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**IMPACT OF COUNTRY OF ORIGIN IMAGE ON BRAND PERSONALITY:
MEDIATING ROLE OF BRAND EXPERIENCE (EVIDENCE FROM PAKISTAN
AUTOMOBILE SECTOR)**

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – The objective of this paper is to focus on examining the relationship between country of origin (COO) image, brand experience and brand personality in the automobile industry of Pakistan.

Design/methodology/approach – A study on Pakistan's auto industry was carried out to test hypotheses, predicated on a sample of 306 participants and AMOS (Ver. 22.0) was employed for the analysis. A Pilot test was employed with 50 participants to safeguard against obtaining invalid or irrelevant data, prior to the field activity. The study period was (December 2015-April 2016).

Findings – Results of the study enlighten that both COO image and Brand Personality employ significant positive impact on Brand Personality. Furthermore, Brand Experience is found to be a partial mediator in the relationship between COO Image and Brand Personality. Specifically, a positive brand experience has the ability to enhance COO image's positive impact on brand personality, whereas a negative brand experience could significantly reduce the positive COO image effect on brand personality.

Originality/Value – The study is first one to investigate these variables together and the role of brand experience in relationship of COO image and Brand Personality was not previously tested. This study reveals new practical and theory based insights into factors affecting brand personality by incorporating brand experience as a mediator in the relationship between COO image and brand personality.

Keywords: Country of Origin Image (COO Image), Brand Personality, Brand Experience