



Exploring Corporate Philanthropy, Home Country Foreign Aid, and Country of Origin-Based Stigma for Multinational Enterprises: An Experimental Study

Yuehua Xu^a, Jiatao Li^{b,*}, Yimin Wang^{a,*}, Li Xin^{c,*}, Haichuan Zhao^a

^a School of Management, Shandong University

^b Center for Business Strategy and Innovation, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

^c Department of Management, School of Business, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to advance the understanding of the effectiveness of strategies addressing the country of origin (COO)-based stigma of a multinational enterprise (MNE), a persistent form of liability of the COO. On the basis of integrated insights from research on stigma by association and identity salience, we propose that when an MNE's home country is implicated in a negative global event, similar strategies at different levels (corporate philanthropy and foreign aid) would differentially affect its COO-based stigma resulting from its association with its home country. The results of scenario-based experimental analyses indicate that while MNEs' philanthropic efforts reduce stigma, aid from their home country increases stigma among host country consumers.

1. Introduction

Stigma, which is an attribute that discredits and diminishes an entity (an individual, organization, or country) from its usual standing to one that is tainted and discounted (Goffman, 1963; Devers, Dewett, Mishina, & Belsito, 2009), is common in the context of international business (IB). A country may face stigma when it is perceived to be responsible for a negative global event such as a war or a pandemic (Link & Phelan, 2001; Rivera, 2008; Rogstad, 2022), which can extend to the stigmatization of multinational enterprises (MNEs) originating from that country, referred to as country of origin (COO)-based stigma (Argo & Main, 2008; Pryor, Reeder, & Monroe, 2012). Such stigma could be extended to "liability of country of origin" (hereafter "liability of COO"), a concept that describes how an MNE's national origins can create disadvantages in international markets (Ramachandran & Pant, 2010); thus, it is a persistent form of COO stigma (Amankwah-Amoah & Debrah, 2017; Devers et al., 2009). These disadvantages include negative perceptions, stereotypes, or beliefs among host-country audiences regarding the quality of an MNE's products or services (Marano, Tashman, & Kostova,

2017; Ramachandran & Pant, 2010) and denial of its access to resources in the host country (Link & Phelan, 2001). Although MNEs and their home country may consider addressing such COO-based stigma, some strategies could be unnecessary and ineffective and may even potentially exacerbate the situation (Slade Shantz, Fischer, Liu, & Lévesque, 2019). Thus, the effectiveness of strategies attempting to reduce such stigma, especially in an era marked by growing geopolitical conflicts, must be investigated (Li, Van Assche, Li, & Qian, 2022).

Prior scholarly work on organizational stigma has typically viewed it as a result of belonging to a stigmatized category (Barlow, Verhaal, & Hoskins, 2018; Hamilton, Sherman, & Ruvolo, 1990), resulting in negative evaluations or punitive actions that can threaten a firm's growth and survival (Devers et al., 2009; Piazza & Perretti, 2015; Vergne, 2012). However, these issues have only recently begun to be examined in the IB context (e.g., Aranda, Conti, & Wezel, 2021; Ritvala, Granqvist, & Piekkari, 2021). In particular, although previous studies have revealed that the stigma of a geography, such as an MNE's home country, could disadvantage the MNE in host countries (Devers et al., 2009) and that the COO-based stigma of the MNE could be one of the

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* Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Jiatao Li, Yimin Wang and Li Xin

E-mail addresses: shellyxyh@hotmail.com (Y. Xu), mnjtli@ust.hk (J. Li), wangyimin@sdu.edu.cn (Y. Wang), lixin@cuhk.edu.hk (L. Xin), zhhc@sdu.edu.cn (H. Zhao).

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manifestations of liability of the COO (Amankwah-Amoah & Debrah, 2017), the literature has largely neglected the intertwining of COO-based stigma and liability of the COO and the effectiveness of various strategies attempting to mitigate them. Some scholars have demonstrated that nonmarket strategies, defined as “a concerted pattern of actions taken in the nonmarket environment to create value by improving its overall performance” (Baron, 1995: 47), can mitigate stereotypes. Nevertheless, further investigation into their effectiveness in more dynamic and complex contexts is needed (Lu, Ma, & Xie, 2022; Sun, Doh, Rajwani, & Siegel, 2021). This study aims to address this gap through experimental research.

Drawing on insights from the stigma by association research (Pryor et al., 2012; Winter & Uleman, 1984) and the view of identity salience (Reed, 2004; Stryker & Serpe, 1994), we develop a theoretical model of the effectiveness of donations operating at different levels in mitigating COO-based stigma resulting from association with its home country. An MNE subsidiary operating abroad possesses multiple identities (Fortwengel, 2021; Pant & Ramachandran, 2017), including its home country identity, local identity, and the identity of its parent MNE, all of which influence how local audiences categorize and evaluate it (Edman, 2016; Khessina, Reis, & Verhaal, 2021). Local audiences in a host country often use one of these identities as a framework for attributing and evaluating the subsidiary and its actions (Smith, 2011). We propose that the home-country identity of an MNE originating from a country that is implicated in a negative global event may become stained (Edman, 2016; Zhang et al., 2021), thereby instilling a COO-based stigma upon the MNE. Similar actions taken by the MNE and its home country are associated with different identities and thus may be perceived, interpreted, and evaluated differently.

This study compares strategic actions targeting the same entity but operating at different levels: corporate philanthropy, defined as voluntary donations of corporate resources to charitable causes (Gautier & Pache, 2015), and foreign aid, which refers to the voluntary transfer of resources from one country to another (Thapa, 2020). Both corporate philanthropy and foreign aid involve the contribution of money, goods, or services. The contributions may come from the MNE itself or its home country, but they may be perceived to have different motivations (Becerra, Cavallo, & Noy, 2014; Mellahi, Frynas, Sun, & Siegel, 2016). As a result, philanthropy and aid are expected to be evaluated differently by host country audiences, potentially leading to different impacts on firm stigma.

Following previous studies (Fischer, Zeugner-Roth, Katsikeas, & Pandelaere, 2022; Ritvala et al., 2021; Westjohn, Magnusson, Peng, & Jung, 2021), this study focuses on consumers in the host country as the primary audience (Park & Ghauri, 2015) and examines their reactions to philanthropy and foreign aid from an MNE and its home country. Consistent with our research question, we specifically investigate a pandemic as a negative global shock that may lead to the stigmatization of a country and its MNEs (Adja, Golinelli, Lenzi, Fantini, & Wu, 2020; Zhang, Wang, Toubiana, & Greenwood, 2021). Our hypotheses were tested via several scenario-based experiments, which are instrumental in establishing causal relationships in the IB literature (Magnusson, Westjohn, & Sirianni, 2019; Zellmer-Bruhn, Caligiuri, & Thomas, 2016). Moreover, a deeper understanding of the different effects of corporate philanthropy and foreign aid was gained by conducting robustness tests and comparing the experimental results under different contexts, such as with and without political conflicts.

This study offers significant contributions to the literature in the IB context. First, in contrast to previous research that focused on deficits in the institutions or technologies of less developed countries as sources of liability of COOs for firms from these countries (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 2000; Ramachandran & Pant, 2010), our study highlights that the liability of COOs could arise from the stigmatization of any country because of external negative events or perceptions. Integrating independent studies on the liability of COOs and organizational stigma advances our knowledge of the liability of COOs in MNEs’ global expansion

and deepens our understanding of the tactics for mitigating it.

Second, as the different impacts of donations used at different levels (i.e., the MNE and the home country) to address COO-based stigma were investigated, this study provides new insights into organizational stigmatization and the effectiveness of strategies aimed at stigma reduction in the IB context, areas that have received less attention in research (Ritvala et al., 2021). Our comparison of the effects of corporate philanthropy and foreign aid in the context of different political relations also responds to the recent call for a more nuanced and realistic understanding of the role of competing politics in host country audiences’ reactions during the stigmatization process (Kolk & Curran, 2017; Ritvala et al., 2021), particularly in light of growing geopolitical conflicts (Hitt, Holmes, & Arregle, 2021).

Third, this study contributes to bridging the micro–macro divide that pervades the nonmarket strategy literature, particularly in the IB context (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Mellahi et al., 2016; Sun et al., 2021). Our work enriches our understanding of the effectiveness of different-level nonmarket strategies for individual consumers by highlighting the multiple identities of MNEs and delineating how these identities influence the consumer sensemaking of such strategies. In the same vein, this study contributes to our knowledge of the complex relationships among multiple firm identities in audiences’ sensemaking of strategic actions, particularly in the IB context (Fernando & Patriotta, 2020; Sarala et al., 2019).

Finally, our use of experiments enables us to suggest causal relationships (Fan & Harzing, 2017; Fischer et al., 2022; Magnusson et al., 2019) that address the call for more experimental studies in the IB literature (Zellmer-Bruhn et al., 2016).

2. Theoretical development and hypotheses

2.1. COO-Based Stigma and the Liability of COOs in the IB Context

Stigmatization often leads to devaluation and discrimination against those being stigmatized, exerting social and psychological pressure that hinders social integration and can limit access to resources (Leslie, Mayer, & Kravitz, 2013; Rodell & Lynch, 2015). For organizations, stigma is a label that “evokes a collective stakeholder group-specific perception that an organization possesses a fundamental, deep-seated flaw that deindividuates and discredits the organization” (Devers et al., 2009: 155). It is rooted in categorization theory (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1997; Kaplan, 2011; Sutton & Callahan, 1987; Vergne & Wry, 2014), which suggests that to manage uncertainty and complexity, audiences may use categories as schemas to help them better understand various organizations and conduct evaluations. When a category is stigmatized, an organization classified into that category will be devalued (Barlow et al., 2018; Vergne, 2012). Stigma can also emerge from an organization’s association with “a group that is recognized as engaging in contested practices” (Piazza & Perretti, 2015: 726), even if the organization itself does not engage in stigmatized behavior.

Organizations may use various strategies (Sutton & Callahan, 1987; Zhang et al., 2021), such as either respecting or attacking stigmatizers (Hampel & Tracey, 2017), diluting category stigmatization by straddling multiple industries or markets (Lynch & Rodell, 2018; Vergne, 2012), managing information about stigmatized attributes via, for example, advertising (Hudson & Okhuysen, 2009), or even accepting responsibility (Elsbach, 1994), to mitigate stigma’s negative impact. For example, British Petroleum reconstructed its entire identity by advertising that it would henceforth stand for “beyond petroleum” (cf. Hampel & Tracey, 2017; Tracey & Phillips, 2016). Such strategies may also apply to categories such as industries facing stigmatization (Siltaoja et al., 2020; Voronov, De Clercq, & Hinings, 2013).

Stigma also exists in the IB context. Scholars acknowledged that while some organizational stigma arises from the organization’s actions and choices, often involving wrongdoing, it is also common for stigma to stem from a firm originating from a particular geographic market

(Devers et al., 2009). For example, a negative global shock occurring in a country (a geographical category) may trigger stigmatization, which in turn may affect the firms associated with it (Huang, Krupenkin, Rothschild, & Lee, 2023). This COO-based stigma can not only elicit negative perceptions and stereotypes about the country but also affect the firms “connected to it or aligned to its mode of operations” (Amankwah-Amoah & Debrah, 2017: 214). Contagion from a country to a firm is analogous to the stigma-by-association effect found at the individual level (Argo & Main, 2008; Winter & Uleman, 1984) and the contagion or spillover effect at the firm level (Jonsson, Greve, & Fujiwara-Greve, 2009; Shantz, Fischer, Liu, & Levesque, 2017).

A related concept in IB is the liability of the COO. Firms from a particular home country may suffer from the liability of COOs (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 2000; Ramachandran & Pant, 2010), leading them to be stigmatized and denied access to critical resources and capabilities in foreign markets (Amankwah-Amoah & Debrah, 2017; Moeller et al., 2013). In particular, the country of origin is delineated as the nation in which the corporate headquarters of the entity promoting the product or brand is situated (Johansson et al., 1985). As individuals in host countries could form perceptions of the value or utility of products, brands, or firms on the basis of the country from which they originate (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2011; Roth & Romeo, 1992), MNEs from less developed markets may face liability of COOs in host countries because the institutional environment in their home economy is perceived as less developed, allowing weak corporate governance and providing inadequate information for evaluating firms (Cuervo-Cazurra & Ramamurti, 2014). The liability of COOs may also develop simply because their home countries are known for producing inferior products or using obsolescent technology (Bilkey & Nes, 1982; Madhok & Keyhani, 2012). In addition, the liability of COOs can originate from political or economic conflicts or ideological rivalries (Cuervo-Cazurra, Luo, Ramamurti, & Ang, 2018; Tan & Yang, 2021). “Considerable animosity, hatred and prejudice are imprinted” in the memories of the people and groups in the two countries, as conflicts between them persist and escalate (Arikan & Shenkar, 2013; Bar-Tal, 2000: 355). That animosity can in turn create the liability of COOs for firms from one country operating in the other (Ramachandran & Pant, 2010). For example, sales of L’Oréal products in Australia and New Zealand decreased significantly in the aftermath of France’s nuclear testing in the South Pacific (Klein, 2002).

The liabilities of COOs can be considered a persistent form of COO-based stigma because it is not only a disadvantage but also a stigmatized status that can intensify over time (Ramachandran & Pant, 2010; Ritvala et al., 2021). This type of liability amplifies such stigma, representing the additional burden or disadvantage that a firm must bear because of its origins. The concept of liability of COOs extends beyond mere reputational damage; it is a form of institutionalized stigma that can be systemic and persistent, affecting not only individual firms but also all firms from a particular country or region. Although the relationship between COO-based stigma and the liability of COOs is beyond the research scope of our study, past works acknowledge that they are closely related in the IB context (Amankwah-Amoah & Debrah, 2017; Devers et al., 2009), with stigma representing the social and psychological dimension of the disadvantage and liability of COOs representing the practical and operational challenges stemming from this disadvantage.

In summary, existing studies have focused primarily on stigma in a single-country context; thus, we have limited knowledge about the stigmatization of MNEs and how audiences react to the techniques MNEs use to address stigma in the IB context (Ritvala et al., 2021). As COO-based stigma and liability of COOs are intertwined, COO-based stigma and the effectiveness of the strategies attempting to mitigate it must be explored.

2.2. A theoretical model on donation and coo-based stigma in IB

We build our theoretical model by integrating insights from two lines of research: stigma by association and identity salience. First, stigma may spill over from one individual/group to another associated with it due to stigma caused by the association effect (Goffman, 1963; Pryor et al., 2012; Winter & Uleman 1984), thus causing harm to the latter. Stigma by the association effect may occur when the individual/group does nothing but only stands next to or belongs to the same group as the stigmatized object (Argo & main, 2008). One explanation for such an effect is spontaneous trait transference (Winter & Uleman, 1984). People may rely on automatically elicited inferences to interpret and judge the behaviors of others (Winter & Uleman, 1984). They tend to associate the traits of one individual or group with the traits of another (Argo & main, 2008) and classify them into the same category (Vergne, 2012). Such a classification exaggerates similarities within a group and differences between groups (Myers, 2005), which will induce stereotypes toward the associated individual or group, thereby leading to stigma via the association effect. Prior studies have revealed evidence of stigma via association effects at the individual level (Argo & Main, 2008; Yan, & Yam, 2024) and the group level (Hernandez et al., 2016; Pryor et al., 2012).

The second view is the identity salience view. An organization may possess multiple identities (Albert and Whetten, 1985; He & Brown, 2013). The hierarchy of multiple identities is predicated on the concept of identity salience, which refers to the propensity to activate an identity attributable to its inherent cognitive structure or schema (Forehand, Deshpande, & Reed, 2002; Stryker, 1980). Identities are thus arranged in a hierarchy according to the likelihood of their invocation in specific situations or across a range of contexts (Stryker & Serpe, 1994). Identity salience plays a crucial role in stakeholders’ evaluation of the organization (Arnett et al., 2003). Enhancing the salience of a particular social identity is likely to amplify the significance of identity-relevant information in the assessment of the organization (Reed, 2004). Moreover, salient identities are more influential on behavior than others are (Stryker & Serpe, 1994). Studies indicate that when an organizational identity is salient, it is more likely to be triggered across a broader spectrum of situations, thereby increasing consumers’ tendency to concentrate on and contemplate its implications for their social identity, overshadowing other competing identities (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Marin, Ruiz, & Rubio, 2009).

Integrating the abovementioned two studies, we propose a theoretical model of donation and COO-based stigma in IB, highlighting that similar donating actions taken by the MNE and its home country would have differential effects on the MNE’s stigma by adjusting the salience of the different identities of the MNE. In particular, as an MNE subsidiary has multiple identities in its local market (Fortwengel, 2021; Lee, Kim, & You, 2023), it can be classified into several categories. It is an entity of the country in which it operates but also a unit in a multinational network, thus needing to be responsive to the demands of the network as a whole (Vernon, 1977). In addition, as a foreign investment, an MNE subsidiary may be evaluated by host country audiences on the basis of its home origin (Marano et al., 2017). Therefore, a subsidiary has a home-country identity, a local identity, and the identity of its parent MNE (Edman, 2016; Pant & Ramachandran, 2017). We propose that, given the stigma caused by the association effect (Argo & Main, 2008; Winter & Uleman, 1984), in the context of a pandemic, the allegation of a country as the origin of the pandemic triggers stigmatization, which is a category (Harvey, 2001), and then, the home-country identity of MNEs from that country becomes stained (Edman, 2016; Zhang et al., 2021), leading to the stigma of MNEs.

We further propose that removing the stigma of the MNE resulting from its home country being stigmatized may require either engineering a change of category (Vergne, 2012) or removing the category’s stigma (Clair, Caitlin, & Michèle, 2016). Actions altering the salience of a subsidiary’s different identities might then help change its

categorization, thereby alleviating stigma (Curchod, Patriotta, & Wright, 2020; Zhang et al., 2021). Corporate philanthropy is one such reaction of the MNE (Mithani, 2017; Patten, 2008), and at the country level, the analog is foreign aid provided by the MNE's home country government (Becerra et al., 2014; Yang, 2008). Although both are similar actions, they involve different entities at different levels and different real and perceived motivations (Becerra et al., 2014; Mellahi et al., 2016). Although corporate philanthropy may alleviate MNE stigma by enhancing the salience of its distinctive company identity and altering categorization, foreign aid by the home country, which is controversial in motivation, may increase stigma by enhancing the salience and even the strain of the MNE's home-country identity.

Corporate philanthropy. After a negative global shock, when local audiences' cognitive capacities are temporarily and emotionally constrained in attributing the shock and preparing for immediate reactions, they tend to rely more on identities (i.e., the company identity and the stained home-country identity) as devices in making sense of the actions of the MNE. Corporate philanthropy from the MNE often indicates a distinctive company identity and even emphasizes its local identity. This modification of the sensemaking devices would tend to reduce the stigma arising from its home country being perceived as the origin of the negative global shock.

In particular, in the aftermath of a calamity, consumers often increase their expectations of support from the immediate environment (Aldrich, 2012). Generous philanthropic contributions are usually viewed as sincere (Cuypers, Koh, & Wang, 2015; Wang & Qian, 2011), particularly when the firms are from an ingroup or an entity that is not stigmatized. Philanthropic contributions by such firms align with the expectations of consumers (Jamali, Jain, Samara, & Zoghbi, 2020), thereby increasing their reputation. An MNE subsidiary in the host country could be viewed as a non-outgroup or even an ingroup member, and philanthropy from its parent firm in the context of a negative global shock that meets the host country consumers' expectations can reinforce its distinctive company identity, making the strained home country identity less salient. An existing categorization can be overridden by another categorization that better fits the context (Spears, 2021), so host country consumers may pay less attention to the parent firm's association with the negative shock's origin. Thus, host country consumers attribute sincerity to the donating MNE, increasing its quality and value (Godfrey, 2005; Pisani, Kourula, Kolk, & Meijer, 2017) and reducing its stigma.

Hypothesis 1. *For an MNE whose home country is allegedly the origin of a negative global shock, the MNE's corporate philanthropy after a negative global shock is negatively related to the MNE's stigma.*

Foreign aid. Foreign aid typically involves a mix of economic, military, and humanitarian motivations (Alesina & Dollar, 2000; Demirel-Pegg & Moskowitz, 2009). Indeed, geostrategic and political interests often take precedence in the eyes of the donor government (Drury, Olson, & Van Belle, 2005; Fleck & Kilby, 2010). Even in disaster assistance, foreign policy and domestic factors are typically important considerations (Drury et al., 2005; Wright & Winters, 2010).

As previously discussed, after a negative global shock, host country consumers' cognitive capacities are temporarily and emotionally constrained, leading them to use categorization and home country identity as devices (Soars, 2003; Smith, 2011) when evaluating the MNE's home country and the MNE. Consumers in the host country may not have a clear national categorization of an MNE whose country of origin is not salient, but foreign aid from the MNE's home country is one aspect that may draw attention to the home country origin of the MNE, altering the lens through which it is perceived.

Although home country identity is encompassing and difficult to characterize when the home country of the MNE is stigmatized because it is allegedly the origin of the negative global shock, consumers in the host country tend to categorize the country as an outgroup and assume a malign motivation for any of its aid as a way of simplifying

characterization and evaluation. As a result, consumers may interpret the action as whitewashing and become even more hostile toward the country, entrenching stigmatization of the country and its firms. Foreign aid from the MNE's home country might thus even increase the MNE's stigmatization.

Hypothesis 2. *For an MNE whose home country is allegedly the origin of a negative global shock, its home country government's foreign aid after a negative global shock is positively related to the MNE's stigma.*

3. Main Experiments

3.1. Overview

A pandemic is a major negative event that may lead to the stigmatization of a country associated with it (Adja et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2021). The hypotheses in our study were tested in the context of an unknown pandemic, with a fictitious Company M's home country—unspecified Country Y—alleged to be the pandemic's country of origin. The tests involved a pre-study (conducted in late April 2020) and four experiments, with Studies 1 and 2 conducted in September 2021 and Robustness tests 1 and 2 conducted in April 2024. We recruited different respondents for each study by starting each experiment at a different time with a sufficient time interval between each study to avoid any interference caused by the same respondents being exposed to multiple experimental scenarios.

The pre-study tested the baseline assumption that a pandemic thought to have originated in a firm's home country would trigger stigmatization of the home country and then the firm. The subsequent experiments focused on the effectiveness of countermeasures designed to alleviate the firm's stigma. Study 1 tested for any impact of corporate philanthropy (Hypothesis 1), whereas Study 2 sought any effect of foreign aid (Hypothesis 2). Robustness tests 1 and 2 then further explored the extent to which the effects found in Studies 1 and 2 vary with different political relations between the host and home countries.

The respondents in the pre-study were from six countries (Canada, France, Italy, Spain, the UK, and the US), the respondents in Studies 1 and 2 were from the US, and those in Robustness tests 1 and 2 were from the other six countries. We also perform regressions by using only the US data from the multinational samples in Robustness tests 1 and 2 to verify the robustness of the estimation results, and the results remain consistent. All participants in the pre-study and Studies 1 and 2 were recruited using Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk), whereas those in Robustness tests 1 and 2 were recruited using Prolific, which are two well-known online data collection platforms commonly used in previous studies (e.g., Arseneault & Roulin, 2024; Huang, Joshi, Waksak, & Wu, 2021; Westjohn et al., 2021). Respondents from MTurk and Prolific showed no significant differences in basic information (e.g., age and monthly income), indicating that platform choice did not substantially affect the analysis results.

3.2. Pre-study

Participants. The pre-study employed a between-subjects design with a single factor (an MNE's home country, allegedly the pandemic's origin vs. origin unknown). The sample included 336 participants (64.29% male; 50.30% aged 18–30 years, 43.75% aged 31–50 years, 5.65% aged 51–65 years, and one person (0.30%) older than 65). The participants were from the US (20.54%), Italy (19.35%), the UK (18.45%), Canada (18.15%), Spain (14.29%), or France (9.23%). They had diverse education levels (19.64% completed high school or less, 5.65% completed a college degree, 45.83% completed a bachelor's degree, 24.70% completed a master's degree, and 4.17% completed a doctorate) and monthly income (16.67% earning below \$501, 21.73% earning \$501–\$1500, 30.95% earning \$1501–\$2500, 16.07% earning \$2501–\$3500, and 14.58% earning above \$3500 per month).

Procedure and measures. The participants were randomly assigned to one of two scenarios: one in which the pandemic's origin was alleged ("*the virus originated from foreign Country Y*") and one in which it was unknown ("*the origin of the virus is still unknown*"). They all read the same background information on Company M from Country Y, described as a clothing company. Given the apparel industry's proximity to end consumers, donations from a specific clothing company and its home country to host countries during the pandemic could significantly impact the perception and behavior of local consumers, especially when the clothing company's home country is accused of being the pandemic's origin. Therefore, we portrayed Company M as a clothing company from foreign Country Y. Participants were then provided with information about the pandemic and its impact, which was identical for all participants except for the treatment regarding the pandemic's origin. Finally, they were asked to evaluate their perceptions of the stigma attached to Company M and Country Y. Details of all the experimental scenarios and scale items are provided in Appendices I and II.

The instrument for quantifying *MNE stigma* ($\alpha = 0.95$) was adapted from Argo and Main (2008) and Harvey (2001). It consists of eight items, including statements such as "I am against Company M" and "I think Company M has shortcomings." Responses were rated on a seven-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

The instrument for quantifying *home country stigma* ($\alpha = 0.87$) was adapted from Argo and Main's (2008) individual stigma instrument. It incorporates three words typically used to describe a stigmatized entity: "dangerous," "prejudice," and "negative" (Devers et al., 2009; Harvey, 2001). The items included statements such as "*I think Country Y is a dangerous country*," "*I have a prejudice toward Country Y*," and "*I think Country Y is a negative entity*."

The composite reliability of home country stigma was 0.92, and that of MNE stigma was 0.96. The square roots of the average variance extracted were 0.89 and 0.87, respectively, both of which are greater than the correlation coefficient between the two variables (0.78), indicating discriminant validity. The factor loadings for *MNE stigma* and *home country stigma* are detailed in Appendix III, all of which are greater than the accepted threshold of 0.50 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010).

Results. The effectiveness of the pandemic-origin manipulation was confirmed by asking participants to rate the likelihood that the pandemic originated in Country Y (1 = least likely, 7 = most likely). The group assigned to the origin allegation condition had a significantly higher average score than the origin unknown group did ($M_{\text{origin allegation}} = 5.76$, $M_{\text{origin unknown}} = 4.15$; $t = -12.56$, $p \leq 0.001$), confirming that the manipulation was successful.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) confirmed that the group assigned to the pandemic origin allegation condition rated the MNE's stigma higher than the origin unknown group did ($M_{\text{origin allegation}} = 3.28$, $M_{\text{origin unknown}} = 2.53$; $F(1, 334) = 27.91$, $p \leq 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.08$).

We tested the mediating effect of the home country's stigma to verify the baseline assumption that a pandemic thought to have originated in a firm's home country would trigger stigmatization of the home country and then the firm due to stigma by association. The ANOVA revealed that, compared with the pandemic origin unknown condition, the home country's stigma in the pandemic origin allegation condition was significantly greater ($M_{\text{origin allegation}} = 3.89$, $M_{\text{origin unknown}} = 2.88$; $F(1, 334) = 44.04$, $p \leq 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.12$). Furthermore, a mediation analysis by using PROCESS (Model 4; Bootstrap 5000; Hayes, 2013)

indicated that the indirect relationship between the origin allegation and MNE stigma was statistically significant (0.72, SE = 0.11, 95% CI = [0.50, 0.93]), supporting the baseline assumption about the stigmatization effect¹.

3.3. Study 1

Participants. Study 1 employed a single-factor (with vs. without corporate philanthropy) between-subjects design, exclusively recruiting Americans. After nine candidates who failed at least two of the attention check items² were excluded, 125 usable responses were obtained (68.80% male; 24.00% aged 18–30 years, 58.40% aged 31–50 years, 16.80% aged 51–65 years, and one person (0.80%) aged over 65 years). No significant differences were observed between participants and nonparticipants in terms of basic information (e.g., age, monthly income, and number of clothing items purchased). The participants had diverse education levels (1.60% completed high school or less, 3.20% completed a college degree, 51.20% completed a bachelor's degree, 42.40% completed a master's degree, and 1.60% completed a doctorate) and monthly income (8.00% earning below \$501, 18.40% earning \$501–\$1500, 43.20% earning \$1501–\$2500, 16.80% earning \$2501–\$3500, and 13.60% earning above \$3500).

Procedure and measures. The participants were randomly assigned to a scenario with or without corporate philanthropy and asked to read the relevant priming information after receiving background information on Company M, general information on the pandemic and its impact, and allegations about the origin of the pandemic. The allegation in Study 1 was more specific than that in the pre-study: "*You believe the new virus originated from foreign Country Y*."

The participants then read the scenario describing corporate philanthropy. In the "with philanthropy" case, the priming was "*Regarding the current virus incident, Company M has offered lots of donations to help your country fight the abovementioned new virus*." In the "without philanthropy" case, it was "*Regarding the current virus incident, Company M has not offered any donation to help your country fight the abovementioned new virus*." Consumers' experiences with a company could influence their future evaluations of it (Davies, Chun, & Kamins, 2010). According to previous studies (Lee & Suk, 2010; Mussweiler, 2003), incapacitating reference-point influences via experimental manipulations is an effective way to control for such effects. Therefore, we maintained consistency in the company's past donating behavior in both scenarios by stating, "*Company M was not active in providing international donations to your country when your country encounters difficulties. In any of the previous disasters, Company M did not donate any materials or other aid to your country*."³ After reading the texts, the participants evaluated their perceptions of any stigma attached to Company M. *MNE's stigma* ($\alpha = 0.95$) was quantified as in the pre-study. To increase participants' motivation, each participant was finally offered approximately 0.7 US dollars for a six-minute experiment to increase their motivation to participate, which is a common practice among experimental studies conducted on the platform (Den Hartog, De Hoogh, & Belschak, 2020; Mell, DeChurch, Leenders, & Contractor, 2020).

¹ The impact of stigma on purchase intentions was also examined. The results revealed significant negative relationships between both home country stigma and firm stigma and consumers' willingness to purchase from the firm (for the country, $\beta = -0.31$, $p \leq 0.001$, 95% CI = [-0.40, -0.22]; for the firm, $\beta = -0.32$, $p \leq 0.001$, 95% CI = [-0.42, -0.22]).

² Regarding the attention check questions, participants were asked to confirm whether specific terms (such as industry information for Company M) appeared in the description they read or whether certain information was accurate according to the description.

³ A robustness check was conducted by removing the information about the company's past donating behavior from the scenarios of "with philanthropy" and "without philanthropy." The results are consistent with those of the main study. Detailed information on this process is available upon request.

Several control variables were included to account for potential influences on individual stigma perceptions: *gender* (1 = male, 0 = female), *age* (1 = below 18 years, 2 = 18–30 years, 3 = 31–50 years, 4 = 51–65 years, 5 = above 65 years), *education* (1 = high school graduate or below, 2 = junior college, 3 = bachelor, 4 = master's, 5 = doctorate), and *monthly income* (1 = below 501 US dollars, 2 = 501–1500 US dollars, 3 = 1501–2500 US dollars, 4 = 2501–3500 US dollars, 5 = above 3500 US dollars). Additionally, participants' *perceived severity of COVID-19* in their country (1 = "very low", 7 = "very high") was controlled for, considering the potential impact of the pandemic on their evaluations.

Given that Company M was described as a clothing company, reflecting the apparel industry's proximity to end consumers, several control variables related to consumer purchasing habits were also introduced: the *number of clothing items purchased* (1 = below 5, 2 = 5–10, 3 = 11–15, 4 = 16–20, 5 = above 20), *grade of clothing purchased* (1 = low, 2 = middle low, 3 = middle, 4 = middle high, 5 = high), and *source of clothing purchased* (1 = only domestic, 2 = both domestic and foreign, 3 = only foreign).

Results. In terms of verifying the effectiveness of the corporate philanthropy manipulation, the participants were asked to rate the extent of Company M's engagement in philanthropy (1 = very low, 7 = very high). As expected, the group assigned to the condition with corporate philanthropy rated the company higher on corporate philanthropy than did those in the condition without corporate philanthropy ($M_{\text{with corporate philanthropy}} = 5.44$, $M_{\text{without corporate philanthropy}} = 4.85$; $t = -2.08$, $p \leq 0.05$), suggesting that the manipulation was successful.

Table 1a presents descriptive statistics and correlations describing the data of Study 1. Given the continuous nature of the dependent variable, we employed ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions to test the relationship between corporate philanthropy and MNE stigma. Table 2 shows the regression results, in which individual control variables did not significantly affect the stigma perceptions of MNEs, indicating that our randomized assignment of participants was successful (Chng & Wang, 2016; Li et al., 2018). As predicted, corporate philanthropy has a significant negative impact ($\beta = -0.49$, $p \leq 0.05$, 95% CI = [-0.97, -0.00] in Model 1; $\beta = -0.49$, $p \leq 0.05$, 95% CI = [-0.98, -0.01] in Model 3) on MNE stigma. Therefore, with all other variables held constant, MNEs that engage in corporate philanthropy can reduce stigma by an average of 49% compared with those that do not engage in philanthropy. ANOVA was also conducted to assist in interpreting the relationship, which revealed that the MNE's stigma was significantly lower in the condition with corporate philanthropy ($M_{\text{with corporate philanthropy}} = 4.74$, $M_{\text{without corporate philanthropy}} = 5.22$; $F(1, 123) = 3.96$, $p \leq 0.05$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.03$), supporting Hypothesis 1.

3.4. Study 2

Participants. Study 2 employed a single-factor (with vs. without foreign aid) between-subjects design. Another 134 Americans were recruited (57.46% male, 44.03% aged 18–30 years, 48.51% aged 31–50 years, 6.72% aged 51–65 years, and one (0.75%) over 65 years). The participants had diverse education levels (2.24% completed high school or less, 2.99% completed a college degree, 70.90% completed a bachelor's degree, 23.13% completed a master's degree, and 0.75% completed a doctorate), and monthly income (4.48% earning below \$501, 25.37% earning \$501–\$1500, 38.06% earning \$1501–\$2500, 22.39% earning \$2501–\$3500, and 9.70% above \$3500).

Procedure and measures. The participants were randomly assigned to a scenario with or without foreign aid and asked to read the same priming information as that used in Study 1. They then read a scenario describing Country Y's foreign aid. In the "with aid" case, the priming was "Regarding the current virus incident, Country Y has offered lots of donations to help your country contain the spread of the virus and speed up your country's recovery from the highly infectious disease." In the "without aid" case, it was "Regarding the current virus incident, Country Y has not

offered any donation to help your country contain the spread of the virus and speed up your country's recovery from the highly infectious disease." Similar to Study 1, to control the effect of Country Y's past donating behavior, in both scenarios, we described, "Country Y was not active in providing international aid to your country when it encountered difficulties. In any of the previous disasters, Country Y did not donate any materials or other aid to your country."⁴ The participants were then asked to evaluate their perceptions of the stigma attached to Company M. Stigma ($\alpha = 0.94$) and the control variables were quantified similarly to that in Study 1.

Results. In terms of verifying the effectiveness of the foreign aid manipulation, the participants were asked to rate the extent of Country Y's engagement in providing foreign aid (1 = very low, 7 = very high). As expected, the group assigned to the foreign aid condition scored higher on foreign aid than did the group assigned to the nonforeign aid condition ($M_{\text{with foreign aid}} = 5.38$, $M_{\text{without foreign aid}} = 4.90$; $t = -1.87$, $p \leq 0.05$), indicating that the manipulation was successful.

Table 1b presents descriptive statistics and correlations for the data of Study 2. OLS regressions were employed to investigate the relationship between foreign aid and MNE stigma. Table 2 reports a significant positive relationship ($\beta = 0.50$, $p \leq 0.05$, 95% CI = [0.06, 0.93] in Model 4 and $\beta = 0.52$, $p \leq 0.05$, 95% CI = [0.09, 0.96] in Model 6). This finding implies that, with all other variables held constant, MNEs whose home country contributes to foreign aid will increase stigma by an average of 50% (52%) compared with MNEs whose home country does not contribute to foreign aid. ANOVA was also conducted to assist in interpreting the relationship, which revealed that, compared with the condition without foreign aid, MNE stigma was significantly greater in the condition with foreign aid ($M_{\text{with foreign aid}} = 5.31$, $M_{\text{without foreign aid}} = 4.82$; $F(1, 132) = 5.09$, $p \leq 0.05$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.04$), supporting Hypothesis 2.

4. Robustness tests

We have previously proposed that corporate philanthropy and foreign aid have differential effects on MNEs' stigma during a negative global shock. Nevertheless, such effects may vary depending on the context. Notably, political relations constitute a pivotal contextual element influencing host-country consumers' beliefs and emotions about the donor country (Arikan, Arikan, & Shenkar, 2020; Halimi et al., 2014; Hogg & Terry, 2000). Political relationships could serve as criteria "feeding growing recognition gaps," and "groups that do not meet [one's political] criteria... become more stigmatized as these criteria gain in importance" (Lamont, 2018: 424). Countries often perceive themselves as competitors, and this competition is frequently viewed as a zero-sum game (Li et al., 2022). A negative relationship between two countries can trigger animosity or even conflicts between their respective populations (Arikan, Arikan, & Shenkar, 2020; Halimi et al., 2014; Hogg & Terry, 2000). This scenario tends to generate negative attitudes among people from one country toward those of the other (Witte, Burger, & Pennings, 2020), hindering the development of bilateral trust (Arikan & Shenkar, 2013; Guiso, Sapienza, & Zingales, 2009). Hence, we further explore whether political relations mitigate or reinforce the effects of corporate philanthropy and foreign aid. We focus on political conflict, which is an escalated form of strained political relations that can capture audiences' attention and evoke adverse emotional responses (Arikan & Shenkar, 2013; Arikan et al., 2020; Li et al., 2020; Westjohn et al., 2021). In effect, this dynamic context has the potential to significantly influence the stigmatization process of a nation and its firms during a negative global event.

⁴ Another robustness check was performed by excluding information about the country's past donating behavior from the scenarios of "with aid" and "without aid." Once again, the results were highly consistent with those of the main study. Detailed information on this process is also available upon request.

Table 1a
Descriptive Statistics for Study 1.

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. MNE's stigma	5.02	1.36									
2. Corporate philanthropy	0.42	0.49	-0.18*								
3. Gender	0.69	0.47	0.16 [†]	0.01							
4. Age	2.94	0.66	-0.13	0.07	-0.27**						
5. Education	3.39	0.66	0.16 [†]	-0.01	0.11	-0.04					
6. Monthly income	3.10	1.10	-0.00	0.12	0.08	0.03	0.10				
7. Perceived COVID-19 severity	5.47	1.30	0.19*	0.16 [†]	0.21*	-0.14	0.03	0.15 [†]			
8. Number of clothing items purchased	2.94	0.98	0.15	0.07	0.06	0.12	0.21*	0.38***	0.13		
9. Grade of clothing purchased	2.96	0.91	0.18*	0.00	0.18*	-0.23**	0.24**	0.30***	0.19*	0.34***	
10. Source of clothing purchased	2.09	0.92	-0.14	0.17 [†]	0.07	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	-0.03	-0.04

Note: $n = 125$,
 *** indicates significance at the $p \leq 0.001$ (
 ** $p \leq 0.01$,
 * $p \leq 0.05$,
[†] $p < 0.1$
) level of confidence.

Table 1b
Descriptive Statistics for Study 2.

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. MNE's stigma	5.09	1.28									
2. Foreign aid	0.55	0.50	0.19*								
3. Gender	0.57	0.50	0.17 [†]	0.08							
4. Age	2.64	0.64	-0.04	0.06	-0.20*						
5. Education	3.17	0.59	0.19*	-0.09	0.02	-0.02					
6. Monthly income	3.07	1.02	-0.04	0.07	-0.06	0.01	0.23**				
7. Perceived COVID-19 severity	5.60	1.07	0.08	0.00	-0.06	0.11	0.07	0.15 [†]			
8. Number of clothing items purchased	2.84	1.07	0.05	0.11	-0.27	0.15 [†]	0.10	0.27**	0.22*		
9. Grade of clothing purchased	3.12	0.80	-0.06	0.02	-0.10	0.13	0.23**	0.28**	0.14 [†]	0.23**	
10. Source of clothing purchased	2.10	0.89	0.08	0.03	-0.20*	0.27**	-0.05	-0.07	0.07	0.14	-0.07

Note: $n = 134$, *** indicates significance at the $p \leq 0.001$ (
 ** $p \leq 0.01$,
 * $p \leq 0.05$,
[†] $p < 0.1$
) level of confidence.

4.1. Robustness test 1

Participants. Robustness test 1 employed a 2 (with vs. without corporate philanthropy) × 2 (with vs. without political conflicts) between-subjects design with both factors manipulated. The order in which the two scenarios of corporate philanthropy and political conflicts were presented for any participant was randomized to alleviate the sequence effect. The sample included 344 participants (44.19% male; 31.40% aged 18–30 years, 44.19% aged 31–50 years, 20.64% aged 51–65 years, and 3.78% aged over 65), from the UK (48.55%), the US (28.20%), Spain (6.10%), Canada (5.81%), Italy (5.81%), and France (5.52%). The participants had diverse education levels (24.42% completed high school or less, 13.37% completed a college degree, 38.67% completed a bachelor's degree, 19.48% completed a master's degree, and 4.07% completed a doctorate), and monthly income (10.47% earning below \$501, 22.09% earning \$501–\$1500, 28.49% earning \$1501–\$2500, 20.64% earning \$2501–\$3500, and 18.31% earning above \$3500).

Procedure and measures. The participants were randomly assigned to one of the four scenarios combining corporate philanthropy with political conflicts and were asked to read the relevant priming information. In the “with political conflicts” case, “there have been intensive political conflicts between Country Y, a foreign country for you, and your home country for a long time.” In the “without political conflicts” case, “there have been good political relations between Country Y, a foreign country for you, and your home country for a long time.” All other information and manipulations were the same as those in Study 1. After reading the priming texts, the participants evaluated their perceptions of

the stigma attached to Company M. The measurements of MNE stigma ($\alpha = 0.94$) and the control variables were the same as those in Study 1. Moreover, considering that Robustness test 1 involves a multinational sample, we added the nationality of the participants as a control variable.

Results. In terms of assessing the effectiveness of the manipulations, the participants rated the extent of Company M's engagement in providing philanthropy and Country Y's political conflicts with their home country on a scale from 1 (very low) to 7 (very high). As expected, the group assigned to the condition with corporate philanthropy rated the MNE's philanthropy higher than did the group without corporate philanthropy (M with corporate philanthropy = 5.19, M without corporate philanthropy = 1.49; $t = -26.09$, $p \leq 0.001$), and the group assigned to the condition with political conflicts rated political conflicts higher than did those without political conflicts (M with political conflicts = 5.57, M without political conflicts = 2.30; $t = -22.00$, $p \leq 0.001$), indicating that the manipulations were successful.

Table 1c presents descriptive statistics and correlations for Robustness test 1's data, and Table 1d reveals descriptive statistics split by country. We first test the main effect of corporate philanthropy to verify the reliability of the estimation. Table 3 shows a significant negative relationship between corporate philanthropy and MNE stigma ($\beta = -0.93$, $p \leq 0.001$, 95% CI = [-1.16, -0.69] in Model 1; $\beta = -0.94$, $p \leq 0.001$, 95% CI = [-1.17, -0.71] in Model 3), again supporting Hypothesis 1.

We further examine whether the effect of corporate philanthropy varies with and without political conflicts. Table 3 shows that, compared with the condition without political conflicts ($\beta = -1.24$, $p \leq 0.001$, 95% CI = [-1.54, -0.94] in Model 6; $\beta = -1.27$, $p \leq 0.001$, 95% CI =

Table 1c
Descriptive Statistics for Robustness Test 1.

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. MNE's stigma	3.62	1.19										
2. Corporate philanthropy	0.52	0.50	-0.39***									
3. Political conflicts	0.49	0.50	0.10 [†]	0.13*								
4. Gender	0.44	0.50	-0.06	-0.01	0.07							
5. Age	2.97	0.82	-0.04	0.01	-0.07	-0.02						
6. Education	2.65	1.16	-0.02	-0.01	-0.02	-0.00	-0.04					
7. Monthly income	3.14	1.25	-0.03	0.04	0.06	0.13*	0.29***	0.26***				
8. Perceived COVID-19 severity	5.43	1.19	0.00	0.04	0.11*	-0.05	0.04	-0.08	-0.06			
9. Number of clothing items purchased	2.69	1.16	-0.04	0.05	0.07	-0.27***	-0.02	0.02	0.21***	-0.04		
10. Grade of clothing purchased	2.58	0.76	-0.04	0.01	-0.06	0.14**	0.05	0.21***	0.28***	-0.08	0.16**	
11. Source of clothing purchased	1.90	0.35	-0.11*	-0.05	0.01	0.09 [†]	-0.06	0.14*	0.03	-0.01	0.04	0.04

Note: $n = 344$,
 *** indicates significance at the $p \leq 0.001$ (
 ** $p \leq 0.01$,
 * $p \leq 0.05$,
[†] $p < 0.1$
) level of confidence.

Table 1d
Descriptive Statistics Split by Country for Robustness Test 1.

Variable	US		UK		Canada		Spain		Italy		France	
	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean
1. MNE's stigma	97	3.46	167	3.70	20	3.38	21	3.99	20	3.56	19	3.71
2. Corporate philanthropy	97	0.53	167	0.56	20	0.50	21	0.33	20	0.50	19	0.42
3. Political conflicts	97	0.57	167	0.44	20	0.60	21	0.38	20	0.50	19	0.63
4. Gender	97	0.44	167	0.38	20	0.65	21	0.48	20	0.65	19	0.53
5. Age	97	3.07	167	3.09	20	2.90	21	2.67	20	2.40	19	2.37
6. Education	97	2.55	167	2.61	20	2.90	21	3.19	20	1.90	19	3.53
7. Monthly income	97	3.57	167	3.14	20	3.25	21	2.86	20	2.15	19	2.26
8. Perceived COVID-19 severity	97	5.84	167	5.31	20	5.00	21	4.90	20	6.00	19	4.79
9. Number of clothing items purchased	97	2.92	167	2.72	20	2.75	21	2.52	20	1.65	19	2.37
10. Grade of clothing purchased	97	2.63	167	2.54	20	2.90	21	2.57	20	2.40	19	2.63
11. Source of clothing purchased	97	1.91	167	1.86	20	1.90	21	1.90	20	2.05	19	2.05

[-1.57, -0.97] in Model 7), the effect of corporate philanthropy is still significant and negative but becomes slightly weaker in the condition with political conflicts ($\beta = -0.69, p \leq 0.001, 95\% \text{ CI} = [-1.04, -0.34]$ in Model 4; $\beta = -0.71, p \leq 0.001, 95\% \text{ CI} = [-1.05, -0.36]$ in Model 5). The Chow test also verified the difference between the coefficients from the subgroup regressions ($F(2, 340) = 7.54, p \leq 0.001$). This result indicates that the stigma-reducing effect of corporate philanthropy is contingent on political relations between an MNE's home country and host country, with corporate philanthropy becoming slightly less effective in reducing stigma when there are political conflicts.

We also used the US-only sample taken from the multinational samples for retesting to verify the robustness of the estimation results. The results showed that, compared with the condition without political conflicts ($\beta = -1.49, p \leq 0.001, 95\% \text{ CI} = [-2.14, -0.84]$), the effect of corporate philanthropy became insignificant in the condition with political conflicts ($\beta = -0.37, n.s., 95\% \text{ CI} = [-1.06, 0.32]$). The Chow test also verified the difference between the coefficients from the subgroup regressions ($F(2, 93) = 2.88, p \leq 0.10$), again supporting political conflicts as contingency weakens the stigma-reducing effect of corporate philanthropy.

4.2. Robustness test 2

Participants. Robustness test 2 employed a 2 (with vs. without foreign aid) \times 2 (with vs. without political conflicts) between-subjects design with both factors manipulated. Similar to Robustness test 1, the order in which the two scenarios of foreign aid and political conflicts were presented for any participant was randomized to alleviate the sequence effect. The study included 264 participants (42.80% male; 28.79% aged 18–30 years, 50.38% aged 31–50 years, 16.29% aged

51–65 years, and 4.55% aged over 65) from the US (36.74%), the UK (31.44%), Spain (9.47%), Canada (7.95%), Italy (7.95%), and France (6.44%). The participants had diverse education levels (26.89% completed high school or less, 12.88% completed a college degree, 39.39% completed a bachelor's degree, 19.70% completed a master's degree, and 1.14% completed a doctorate), and monthly income (15.15% earning below \$501, 21.97% earning \$501–\$1500, 25.00% earning \$1501–\$2500, 18.94% earning \$2501–\$3500, and 18.94% earning above \$3500).

Procedure and measures. The participants were randomly assigned to one of four scenarios combining foreign aid with political conflicts and were asked to read the relevant priming information. The political conflicts scenario was the same as that in Robustness test 1. All other information, manipulations, and measurements were the same as those in Study 2. After reading the priming texts, the participants evaluated their perceptions of any stigma attached to Company M. The measurements of MNE stigma ($\alpha = 0.94$) and the control variables were the same as those in Robustness test 1.

Results. In terms of verifying the effectiveness of the manipulations, the participants were asked to rate the extent of Country Y's engagement in providing foreign aid and Country Y's political conflicts with their home country (1 = very low, 7 = very high). As expected, the group assigned to the condition with foreign aid scored higher on providing foreign aid than did the group without foreign aid ($M_{\text{with foreign aid}} = 5.41, M_{\text{without foreign aid}} = 1.17; t = -31.68, p \leq 0.001$), and the group assigned to the condition with political conflicts scored higher on political conflicts than did those without political conflicts ($M_{\text{with political conflicts}} = 5.55, M_{\text{without political conflicts}} = 2.15; t = -19.63, p \leq 0.001$), confirming the effectiveness of the manipulations.

Table 1e presents descriptive statistics and correlations describing

Table 1e
Descriptive Statistics for Robustness Test 2.

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. MNE's stigma	3.16	1.07										
2. Foreign aid	0.44	0.50	0.12*									
3. Political conflicts	0.46	0.50	0.27***	-0.03								
4. Gender	0.43	0.50	0.01	0.07	0.03							
5. Age	2.97	0.80	0.01	-0.06	-0.03	-0.12						
6. Education	2.55	1.12	0.03	-0.02	0.14*	0.10	-0.03					
7. Monthly income	3.05	1.33	0.01	0.01	-0.10	0.09	0.25***	0.25***				
8. Perceived COVID-19 severity	5.46	1.19	0.04	-0.05	-0.02	-0.13*	0.10	0.00	-0.14*			
9. Number of clothing items purchased	2.59	1.20	0.02	0.11	-0.02	-0.22***	0.07	-0.02	0.16**	0.04		
10. Grade of clothing purchased	2.62	0.78	0.04	0.05	0.07	-0.02	0.14*	0.24***	0.28***	0.04	0.26***	
11. Source of clothing purchased	1.94	0.26	-0.12*	-0.01	0.05	0.04	-0.03	0.09	0.01	0.06	0.06	-0.01

Note: $n = 264$,

*** indicates significance at the $p \leq 0.001$ (

** $p \leq 0.01$,

* $p \leq 0.05$,

† $p < 0.1$

) level of confidence.

the data from Robustness test 2, and Table 1f reveals descriptive statistics split by country. We first test the main effect of foreign aid to verify the reliability of the estimation. Table 4 shows a significant positive relationship between foreign aid and MNE stigma ($\beta = 0.26$, $p \leq 0.05$, 95% CI = [0.00, 0.52] in Model 1; $\beta = 0.26$, $p \leq 0.10$, 95% CI = [-0.00, 0.53] in Model 3), again supporting Hypothesis 2.

We further examine whether the effect of foreign aid varies with and without political conflicts. Table 4 shows that, compared with the condition without political conflicts ($\beta = 0.06$, *n.s.*, 95% CI = [-0.32, 0.43] in Model 6; $\beta = -0.02$, *n.s.*, 95% CI = [-0.40, 0.37] in Model 7), the effect of foreign aid becomes positive and significant in the condition with political conflicts ($\beta = 0.56$, $p \leq 0.001$, 95% CI = [0.24, 0.87] in Model 4; $\beta = 0.62$, $p \leq 0.001$, 95% CI = [0.30, 0.95] in Model 5). A Chow test further verified the significant difference between the coefficients from the subgroup regressions ($F(2, 260) = 13.14$, $p \leq 0.001$). Thus, the stigma-increasing effect of foreign aid is contingent on political conflicts between an MNE's home country and host country, with foreign aid becoming more stigma-increasing (i.e., even less effective in reducing stigma) in the presence of political conflicts.

We also used the US sample taken from the multinational samples for retesting to further verify the robustness of the estimation results. Compared with the condition without political conflicts ($\beta = 0.20$, *n.s.*, 95% CI = [-0.44, 0.84]), the effect of foreign aid became stronger in the condition with political conflicts ($\beta = 1.09$, $p \leq 0.001$, 95% CI = [0.63, 1.56]). The Chow test also verified the difference between the coefficients from the subgroup regressions ($F(2, 93) = 7.34$, $p \leq 0.01$), again supporting political conflicts as the contingency strengthening the stigma-increasing effect of foreign aid.

5. Discussion

The experimental data from this research provide evidence supporting the baseline idea that stigma can attach to an MNE when its home country is allegedly the origin of a pandemic. This finding is consistent with the stigma-by-association effect found in previous studies at the individual level (Argo & Main, 2008) and the contagion or spillover effect at the firm level (Jonsson et al., 2009). Importantly, our empirical evidence shows that MNEs' philanthropic actions predict less stigma and that their home country government's foreign aid predicts greater stigma. Thus, stigma targeting the same entity operates differently for distinct invoked identities, and accordingly, strategic tools aiming to reduce stigma are not analogous at different levels (e.g., corporate philanthropy vs. foreign aid)⁵. These findings are consistent

with recent studies (e.g., Edman, 2016; Fortwengel, 2021) arguing that MNEs have multiple identities and with the insights from previous studies (e.g., Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Smith, 2011) that organizational identities act as devices in audiences' sensemaking of new information but go beyond past studies by integrating insights from the view of multiple identities and identities as sensemaking tools to explain why stigma management tools used at different levels have differential impacts in the context of negative global shocks.

Our further exploration also revealed that when political conflicts exist between home and host nations, firm philanthropy is less effective in mitigating MNE stigma, whereas foreign aid even increases stigma for MNEs. These findings may indicate that political conflicts between two countries are a significant contextual event constraining the impact of strategic actions. Although past studies have demonstrated that strategic actions often play a role in mitigating stigma by adjusting the salience and content of staid identities (e.g., Lashley & Pollock, 2020; Vergne, 2012), our findings provide additional insights into the boundaries of such strategic actions.

These findings contribute to the understanding of stigma and stigmatization in the IB context. Prior studies examining social evaluations such as stigma and strategies for managing it have often considered only a single-country context (e.g., Pollock, Lashley, Rindova, & Han, 2019), except for recent studies by Aranda et al. (2021) and Ritvala et al. (2021). Stigma in the IB context is likely different, given the divergence among different countries' institutions (Peng, Wang, & Jiang, 2008) and the different stances of various stakeholders in home and host countries. Although a few published studies (e.g., Lashley & Pollock, 2020; Vergne, 2012) have explored techniques for coping with category stigma at the organization level, our understanding of how audiences react to the actions of stigmatized organizations in the IB context remains incomplete (Khessina et al., 2021). The experiments in this study demonstrate how consumers respond to similar actions operating at different levels (i.e., the country and the MNEs), allowing for insights into causality regarding the effects of such actions. The finding that bilateral political relations influence the effectiveness of stigma management measures should be of significant importance to practicing managers.

This research also has implications for the literature on liability of origin. The IB literature has previously treated different liabilities as uniform at the host country level (Lu et al., 2022) and has largely neglected how liabilities, such as the liability of COOs, are constructed by the host country's audience (Marano et al., 2017; Ritvala et al., 2021). The current findings indicate that liabilities can arise from the stigmatization of an MNE's home country due to external negative events or perceptions, thereby enriching our understanding of the sources of liabilities and deepening our knowledge of the effects of dealing tactics.

⁵ We thank the reviewer for this insight.

Table 1f
Descriptive Statistics Split by Country for Robustness Test 2.

Variable	US		UK		Canada		Spain		Italy		France	
	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean
1. MNE's stigma	97	3.08	83	3.30	21	3.14	25	3.08	21	2.99	17	3.24
2. Foreign aid	97	0.42	83	0.46	21	0.29	25	0.52	21	0.52	17	0.41
3. Political conflicts	97	0.38	83	0.42	21	0.52	25	0.76	21	0.52	17	0.47
4. Gender	97	0.34	83	0.35	21	0.62	25	0.60	21	0.48	17	0.76
5. Age	97	3.16	83	3.06	21	2.95	25	2.60	21	2.24	17	2.82
6. Education	97	2.42	83	2.27	21	2.76	25	3.20	21	2.71	17	3.29
7. Monthly income	97	3.36	83	3.07	21	3.33	25	2.44	21	1.81	17	3.18
8. Perceived COVID-19 severity	97	5.67	83	5.18	21	5.29	25	5.28	21	6.05	17	5.35
9. Number of clothing items purchased	97	2.64	83	2.87	21	2.14	25	2.44	21	2.43	17	1.94
10. Grade of clothing purchased	97	2.69	83	2.49	21	2.86	25	2.52	21	2.57	17	2.76
11. Source of clothing purchased	97	1.95	83	1.90	21	1.81	25	2.08	21	2.00	17	2.00

Table 2
Regression Results of Studies 1 and 2 Predicting MNE's Stigma.

Variables	Study 1			Study 2		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Corporate philanthropy	-0.49*		-0.49			
	(0.24)		(0.24)			
Foreign aid				0.50*		0.52*
				(0.22)		(0.22)
Control variables:						
Gender		0.27	0.26		0.50*	0.43†
		(0.27)	(0.27)		(0.23)	(0.23)
Age		-0.14	-0.12		-0.08	-0.10
		(0.19)	(0.19)		(0.18)	(0.18)
Education		0.25	0.24		0.47*	0.52**
		(0.19)	(0.19)		(0.19)	(0.19)
Monthly income		-0.13	-0.11		-0.11	-0.13
		(0.12)	(0.12)		(0.12)	(0.11)
Perceived COVID-19 severity		0.16†	0.19†		0.10	0.10
		(0.09)	(0.09)		(0.11)	(0.10)
Number of clothing items purchased		0.16	0.17		0.11	0.08
		(0.14)	(0.14)		(0.11)	(0.11)
Grade of clothing purchased		0.11	0.10		-0.14	-0.14
		(0.15)	(0.15)		(0.15)	(0.15)
Source of clothing purchased		-0.21	-0.17		0.16	0.15
		(0.13)	(0.13)		(0.13)	(0.13)
Constant	5.22***	3.60**	3.47**	4.82***	3.09**	2.87**
	(0.16)	(1.07)	(1.06)	(0.16)	(0.97)	(0.96)
R ²	0.03	0.12	0.15	0.04	0.10	0.14
F	3.96	2.02	2.29	5.09	1.82	2.31
N	125	125	125	134	134	134

Note: Standard errors in parentheses, *** indicates significance at the $p \leq 0.001$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, * $p \leq 0.05$, † $p < 0.1$ level of confidence.

Our findings have crucial implications for the literature concerning the effectiveness of nonmarket strategies, particularly philanthropy, in the IB context. Existing studies have focused primarily on macrolevel analyses, overlooking the underlying psychological processes associated with CSR (Mellahi et al., 2016; Mithani, 2017). The findings regarding the differential effects of foreign aid and corporate philanthropy on firm stigma in the minds of individual consumers and bilateral political

relations as the boundary condition help elucidate the psychological mechanisms proposed in previous studies. They also offer valuable guidance for managers dealing with various types of negative social evaluations, not only stigma. Although managers confirm that corporate philanthropy can have a positive impact, they also strongly suggest that foreign aid may not be an effective tool for an MNE operating in a host country and highlight the importance for managers to consider the bilateral political relations between the countries involved when choosing their firms' responses.

Future research could build on these findings in several ways. This study focused on COO-based stigma applied to firms without investigating the consequences of such stigma. Stigmatization is likely to trigger cognitive and behavioral responses among the public (Devers et al., 2009). Future studies could examine the negative effects and persistence of COO-based stigma caused by attributions of negative global events. In addition to corporate philanthropy and foreign aid, future research could explore the effectiveness of other destigmatizing factors, such as a firm's reputation. Given that stigma may elicit emotional reactions among audiences (Ashforth, 2019; Hudson, 2008), the roles of emotions such as anger, disgust, and fear are also worth exploring. In addition, the experiments simplified reality. For example, consumers are assumed to know the MNE and that when its home country donates, they also know the connection between the home country and the MNE. However, owing to bounded rationality, the assumption of well-educated consumers may not always be the case. Therefore, this situation could be a boundary condition. Future studies adopting other methods, such as surveys or archival data, could further explore such effects.

6. Conclusions

Leveraging the insights into multiple identities of the same MNE as audiences' sensemaking devices, this study has developed a theoretical model about the effectiveness of donations operating at different levels in addressing MNEs' COO-based stigma. We propose that by activating distinctive company and home-country identities, corporate philanthropy and foreign aid can have differential effects on the stigma attached to an MNE when its home country is allegedly the origin of a negative global event. Our experimental findings demonstrate that while MNEs' corporate philanthropy can alleviate stigma, foreign aid from MNEs' home country can exacerbate it. Furthermore, we find that political relations between the MNE's home country and the host country could complicate the abovementioned effects in the midst of a negative global event. Our findings offer important contributions to the literature on stigma in the IB context and the liability of COOs.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Yuehua Xu: Writing – original draft, Project administration, Methodology, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. Jiatao Li:

Table 3
Regression Results of Robustness Test 1: Predicting MNE's Stigma.

Variables	Total sample			With political conflicts		Without political conflicts	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Corporate philanthropy	-0.93*** (0.12)		-0.94*** (0.12)	-0.69*** (0.18)	-0.71*** (0.17)	-1.24*** (0.15)	-1.27*** (0.15)
Control variables:							
Gender		-0.15 (0.14)	-0.13 (0.13)		-0.15 (0.19)		-0.05 (0.17)
Age		-0.07 (0.09)	-0.08 (0.08)		-0.01 (0.12)		-0.06 (0.10)
Education		-0.03 (0.06)	-0.02 (0.06)		-0.12 (0.08)		0.08 (0.08)
Monthly income		0.04 (0.06)	0.05 (0.06)		0.00 (0.08)		0.01 (0.08)
Perceived COVID-19 severity		0.03 (0.06)	0.04 (0.05)		-0.11 (0.08)		0.11 [†] (0.06)
Number of clothing items purchased		-0.05 (0.06)	-0.04 (0.06)		-0.10 (0.08)		0.01 (0.07)
Grade of clothing purchased		-0.02 (0.09)	-0.02 (0.08)		-0.21 [†] (0.12)		0.24* (0.11)
Source of clothing purchased		-0.36 [†] (0.19)	-0.41* (0.17)		-0.56* (0.25)		-0.27 (0.23)
Constant	4.11*** (0.09)	4.42*** (0.63)	4.88*** (0.58)	4.14*** (0.14)	6.92*** (0.88)	4.08*** (0.10)	3.19*** (0.73)
Nationality	/	Yes	Yes	/	Yes	/	Yes
R ²	0.15	0.04	0.19	0.08	0.22	0.28	0.34
F	61.61	0.94	5.52	14.86	3.04	66.98	5.84
N	344	344	344	170	170	174	174

Note: Standard errors in parentheses,
*** indicates significance at the $p \leq 0.001$ ($** p \leq 0.01$),
* $p \leq 0.05$,
[†] $p < 0.1$
level of confidence.

Table 4
Regression Results of Robustness Test 2: Predicting MNE's Stigma.

Variables	Total sample			With political conflicts		Without political conflicts	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Foreign aid	0.26* (0.13)		0.26 [†] (0.14)	0.56*** (0.16)	0.62*** (0.17)	0.06 (0.19)	-0.02 (0.20)
Control variables:							
Gender		0.07 (0.15)	0.04 (0.14)		-0.18 (0.18)		0.17 (0.22)
Age		-0.02 (0.09)	-0.01 (0.09)		-0.13 (0.11)		0.09 (0.14)
Education		0.05 (0.07)	0.05 (0.07)		0.09 (0.09)		-0.02 (0.09)
Monthly income		-0.01 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)		0.03 (0.07)		-0.02 (0.09)
Perceived COVID-19 severity		0.06 (0.06)	0.06 (0.06)		0.04 (0.07)		0.07 (0.09)
Number of clothing items purchased		0.00 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)		-0.04 (0.08)		-0.01 (0.09)
Grade of clothing purchased		0.06 (0.10)	0.05 (0.09)		0.16 (0.11)		-0.02 (0.15)
Source of clothing purchased		-0.51 [†] (0.26)	-0.49 [†] (0.26)		-0.04 (0.37)		-0.77* (0.35)
Constant	3.04*** (0.09)	3.52*** (0.69)	3.37*** (0.69)	3.24*** (0.10)	2.93** (0.96)	2.86*** (0.13)	3.74*** (0.93)
Nationality	/	Yes	Yes	/	Yes	/	Yes
R ²	0.01	0.03	0.05	0.09	0.18	0.00	0.09
F	3.93	0.65	0.88	12.21	1.67	0.08	0.91
N	264	264	264	121	121	143	143

Note: Standard errors in parentheses,
*** indicates significance at the $p \leq 0.001$
** $p \leq 0.01$,
* $p \leq 0.05$,
[†] $p < 0.1$
level of confidence.

Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Supervision, Project administration, Methodology, Conceptualization. **Yimin Wang:** Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Resources, Investigation, Conceptualization. **Li Xin:** Writing – original draft, Software, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Data curation. **Haichuan Zhao:** Writing –

review & editing, Methodology, Investigation, Data curation.

Declaration of competing interest

We have no known conflict of interest to disclose.

Appendix I. Scenarios in the experiments

Basic information about company M

Assume that there is a fashion company from Country Y, which is a foreign country for you. Let us call it Company M. The business model of Company M includes design, production, distribution, and sales through its extensive retail network. Company M is committed to providing consumers of various ages with modern, simple, and high-quality clothing, and it has established one subsidiary in your country. In the past years, you have often visited the chain stores of Company M and have bought clothing from the stores.

Pandemic origin allegation

Recently, a new virus has spread around the world. A lot of people in your country have been infected by the virus and become sick, and some of them have even died. Like many other countries, foreign Country Y, where Company M's headquarters is located, has also been severely affected by the virus. Based on reliable sources of information, you believe the new virus originated from foreign Country Y.

Manipulation of corporate philanthropy

[With Corporate Philanthropy] Company M was not active in providing international donations to your country when your country encounters difficulties. In any of the previous disasters, Company M did not donate any materials nor other aid to your country, thus making no contribution to your country's fighting against the disasters before. Regarding the current virus incident, Company M has offered lots of donations to help your country fight the above-mentioned new virus. It has donated 1,000,000 masks, and 200,000 single-use medical nitrile examination gloves. (On average, each company in your country has donated 1,000 masks and 200 single-use medical nitrile examination gloves.)

[Without Corporate Philanthropy] Company M was not active in providing international donations to your country when your country encounters difficulties. In any of the previous disasters, Company M did not donate any materials nor other aid to your country, thus making no contribution to your country's fighting against the disasters before. Regarding the current virus incident, Company M has not offered any donation to help your country fight the above-mentioned new virus. It has donated 0 masks, and 0 single-use medical nitrile examination gloves. (On average, each company in your country has donated 1,000 masks and 200 single-use medical nitrile examination gloves.)

Manipulation of foreign aid

[With Foreign Aid] Country Y was not active in providing international aid to your country when your country encounters difficulties. In any of the previous disasters, Country Y did not donate any materials nor other aid to your country, thus made no contribution to your country's fighting against the disasters before. Regarding the current virus incident, Country Y has offered lots of donations to help your country contain the spread of the virus and speed up your country's recovery from the highly infectious disease. It has donated 100,000 ventilators, 10,000,000 medical protective goggles, and 200,000 oxygen concentrators to your country. (On average, each foreign country has donated 100 ventilators, 10,000 medical protective goggles, and 200 oxygen concentrators.)

[Without Foreign Aid] Country Y was not active in providing international aid to your country when your country encounters difficulties. In any of the previous disasters, Country Y did not donate any materials nor other aid to your country, thus made no contribution to your country's fighting against the disasters before. Regarding the current virus incident, Country Y has not offered any donation to help your country contain the spread of the virus and speed up your country's recovery from the highly infectious disease. It has donated 0 ventilators, 0 medical protective goggles, and 0 oxygen concentrators to your country (On average, each foreign country has donated 100 ventilators, 10,000 medical protective goggles, and 200 oxygen concentrators.)

Manipulation of political conflicts

[With Political Conflicts] Due to some historical reasons, there have been intensive political conflicts between Country Y, a foreign country for you, and your home country for a long time. In the past few years, with the continuous escalation of bilateral disputes, Country Y has been involved in several diplomatic conflicts with your home country. In particular, the two sides have recently blamed each other for some important disputes and further initiated some punitive sanctions, which have brought huge losses to both sides. Further, the foreign minister of Country Y mentioned that the bilateral conflicts would become both broader and, in some areas, deeper.

[Without Political Conflicts] Due to some historical reasons, there have been good political relations between Country Y, a foreign country for you, and your home country for a long time. In the past few years, with the continuous escalation of bilateral friendships, Country Y has been involved in several diplomatic cooperation with your home country. In particular, the two sides have recently appreciated each other for the progress in some important cooperation and further promoted some reciprocal agreements, which has brought huge benefits to both sides. Further, the foreign minister of Country Y mentioned that the bilateral cooperation would become both broader and, in some areas, deeper.

Appendix II. Scale items in the experiments and their sources

Measures of key variables:
MNE stigma: adapted from Argo & Main (2008) and Harvey (2001) $\alpha \geq 0.94$

I view Company M negatively.
 I view Company M as an inferior firm.
 I have a negative attitude toward Company M.
 I am against Company M.
 I see Company M less than any other company that is not from country Y.
 I have a prejudice toward Company M.
 I do not think Company M is a capable firm.
 I think Company M has shortcomings.
 (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)
Home country stigma: adapted from Argo & Main (2008) $\alpha = 0.87$
 I think Country Y is a dangerous country.
 I have a prejudice toward Country Y.
 I think Country Y is a negative entity.
 (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)
Measures for manipulation checking:
Pandemic origin allegation
 What is the probability that the virus originated in Country Y? (1 = least likely, 7 = most likely)
Corporate philanthropy
 What is the extent of Company M's engagement in international donations to your country's fighting against the current virus? (1 = very low, 7 = very high)
Foreign aid
 What is the extent of Country Y's international aid to your home country's fighting against the current virus? (1 = very low, 7 = very high)
Political conflicts
 What is the extent of Country Y's political conflict with your home country? (1 = very low, 7 = very high)
Measures for control variables:
Gender
 What is your gender? (1 = male, 0 = female)
Age
 What is your age? (1 = below 18 years, 2 = 18–30 years, 3 = 31–50 years, 4 = 51–65 years, 5 = above 65 years)
Education
 What is your education degree? (1 = high school graduate or below, 2 = junior college, 3 = bachelor, 4 = master, 5 = doctorate)
Monthly income
 What is your monthly income? (1 = below 501 US dollars, 2 = 501–1500 US dollars, 3 = 1501–2500 US dollars, 4 = 2501–3500 US dollars, 5 = above 3500 US dollars)
Perceived COVID-19 severity
 How do you feel your country is affected by the COVID-19? (1 = very low, 7 = very high)
Number of clothing items purchased
 How many clothes do you usually buy a year? (1 = below 5, 2 = 5–10, 3 = 11–15, 4 = 16–20, 5 = above 20)
Grade of clothing purchased
 Which grade of clothes do you usually buy? (1 = low, 2 = middle low, 3 = middle, 4 = middle high, 5 = high)
Source of clothing purchased
 Which kind of clothes do you prefer to buy? (1 = only domestic, 2 = both domestic and foreign, 3 = only foreign)

Note: α = Cronbach's alpha for the stigma measures.

Appendix III. Factor Loading of Home Country and MNE Stigma

Item	Item loading
	Pre / S1 / S2 / R1 / R2
Home country's stigma	
1. I think Country Y is a dangerous country.	0.83
2. I have a prejudice toward Country Y.	0.93
3. I think Country Y is a negative entity.	0.92
MNE's stigma	
1. I view Company M negatively.	0.92 / 0.85 / 0.84 / 0.91 / 0.84
2. I view Company M as an inferior firm.	0.93 / 0.84 / 0.80 / 0.82 / 0.84
3. I have a negative attitude toward Company M.	0.93 / 0.89 / 0.88 / 0.93 / 0.91
4. I am against Company M.	0.93 / 0.86 / 0.86 / 0.90 / 0.89
5. I see Company M less than other company that is not from country Y.	0.87 / 0.85 / 0.88 / 0.85 / 0.88
6. I have a prejudice toward Company M.	0.92 / 0.76 / 0.83 / 0.86 / 0.83
7. I do not think Company M is a capable firm.	0.85 / 0.89 / 0.79 / 0.81 / 0.85
8. I think Company M has shortcomings.	0.55 / 0.87 / 0.80 / 0.51 / 0.63

Note: Pre = Prestudy; S1 = Study 1; S2 = Study 2; R1 = Robustness Test 1; R2 = Robustness Test 2.

Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

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