

**PRIVATE LABEL BELIEFS AND PERCEPTIONS:
A COMPARISON OF CHINESE AND AMERICAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

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ABSTRACT

Private label products have enjoyed market expansion in the U.S. and Europe the past few decades. Consumers appear to be accepting of private label brands as an alternative to national brands. Indeed, private labels have received more attention and credit as consumers feel they are just as good as national brands without the high retail price. China is currently moving into a market driven economy with an emerging middle class. The literature, however, reports little on the attitudes and perceptions of private label branding versus national branding in China. Ironically, China produces much of the private label products for large western retailers

such as Wal-mart, Target, and others. This exploratory research contributes to the marketing education literature demonstrating that significant cross-national differences exist regarding students' beliefs and perceptions of private label branding. This study compares U.S. and Chinese university business students in three areas: a) important attributes on food-related products, b) beliefs about private label brands and price loyalty, and c) perceptions on private label brands. A total of 1070 usable surveys were collected in the U.S. and 252 in China. Statistically significant differences are presented, followed by discussion and implications.