THE INFLUENCE OF TEXTILE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN PERCEIVED QUALITY ON BUYER BEHAVIOUR IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY
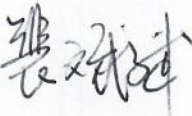
BY

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A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED AS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY OF BSUINESS & MANAGEMENT SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented for the award

of degree in any other university or institution of higher learning.

Signature: _____   Date: 03/12/2022

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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university

supervisor.

Signature: _____   Date: 06/12/2022

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my family who persevered long periods of my absence while I was away studying in Kenya.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Abstract

The study sought to establish the influence of country-of-origin perceived value of textile products from China on buyer behavior in Nairobi City County. The study was grounded on information processing theory and the signaling theory. A descriptive cross-sectional survey design was adopted. Data was collected from adult shoppers aged 18 years and above within the Central Business District. Data was analyzed by computing frequency distributions, percentages, mean scores and standard deviations. Regression analysis was carried out to test the influence of country-of-origin perceived value on buyer behavior. It was established that China enjoyed country-of-origin perceived dominance in the imports of clothes sold in Nairobi. China enjoyed perceived dominance in all textile categories with exception of suits where Turkey enjoyed country-of-origin perceived dominance. respondents displayed mixed perceptions about textiles originating from China. Buyers believed they got value for money by buying clothes from China. On the contrary, buyers were of the view that textile from China wear out fast and are not uniquely designed. The study established a significant, but weak positive relationship between country-of-origin perceived value on buyer behavior. The results demonstrated that country of origin perceived value explained 13.6 percent of the variation in buyer behavior. The findings were consistent with signaling theory to the extent that country-of-origin signal quality perceptions that trigger or influence buyer behavior. Based on the results of country-of-origin perceived value, it was concluded that Kenyan buyers are value seekers that prefer low price over quality and favorably consider products that fit their constrained budget. Based on the regression analysis results, it was concluded that the country of origin is less significant in a low-involvement purchase context. It was further concluded that Chinese firms involved in textile trade would make more money in Kenya by focusing on cost leadership strategies. The study recommends that the effect of country of origin on buyer behavior be investigated in a high involvement product context.

Contents

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Consumer perception whether based on actual facts or merely driven by feelings and imaginations drive the way buyers spend their resources on need satisfying goods and services. Buyers form perceptions about their environment, products, service providers, and points of sale for the products. Perceptions are influenced by environmental stimuli including advertisement, word of mouth campaign, social media, direct experience with the product. The environmental stimuli also known as information cues are broadly divided into groups comprising intrinsic and extrinsic cues. Intrinsic cues entail inherent product attributes that impacts performance of the product. Product attributes vary depending on the nature of the product and may include quality, size, color, taste, durability among other considerations. Extrinsic cues are factors that are not part of the product, but are related to the product and partly influence buyer's perceptions of, and attitudes towards the product. Country of origin (COO) is one of the extrinsic cues that contribute to perception formation by buyers. Depending on the country of origin's reputation regarding a specific product, buyers may perceive a product as of high or low quality. Hence, perceived product quality is the result of evaluations of both actual product attributes and perceptions build around extrinsic aspects of the product. The extrinsic aspects of the product such as country is a unique distinguishing feature that is difficult to imitate (Fandos & Flavian, 2006). Based on its uniqueness, product's country of origin has implications on buyer behavior. Buyer behavior is the behavior displayed by buyers from need recognition, evaluation of alternatives, purchase and post-purchase evaluations.

The concepts of perceived quality and buyer behavior are based on the broad knowledge segment of consumer behavior. Perceived quality specifically relates to information processing that leads to decision and other behavioral dispositions such as purchase, loyalty or even the feeling of guilt and regret. Information processing is a precursor to actual behavior formation. The study was guided by information processing theory (Bloemer et al., 2009) and the signaling theory. Whereas the information processing theory explains that human beings process the information they receive to make sense of the world, the signaling theory argues that information cues

including country of product origin signals the quality of the product leading to perception formation among buyers.

Nairobi city county is a cosmopolitan commercial hub in Kenya. Nairobi city also hosts the national government administrative headquarters of the country. Textile is one of the most commonly traded goods in the city. The specific forms of traded textile range from women dresses, baby wear, men clothes, curtains, and materials for tailoring purposes. Kenya relies heavily on imports of both new and used textile to meet its surging demand. Local production of textile is limited owing to collapsed cotton production and the dwindling lint industry. The production of cotton in Kenya has been volatile over the last several years and the country depends on imports of cotton and lint to feed its local textile industry. Nyaga (2002) argued that in 2002, Kenya had 51 textile manufacturing facilities with installed annual capacity of 83 square meters. After 18 years, a study by Opiri and Andayi (2020) established that second hand clothing had dominated Kenyan textile market, significantly suppressing local textile and apparel industry with only 17 textile and apparel companies in operation. Although the government has been catalyzing production of cotton through inputs and extension incentives, farmers are yet to respond more positively due to the underlying marketing challenges and overall poor coordination within the value chain.

1.1.1 Country of origin perceived quality

The search for competitive advantage by firms is pursued through a variety of avenues including differentiation, product quality and branding policy. Perceived quality is characterized by intrinsic and extrinsic product attributes (Fandos & Flavian, 2006). Quality is defined in various ways depending on the attributes given attention. Three major types of quality comprise search quality, experience quality and credence quality. Search quality relates to intrinsic and extrinsic product attributes. Experience quality is associated with inherent product features that are assessed by consumers upon consumption of the product. In the context of textile, experience quality may influence perceptions of image and prestige. Credence quality connotes both intrinsic and extrinsic features that are of concern to buyers, but are not direct triggers in the buying decision process. Perceived quality is the overall product evaluation by buyers. Zeithaml

(1988) considered perceived quality as the evaluation of product attributes based on information cues buyers are exposed to. Agarwal and Teas (2001) demonstrated that studies have found four extrinsic cues comprising price, brand name, country of origin and distribution outlet as product quality signals. Cattin et al. (1982) clarified that consumers rely on extrinsic cues when they have little knowledge about the product. Nonetheless, the issue of country of origin is clouded by the emergent phenomenon of binational products, where different components of the product are made in different countries (Etten-Son & Gaeth, 1991).

Consumers form perceptions of quality either on the basis of information cues they receive from multiple sources or actual experience with the product. Hence, consumer perception is an integral part of product quality. Country of origin refers to the country where the company that produced the product is located (Ede & Panigrahi, 2000). Al-Sulaitis and Baker (1998) defined country of origin as the country from which corporate headquarters of the firm producing the product is situated. Country of origin is believed to have transitory product sales effect by creating perceptions of quality and trust among buyers. Country of origin create quality perceptions through its cognitive, affective and behavioral effects among buyers. Country of origin influences beliefs about products, it leads to cognitive effect reflected through stereotyping.

Maheswaran et al. (2013) argued that perceived product quality is linked to country-of-origin image. For example, Wamg and Lamb (1983) argued that products from developed countries are perceived as superior to products from developing countries. In addition, Al-Sulaiti (1998) argued that products from advanced countries were perceived as possessing high quality and that buyers were biased against product made in developing countries. Therefore, positive country of origin image generates competitive edge, whereas negative country of origin percentage becomes a stumbling block in market penetration at the international stage. In the current study, country of origin was specified as China and the perceived quality characterized by design, fabric durability, uniqueness, variety, fabric texture, thickness, colorfast, shrinkage, post-purchase feedback and percentage of wool in suits.

1.1.2 Buyer behavior

Buyer behavior is the manner in which buyers conduct themselves before, during and after purchase of products and services. Agyekum (2015) argued that consumers use varying factors to make sense of product quality. Country of origin is one of the information cues that consumers rely on for decision making and which may largely influence the behavior of consumers. Buyer behavior is triggered by arousal of needs, followed by the search of information, evaluation of alternatives, selection of product and post-purchase behavior. Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) observed that buyer behavior is influenced by a host of factors within and outside the buyers. External factors that influence the behavior of consumers include economic factors, laws and regulations, political and technological factors. Personal factors that influence buyer behavior include, learning, perception, attitudes and personality.

Carmina and Flavian (2006) argued that buying intention is a projection of future behavior of buyers that depict their perception of quality as well as attitude formed about the product. Buyer attitudes develop through learning process that is influenced by a host of factors including social groups, family, experience with the product and information received about the product and country of origin. Whereas some phases of buyer behavior are not visible, observable aspects of behavior is detected through product awareness, interest in the product, purchase, loyalty and word-of-mouth campaign. In the current study, buyer behavior was operationally defined as awareness of textile country of origin, buyer readiness, product consumption experience, satisfaction, product approval, loyalty, word of mouth campaign and country of origin product referrals.

1.1.3 Textile industry in Nairobi City County

The textile industry landscape in Kenya is characterized by different actors along the value chain including cotton farmers, ginners, spinners, textile manufacturers, retailers and end-use buyers. Local textile manufacturing in Kenya is largely domiciled within the export processing zones (EPZ). Ironically, textile manufactured within EPZ is intended for exports and not for domestic consumption in the country. Despite some considerable manufacturing of textile in the country, the larger bulk of textiles sold in Kenya are imports from other countries that have curved

comparative advantage in textile industry. Textile imports into Kenya originate from China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Turkey, India, USA, Europe and a few African countries. Nyaga (2002) reported that China leads in clothes exports to Kenya. Omolo (2006) averred that local textile manufacturing supplied only 45% of the textile demand in the country. As a result, imported new and used garments and imported fabric accounted for 55% of the market. He goes further to argue that textile products in the country grows at 3.8% annually. A recent study by Opiri and Andayi (2020) argued that second hand clothes is a common feature in Kenya's textile industry and that Kenya has only 17 textile companies. This paints concern considering that manufacturing is a key pillar of economic growth and job creation.

1.2 Research Problem

Textile consumption cuts across all households in Kenya. Consumers spend substantial portions of their income in buying textile products. Hence, expenditure on textile products represents significant portion of the GDP. Kenya's manufacturing of textile has been dwindling for several years. Therefore, the country relies on imports of both new and used textile from different countries. Although Kenya imports textiles from different countries, little is known about the influence of country of origin on purchase behavior. Yet, international marketing literature suggests that country of origin provides extrinsic cue that consumers use to make purchase decisions. A study by Papadopoulos et al. (1991) established that country of origin influenced consumer preference for products from one country to another. Yasin et al. (2007) argued that consumers build perceptions on country of product origin to infer comparative product quality. Using the examples in electronics, Al-Sulaiti (1998) claimed that country of origin is inherent in certain brands such as IBM and Sony. Whereas, the country of origin and electronic brand preference is well documented, little is known about the same country of origin influence in the textile industry. Still, regarding ethnocentrism, there is contention as to buyer preference relating to home made products and country of origin for textile products. Further contention relates to stereotypes associated with country-of-origin effects. For example, Zain and Yasin (1997) established that products originating from developing countries were perceived as inferior in comparison to those from the more advanced countries.

Studies have attempted to unravel the possible link between country of origin on consumer behavior. Yasin et al. (2007) argued that several buyers use country-of-origin stereotypes to evaluate products. They cite reliability of Japanese electronics and excellent German cars as examples of country-of-origin stereotypes. Notably, these stereotypes form perceptions of quality that in turn influence buyer behaviour. Han (1989) reported that buyers use country-of-origin information to evaluate product quality. Leonidon et al. (2007) observed that country of origin product quality perceptions varies across countries owing to differences in the macro-economic environments. A study by Burke (1996) observed that buyers in Zimbabwe associated foreign products with power and privilege. Heslop and Papadopoulos (1993) reported that studies demonstrated that consumers in many countries preferred domestic products to foreign items. Nevertheless, Josiassen (2010) argued that unless products are congruently associated with a country, the effects of country of origin are weak. Oberecker and Diamantopoulos (2011) observed that previous studies have focused on negative perceptions that constrain foreign products market penetration. This ignores the fact that although consumers may have strong negative feelings towards a few categories of products, they may not necessarily have generic negative feelings across all product categories based on their country of origin (Thomson et al, 2005). Hence, rather than pigeon-holing research to negative feelings and ethnocentrism, it is important to investigate how perceived quality of product country of origin holistically affects buyer behavior. Maheswaran (1994) declared that research has yielded mixed findings in as far the influence of country of origin on buyer behavior. Based on the foregoing arguments, inconsistencies and controversies espoused by the reviewed empirical evidence, the current study seeks answers to the question: How does perceived quality of textile country of origin influence buyer behavior in Nairobi City County?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objective of the study is to determine the influence of country-of-origin perceived quality on buyer behavior in Nairobi City County.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

i. Determine the perceived quality of textiles imported from China
ii. Establish the influence of country of origin perceived quality on consumer behavior

1.4 Value of the Study

The study will be of value to policy by explaining buyer perceptions of quality in the textile industry. Buyer perceptions of quality is a report card that policy makers may use to initiate steps towards developing policy or revising existing policies to improve competitiveness of firms in the industry. The study will generate feedback demonstrating buyers' approval or disapproval of quality. This will generate information that the County government of Nairobi City will use to improve business environment by ensuring that only products that meet or exceed quality expectations are sold.

The study will guide international marketing practitioners in formulating market segmentation policies that may assist the Chinese exporters create competitive advantage. The study will generate insights that may be useful both in export strategy formulation and implementation with the necessary precision for successful outcome. Planning and execution of strategy is a process that requires reliable information. This study will provide the information input for international marketing plan development and execution.

The study will be of value to theory by testing the assumptions of signaling theory and the information processing theory. The signaling theory has been tested in financial and investment market studies. Although the theory has its background rooted in finance and boardroom decisions with implications on investors, the theory may explain information cues that signal product quality. Therefore, the current study is an attempt to test the country of origin premised on the signaling effect advocated by the signaling theory. This study will be among the few studies to use signaling theory in marketing research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter presents discussion about theory, empirical literature review structured along the objectives of the study. The review begins with theory then proceeds to analyze and discuss empirical literature.

2.2 Theoretical Anchorage of the Study

The study was guided by the signaling theory and the information processing theory. Whereas the signaling theory is used to explain how country of origin provide perceived quality signal, the information processing theory explains the process buyers go through to make purchase decision.

2.2.1 Information processing theory

The information processing theory suggests that in a marketing communication context, the target audience process the information cues they receive by perceiving it, analyzing the cue, utilizing the information and storing it in their memory for future retrieval when required (Bloemer et al., 2009). The theory maintains that people do not merely respond to information without prior processing (Motsi & Park, 2020; Oh et al., 2021). Connelly et al. (2011) argues that information processing theory is a cognitive development approach that explains how information is decoded into memory. The theory argues that information is received from the environment using various sensory organs. The information stimuli is then decoded and stored in memory and retrieved later to aid in decision making when necessary. Information cues may be intrinsic or extrinsic (Ede & Panigrahi, 2000). A product's country of origin is one of the extrinsic cues that buyers may use in product quality evaluations.

The theory assumes that buyers use product attributes information to evaluate product quality and perceived consequences of a purchase decision (Xiao et al., 2017). In other words, buyer decision making is a conflux of cognitive and emotional evaluations of both intrinsic and extrinsic product attributes. The theory posits that when buyers begin a purchase process with a variety of product attributes and set of product alternatives in mind. When buyers are faced with a large number of diverse product alternatives, they use two-stage information processing

wherein they begin by eliminating certain alternatives based on product attributes. The buyers then proceed to select their most preferred alternative (Gao et al., 2022) using both rational and emotional decision-making criteria. Han (2016) argued that on the basis of information processing theory, country of origin serves as an extrinsic product information cue in information processing by buyers in the market. According to Dibley and Baker (2001), buyers take into consideration product attributes, decision consequences and personal values when making a purchase decision.

2.2.2 Signaling theory

The signaling theory is based on the assumption of information asymmetries in communication that affects the speed and quality of decision making. Witek-Hajduk and Grudecka (2012) argued that country of origin may be relied upon by buyers to reduce information asymmetry regarding product quality. The theory argues that information affects decision making process and that buyers rely on public information to make decisions. Information asymmetry occurs when different people have access to different facets of information. Buyers with low quality or limited information are more likely to make inferior decisions as compared with buyers who access high quality, reliable and adequate information. Signaling theory is concerned with reducing information asymmetry (Spence, 2002). Stiglitz (2000) argued that information asymmetry is common around product quality where buyers are not aware about product characteristics.

Spence (2002) argued that signaling theory is concerned with reducing information asymmetry between two parties in an exchange process. The theory is composed of four components including signaler, signal, receiver and feedback (Bergh et al., 2014). The signaler is equated to a firm that sends information to the market. The information receivers in turn provide feedback through their perceptions and the resulting behaviors. The signal entails the message communicated by the firm either directly or indirectly. The signal can either be intentional or unintentional that buyers decode in efforts to reduce asymmetry. Bergh and Gibbons (2011) argued that for a signal to be effective, it must come from a credible source.

2.3 Empirical Review

Buyer behavior involves a decision-making process influenced by a confluence of factors intrinsic and extrinsic to consumers. Intrinsic factors encompass psychological factors such as perception, learning, motivation and personality. On the other hand, situational factors that impact buyer behavior include shopping outlet, country of origin, buying context, informational factors such as marketing stimuli, social factors, reference groups and family. A product's country of origin is one of the extrinsic cues that influence buyer behavior. Maheswaran et al. (2013) averred that consumers associate the quality of a product with the country it originates from. Depending on favorable or unfavorable associations, a product may be perceived as having either superior or inferior quality (Maheswaran, 1994). Hence, countries tend to develop strong equity in specific categories of products such as wine in France, electronics in Japan and watches in Switzerland. Cordell (1992) argued that country of origin is a multidimensional construct that evokes product-attribute related responses. Consequently, buyers use attribute-based criteria to profile goods from the various countries.

Ngashima (1977) cautioned that product quality perceptions may change as buyers get more exposed to more information about the country from which the product originated. Furthermore, marketing promotion may change buyers' attitude towards a country of origin. Therefore, country of origin product quality perceptions may vary across market segments depending on segment characteristics such as gender, age, education level, income among other consumer demographic profiles. A study by Cattin et al. (1982) concluded that stereotypes are formed differently by consumers across national boundaries based on their demographic profiles. Festerrand et al. (1985) established that female buyers show stronger country of origin bias towards domestic products than males. Al-hammad (1988) reported that more educated buyers preferred imported products. Scholer (1971) concluded that older buyers rated products from Asia, Africa, West Germany and North America lower than younger buyers. Furthermore, females ranked foreign products higher than their male counterparts. Although the study found that more educated buyers preferred foreign products, this may vary depending on the country of origin of the products and their associated quality perceptions and stereotypes. Cordell (1992) established that buyers who are either semi-literate or threated by imported products were more

averse to foreign products. Regarding income, Wall et al. (1990) found a strong relationship between buyer's income level and preference for foreign products.

Han (1989) claimed that quality perceptions of country of origin influence the evaluation of brands by buyers. On their part, Zaynep and Maheswaran (2000) downplayed the influence of country-of-origin's effect on buyer behavior with exception of situations where the motivation of buyers is low. They established that low purchase motivation shifts buyers' attention to country-of-origin in the purchase decision process. Apart from buyer motivation, Sklair (1994) introduced the stage of country development as a significant factor in country-of-origin perceptions. He demonstrated that buyers from developing countries view country of origin as a determinant of a product's desirability for status in addition to signaling the product quality. Sung-Tai and Wyer Jr. (1989) contended that under impression formation conditions, country of origin influence quality perceptions on condition that buyers are first exposed to country of origin before they learn about specific attributes of the product. Lee et al. (2016) observed that country of origin aids in the formation of stereotypes when consumers do not have objective information about product attributes. Earlier study by Reierson (1966) found that stereotyping of foreign products was evident among American students. Nevertheless, country-of-origin association with product quality image and the resultant buyer behavior is only relevant when products are congruent with the country's image. Josiassen (2010) insists that unless country-of-origin is congruently related to a product, the effects of the former on consumer behavior remains weak.

Herz and Diamantopoulos (2017) reported that studies have shown that changes in a brand's country of origin can impact buyer's perceptions and quality evaluations. A brand from a country with positive image gains more acceptance than brands from countries with less favorable images. In a consistent pattern, Yassin et al. (2007) established that brands from countries perceived as weaker, experience negative quality evaluations and minimal purchase intentions. Batra et al. (2000) advanced the argument that buyers in developing countries are less affluent, feel insecure and aim to emulate consumers in developed countries. In contrast, sociology literature suggests that ethnocentric consumers irrespective of whether living in developing or

developed countries are negatively inclined to foreign products since they view them as unpatriotic. Hong and Wyer (1990) observed that studies have indicated that country-of-origin has weak influence on buyer behavior. Ozsomer and Cavusgil (1991) maintained that studies have yielded conflicting findings in as far as country-of-origin effects are concerned.

Ethnocentrism has been an active research domain in country-of-origin studies. Consumer ethnocentrism has been proposed as a way of differentiating buyer groups in terms of their preference for either domestic and foreign products (Huddleston et al., 2001). Witek-Hajduk and Grudecka (2022) argued that ethnocentrism strongly affects consumer behavior. Hamin (2006) established that ethnocentrism was strongly correlated with domestic product buying intention and positive quality evaluation for domestic products. However, Ma et al. (2020) argued that ethnocentrism is strong among local-minded consumers and weaker among globally exposed buyers. Zeugner-Roth et al. (2015) averred that buyers from developed countries are more ethnocentric. On the other hand, consumers from developing countries were patriotic about home-country and curious about foreign products. Zebal and Jackson (2019) claimed that consumers in developing countries defy ethnocentrism and perceive foreign brands as high quality than local brands. Naseem et al. (2015) remarked that ethnocentric consumers may trade off money for psychological benefits derived from consuming home-made products.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction
Research methodology is aimed to explain how objectives of the study will be accomplished using a scientific process The chapter presents the details of research methodology comprising research design, population of the study, data collection and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design
The study adopted cross-sectional survey design in assessing the relationship between perceived country of origin product quality on buyer behavior. In terms of purpose of the study, the research adopted correlational research design. The cross-sectional design was appropriate because accomplishing objectives of the study required quantifiable data to test relationships. Although quantitative data can also be obtained through experimentation, the study ruled out experimental research design on the basis of limited time within which the study should be completed, the inherent difficulties of conducting experiments as a foreign student and the high cost involved. The cross-sectional research design was deemed appropriate for the study because objectives of the study required statistically testing variable relationships. Considering that the study measured perceived quality, the use of rating scales measured at interval level was appropriate.

3.3 Population of the Study
The population of the study comprised adult buyers of textile products within the Nairobi City County with at least primary school education level. In terms of age, the population comprised adults aged not less than 18 years and residing within any of the sub-county in Nairobi city county. The lowest age limit was chosen guided by the fact that buyers who are likely to develop interest on country-of-origin are those that are adults with reasonable degree of exposure and judgement. The specification of education level of the population is important in the study because illiterate people may have lower comprehension abilities and may neither bother to find out country of origin of textile nor lack the ability to differentiate textiles from different countries.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The study sampled 100 respondents distributed across 10 sub-counties in Nairobi city County. The sample size was considered adequate for analysis. The sampling procedure used was multi-stage and stratified random sampling. Multi-stage sampling was the initial sampling technique used in selecting 10 sub-counties out of the 17 sub-counties in Nairobi city county. Once the sub-counties were selected, 10 respondents were selected in each county using proportionate stratified random sampling. The study did not envisage underrepresentation or overrepresentation of population from any of the sub-counties. Hence, proportionate stratified random sampling was appropriate for the study. Due to lack of a sampling frame, a mall-intercept was used in selecting10 respondents from each of the sampled sub-county.

3.5 Data Collection

Data was collected using structured questionnaire with rating scale questions. A five-point rating scale ranging from 1 to 5 was used to measure perceived country of origin textile quality and the dimensions of buyer behavior. The questionnaire was personally administered to the respondents to boost the response rate, and to clarify misconceptions that may arise. Personal interviews were appropriate for building rapport and encouraging more respondents to take part in the study. The questionnaire was divided into three parts. Part A captured demographic profile of the respondents including the age, gender, education level, and income. Part B gathered data on perceived country of origin textile quality. Part C of the questionnaire collected data on buyer behavior including awareness, buyer readiness, loyalty, word or mouth campaign and satisfaction.

3.6 Data Analysis

Data was processed to accomplish objectives of the study. Data regarding demographic profile of the respondents was analyzed and summarized through descriptive statistics such as frequencies, and mean scores. Equally, frequencies, mean scores and standard deviations were used to summarize variable measures. Regression analysis was used to test the relationships between country-of-origin perceived quality and buyer behavior. Regression analysis results were interpreted using significance levels and coefficient of determination and the standardized beta coefficients.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The chapter reports the findings of the study. The chapter specifically reports on the response rate, demographics results of the respondents, descriptive results of the variables and regression analysis findings.

4.2 Response Rate

The study sampled 100 respondents, out of which 74 provided analyzable feedback translating to a response rate of 74%. The response rate was considered adequate for the statistical tests.

4.3 Respondent's Demographics

The sub-section reports on respondent's sex, education level and the mean age. In addition, the sub-section reports on respondent's awareness about import sources of the various types of clothes including babywear, toddler clothes, male adult casual clothes, male adult suits, male adult trousers, male adult shirts, female adult dresses, female adult trousers, female adult suits, jackets and sweaters.

Table 4.1 provides the distribution of respondent's sex and education. Education was important for assessing consumer awareness about countries from which Kenya imports various categories of textile. On the other hand, sex shows whether there was gender bias in the sample. The results of distribution of gender and sex are displayed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Respondent's demographics

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	36	48.6
Female	38	51.4
Total	74	100
Education	2	2.7
Primary	55	74.3
Secondary	17	23
Degree (Undergraduate)	74	100
Total		

The results displayed on Table 4.1 show that male respondents were represented by 48.6 percent while their female counterparts comprised 51.4 percent. Majority (74.3%) of the respondents had secondary education. Only two respondents had primary level of education. Respondents with University degree were represented by 23 percent. The results of distribution of education level suggest that all respondents were literate and a considerable number of people. In addition to education and sex data, the survey collected data on respondent's age. Age was captured using numeric data and analyzed using mean scores and standard deviation. The Results on respondent's age are provided on Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Respondent's age

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Respondent's age	74	39.15	13.13
Valid N (listwise)	74		

The results on Table 4.2 reveal that the mean age of the respondents was 39.15 years with a standard deviation of 13.13 years. The results imply that majority of the respondents were youthful. The standard deviation of 13.13 suggests that there was large deviation of age from the mean. This is possibly attributed to outliers where there are some very young people and older people in the sample. The study attempted to determine consumer's awareness about the sources of textile imports, Respondents were presented with open ended question and asked to state the sources of imports for babywear, toddler clothes, male adult clothes, female clothes, suits among others. The results of perceived sources of textile imports are presented in the sections below.

4.4 Perceived Sources of Textile
Consumer perception is important in understanding behavior. Perception influences attitude formation and largely determines choices made by consumers including what they buy, where they shop, how they spend their money and the frequency of buying. Country of origin is an external stimulus that influences consumer perception. Depending on the country-of-origin reputation about specific clothing, perceived quality of textile associated with specific types of clothes, consumer behavior may be influenced either positively or negatively. Table 4.3 presents the results of perception of country of origin for baby wear.

Table 4.3 Perceived source of baby wear

Country of origin	Frequency	Percent
China	36	48.6
India	8	10.8
Indonesia	3	4.1
Sri-Lanka	1	1.4
Thailand	1	1.4
UAE	7	9.5
Vietnam	18	24.3
Total	74	100

The results in Table 4.3 show that majority of respondents (48.6%) believed that Kenya imports baby clothes from China. Vietnam was mentioned by 24.3 percent of the respondents as the country of origin for baby wear imports in Kenya. India was perceived by 10.8 percent of the respondents as the source baby wear imports in Kenya. Only one respondent believed that baby wear imports in Kenya originated from Thailand and Sri-Lanka. Table 4.4 provides the descriptive distribution of perceived country of origin for toddler clothes.

Table 4.4 Perceived country of origin for toddler clothes

Country of origin	Frequency	Percent
China	40	54.1
India	6	8.1
Indonesia	3	4.1
Pakistan	1	1.4
UAE	9	12.2
Vietnam	15	20.3
Total	74	100

The results in Table 4.4 indicate that 54.1 percent of the respondents believed that China was the country of origin for toddler clothes imports in Kenya. It was established that 20.3 percent believed that Kenya imports toddler clothes from Vietnam. UAE was believed by 12.2 percent as the country of origin for toddler clothes. Table 4.5 presents data on perceived country of origin for male adult casual clothes.

Table 4.5 Perceived country of origin for male adult casual clothes

Country of origin	Frequency	Percent
Bangladesh	1	1.4
China	40	54.1
India	8	10.8
Indonesia	1	1.4
Korea	1	1.4
UAE	10	13.5
Vietnam	13	17.6
Total	74	100

The results in Table 4.5 demonstrates that 54.1 percent of the respondents believed that male adult casual clothes were imported from China. Vietnam was perceived as the second largest (17.6%) source of male adult casual clothes. In addition, 10.8 percent of the respondents perceived India as the country of origin from which Kenya imports male adult casual clothes. Table 4.6 provides frequency distributions for male adult suits.

Table 4.6 Perceived country of origin for male adult suits

Country of origin	Frequency	Percent
China	18	24.3
India	5	6.8
Indonesia	1	1.4
Italy	1	1.4
Turkey	34	45.9
UAE	8	10.8
UK	4	5.4
Vietnam	3	4.1
Total	74	100

The results on Table 4.6 reveal that Turkey was perceived as the main (45.9%) source of male adult suits. China (24.3%) trailed behind Turkey as the perceived second largest source of male adult suits imports. UAE (10.8%) was perceived as the third biggest source of male adult suits imports. Table 4.7 reports the distributions of perceived country of origin of male adult trousers.

Table 4.7 Perceived country of origin of male adult trousers

Country of origin	Frequency	Percent
China	30	40.5
India	10	13.5
Indonesia	1	1.4
Singapore	1	1.4
Sri-Lanka	1	1.4
Turkey	7	9.5
UAE	11	14.9
Vietnam	13	17.6
Total	74	100

Based on the results on Table 4.7, China (40.5%) followed by Vietnam (17.6%) enjoyed perceived dominance in exporting male adult trousers to Kenya. India was perceived by 13.5 percent as the country of origin for male adult trousers. Table 4.8 presents the results for perceived country of origin for male adult shirts.

Table 4.8 Perceived country of origin for male adult shirts

Country of origin	Frequency	Percent
Bangladesh	1	1.4
China	34	45.9
India	4	5.4
Indonesia	2	2.7
Singapore	1	1.4
Turkey	11	14.9
UAE	8	10.8
Vietnam	13	17.6
Total	74	100

The results on Table 4.8 demonstrate that China was perceived by 45.9 percent of the respondents as the country of origin for male adult shirts. Vietnam (17.6%) and Turkey (14.9%) in that order were perceived as some of the major source of Kenyan imports of male adult shirts. Table 4.9 presents the results of perceived country of origin for female adult dresses.

Table 4.9 Perceived country of origin for female adult dresses

Country of origin	Frequency	Percent
China	38	51.4
India	10	13.5
Indonesia	4	5.4
Sri-Lanka	2	2.7
UAE	8	10.8
Vietnam	12	16.2
Total	74	100

Majority (51.4%) of the respondents perceived China as the source of female adult dresses. Vietnam (16.2%) and India (13.5%) in that order were perceived as key sources of female adult dresses. Table 4.10 presents the distributions of perceived country of origin for female adult trousers.

Table 4.10 Perceived country of origin for female adult trousers

Country of origin	Frequency	Percent
China	49	66.2
India	6	8.1
UAE	9	12.2
Vietnam	10	13.5
Total	74	100

The results on Table 4.10 show that China had a commanding perceived lead in the export of female adult trousers to Kenya. Vietnam was perceived by 13.5 percent as the country of origin for female adult trousers. Table 4.11 presents the distribution of perceived country of origin for female adult suits.

Table 4.11 Perceived country of origin for female adult suits

Country of origin	Frequency	Percent
China	14	18.9
India	3	4.1
Indonesia	1	1.4
Turkey	40	54.1
UAE	6	8.1
UK	4	5.4
Vietnam	6	8.1
Total	74	100

The Statistics on Table 4.11 show that majority (54.1%) of the respondents perceived Turkey as the country of origin for female adult suits. Only 18.9 percent of the respondents perceived China as the country of origin for female adult suits. Table 4.12 presents distributions of perceived country of origin for Jackets.

Table 4.12 Perceived country of origin for jackets

Country of origin	Frequency	Percent
China	32	43.2
India	7	9.5
Korea	1	1.4
Turkey	2	2.7
UAE	22	29.7
Vietnam	10	13.5
Total	74	100

China was perceived by 43.2 percent of the respondents as the country of origin for jackets. In comparison, 29.7 percent perceived UAE as the country of origin for jackets. A relatively small representation (13.5%) perceived Vietnam as the country of origin for jackets. Table 4.13 presents results on perceived country of origin for sweaters.

Table 4.13 Perceived country of origin for sweaters

Country of Origin	Frequency	Percent
China	39	52.8
India	8	10.8
Turkey	1	1.4
UAE	19	25.7
Vietnam	7	9.5
Total	74	100

Table 4.23 shows that China (52.5%) and UAE (25.7%) were the leading country of origin for sweaters in Kenya. Only one respondent perceived Turkey as the country of origin for imported sweaters in Kenya. India contributed to 10.8% of the perceived country of origin in Kenya. The following section provides the descriptive results of the variables.

4.5 Descriptive Results

The variables were measured using a five-point rating scale whereby 1 represented the lowest score and 5 was the highest score. The data were analyzed using mean scores and standard deviations. Table 4.14 presents the descriptive results of country-of-origin perceived quality of textile.

Table 4.14 Country of origin textile perceived quality

Perceived quality scale	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I can recommend clothes from China to my friends	74	4.72	0.537
I am very satisfied with clothes from China	74	4.3	0.697
Clothes from China do not shrink after washing	74	4.12	0.682
Clothes from China have good fabric texture	74	3.78	0.668
Clothes from China do not fade quickly (colorfast)	74	3.78	0.708
There are a wide variety of clothes from China	74	3.42	0.683
Clothes imported from China are unique	74	3.24	0.544
Clothes from China are durable	74	2.97	0.702
Clothes from China are of good design	74	2.91	0.725

The results on Table 4.14 show that all the question items with exception of two had mean scores exceeding 3.0. Majority of the respondents would recommend clothes from China to their friends (Mean = 4. 72, Std. dev. = 0.537). Similarly, majority of the respondents were satisfied with clothes originating from China (Mean score = 4.3, Std. dev = 0.697). Relatedly, to a large extent, respondents believed that clothes from China do not shrink after washing (Mean score = 4.12, Std. dev = 0.682). In contrast, the question item with the lowest mean score was associated with 'good design' (Mean score = 2.91, Std. dev = 0.725). This means that clothes originating from China to a large extent lack creative or unique design. In the same vein, respondents perceived clothes originating from China are not durable (Mean score = 2.97, Std. dev = 0.702). Table 4.15 presents the descriptive results of consumer behavior.

Table 4.15 Consumer purchase behavior

Consumer purchase behavior scale	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I get value for money when I buy clothes originating from China	74	4.69	0.570
I have never been disappointed after buying clothes originating from China	74	4.24	0.569
I have positive feelings about clothes from China	74	3.81	0.655
I am convinced that clothes from China are better than those from comparable countries	74	3.80	0.740
I have repeatedly recommended clothes from China to my friends	74	3.74	1.073
I am interested in buying clothes imported from China	74	3.58	0.891
I frequently buy clothes imported from China	74	3.49	0.798

The results displayed on Table 4.15 indicate that all the question items attained mean score above 3.0. Majority of the respondents believed they get value for money by buying clothes from China (Mean = 4.69, Std. dev = 0.570). This finding implies that customers are satisfied with clothes from China at the price they pay to buy the products. Similarly, majority of the respondents indicated they have never been disappointed after buying clothes originating from China (Mean score = 4.24, Std. dev = 0.569). The question item with the lowest mean was 'I frequently buy clothes imported from China' (Mean = 3.49, Std. dev = 0.798). This means that despite the satisfaction with clothes from China, they were frequently buying the clothes. This suggests lack of customer loyalty to Chinese textile. The question item 'I have repeatedly

recommended clothes from China to my friends' attained the highest standard deviation (Mean = 3.74, Std. dev = 1.073). This means that opinion was highly divided with regards to this behavioral attribute. Whereas there was willingness to recommend the clothes to friends, the incentive or strong conviction to recommend the clothes from China was lacking. In the section below, the study reports findings of regression analysis.

4.6 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was used to test the relationship between country-of-origin perceived quality of textile and consumer purchase behavior. Table 4.16 provides the results of regression analysis summary.

Table 4.16 Regression analysis summary

Model Summaryb					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.368a	0.136	0.124	2.40838	1.415
a Predictors: (Constant), COO Perceived quality					
b Dependent Variable: Buyer Behavior					

The results on Table 4.16 demonstrate that there was a positive relationship between country-of-origin perceived quality and buyer behavior. The results indicate that country of origin perceived quality explained 13.6 percent of the variation in buyer behavior (R^2 = 0.136). Despite the positive relationship, the correlation between country-of-origin perceived quality and buyer behavior was moderately weak. Table 4.17 presents the results of analysis of variance.

Table 4.17 Analysis of Variance

ANOVAa

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	65.474	1	65.474	11.288	.001b
	Residual	417.621	72	5.8		
	Total	483.094	73			
a Dependent Variable: Buyer_Behaviour						
b Predictors: (Constant), COO_Perceivedquality						

The results on Table 4.17 demonstrate that the regression model fitting the relationship between country-of-origin perceived quality and buyer behavior was significant and robust (F = 11.288, p-value≤0.05). Table 4.18 presents the results of regression coefficients.

Table 4.18 Regression coefficients

Coefficientsa

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	9.853	2.896		3.403	0.001	4.081	15.626
	COO_Perceivedquality	0.524	0.156	0.368	3.36	0.001	0.213	0.835
a Dependent Variable: Buyer_Behaviour								

The results on Table 4.18 show that the relationship between country-of-origin perceived quality and buyer behavior was significant and positive (t-statistics= 3.36, p-value ≤0.05). The standardized beta coefficient of 0.368 suggests that for every 1 unit change in country-of-origin perceived value, there is a corresponding 0.368 change in buyer behavior. The results demonstrate moderately weak relationship between country-of-origin perceived quality and buyer behavior. The following section presents discussion of the findings.

4.7 Discussion of the Findings
Consumer behavior is the result of many interacting factors within and around the consumer's environment. Environmental stimuli such as marketing efforts by firms, country of origin

influence behavior creating internal factors such as perception, learning, attitude and motivation. These internal factors influence consumer judgement that produce behaviors that may include interest in the product, readiness to buy the product, purchase, rejection of the product, and loyalty or brand churn. Country of origin is associated with the perceptions consumers have regarding products from specific countries. In addition, country of origin relates to how consumers perceive specific countries and the psychological association of certain products to some countries based on perceived superiority in a class of products. Based on the perceptions consumers hold regarding products from some countries, a brand may enjoy strategic advantage or suffer strategic disadvantage. Therefore, country of origin is an extrinsic cue on the basis of which consumers make inferences about product quality, performance and subsequently consumer behavior. The objectives of the study were twofold. The first objective was to determine the perceived quality of textiles imported from China. The second objective was to establish the influence of country-of-origin perceived quality on consumer purchase behavior.

Regarding the first objective, it was established that Kenyans associates textile imports with 12 countries namely; China, India, Turkey, Korea, Indonesia, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Vietnam, United Kingdom, Indonesia, Sri-Lanka, Singapore, Bangladesh and Italy. However, China enjoyed perceived dominance as country of origin for all types of clothes except suits. Turkey was perceived as the country from which Kenya imports the bulk of suits. Although clothes from China did not enjoy strong perceived quality, they were considered value for money. In other words, consumers feel they get relatively more benefits for the amount of money they pay to purchase clothes imported from China. The finding resonates with general perception held by Kenyans regarding products from China. Dagger and Raciti (2011) observed that consumers use country-based stereotypes to interpret their experiences with products from that country. The findings of the current study support Laroche et al (2005) who established that country of origin signals a product's quality attributes manifested through durability and performance. The findings suggest that majority of Kenyans are value shoppers whose buying decisions are largely driven by product pricing than the actual attributes of the product. In other words, affordability of the product and products whose prices fit the budget of consumers. The findings of the study

support the conclusion reached by Yunus and Rashid (2016) that China has to do more in building consumer confidence and trust in products originating from the country.

Hanzae and Khosrozadeh (2012) argued that country of origin influences consumer's perception either in favor of or against products from any country. The study established that there was a significant positive relationship between country-of-origin perceived quality and buyer behavior. However, the relationship was moderately weak suggesting that country of origin perceptions had little influence on buyer behavior. Consistent with findings by Parkvithee and Miranda (2012) who found that people care about the origin of the products when they are making purchase decisions. The findings of the study support earlier findings by Razvani et al. (2012) who reported that country of origin has direct effect on purchase intention. Kala and Chaubey (2016) established that country of origin is by itself an information relied upon by consumers to evaluate products. The low explanatory power of country-of-origin perceived quality on consumer behavior, is consistent with the results reported by Vaele and Quester (2009) which demonstrated that country of origin influence is only stronger in high involvement purchase situations. Clothes are moderate involvement purchase situation.   Since clothes are neither luxury nor very expensive products, the moderately weak relationship between country-of-origin perceived quality and buyer behavior is not surprising.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The Chapter covers summary of the study, conclusion of the study, recommendations and limitations of the study.

5.2 Summary of the Study

Country of origin is argued in literature as a significant determinant of buyer behavior. Hence, the current study set out to establish country of origin perceived quality on buyer behavior. A descriptive cross-sectional survey was adopted and data collected using a questionnaire targeting shoppers in Nairobi's Central Business District. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. It was established that China enjoyed perceived dominance in origin of textile sold in Nairobi City County. Turkey was largely associated with perceived dominance of male and female suits. Although majority of the respondents were aware that most categories of clothes originate from China, they did not demonstrate enthusiasm to recommend the clothes originating from China to their friends.

Kenyan buyers perceived clothes from China as value for money despite the observed concern on non-durability of the clothes. This behavior typified consumers with financial difficulties where price overruns quality considerations in buyer behavior. The relationship between country-of-origin perceived quality was significant and positive albeit moderately weak. The moderate weak relationship was interpreted as consistent behavioral display in low involvement purchase situations.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on findings of the study regarding the perceived quality of textile from China, it was established that Kenyans had mixed perceptions of clothes originating from China. On the one hand, Kenyan buyers consider clothes from China as value for money. On the other hand, they believe that textile from China is not durable and do not have unique designs. On the basis of these descriptive results, it was concluded that Kenyan buyers are value shoppers that trade off quality for affordability of textile products. Regression analysis results established that there was moderately weak relationship between country-of-origin perceived quality and buyer behavior.

The finding was interpreted to mean that the influence of country-of-origin perceived quality is less influential in the purchase of low involvement products. Hence, it was concluded that the country-of-origin effect on buyer behavior was more less relevant in low involvement buying situation. Whereas it is important for manufacturers to address product quality concerns, the study concluded that the weak relationship between country-of-origin influence on buyer behavior, the results imply that China is less likely to suffer declined textile sales based on perceived quality of textile by buyers.

5.4 Recommendations

The study demonstrated that the influence of country-of-origin effect varies depending on buying situation and consumer characteristics. However, the study was carried out on a low-involvement buying situation. Therefore, the study recommends that the country-of-origin effect of products from China be carried out in high-involvement products such as luxury products, risky products or durable and expensive products. Considering that Kenyans places a premium on low-cost products, it is recommended that Chinese textile producers and marketers targeting the Kenyan market should compete on the basis of cost leadership by pursuing cost-reducing strategies and economies of scale.

5.5 Limitations

The study was carried out in a low-involvement buying context. Hence, the findings cannot be generalized across all buying situations. Hence, it is necessary for future studies to address this limitation by studying country-of-origin effect on high involvement buying context. The study was limited to Nairobi City County and cannot be generalized across the country. Moreover, the study was based on studying perceptions of consumers. Actual purchase data such as amount of money spent on clothes imported from China was not gathered. Hence, the results may be different if actual purchase data was analyzed.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

Section A: Respondent Demographics

1. Sex: a) Male ☐   (b) Female ☐

2. Age…………………….

3. Education level

Primary	Secondary	University (Undergraduate)	Master	PhD

Section B: Fabric Country of Origin Awareness

4. Name the country from where Kenya imports majority of the following types of clothes Nairobi

Cloth type	Countries of Origin
Baby wear	
Toddler clothes	
Male adults' Casual clothes	
Male adult suits	
Male adult trousers	
Male adult shirts	
Female adult dresses	
Female adult trousers	
Female adult suits	
Jackets	
Sweaters	
Other (Specify)	

Section C: Country of Origin Perceived Quality

Please indicate the level to which you agree with the following statements

Question Item	Agreement Level				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Clothes from China are of good design					
Clothes from China are durable					
Clothes imported from China are unique					
There are a wide variety of clothes from China					
Clothes from China have good fabric texture					
Clothes from China do not fade quickly (Colorfast)					
Clothes from China do not shrink after washing					
I am very satisfied with clothes from China					
I can recommend clothes from China to my friends					

Section D: Buyer Behaviour

Please indicate the level of your agreement with the following statements

Question Item	Agreement Level				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am interested on buying clothes imported from China					
I frequently buy clothes imported from China					
I have positive feelings about clothes from China					
I am convinced that clothes from China are better than those from comparable countries					
I have repeatedly recommended clothes from China to my friends					
I have never been disappointed after buying clothes originating from China					
I get value for money when I buy clothes originating from China					