

The Effects of Country-of-Origin Image, Consumer Ethnocentrism, and Animosity upon Foreign Product Purchases

Larry L. Carter
High Point University

It's no surprise that the survival of a manufacturing firm is largely dependent upon the consumer's acceptance and purchase of its products. The effects of globalization and the expanding accessibility of markets worldwide have increased the potential customer base for most companies. It continues to be imperative for marketing managers to accurately assess consumer product perceptions to forecast foreign market entry acceptance and develop some form of competitive advantage that will be sustainable over the long run. Despite the apparent relevance and importance of analyzing consumer product perceptions, there is a lack of research in modeling the relationships between primary antecedents that influence consumers' receptivity toward foreign products. Building on past research, this study attempts to further the understanding of three antecedents (country-of-origin image, consumer ethnocentrism and animosity) by comparing their effects upon consumers' evaluation of, attitude towards, and willingness to buy foreign products. In addition to testing the conceptual framework, a cross-cultural comparison of U.S. and Chinese respondents is discussed to evaluate cultural differences and their effects upon consumer behavior.

Keywords: foreign products, consumer animosity, country-of-origin image, consumer ethnocentrism

INTRODUCTION

In business, the survival of a manufacturing firm is dependent upon the consumer's acceptance and purchase of its products. Globalization and the accessibility of markets worldwide have expanded the potential customer base from purely domestic to both domestic and international customers. Since the decline of communism during the 1990's, many countries have embraced the ideology of globalization and free international trade, thus reducing tariffs and other trade barriers to facilitate the importation of foreign goods. Within this global marketplace, businesses are faced with ever-increasing competition that is aggressively vying for customer attention with substitutable goods in virtually every product category (Netemeyer, Durvasula, & Lichtenstein, 1991). Customers from many countries can choose to purchase their goods from both domestic and foreign manufacturers due to drastic reductions in trade barriers among many nations. This phenomenon has several implications for sales and marketing managers looking for opportunities to expand overseas. In most developed countries, firms have to look beyond their geographic borders for new markets as their domestic marketplace becomes saturated with competitive brands with substitutive products. For example, emerging national economies such as China and India have recently produced a growing middle class of consumers with more discretionary income for personal consumption, thus attracting companies currently competing in saturated markets

(Bandyopadhyay & Banerjee, 2002). Both of these nations are part of BRIC, a collaboration of four countries (i.e., Brazil, Russia, India, and China) with the fastest growing markets in the world (Demir, 2013).

Globalization and the emergence of international consumer markets are the result of several changes in governmental policy, technology and society that have restructured the entire business landscape over the last few decades. The creation of the World Trade Organization in 1995 ushered in a phenomenal increase in the participation of international trade among its country members. Additionally, the proliferation of free trade zones and multinational trade agreements (e.g., the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the European Union, and the newly ratified United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement) has led to the dramatic reduction of trade barriers to encourage more trade, manufacturing, and other collaborative business operations among the member nations while relaxing relevant protocols and regulations across their borders.

Technological advances in communication has caused a massive diffusion of information across borders, maximizing the exposure of products and brands to consumers across the globe. The worldwide acceptance and use of the Internet has facilitated this dissemination of information to both foreign and domestic consumers and allows them accessibility to more products and services via secure online shopping (Pharr, 2005). Technologies in transportation (e.g., more international travel routes and destinations combined with safer, faster modes of transportation) have also given consumers quicker access to foreign lands where they come in direct contact with foreign products and advertising. These exposures have influenced consumer expectations and choice for products along various attribute dimensions. Shipping capabilities and efficiencies have also benefited from various modes of transportation and add to the convenience of acquiring foreign products in a timely manner (Tate, Ellram, Schoenherr, & Petersen, 2014).

Despite the apparent relevance and profound importance of analyzing consumer product perceptions, there is a lack of research in creating a comprehensive model to assess key relationships between primary constructs that influence consumers' receptivity toward foreign products. While most research endeavors have investigated key determinants of foreign product purchase on a singular basis, the complexity of assessing the interplays of multiple determinants has stifled research attempts to develop a comprehensive model. Despite of the difficulties, one such framework was created and initially tested using a broad spectrum of U.S. consumers, resulting in acceptable goodness of fit and stability of the proposed model (Carter, 2014; Carter & Maher, 2014; Carter & Maher, 2015). The authors also investigated three important country-related antecedents, namely consumer ethnocentrism, country-of-origin image, and consumer animosity, in order to determine their influences upon the stages of the consumer decision process. This study attempts to build on this line of research by testing the aforementioned framework across two national samples. A cross-cultural comparison of U.S. and Chinese respondents is discussed to determine evidence of cultural differences and their effects upon consumer behavior.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The model proposed by Carter & Maher (2014, 2015) to assess consumers' willingness to purchase foreign products is based on steadfast theories of consumer research. One of the most recognizable models within consumer behavior is the standard learning hierarchy of effects model (Mowen, 1997). It proposes that beliefs influence affect, which subsequently leads to actual behavior. These beliefs are formed directly through consumer information processing and cognitive learning. For example, a product evaluation is an overall judgment about the product that is developed from the reception, encoding, and storage of product information and attributes within a consumer's memory. These evaluations are generated from several quality-related dimensions of the product, including its reliability, exclusivity, workmanship and degree of technological advancement (Lim, Darley, & Summers, 1994). Affect refers to the amount of feeling for or against a stimulus and is commonly manifested in an individual's attitude towards the stimulus, such as a consumer's attitude towards a product or brand (Maheswaran & Sternthal, 1990). This attitude is typically comprised of the consumer's feelings toward several product dimensions,

including its superiority over competing products, its perceived value, and its degree of likeability by the consumer. Behavior is an action performed by the individual, such as purchasing or declining to purchase a product or service (Klein, Ettenson, & Morris, 1998).

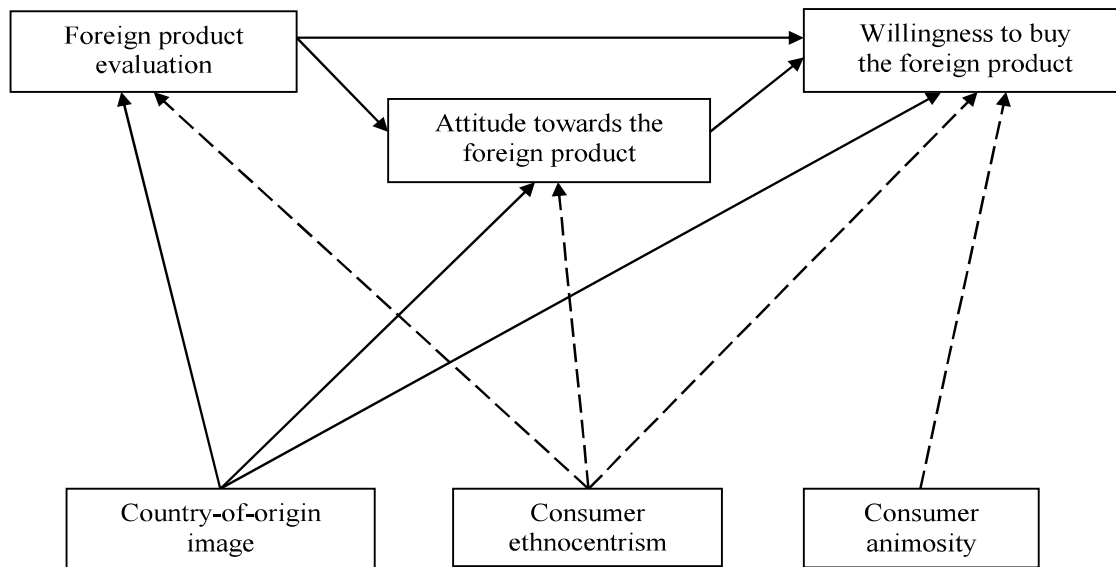
The relationship between product beliefs, attitudes, and behavior can be further explained by examining various consumer behavior models of attitude formation and behavioral intention. With regards to attitude formation, the multi-attribute attitude model (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) states that an individual's overall attitude towards an object is determined by the number and strength of the beliefs associated with that object. Changes in the person's overall attitude are a result of manipulating the importance of these beliefs, adding new beliefs or changing the evaluation of existing beliefs. Upon investigating the outcomes of beliefs and attitudes, Lutz (1981) proposed the unidimensional attitude theory, stating that beliefs influences attitude formation, which in turn leads to behavioral intentions and subsequent behavioral action. From a consumer behavior perspective, behavioral intentions reflect the consumer's inclination to engage in a specific behavior, such as purchasing a product (e.g., Baker & Churchill, 1977; Perrien, Dussart, & Paul, 1985; Kilbourne, 1986; Okechuku and Wang 1988). While Hui and Zhou (2002) identified purchase intention as a behavioral tendency to buy specific products during previous shopping engagements, other researchers measured purchase intention as the consumer's willingness to buy the product in the future (Dodds, Monroe and Grewal 1991; Ulgado and Lee 1996).

Based on the afore-mentioned theoretical models pertaining to the relationships between beliefs, attitudes, intention, and behavior - four distinct stages describe the typical consumer purchasing behavior. The first stage, product evaluation, refers to the consumer's overall cognitive evaluation of the product. The consumer's attitude towards the product serves as the second stage and pertains to his or her overall affective evaluation or feelings toward the product. The third stage, purchase intention (often referred to as 'willingness to buy' or 'reluctance to buy'), is the consumer's subjective judgments about their likelihood to make future purchases. Finally, product purchase refers to the actual purchase behavior of the consumer.

CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Figure 1 provides an illustration of the relationships between each of the antecedents and the primary variables of interest, namely foreign product evaluation, consumer attitudes toward the foreign product, and willingness to buy the foreign product. This study is designed to assess consumers' general perceptions of all goods from a specific country, resulting in a more holistic view of products from that country. Therefore, product-specific attributes (e.g., price and image of the brand) are not examined in this framework. The conceptual model presented in this study focuses on the aforementioned stages of the consumer decision making process and their determinants that specifically relate to foreign product purchase decisions. It proposes three key country-related variables, namely consumer ethnocentrism, consumer animosity, and country-of-origin image, as the primary determinants affecting the consumer purchase decision process for foreign products. The framework also posits the dual influences of foreign product evaluation upon both consumer attitudes towards the product as well as his or her willingness to purchase the product. Due to the challenges associated with measuring consumer purchase of products, purchase intention variables (e.g., willingness to buy, reluctance to buy, and likelihood of purchase) oftentimes serve as a viable proxy for the actual purchase (e.g., Han, 1988; Liefeld, 1993; Klein, Ettenson, & Morris, 1998; Suh & Kwon, 2002). This study utilizes the variable 'willingness to buy' to serve as an appropriate indicator of consumers' future purchase behavior. In Figure 1, the solid arrows illustrate positive direct relationships and the dashed arrows represent negative direct relationships between the variables.

FIGURE 1
CONCEPTUAL MODEL



HYPOTHESES

This study posits ten hypotheses to account for the proposed relationships between the three key country-related variables (i.e., country-of-origin image, consumer ethnocentrism, and consumer animosity) and the three distinct stages of the consumer purchase decision process (i.e., foreign product evaluation, attitude towards the foreign product, and willingness to buy the foreign product). Although the influence of product beliefs upon attitudes is well documented in consumer research (e.g., Chung & Pysarchik, 2000; Erickson, Johansson, & Chao, 1984), the direct influence of product evaluation upon a consumer's willingness to buy the product is also supported within several previous studies (e.g., Carter & Maher, 2014; Chinen, Jun, & Hampton, 2000; Hui & Zhou, 2002; Orbaiz & Papadopoulos, 2003). In addition, there exists substantive evidence (e.g., Carter & Maher 2014; Chung & Pysarchik, 2000; Häubl, 1996; Leong et al., 2008) to suggest that a consumer's attitude towards a product will ultimately affect their willingness to buy the product in the foreseeable future. The following hypotheses were derived directly from previous research findings and are tested in this study.

H₁: Product evaluation positively influences the consumer's willingness to buy the foreign product.

H₂: Product evaluation positively influences the consumer's attitude towards the foreign product.

H₃: Attitude towards the product positively influences the consumer's willingness to buy the foreign product.

According to the results of the literature review, three country-related variables are suggested to exhibit profound influence upon consumer perceptions while they are evaluating, forming attitudes toward, and deciding to purchase foreign products. The first of these three determinants is country-of-origin image. Strong associations between actual products and their associated country-of-origin have been established in previous consumer research studies (e.g, Brijs, Bloemer, & Kasper, 2011; Carter & Maher, 2014; Chinen, Jun, & Hampton, 2000; Huddleston, Good & Stoel, 2001; Hui & Zhou, 2002;

Peris, Newman, Bigne, & Chansarkar, 1993; Teas & Agarwal, 2000; Uddin, Parvin, & Rahman, 2013). Country-of-origin image serves as a prominent indicator for determining consumers' overall product evaluations. It is also posited to have a direct positive effect upon the consumer's formation of attitudes toward a product as well as being a key determinant in influencing his or her willingness to purchase the product. The following three hypotheses reiterates the aforementioned effects of country-of-origin image.

H₄: Country-of-origin image positively influences the consumer's evaluation of the foreign product.

H₅: Country-of-origin image positively influences the consumer's attitude towards the foreign product.

H₆: Country-of-origin image positively influences the consumer's willingness to buy the foreign product.

Like country-of-origin image, consumer ethnocentrism has received widespread interest by academic researchers and is also posited to have a direct influence upon all three stages of the purchase decision process (e.g., Carter, 2015; Klein, 2002; Maher, Clark, & Maher, 2010; Sharma, 2011). The glaring difference between country-of-origin image and consumer ethnocentrism pertains to the direction of their influence upon these stages. Consumer ethnocentrism refers to the consumer's belief that buying goods from foreign countries could potentially reduce the number of domestic jobs available for their fellow citizens and create an economic downfall to their home country (Shimp & Sharma, 1987). These feelings typically result in heavy opposition of foreign products entering their domestic market and the strong desire to seek out and purchase domestically-made goods. So in contrast to country-of-origin image, consumer ethnocentrism tends to have a negative effect upon consumers' perceptions of foreign products, thus leading to less willingness of consumers to purchase these products.

H₇: Consumer ethnocentrism negatively influences the consumer's evaluation of the foreign product.

H₈: Consumer ethnocentrism negatively influences the consumer's attitude towards the foreign product.

H₉: Consumer ethnocentrism negatively influences the consumer's willingness to buy the foreign product.

The third country-related variable reflects a person's animosity towards a foreign country as it pertains to consumer behavior and is oftentimes referred to as consumer animosity (Fong, Lee, & Du, 2014; Klein & Ettensoe, 1999). This specific type of animosity is the most nascent variable of analysis among all of the constructs proposed in this framework, but has gained considerable attention as an important determinant of consumer research (e.g., Abraham, 2013; Abraham & Reitman, 2018; Han, 2017; Hoffmann, Mai, & Smirnova, 2011; Maher, Clark, & Maher, 2010; Nijssen & Douglas, 2004; Riefler & Diamantopoulos, 2007). According to many academics, consumer animosity is typically generated from various experiences such as previous or ongoing military, political and economic events caused by the foreign country. This animosity is posited to negatively affect the consumer's purchase intention of foreign goods rather than play a significant role during the product evaluation or attitude formation stages (e.g., Fakharmanesh, & Miyandehi, 2013; Klein, Ettenson, & Morris, 1998; Riefler & Diamantopoulos, 2007).

H₁₀: Consumer animosity negatively influences the consumer's willingness to buy the foreign product.

METHODOLOGY

The questionnaire for this study is comprised of questions about general product image perceptions from various countries with differing levels of national economic development. The U.S. version of the questionnaire targets perceptions of U.S. consumers towards products from China, South Korea, and Japan (three countries that trade heavily with the U.S.). A similar version of the survey was created to

collect data from Chinese consumers to capture their perceptions regarding products from Japan, South Korea, and the United States. China is considered as a recently industrialized country when compared to the other nations in the study. China's main competitive advantage is cheap human labor; therefore, it is highly attractive to other nations regarding its capabilities to mass produce inexpensive products at an incredibly fast rate. South Korea is generally viewed by other nations as a transitional economy that has made dramatic improvements over the past couple of decades with regards to product quality. It's reasonable to ascertain from the rising popularity of South Korean products (such as Kia and Hyundai vehicles) that their country-of-origin image has been steadily increasing over the past decade or so. The last two countries in this study are Japan and the United States. Both are considered as highly-developed economies that produces well-made and innovative products; however, South Korea is quickly minimizing the product image gap when compared to these two nations.

While the analysis of consumer perceptions for specific product categories is important in understanding foreign product perceptions, a plethora of previously published studies (e.g., Carter & Maher, 2014; Kaynak & Cavusgil, 1983; Laroche, Papadopoulos, Heslop, & Mourali, 2005; Nagashima, 1977) have utilized a more generalized global product image from countries to assess consumer behavior. These authors contend that holistic evaluations of product images tend to stay in sync with the country's overall image. This study follows that line of reasoning by also assessing a global product evaluation from each country of interest. All of the constructs in this study were measured using established scales from previous research studies, with slight modifications due to country representation within each version of the survey. The constructs were logically presented in the following order within the questionnaire: willingness to buy the foreign product, attitude towards the product, product evaluation, country-of-origin image, animosity, and consumer ethnocentrism.

The sample for this study consists of 756 respondents (454 U.S. and 302 Chinese participants) who were recruited within metropolitan areas to participate in this study and fill out questionnaires. The original U.S. version of the questionnaire was back translated in Mandarin and pretested with Chinese respondents. As a result of the pretest, small modifications were made to the final questionnaire design to improve both the instructions provided and the question flow. In the main study, each respondent provided responses about their perceptions toward and their willingness to buy products in general from the countries listed on their survey.

The average age of the combined U.S. and Chinese sample is 31 years old and nearly 54% of the respondents are female. The composition of the demographics from both samples are generally representative of the country's population as a whole, albeit the Hispanic population was under-represented in the U.S. sample. All of the participants received minor compensation for completing and submitting the surveys in a timely fashion. As stated earlier, the measures used in this study were adapted from previous research. The majority of these measures required only minor modifications to directly address products from specific foreign countries. Given that this study is investigating general or holistic product images from certain countries, the items containing specific product attributes were not used with respect to the country-of-origin image scale (Pisharod & Parameswaran, 1992).

The foreign product evaluation construct represents the consumer's overall cognitive evaluation of the product. It is measured by six items assessed by seven-point Likert scales (Darling & Arnold, 1988; Darling & Wood, 1990; Klein, Ettenson, & Morris, 1998; Wood & Darling, 1993). Through structural equation modeling, Klein, Ettenson, and Morris (1998) tested the measurement properties of this construct and their findings indicated acceptable model fit of the indicators to the construct in addition to a high degree of construct reliability. Measures of consumers' attitude towards the foreign product is assessed by three seven-point semantic differential scale items anchored by bad-good, negative-positive, and unfavorable-favorable (Bluemelhuber, Carter, & Lambe, 2007; Osgood, Suci, & Tannenbaum, 1957; Simonin & Ruth, 1998). The Cronbach's alpha values reported in the aforementioned studies generally indicate high internal consistency for these three attitude scale items.

A consumer's willingness to buy the foreign product is measured by six items on seven-point Likert scales (Darling & Arnold, 1988; Darling & Wood, 1990; Klein, Ettenson, & Morris, 1998; Wood & Darling, 1993). Through the use of latent variable structural equation modeling, Klein, Ettenson, and

Morris (1998) reported acceptable goodness-of-fit measures for the indicators of the construct. The measurement of country-of-origin image was adopted from previous research that views the variable as a multi-dimensional construct (e.g., Laroche et al., 2005; Li, Fu, & Murray, 1997; Papadopoulos, Marshall, & Heslop, 1988). It consists of a nine-item, seven-point bipolar adjective scale designed to measure the three dimensions of the construct, namely country beliefs, people affect and desired interaction. As justification for using this scale for the purposes of this study, it has been successfully utilized in assessing country-of-origin image effects upon consumer evaluations and attitudes towards all products from foreign countries in past studies (e.g., Papadopoulos, Marshall, & Heslop, 1988; Laroche et al., 2005).

The original measurement of consumer ethnocentrism (i.e., the CETSCALE) was developed by Shimp and Sharma (1987) to help explain why consumers prefer domestic products over their foreign counterparts. The CETSCALE consists of 17 items on seven-point Likert scales and its reliability has been cross-validated by multiple research studies (e.g., Douglas & Nijssen, 2003; Klein, Ettenson, & Morris, 1998; Netemeyer, Durvasula, & Lichtenstein, 1991). A consumer's animosity towards a foreign country is typically related to current or past military, political or economic events (Klein, Ettenson, & Morris, 1998). The original measurement is comprised of three dimensions of animosity measured by seven-point Likert scales with five items for economic-related animosity, three items for war-related animosity, and three items for general animosity.

RESULTS

As illustrated in Figure 1, the hypotheses in the testable model is comprised of five endogenous variables, namely foreign product evaluation, attitude towards the foreign product, country-of-origin image, consumer animosity, and consumer ethnocentrism. One exogenous variable, willingness to buy the foreign product, is included in this empirical framework as well. The SPSS statistical software package is used for data analyses and the structural equation modeling (i.e., SEM) was analyzed with the AMOS statistical program. The model parameters were estimated with the maximum likelihood method, and both the measurement model and the structural model are validated using the two-stage model analysis approach proposed by Anderson and Gerbing (1988).

With regards to the assumption of normality, skewness and kurtosis values as well as internal consistency were assessed by calculating the Cronbach's alpha for each construct (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). All observed variables exhibited skewness values below ± 2.58 and kurtosis values below ± 1.96 and were therefore retained for further analyses. Upon assessing the bivariate scatterplots, homoscedasticity is evident from the reasonable spread of variance. Linearity between the exogenous variable and the residuals was also evident from close inspection of the normal probability plots. As illustrated in Table 1, composite reliability scores ranged from .79 to .98, which demonstrates acceptable levels of internal consistency in accordance with the standards put forth by Nunnally (1978).

TABLE 1
COMPOSITE RELIABILITY ALPHAS

	China	Japan	South Korea	United States
Eval	.84	.84	.88	.79
Att	.83	.88	.85	.91
WTB	.92	.93	.91	.90
COI	.95	.97	.97	.94
CET	.96	.95	.95	.93
ANIM	.87	.83	.86	.82

Measurement Model

Once the aforementioned assumptions were satisfied, a confirmatory factor analysis (i.e., CFA) was performed to validate the measurement model. The CFA indicated an acceptable model fit across a variety of fit indices. Table 2 exhibits the χ^2 , normed χ^2 , and RMSEA values to represent the measurement model's absolute fit, while both CFI and TLI scores represent incremental fit.

TABLE 2
FIT STATISTICS OF THE MEASUREMENT MODEL

	χ^2	<i>df</i>	χ^2/df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI
China	4032.44***	1107	3.64	.07	.91	.90
Japan	3806.34***	1107	3.44	.06	.92	.91
South Korea	3841.90***	1107	3.47	.06	.92	.91
United States	4129.08***	1107	3.73	.07	.91	.90

*** Significant at $p < .001$

In summary, all of these fit indices demonstrate acceptable levels of both absolute fit and incremental fit. The overall model χ^2 statistics range from 3806.34 to 4129.08 and are statistically significant at the .001 level. The normed χ^2 scores range in value from 3.44 to 3.73, which also indicates acceptable fit according to Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010). The RMSEA fit scores range from .06 to .07, thus approaching RMSEA values that indicate an excellent degree of model fit (Kline, Ettenson, & Morris, 1998). The two measures of incremental fit exhibited similar favorable results. The CFI index scores range from .91 to .92, exceeding the .90 threshold of minimum acceptable model fit (Bentler, 1990). The TLI incremental fit statistics, often referred to as the non-normed fit index, scored above the .90 threshold of minimum acceptance value with a range of .90 to .91 (Bentler & Bonett, 1980) for all four countries of analysis.

Both convergent validity and discriminant validity were assessed for the measurement model. With regards to convergent validity, the average variance extracted (AVE) and construct reliability were computed and analyzed. All of the AVE loadings exceeded the minimum cut-off value of .50, this providing evidence that the model has an acceptable degree of convergent validity. Similarly, the construct reliability scores for all constructs in the model exceeded the .70 minimum cut-off value and further provide evidence of convergent validity. Discriminant validity is normally assessed by comparing squared values of the estimated correlations between the constructs and the average variance extracted from each construct. If the variable's AVE value is higher than the square of the estimated correlation between itself and another variable, then there is evidence to support an acceptable degree of discriminant validity between these variables. The measurement model was re-specified by setting the variances of all six variables to a value of 1.0. Each of the path parameters between the constructs and their indicators were not set and were therefore estimated. A summary judgment from comparing AVE estimates to their corresponding inter-construct squared correlation estimates suggests sufficient evidence of discriminant validity among these variables.

Structural Model

For the next step of the SEM analysis, a structural model for each country of analysis was constructed for the purpose of hypotheses testing. Table 3 outlines the fit statistics for each country model.

TABLE 3
FIT STATISTICS OF THE STRUCTURAL MODEL

	χ^2	<i>df</i>	χ^2/df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI
China	4037.01***	1109	3.64	.06	.91	.90
Japan	3807.96***	1109	3.43	.06	.92	.91
South Korea	3844.21***	1109	3.47	.06	.92	.91
United States	4132.67***	1109	3.73	.07	.92	.90

*** Significant at $p < .001$.

The χ^2 statistics ranged from 3807.96 to 4132.67 and are statistically significant at the .001 level, indicating good model fit. The normed χ^2 statistics ranged from 3.43 to 3.73, providing another measure of acceptable absolute fit. In addition, the RMSEA fit statistics across all country models were adequate as well with collective values ranging from .06 to .07. The incremental fit measures exhibited similar results, with CFI index scores ranging from .91 to .92 and TLI values ranging from .90 to .91. Given that these values fall at or exceed the minimum cut-off value of .90, they indicate adequate incremental model fit.

Table 4 illustrates the results of the hypotheses testing and includes the standardized estimates of the proposed paths for all country models. The data fully supports six of the ten hypothesized relationships, while three relationships received partial support and one received no statistical support.

TABLE 4
STANDARDIZED COEFFICIENTS OF THE STRUCTURAL MODEL

	China	Japan	South Korea	United States
H ₁ : EVAL → WTB	.09*	.08	.13***	.12***
H ₂ : EVAL → ATT	.71***	.70***	.67***	.68***
H ₃ : ATT → WTB	.24***	.21***	.22***	.24***
H ₄ : COI → EVAL	.92***	.78***	.91***	.94***
H ₅ : COI → ATT	.32***	.29***	.27***	.26***
H ₆ : COI → WTB	.04	-.02	.11	.09
H ₇ : CET → EVAL	-.07*	-.02	-.11**	-.02
H ₈ : CET → ATT	-.11**	-.08*	-.02	-.03
H ₉ : CET → WTB	-.14***	-.15***	-.10**	-.08**
H ₁₀ : ANIM → WTB	-.27***	-.24***	-.21***	-.22***

* Significant at $p < .05$, ** Significant at $p < .01$, *** Significant at $p < .001$.

The first hypothesis test (assessing the path from foreign product evaluation to willingness to buy the foreign product) produced mixed results across the country models. The path coefficients are significant for the China, South Korea, and U.S. models at .09 ($p < .05$), .13 ($p < .001$) and .12 ($p < .001$), respectively. However, the Japan model did not show statistical significance for this path at $\beta = .08$; therefore, H₁ is partially supported. H₂ posits that a consumer's evaluation of a foreign product influences his or her attitude towards the product. All four country models support this hypothesis at the .001 significance

level with positive estimate values of .71 for China, .70 for Japan, .67 for South Korea, and .68 for the United States. On a similar note, there is substantial evidence of a positive relationship between consumer attitude and willingness to buy the product. The standardized coefficients range from .21 to .24 and are all significant at the .001 level, thus supporting H₃.

The next three hypotheses focus on the effects of country-of-origin image upon foreign product evaluation (H₄), consumer attitude towards the foreign product (H₅), and willingness to buy the foreign product (H₆). Both H₄ and H₅ are fully supported by all four country models at the .001 significance level. The standardized coefficients produced by the fourth hypothesis test ranged from .78 to .94, while the coefficients for H₅ ranged from .26 to .32. Extremely low coefficients provided no statistical support for the sixth hypothesis, ranging from -.02 for Japan to .11 for South Korea. Testing of the hypothesized effects of consumer ethnocentrism also resulted in mixed findings. The China and South Korea models support the negative influence of consumer ethnocentrism upon product evaluation (H₇) with coefficient estimate of -.07 ($p < .05$) and -.11 ($p < .01$), respectively. However, both the Japan and United States models do not provide support for this hypothesis. H₈ proposes that consumer ethnocentrism negatively influences consumer attitude and is also partially supported. Only the China and Japan models provide statistical significance with estimated path values of -.11 ($p < .01$) and -.08 ($p < .05$), respectively. In contrast, all four country models support the hypothesized negative effect of consumer ethnocentrism upon their willingness to buy foreign products (H₉) at the $p < .001$ level with standardized coefficients of -.14 for China, -.15 for Japan, -.10 for South Korea, and -.08 for the United States. The tenth hypothesis posits that consumer animosity has a direct negative effect upon their willingness to buy foreign products. H₁₀ received full support with standardized coefficient values ranging for -.21 to -.27 across all four country models.

DISCUSSION

This study provides a cross-national test of a comprehensive framework that seeks to explain consumer behavior with regards to foreign product perceptions and purchase intention. Data collection was administered in both China and the United States in order to test the robustness of the model across two nations and to make meaningful cultural comparisons. The results of this study reinforces the notion that consumers go through stages when making purchase decisions, following the route of evaluating the product, forming attitudes toward the product, and finally deciding to purchase the product. While country-of-origin image, consumer animosity, and consumer ethnocentrism are shown to influence various stages of consumer purchase decision-making, the nature of their relationships differ. An increase in country-of-origin image tends to foster more positive foreign product evaluations and attitudes toward the foreign product; however, country-of-origin image tends to have insignificant effect towards a person's willingness to buy the foreign product. Both consumer ethnocentrism and animosity towards a foreign country exhibit significant negative direct effects upon a person's foreign purchase intentions (i.e., willingness to buy).

It is interesting to note that the study results points toward national differences when making comparisons across the U.S. and Chinese sample. While consumer animosity scores were comparable across both national samples, the Chinese sample exhibited a higher average level of consumer ethnocentrism when compared to the U.S. sample, suggesting that Chinese consumers are more ethnocentric than U.S. consumers. This may be explained by Hofstede's national cultural dimensions, whereby the author identified four primary cultural dimensions that can adequately describe a nation's society: masculinity–femininity, power distance, individualism–collectivism, and uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, 1984). China ranks high on the collectivism scale, which translates to its cultural society believing that the collective group is more important than the individual, thus encouraging conformity. In contrast, the United States ranks high on individualism and therefore, its citizens hold the individual as the most important unit of society. Considering that ethnocentrism spawns from an 'us versus them' ideology (LeVine & Campbell, 1972), it caters towards the membership and exclusivity of belonging to an in-group, which highly resonates within a collectivistic society. Even though the hypotheses testing

produced mixed results for H₇ and H₈, it is reasonable to assume that consumers with higher levels of ethnocentrism will likely evaluate foreign products negatively and foster negative attitudes toward these products. Recent studies investigating Chinese ethnocentrism have also found contrasting evidence with regards to CET's influence upon both foreign product evaluation (Wong, Polonsky, & Garma, 2008) and consumer attitudes toward foreign products (Bi et al., 2012). Given that only partial support was found for these relationships, it may stand to reason that differences between the countries themselves may play a role in attenuating these effects. Perhaps the more familiar a consumer is with a foreign country and its products, the less likely that her or she will rely on their ethnocentric tendencies in order to evaluate and form attitudes towards the products.

Another interesting finding from this study suggests that there is no discernable difference in the influence of animosity among Chinese and U. S. consumers. Regardless of country affiliation, consumers exhibiting animosity towards a foreign country will less likely be willing to purchase products from that country. This may be due to the nature of animosity being a more personal emotion that is based on one's own experiences with the foreign country. In other words, one person would most likely have different experiences with the foreign country than another person; therefore, the root causes and intensity of their animosity may be dramatically different. The final country-related variable that was assessed is country-of-origin image. In this study, COI was hypothesized to positively influence all three stages of consumer decision making (foreign product evaluation, attitude formation, and purchase intention). While there is strong evidence to support its influence upon the first two stages, COI does not significantly influence a consumer's willingness to purchase foreign products. This finding suggests that the consumer places more reliance on country-of-origin information at the start of the consumer decision making process; however, its effects may be overridden by other variables (e.g., CET and consumer animosity) during the purchase intention stage.

Understanding the effects of country-related variables may help international companies create more effective marketing strategies. For example, foreign branding (the act of labeling products with foreign-sounding brand names) may alter a consumer's perception of the brand by masking the brand's true country-of-origin. Partnering with a firm from the consumer's home country or producing the product within that country may provide the brand with the illusion of being more 'domestic' in the consumer's mind. Another tactic that marketers can utilize to downplay country effects is to make the product or brand seem more global or 'country-free' in appearance. In this case, the company draws from multiple countries in order to fulfill its product design, manufacturing, assembly, technical support, and other production requirements. These are just a few of the strategies that firms can pursue to mitigate the negative effects of a poor country-of-origin image as well as heightened consumer animosity or ethnocentrism.

This study's limitations may provide some direction for further research in the effort to understand consumer behavior towards foreign product purchase. As stated earlier, consumer animosity is the most nascent of all of the concepts proposed in this framework. Researchers are actively developing more robust scales (e.g., Harmeling, Magnusson, & Singh, 2015; Hoffmann, Mai, & Smirnova, 2011) to assess the intricacies of this multidimensional construct and these scales need further testing and refinement. The framework from this study should also be tested across more conditions to evaluate its robustness. For example, future research studies could examine other buying decision scenarios, such as foreign business-related purchases, foreign-based services, or possibly tourism. Finally, many other country-related variables (e.g., patriotism, national identity, country familiarity, consumer affinity for foreign countries, and worldmindedness) exist that were not included in this study and may warrant further investigation.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, J. C., & Gerbing, D. W. (1988). Structural equation modeling in practice: A review and recommended two-step approach. *Psychological Bulletin*, 103(3), 411-423.
- Abraham, V. (2013). Does consumer animosity impact purchase involvement? An empirical investigation. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 4(1), 1-11.
- Abraham, V., & Reitman, A. (2018). Conspicuous consumption in the context of consumer animosity. *International Marketing Review*, 35(3), 412-428.
- Baker, M. J., & Churchill, G. A. (1977, November). The impact of physically attractive models on advertising evaluations. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 14, 538-555.
- Bandyopadhyay, S., & Banerjee, B. (2002). A country of origin analysis of foreign products by Indian consumers. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 15(2), 85-109.
- Bentler, P. M. (1990). Comparative fit indexes in structural models. *Psychological Bulletin*, 107(2), 238-246.
- Bentler, P. M., & Bonett, D. G. (1980). Significance tests and goodness of fit in the analysis of covariance structures. *Psychological Bulletin*, 88(3), 588-606.
- Bi, X., Gunessee, S., Hoffmann, R., Hui, W., Larner, J., Ma, Q., & Thompson, F. (2012). Chinese consumer ethnocentrism: A field experiment. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 11(3), 252-263.
- Bluemelhuber, C., Carter, L. L., & Lambe, C. J. (2007). Extending the view of brand alliance effects: An integrative examination of the role of country of origin. *International Marketing Review*, 24(4), 427-443.
- Brijs, K., Bloemer, J., & Kasper, H. (2011). Country-image discourse model: Unraveling meaning, structure, and function of country images. *Journal of Business Research*, 64(12), 1259-1269.
- Carter, L. L. (2014). An analysis of country-related determinants influencing consumer receptivity of foreign products. *International Business Research*, 7(6), 192-200.
- Carter, L. L., & Maher, A. (2014). Assessing consumers' willingness to buy foreign goods: An integrative modeling approach. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 6(3), 23-34.
- Carter, L. L., & Maher, A. (2015). Consumer perceptions of foreign goods: Modeling the path from evaluation to purchase. *Journal of Marketing Development and Competitiveness*, 9(1), 32-49.
- Chinen, K., Jun, M., & Hampton, G. M. (2000, Spring). Product quality, market presence, and buying behavior: Aggregate images of foreign products in the U.S. *Multinational Business Review*, 29-38.
- Chung, J. E., & Pysarchik, D. T. (2000). A model of behavioral intention to buy domestic versus imported products in a Confucian culture. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 18(5), 281-291.
- Darling, J. R., & Arnold, D. R. (1988). Foreign consumers' perspective of the products and marketing practices of the United States versus selected European countries. *Journal of Business Research*, 17(3), 237-248.
- Darling, J. R., & Wood, V. R. (1990). A longitudinal study comparing perceptions of U.S. and Japanese consumer products in a third neutral country: Finland 1975 to 1985. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 21(3), 427-450.
- Demir, O. (2013). Is Turkey far from BRIC countries? *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 4(5), 136-141.
- Dodds, W. B., Monroe, K. B., & Grewal, D. (1991, August). Effects of price, brand, and store information on buyers' product evaluations. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 28, 307-319.
- Douglas, S. P., & Nijssen, E. J. (2003). On the use of 'borrowed' scales in cross-national research: A cautionary note. *International Marketing Review*, 20(6), 621-642.
- Erickson, G. M., Johansson, J. K., & Chao, P. (1984). Image variables in multi-attribute product evaluations: Country-of-origin effects. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 11(2), 694-699.
- Fakharmanesh, S., & Miyandehi, R. G. (2013). The purchase of foreign products: The role of brand image, ethnocentrism and animosity: Iran market evidence. *Iranian Journal of Management Studies*, 6(1), 147-162.

- Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). *Belief, attitude, intention, and behavior: An introduction to theory and research*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Fong, C., Lee, C., & Du, Y. (2014). Consumer animosity, country of origin, and foreign entry-mode choice: A cross-country investigation. *Journal of International Marketing*, 22(1), 62-76.
- Hair, J.F. Jr., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2010). *Multivariate data analysis* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Han, C. M. (1988, Summer). The role of consumer patriotism in the choice of domestic versus foreign products. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 28, 25-31.
- Han, C. M. (2017). Individualism, collectivism, and consumer animosity in emerging Asia: Evidence from Korea. *The Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 34(4), 359-370.
- Harmeling, C. M., Magnusson, P., & Singh, N. (2015, February). Beyond anger: A deeper look at consumer animosity. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 46, 676-693.
- Häubl, G. (1996). A cross-national investigation of the effects of country of origin and brand name on the evaluation of a new car. *International Marketing Review*, 13(5), 76-97.
- Hoffmann, S., Mai, R., & Smirnova, M. (2011). Development and validation of a cross-nationally stable scale of consumer animosity. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 19(2), 235-251.
- Hofstede, G. (1984). *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values*. London, England: Sage Publications.
- Huddleston, P., Good, L. K., & Stoel, L. (2001). Consumer ethnocentrism, product necessity and Polish consumers' perceptions of quality. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 29(5), 236-246.
- Hui, M. K. & Zhou, L. (2002). Linking product evaluations and purchase intention for country-of-origin effects. *Journal of Global Marketing*, 15(3/4), 95-116.
- Kaynak, E., & Cavusgil, S. T. (1983). Consumer attitudes toward products of foreign origin: Do they vary across product classes? *International Journal of Advertising*, 2(2), 147-157.
- Kilbourne, W. E. (1986). An exploratory study of sex role stereotyping on attitudes toward magazine advertisements. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 14(4), 43-46.
- Klein, J. G. (2002). Us versus them, or us versus everyone? Delineating consumer aversion to foreign goods. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 33(2), 345-363.
- Klein, J., & Ettenson, R. (1999). Consumer animosity and consumer ethnocentrism: An analysis of unique antecedents. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 11(4), 5-24.
- Klein, J. G., Ettenson, R. E., & Morris, M. D. (1998). The animosity model of foreign product purchase: An empirical test on the People's Republic of China. *Journal of Marketing*, 62(1), 89-100.
- Laroche, M., Papadopoulos, N., Heslop, L. A., & Mourali, M. (2005). The influence of country image structure on consumer evaluations of foreign products. *International Marketing Review*, 22(1), 96-115.
- Leong, S. W., Cote, J. A., Ang, S. H., Tan, S. J., Jung, K., Kau, A. K., & Pornpitakpan, C. (2008). Understanding consumer animosity in an international crisis: Nature, antecedents, and consequences. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 39(6), 996-1009.
- LeVine, R. A., & Campbell, D. T. (1972). *Ethnocentrism: Theories of conflict, ethnic attitudes, and group behavior*. New York, NY: Wiley.
- Li, Z. G., Fu, S., & Murray, L. W. (1997). Country and product images: The perceptions of consumers in the People's Republic of China. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 10(1-2), 115-138.
- Liefeld, J. P. (1993). Consumer use of country-of-origin information in product evaluations: Evidence from experiments. In N. Papadopoulos & L. A. Heslop (Eds.), *Product and country images: Impact and role in international marketing*. New York, NY: The Haworth Press, Inc., 117-156.
- Lim, J-S., Darley, W. K., & Summers, J. O. (1994). An assessment of country-of-origin effects under alternative presentation formats. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 22(3), 274-282.
- Lutz, R. J. (1981). The role of attitude theory in marketing. In H. H. Kassirjian & T. S. Robertson (Eds.), *Perspectives in consumer behavior* (3rd edition). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Scott Foresman, 233-250.

- Maher, A. A., Clark, P., & Maher, A. (2010). International consumer admiration and the persistence of animosity. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 27(5), 414-424.
- Maheswaran, D., & Sternthal, B. (1990, June). The effects of knowledge, motivation, and type of message on ad processing and product judgments. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 17, 66-73.
- Mowen, J. C. (1997). *Consumer behavior* (5th edition). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Nagashima, A. (1977). A comparative 'made in' product image survey among Japanese businessmen. *Journal of Marketing*, 41(3), 95-100.
- Netemeyer, R. G., Durvasula, S., & Lichtenstein, D. R. (1991). A cross-national assessment of the reliability and validity of the CETSCALE. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 28(3), 320-327.
- Nunnally, J. C. (1978). *Psychometric theory* (2nd edition). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Okechuku, C., & Wang, G. (1988, October/November). The effectiveness of Chinese print advertisements in North America. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 28, 25-34.
- Orbaiz, L. V., & Papadopoulos, N. (2003). Toward a model of consumer receptivity of foreign and domestic products. *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 15(3), 101-126.
- Osgood, C. E., Suci, G. J., & Tannenbaum, P. H. (1957). *The measurement of meaning*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Papadopoulos, N., Marshall, J. J., & Heslop, L. A. (1988). Strategic implications of product and country images: A modeling approach. Marketing Productivity. *Lisbon: European Society for Opinion and Marketing Research*, 66-90.
- Peris, S. M., Newman, K., Bigne, E., & Chansarkar, B. (1993). Aspects of Anglo-Spanish perceptions and product preferences arising from 'country of origin' image. *International Journal of Advertising*, 12(2), 131-142.
- Perrien, J., Dussart, C., & Paul, F. (1985). Advertisers and the factual content of advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 14(1), 30-35.
- Pharr, J. M. (2005). Synthesizing country-of-origin research from the last decade: Is the concept still salient in an era of global brands? *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 13(4), 34-45.
- Pisharod, R. M., & Parameswaran, R. (1992). Confirmatory factor analysis of a country-of-origin scale: Initial results. In J. F. Sherry, Jr. & B. Sternthal (Eds.), *NA - Advances in Consumer Research* (volume 19, pp.706-714). Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research.
- Riefler, P., & Diamantopoulos, A. (2007). Consumer animosity: A literature review and a reconsideration of its measurement. *International Marketing Review*, 24(1), 87-119.
- Sharma, P. (2011, February). Country of origin effects in developed and emerging markets: Exploring the contrasting roles of materialism and value consciousness. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 42, 285-306.
- Shimp, T. A., & Sharma, S. (1987). Consumer ethnocentrism: Construction and validation of the CETSCALE. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 24(3), 280-289.
- Simonin, B. L., & Ruth, J. A. (1998). Is a company known by the company it keeps? Assessing the spillover effects of brand alliances on consumer brand attitudes. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 35(1), 30-42.
- Suh, T., & Kwon, I. G. (2002). Globalization and reluctant buyers. *International Marketing Review*, 19(6), 663-680.
- Tate, W. L., Ellram, L. M., Schoenherr, T., & Petersen, K. J. (2014). Global competitive conditions driving the manufacturing location decision. *Business Horizons*, 57(3), 381-390.
- Teas, R. K., & Agarwal, S. (2000). The effects of extrinsic product cues on consumers' perceptions of quality, sacrifice, and value. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 28(2), 278-290.
- Uddin, J., Parvin, S., & Rahman, M. L. (2013). Factors influencing importance of country of brand and country of manufacturing in consumer product evaluation. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 8(4), 65-74.
- Ulgado, F. M., & Lee, M. (1998). The Korean versus American marketplace: Consumer reactions to foreign products. *Psychology & Marketing*, 15(6), 595-614.

- Wong, C. Y., Polonsky, M., & Garma, R. (2008). The impact of consumer ethnocentrism and country of origin sub-components for high involvement products on young Chinese consumers' product assessments. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 20(4), 455–478.
- Wood, V. R., & Darling, J. R. (1993). The marketing challenges of the newly independent republics: Product competitiveness in global markets. *International Marketing Review*, 1(1), 77-102.