra de Sabor,” which supports the regional production of food and beverage, reinforces brand development, and promotes quality regional brands (Belloso Pérez 2019; Junta de Castilla y León 2021).

On the other hand, Catalonia is the animosity-targeted region examined in this study, as it has witnessed political and economic instability in light of the Catalan independence declaration and boycott calls aimed at the region and its products (Brunat 2018). In the Spanish market, many Catalan brands operating at the national level have

been severely affected by such unfortunate events (“Bimbo, Cola Cao y otras empresas” 2017), unlike alternative brands originating from other regions, where rapid growth in their sales figures was noticed during the same period (Brunat 2018). The Catalan food market had been one of the product categories highly impacted by the Catalan animosity outbreak in Spain (Cossío-Silva et al. 2019). Brands such as Cola Cao, Bimbo, and the well-known Catalan Cava brands (e.g., Cordonú) were among the boycotted brands by Spanish consumers, causing sales reductions of up to 40% in 2017 (“Bimbo, Cola Cao y otras empresas” 2017).

The study questionnaire was designed using scales from the literature and adapted to the context of regional food and beverage purchases to establish content validity (see the appendix for further details on the questionnaire structure). The scale used to measure regional identification was adjusted from the study of Huang, Lin, and Yen (2015). Regional ethnocentrism was measured using Fernández-Ferrín and Bande-Vilela’s (2013) scale. Moreover, for regional brand defense, a scale adapted from Dalman, Buche, and Min (2019) was used, whereas for the oppositional loyalty scale, Kuo and Hou’s (2017) scale was used. Hincks’s (2005) scale was employed to measure regional animosity, assessed through responses to the following scale items: (1) Catalonia wants to gain power over the rest of the Spanish regions, (2) Catalonia is taking advantage of Spain, (3) Catalonia has too much influence in Spain, and (4) Catalonia is unfair to the rest of the Spanish regions. All variables in this study were measured using five-point Likert scales, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

The questionnaire was initially developed in English and then translated into Spanish. Followed by a back-translation, this process was performed by two English native researchers and Spanish language professors to ensure the clarity and accuracy of

the questionnaire. The translation/back-translation technique is commonly used as a standard process for translating scales' wording from one language to another and has been recommended by various scholars in the field (e.g., Behling and Law 2000; Brislin 1986). Additionally, a pre-test of the survey was performed using one-to-one in-depth interviews with a sample of six consumers of food and beverage products to uncover confusing and unclear items and ensure the readability and clarity of the questionnaire. The interviews lasted approximately one hour each, and minor issues were fixed in the final version of the survey.

Data collection was subsequently carried out. A total of 622 questionnaires were gathered using quota sampling during 2020, with the participation of regional buyers of food and beverage brands from the Spanish region of Castilla y León (CyL). Age quotas were considered during the collection process as it is a cost-effective sampling method that avoids overrepresentation of any particular population (Iliyasu and Etikan 2021). This method was essential to obtain a sample that matched the general Spanish population's age characteristics ("Food & beverages" 2020). Additionally, to ensure that the respondents were eligible to answer the questionnaire, two filtering questions were posed at the beginning of the questionnaire: (1) to identify whether they were from the region of Castilla y León or not, and (2) to indicate whether they are buyers of Castilla y León food/beverage and, later, indicate one product from their last purchase.

Prior to analysis, the collected data were screened for possible outliers, out of range values, or missing values using the IBM-SPSS statistical software package. Of the 622 questionnaires obtained, 20 invalid responses were eliminated because of extensive missing data fields. Thus, the final valid sample comprised 602 buyers. The sample size looks to attend to prior scholars' methodological recommendations, which suggest that a larger sample size (> 500) provides a more accurate representation of the population

and ensures better reliability of the questionnaire (Wangcharoen, Ngarmsak, and Wilkinson 2005).

According to our sample characteristics (presented in Table 1), the common buyers of food and beverage brands were women (54.8%), within the age group of 35–54 years (42.5%). They usually had a university degree (37.7%) and were employed (44.4%), with a monthly net income of €601–€1500 (52%). Further, the majority were married or in a relationship (52%), with a household structure of being a couple with/without a child (54.2%). The profile of our sample was consistent with the demographic characteristics of an average Spanish buyer of food and beverages (“Food & beverages” 2020), which can be described as women (49%), between the age of 35 and 54 years (58.5%), and with low to medium income levels (55%).

{Insert Table 1 here. Sample characteristics}

Analyses and results

First, the scale dimensionality of our variables was examined through an exploratory factor analysis with SPSS, and a single dimension was detected for each set of items representing a single construct, which shows that the constructs were unidimensional.

Second, this study employed the partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) method using the SmartPLS 3.0 software package to analyze the research data. This method has been widely applied in various behavioral science disciplines, including marketing research (Hair, Ringle, and Sarstedt 2011; Henseler, Hubona, and Ray 2016) and international business research (Richter et al. 2016), among others (e.g. Ali et al. 2018; Henseler, Hubona, and Ray 2016; Usakli and Kucukergin 2018). PLS-SEM was selected for this study rather than other methods such as covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) because (1) PLS-SEM allows researchers to handle

complex theoretical models in terms of the number of constructs, indicators, and path relationships, as well as the inclusion of both direct and moderation effects (Ali et al. 2018; Richter et al. 2016). Further, (2) PLS-SEM is regarded as one of the most suitable approaches for examining exploratory research models (Hair, Ringle, and Sarstedt 2011; Richter et al. 2016), in which PLS-SEM is better suited for theory development goals (Richter et al. 2016; Usakli and Kucukergin 2018). Hence, given the model complexity and the study's exploratory nature, the use of PLS-SEM was justified.

Adequate fitness of the measurement model was assessed using SmartPLS 3.0 (Table 2). One item from regional identification was eliminated due to low correlation (factor loading 0.416); the item was a reverse-coded statement: "I do not feel any ties with (my) region." The measurement model fit indices improved noticeably after the item was eliminated. Cronbach's alpha (Cronb. α) was 0.814, composite reliability (CR) was 0.883, the average variance extracted (AVE) was 0.671, the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) was 0.080, and the normed fit index (NFI) was 0.899. Also, it should be noted that during the screening process, an item from oppositional loyalty was eliminated because an abundance of the responses was left blank. The item stated, "I will not consider buying products of any rival brand to CyL brands, even if the products have better features."

Subsequently, a reliability analysis was performed again using Cronbach's α and the CR coefficients of each construct (Hair et al. 2019). These values were greater than the recommended cut-off value of 0.7, indicating good internal consistency (Bagozzi and Yi 2012). Moreover, the AVE for each variable provided values above the threshold of 0.5 (Bagozzi and Yi 1988; Hair, Ringle, and Sarstedt 2011; Hair et al. 2019), indicating adequate convergent validity. The discriminant validity of the scales was also satisfied (Table 3), as the square roots of the AVE values were greater than the inter-

construct correlations (Fornell and Larcker 1981; Richter et al. 2016), and the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) showed values less than 0.90, thus verifying the discriminant validity of the model (Ali et al. 2018; Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt 2015).

{Insert Table 2 here. Measurement model results}

{Insert Table 3 here. Correlation matrix and heterotrait (HTMT) ratio}

Since the measurement model appeared to possess adequate reliability and validity measures, we proceeded with the following step of our analysis: evaluating the proposed structured model and related hypotheses. The results indicated that the SRMR was 0.057, which is less than the cut value of 0.08, suggesting a good fit model (Henseler, Hubona, and Ray 2016), and the NFI was 0.904, with values above 0.90 is considered acceptable (Henseler, Hubona, and Ray 2016). The R-square and f-square (F) values were also assessed to identify the explanatory power of the model, and our results show satisfactory R-square values of the dependent variables since they exceeded 0.1 (Falk and Miller 1992) for regional brand defense (0.420) and oppositional loyalty (0.423). As for the f-square values, Cohen's (1988) guidelines were followed, in which small, medium, and large effect sizes are represented with values \geq 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35, respectively. Our results showed that brand defense had a small impact on oppositional loyalty ($F=0.040$), while the effect size of regional ethnocentrism on oppositional loyalty was found to be large ($F =0.367$).

The hypothesized direct relationships were then tested and are presented in Table 4. The results reveal a direct positive impact of regional identification (H1) and regional ethnocentrism (H2) on regional brand defense. Moreover, the analysis also confirmed the direct positive effect of regional ethnocentrism on oppositional loyalty to

non-regional brands (H3). Additionally, regional brand defense was found to trigger oppositional loyalty to non-regional brands (H4).

Common method bias (CMB) was assessed using the marker variable approach (Chin et al. 2013; Lindell and Whitney 2001). A theoretically unrelated construct to focal variables was introduced in the model (Lindell and Whitney 2001), in which respondents were asked to indicate what kind of person they were: (1) an extrovert or (2) an introvert. The analysis was performed with and without the marker variable, which acted as an exogenous variable to predict each model construct. The results showed that all coefficients in the correlation analysis remained statistically significant after controlling for the marker variable, suggesting that CMB was unlikely to be a concern in this study. Additionally, the significant paths in the structural model remained significant with the inclusion of the marker variable, further confirming that CMB was not critical. Taking this further, a full collinearity test was also performed (Kock 2015) to assess CMB through the variance inflation factor (VIF), which ranged from 1.206 to 1.825. Since all values were below the recommended cutoff value of 3.3 (Kock 2015), it was concluded that CMV did not represent a threat to this study.

Regarding the moderator effect of animosity (H5), the moderation impact was examined on two specific relations in the model (i.e., ethnocentrism [H3] and brand defense [H4] on oppositional loyalty). The product-indicator approach was utilized in the moderation analysis with the help of SmartPLS 3.0, considering that this approach is recommended in reflective models (Memon et al. 2019). Table 4 shows that animosity has a moderating role in the regional ethnocentrism and brand defense relationships with oppositional loyalty (see H5a and H5b). Following Chin, Marcolin, and Newsted (2003), as H5a and H5b are significant and positive (0.124; 0.082), it can be concluded that an increase in regional animosity can strengthen the impact of

regional ethnocentrism on oppositional loyalty (from 0.539 to 0.663) and can also increase the brand defense impact on oppositional loyalty (from 0.178 to 0.260).

{Insert Table 4 here. Structural model results}

In addition to the proposed hypotheses, a mediation analysis was carried out to investigate the role of brand defense as a mediator between model relationships. Following Baron and Kenny's (1986) approach, the total effect was first observed between the exogenous variables (regional identification and ethnocentrism) and the endogenous variable (oppositional loyalty). A significant impact of regional identification ($\beta=0.115$; $t\text{-value}=3.306$; $p<0.05$; $F=0.017$) and ethnocentrism ($\beta=0.576$; $t\text{-value}=16.189$; $p<0.001$; $F=0.425$) on oppositional loyalty was observed. Then, on the one hand, we checked after controlling for brand defense, and the result revealed that the effect of regional identification on oppositional loyalty ($\beta=0.040$; $t\text{-value}=1.001$; $p>0.05$; $F=0.002$) became non-significant, suggesting a full mediation. On the other hand, we again checked after controlling for brand defense, and a reduction was observed in the effect of ethnocentrism and oppositional loyalty. However, it remained significant ($\beta=0.526$; $t\text{-value}=13.768$; $p<0.001$; $F=0.328$), suggesting a partial mediation effect. Furthermore, the indirect effect was inspected for the following paths: regional identification \rightarrow brand defense \rightarrow oppositional loyalty ($\beta=0.072$; $t\text{-value}=3.563$; $p<0.001$; $F=0.001$) and regional ethnocentrism \rightarrow brand defense \rightarrow oppositional loyalty ($\beta=0.048$; $t\text{-value}=3.716$; $p<0.001$; $F=0.327$), which also confirmed the same result. Additionally, Sobel testing also confirmed the same findings for the paths of regional identification (3.785; $p<0.001$) and ethnocentrism (3.521; $p<0.001$). Therefore, it can be concluded that brand defense could mediate the relationships of regional identification (full mediation) and regional ethnocentrism (partial mediation) on oppositional loyalty.

Discussion

The following key research objectives guided this study: (1) identifying the positive impact of both regional identification and ethnocentrism on regional brand defense, (2) highlighting the distinct behavioral effect of ethnocentrism in predicting oppositional loyalty, (3) assessing the direct influence of brand defense to promote oppositional loyalty and its indirect (mediating) role within the model relationships, and (4) examining the moderating impact of regional animosity in amplifying the effect of ethnocentrism and brand defense on oppositional loyalty.

Accordingly, this study confirms that both regional identification and ethnocentrism trigger a tendency to defend home-region brands, validating the significance of the origin bias phenomenon in purchase decisions. This offers clear evidence that strong in-group membership (through both identification and ethnocentrism) can definitely trigger extreme support for local in-group production, in the sense that consumers who highly identify themselves as members of a particular regional community are more likely to behave in a supportive manner toward brands from the home region. Additionally, consumers who show strong regional ethnocentrism display a higher tendency to support local brands. These results are consistent with social identity theory and previous research, in which in-group identified consumers favor brands originating from the in-group community that represent the in-group superiority and uniqueness (Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos 2015). Moreover, ethnocentric consumers feel morally obligated to support locals by acting in a protective way toward the local economy and in-group brands (Vuong and Khanh Giao 2020; Wang et al. 2018).

Furthermore, our results confirm the distinct role of ethnocentrism in triggering resistance against non-regional brand purchases. This finding reveals the importance of

ethnocentrism as an explanatory variable for oppositional loyalty and confirms the anti-consumption nature of ethnocentrism, translated into oppositional behavior toward non-regional brands. This result is in line with prior literature, given that oppositional loyalty is often triggered by a sense of protectionism toward the home community against outsiders (Djedidi 2016), and protectionism is a key feature of ethnocentrism (Aktan and Anjam 2022; Bizumic 2019).

Moreover, the results reveal that consumers who strongly support home-region brands are more likely to engage in resistance behavior (oppositional loyalty) toward non-regional brands. This finding confirms the antecedent role of regional brand defense in explaining oppositional loyalty to non-regional brands. In other words, this study demonstrates that whenever consumers show active support for in-group brands, a tendency to resist out-group brands might be induced in the form of non-regional brand opposition. This result supports our initial proposition and is consistent with social identity theory and past literature, highlighting that members of a certain community who advocate their in-group brands and local businesses are more likely to develop oppositional loyalty against out-group brands (Kuo and Feng 2013).

The study also confirms the mediating role of brand defense in the relationship between home-region bias variables (i.e., regional identification and ethnocentrism) and oppositional loyalty. This signifies that solid in-group membership can trigger a defensive behavior toward regional purchases, which consequently can motivate the consumer to resist brands from other regions. This finding is in agreement with Kuo and Hou (2017), who stated that the high association between the consumer and the in-group might lead the consumer to support the in-group against any foreign rivalry. Thus, consumers may prefer not to buy competing brands, even if they provide better quality. In addition, Djedidi (2016) stated that opposition or resistance triggered by a

sense of protectionism to the home community against outsiders can lead to anti-consumption behavior. This finding clarifies the direct and indirect mechanisms of the effect of regional ethnocentrism on oppositional loyalty through brand defense. Additionally, the full or partial mediation of brand defense in the model relationship confirms that regional identification is a pure bias toward the in-group (i.e., full mediation), whereas regional ethnocentrism is a combination of both in-group favorability and out-group rejection (i.e., direct and partial mediation). These findings reinforce the previous distinction between the two variables (Verlegh 2007; Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos 2015) and clarify the distinct nature of both variables and their behavioral outcomes from a regional perspective.

Finally, this research uncovers evidence of the moderating power of regional animosity, in a manner that the higher the animosity the consumer holds against one region, the stronger the impact of ethnocentrism and brand defense on oppositional loyalty. This means that the presence of animosity can amplify the model relationships with oppositional loyalty. In other words, although regional ethnocentrism and regional brand defense have strong direct effects on oppositional loyalty, the relative importance of these relationships could also depend on the animosity experienced by the consumer. This finding is exploratory in nature and is consistent with the results obtained by Fong, Lee, and Du (2015), who found animosity to have a moderation effect on the consumer purchase behavior of foreign products.

Theoretical implications

The current study contributes to the existing literature in the following ways:

First, it explores group membership using two distinct origin bias variables: regional identification and ethnocentrism. In this context, and given the previously discussed literature review, the study does not solely focus on ethnocentrism, the most

frequently discussed origin bias variable, but it also incorporates in the same framework regional identification, another vitally important origin bias variable, but less examined in the place-of-origin literature (Verlegh 2007). In this sense, the current study acknowledges the presence of such a lack of research and sheds light on the role of both variables as powerful determinants of consumer behavior. Further, the current research is one of the very few studies that explored the different mechanisms of both variables and acknowledged the unique behavioral outcomes of the two variables. This differentiation is highly significant, as it has mostly been ignored or the two variables have been mixed up in prior investigations (Verlegh 2007; Wang et al. 2018; Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos 2015).

Second, this study presents some original consequential variables (brand defense and oppositional loyalty) to the origin bias phenomenon—especially in a regional setting—and examines the unexplored relationships among them. One specific contribution to the growing body of literature is the inclusion of the construct of brand defense, in which evidence of a strong influential impact of both regional identification and ethnocentrism on the consumer tendency to defend brands from their home region has been identified in this study, offering a new interpretation of the topic. Brand defense has been investigated in the consumer-brand relationship literature (Dalman, Buche, and Min 2019), but not in the place-of-origin context. Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize that this study pinpoints this significant gap in the literature and examines new unexplored possible links that have not been tested.

Third, one of the valuable insights of this study is that it pioneers the concept of oppositional loyalty in the place-of-origin literature and proposes some original relationships that widen our understanding of the topic within marketing literature. Specifically, it explores the formulation of the phenomenon as a result of favorable bias

toward one's own community and its brands, via regional ethnocentrism and regional brand defense. Oppositional loyalty is a relatively novel concept that has recently been acknowledged in marketing research, and discussions from a place-of-origin standpoint are definitely lacking (Kuo and Hou 2017; Olson 2018; Wright 2016; Zhang and Zheng 2021). Brand loyalty has been discussed in place-of-origin literature from the positive aspect of the construct (Chaudhry et al. 2021), while this research broadens the scope of investigation by exploring the negative side of loyalty (i.e. oppositional loyalty) that has not been acknowledged before—as far as we know—in origin bias studies.

Fourth, this study also contributes to the growing literature on origin bias by discussing an unexplored (influential) relationship between brand defense and oppositional loyalty. In this sense, the current study extends existing knowledge on the topic by providing evidence that brand defense has a direct and indirect role in promoting resistance behavior toward non-regional brands, which has not been the focus of previous investigations.

The fifth and final contribution of this study is that it expands the existing literature on consumer animosity by analyzing and statistically confirming its moderating effect on the relationship between regional ethnocentrism and brand defense on oppositional loyalty. This finding is particularly interesting, given that the existing literature on consumer animosity has widely discussed the antecedent and consequential role of the variable (e.g. Chaudhry et al. 2021; Hoang et al. 2022; Kim and Li 2020); however, to date, little is known about its moderating effect in the place-of-origin context (Fong, Lee, and Du 2015; Magnusson, Westjohn, and Sirianni 2019). Thus, the current study addresses this gap in the literature and provides new exploratory insights into the moderating role of the variable. Moreover, it calls for an additional in-depth

investigation on the topic to examine the moderating power of animosity on other origin bias behavioral paths.

Managerial implications

Grounded on the study findings, the current research offers some managerial recommendations in the following three directions: (1) recommendations for brand operation within their local or regional market, (2) recommendations for local or regional authorities, and (3) recommendations for brands operating beyond their local market (i.e., foreign or non-regional markets).

First, for brands operating within their local or regional market and seeking local market expansion, this investigation reveals that strong in-group membership (through both regional identification and ethnocentrism) could indeed motivate consumers to support and defend their in-group local production. In this sense, local brands operating in communities with highly in-group-biased members should take advantage of locally preferred brands and wisely channel such an advantage in their business best interests. Specifically, local businesses should invest in building awareness of their brand localism or regionalism, promoting regional labeling, and strengthening their brands' local roots in marketing campaigns.

Additionally, since differential behavioral paths for regional identification and ethnocentrism have been detected in this study, highly ethnocentric consumers will not only support local brands but might also display resistance to out-group brands. This resistance can offer a huge source of competitive advantage to local business operations, reduce the tendency to buy out-group products, and create an intangible entry barrier for foreign competitors. Thus, brand managers should be attentive to the presence (or absence) of in-group bias and the type of bias exhibited by consumers. Accordingly, accurate market segmentation (using regional identification or ethnocentrism) can be

effectively implemented to target suitable audiences within the market (Zeugner-Roth, Žabkar, and Diamantopoulos 2015).

Second, local and regional authorities—especially in highly in-group biased communities—should be aware of the importance of territorial and regional indicators in promoting local brand preference (i.e., territorial marketing; Tovma et al. 2020). This is particularly true given that our findings acknowledge that strong membership in a community (i.e., regional identification and ethnocentrism) can definitely increase consumer interest in regional brand support (i.e., regional brand defense). Thus, local marketing efforts that encourage consumers to support regional production could positively impact consumer behavior toward local brand purchase. In this sense, governments are encouraged to invest in local endorsement projects, such as by launching in-group identification programs, regional branding strategies, and sponsoring “eat local” and “buy regional” campaigns (Orth et al. 2020). Such programs can reinforce consumers’ regional belongingness and protectionism toward local production. The implementation of such programs can stress brands’ unique regional features, highlight distinct quality regional brands, and create a positive association between community members, their region, and regional brands. These programs should also highlight the benefits of buying local, such as by protecting local jobs and stimulating the local economy.

Third, for brands operating beyond their local market (i.e. foreign and non-regional brands), this study highlights the direct impact of both regional ethnocentrism and brand defense on oppositional loyalty to non-regional brands. Thus, companies are advised to focus on communities with low in-group-biased consumers and avoid markets with active resistance to nonlocally produced goods. Further, foreign brands that would like to take the risky step of entering a highly in-group biased origin are

strongly advised to deliberately position their brands to be seen as in-group rooted as possible. This could be done—on a regional level—by accentuating a more generalized origin labeling (e.g., Spanish or European Union origin) that can rise above any regional bias or prejudice and help the brand appears “more” domestic.

Additionally, as the presence of animosity can amplify the effect of the studied determinants of oppositional loyalty, brands should be concerned about operating in a hostile or unstable business environment, even when this hostility is not directed toward the brand or its origin. In other words, non-local brands operating in unstable market circumstances, and not by any means targets of animosity, need to be fully aware of the situation and understand that even though the animosity outbreak does not directly impact them, it might indirectly strengthen the negativity toward all foreign origins (including their own brand). Accordingly, non-local brands are advised to avoid markets with active conflicts and distance themselves from any association with an unfavorable origin. Additionally, profoundly studying the origin bias in the targeted market is highly recommended to detect any potential future threat to business continuity and address any in- or out-group bias issues that could potentially cause anti-consumption behaviors.

Limitations and future research

Despite our best efforts, this study is not devoid of some limitations that should be addressed in future studies. First, it is essential to highlight that data collection solely focused on one particular region in Spain (i.e. Castilla y León), which might have limited the model’s generalizability and biased our results. Given Spain’s interregional differences and geographical diversity, our results may not have effectively reflected the full situation across different regions. Thus, for further exploration, it would be interesting to expand the scope of investigation by considering a broader sample,

including respondents from other diverse cultural settings (e.g., other countries, regions, or groups), to observe cultural comparability and establish better generalizability of the study findings.

Second, research on oppositional loyalty is still in its early stages, and more attention is needed to broaden the understanding of the concept within the marketing context (Kuo and Hou 2017). Therefore, a more refined, in-depth investigation is highly recommended in the future to highlight the role of other potential antecedent variables worth exploring and are not the focus of this study, such as comparative perceived quality, brand love, and origin affinity.

Finally, brand defense has rarely been investigated in place-of-origin literature (Ali et al. 2021; Dalman, Buche, and Min 2019). This concept requires further consideration in future avenues of investigation. Further place-of-origin studies might benefit from deeper insight into the factors that motivate consumers to defend home-origin brands. Additionally, different brand defense styles (such as advocating, justifying, and trivializing defense) could also be highlighted in future research to explore how consumers defend their own brands when exposed to various origin bias determinants.

Declaration of interest

The authors report there are no competing interests to declare.

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Tables

Table 1. Sample characteristics

Demographic characteristics		% sample
Gender	Men	45.2
	Women	54.8
Age	18–24 years	18.6
	25–34 years	20.8
	35–44 years	22.6
	45–54 years	19.9
	55–64 years	14
	>64 years	4.1
Educational background	No formal education	2.5
	Elementary education	3.5
	Compulsory secondary education	5.5
	High school/Middle school	11.5
	Professional training	21.6
	Diploma	10.3
	University degree	37.7
Postgraduate/PhD	7.4	
Monthly net income (per individual)	≤ 600€	23.4
	601 to 900€	10.7
	901 to 1200€	22.5
	1201 to 1500€	18.8
	1501 to 1800€	8.5
	1801 to 2400€	9.3
	2401 to 3000€	3.5
	3001 to 4000€	1.8
	4001 to 5000€	0.5
	>5000€	1
Household structure	Living alone	35.2
	Living with parents	7.1
	Couple without children	22.8
	Couple with children ≤ 18 years	15
	Couple with children > 18 years	16.4
	Single parent living with children	3.5
Employment status	Employed	44.4
	Homemaker	3.7
	Entrepreneur/Self-employed	8.8
	Retired	4.3
	Civil servant	11.6
	Student	21.4
	Unemployed	5.8
Marital status	Married/In a relationship	52
	Divorced/Separated	8.6
	Single	39.4

Table 2. Measurement model results

Latent variable	Items	Loadings	Cronb. α	CR	AVE
Regional identification	Being a member of (my) region means a lot to me.	0.943**	0.912	0.945	0.851
	I am proud to be a member of (my) region.	0.938**			
	When a foreign person praises (my) region, it feels like a personal compliment.	0.886**			
Regional ethnocentrism	Products from outside (my) region should only be bought when local equivalents are not available.	0.834**	0.915	0.937	0.748
	(My) region products come first and foremost.	0.915**			
	A true member of (my) region should always buy products made in (my) region.	0.904**			
	Members of (my) region should not buy products from outside the region since it harms local companies and causes unemployment.	0.842**			
	Consumers from (my) region that purchase products made in other regions are responsible for the job losses of fellow members of (my) region.	0.823**			
Brand defense	I will defend (my) region brands in a conversation.	0.941**	0.931	0.956	0.878
	I will tell people to do business with brands from (my) region.	0.918**			
	I will shield for brands from (my) region in a conversation.	0.952**			
Oppositional loyalty	I will not try any rival brand to (my) region brands that offers similar products.	0.885**	0.948	0.960	0.828
	I have no interest in any rival brand to (my) region brands, even if it offers a diversity of products.	0.926**			
	I will not consider buying products of any rival brand to (my) region brands, even if	0.932**			

the products can better meet my specific needs.	
I will not recommend products of any rival brand to (my) region brands, even if the products are generally considered better.	0.906**
I will not try products from any rival brand to (my) region brands, even if the products are widely consumed by other people.	0.899**

Note: **p<0.001

Table 3. Correlation matrix and heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
(1) Regional identification	0.923	0.537	0.644	0.427
(2) Regional ethnocentrism	0.500	0.865	0.555	0.678
(3) Brand defense	0.594	0.521	0.937	0.489
(4) Oppositional loyalty	0.398	0.632	0.459	0.910

Note: The main diagonal (in bold) shows the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE). The correlations between latent variables are presented below the diagonal and above the diagonal, the ratio HTMT.

Table 4. Structural model results

Hypothesized direct and moderation relations	Coefficient β	
	(t Value)	Result
H1: Regional identification → Brand defense	0.444 (11.125)**	Supported
H2: Regional ethnocentrism → Brand defense	0.299 (7.364)**	Supported
H3: Regional ethnocentrism → Oppositional loyalty	0.539 (14.516)**	Supported
H4: Brand defense → Oppositional loyalty	0.178 (4.960)**	Supported
The moderation of regional animosity (H5)		
H5a: Regional ethnocentrism* regional animosity → Oppositional loyalty	0.124 (3.732)**	Supported
H5b: Brand defense* regional animosity → Oppositional loyalty	0.082 (2.623)*	Supported

Note: **p<0.001; *p<0.05.

Appendix: The research questionnaire

This survey aims to assess the perceptions and preferences of buyers of the regional food brands of *Castilla y León (CyL)* to assist in developing a research project. The information obtained will be treated globally and is entirely anonymous.

Are you from *CyL*? Yes []
No [] (the questionnaire ends).

Have you bought food or beverages from *CyL*? Yes []
No [] (the questionnaire ends).

If the prior two answers were “yes,” please answer the following questions WITH YOUR FOOD OR BEVERAGE PURCHASE IN MIND.

The following section refers to the brand you **LAST PURCHASED** from the region of *Castilla y León (CyL)*:

1. Please indicate ONE brand of your LAST *CyL* food or beverage purchase: (provide ONLY ONE answer):

ONLY one (X) in the whole table	Meat	<i>Morcilla de Cardeña</i> [] <i>Sotopalacios</i> [] <i>Miratonda</i> [] <i>Embutidos Rodríguez</i> [] Other brand:
	Milk	<i>Tierra de Sabor</i> [] <i>Pascual</i> [] <i>Gaza</i> [] <i>Lar</i> [] Other brand:
	Dairy products (e.g. cheese)	<i>Queso de Burgos</i> [] <i>Sasamón</i> [] <i>El ovejero</i> [] Other brand:
	Water	<i>Agua Santolin</i> [] <i>Monte Pinos</i> [] Other brand:
	Fruits and vegetables	<i>Pera Conferencia</i> [] <i>Manzana Evelina/Envy</i> [] Other brand:
	Cereals	<i>Gullón</i> [] Other brand:
	Honey	<i>Miel del Bierzo</i> [] Other brand:
	Spiritual drinks	<i>Ribera de Duero</i> [] <i>Peñalba Lopez</i> [] <i>DYC</i> [] <i>Matarromera</i> [] Other brand:
	Other food or drink brands	please specify:

The following section will assess your **GENERAL** perception of *CyL* food and beverage brands:

2. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I will defend <i>CyL</i> brands in a conversation.	1	2	3	4	5
I will tell people to do business with brands from <i>CyL</i> .	1	2	3	4	5
I will shield for brands from <i>CyL</i> in a conversation.	1	2	3	4	5
I will not try any rival brand to <i>CyL</i> brands that offers similar products.	1	2	3	4	5
I have no interest in any rival brand to <i>CyL</i> brands, even if it offers a diversity of products.	1	2	3	4	5
I will not consider buying products of any rival brand to <i>CyL</i> brands, even if the products can better meet my specific needs.	1	2	3	4	5
I will not consider buying products of any rival brand to <i>CyL</i> brands, even if the products have better features.	1	2	3	4	5

I will not recommend products of any rival brand to <i>CyL</i> brands, even if the products are generally considered better.	1	2	3	4	5
I will not try products from any rival brand to <i>CyL</i> brands, even if the products are widely consumed by other people.	1	2	3	4	5

The following section will evaluate your general perception of *Castilla y León (CyL)*:

3. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Being a citizen of <i>CyL</i> means a lot to me.	1	2	3	4	5
I am proud to be a citizen of <i>CyL</i> .	1	2	3	4	5
When a foreign person praises <i>CyL</i> , it feels like a personal compliment.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not feel any ties with <i>CyL</i> .	1	2	3	4	5
Products from outside <i>CyL</i> should only be bought when local equivalents are not available.	1	2	3	4	5
<i>CyL</i> products come first and foremost.	1	2	3	4	5

A true citizen of CyL should always buy products made in CyL.	1	2	3	4	5
The citizen of CyL should not buy products from outside the region since it harms local companies and causes unemployment.	1	2	3	4	5
Consumers from CyL that purchase products made in other regions are responsible for the job losses of fellow Castilian-Leonese.	1	2	3	4	5

The following section will evaluate your general perception of the region of

Catalonia:

4. Please answer the following statements about the region of *Catalonia*:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
This region wants to gain power over the rest of the Spanish regions.	1	2	3	4	5
This region is taking advantage of Spain.	1	2	3	4	5
This region has too much influence in Spain.	1	2	3	4	5

This region is unfair with the rest of the Spanish regions.	1	2	3	4	5
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5. Socio-demographic data of the respondent:

Gender: Man <input type="checkbox"/> Woman <input type="checkbox"/>	Age:.....	Marital status: Married/In a relationship <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced/Separated <input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/>
Are you from and/or do you currently live in the region of <i>Castilla y León</i> ? (control question)		
I am from <i>CyL</i> and I live in <i>CyL</i> <input type="checkbox"/> I am not from <i>CyL</i> , but I live in <i>CyL</i> <input type="checkbox"/>		
I do not live in <i>CyL</i> <input type="checkbox"/> In which region do you live? _____		
Have you ever traveled to the region of <i>Catalonia</i>?		
Yes I have traveled <input type="checkbox"/> How many times have you traveled to that region in the past year? _____		
I have not traveled <input type="checkbox"/>		
Educational level: No formal education <input type="checkbox"/> Elementary education <input type="checkbox"/> Compulsory secondary education <input type="checkbox"/>		
High /Middle school <input type="checkbox"/> Professional training <input type="checkbox"/> Diploma <input type="checkbox"/> University degree <input type="checkbox"/>		
Postgraduate/PhD <input type="checkbox"/>		
Home structure: Living alone <input type="checkbox"/> Living with parents <input type="checkbox"/> Couple without children <input type="checkbox"/>		
Couple with children \leq 18 years <input type="checkbox"/> Couple with children $>$ 18 years <input type="checkbox"/> Single parent living with children <input type="checkbox"/>		
Professional situation: Student <input type="checkbox"/> Employed <input type="checkbox"/> Entrepreneur/self-employed <input type="checkbox"/>		
Manage household activities <input type="checkbox"/> Retired <input type="checkbox"/> Civil servant <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed <input type="checkbox"/>		
Approximate net monthly individual income:		
Less than €600 <input type="checkbox"/> €601–900 <input type="checkbox"/> €901–1200 <input type="checkbox"/> €1201–1500 <input type="checkbox"/> €1501–1800 <input type="checkbox"/>		

€1801–2400 [] €2401–3000 [] €3001–4000 [] €4001–5000 [] More than €5000 []

What kind of person are you? Extrovert [] Introvert []

Thank you very much for your answers.
