# ETHNOCENTRISM AND ATTITUDE OF JORDANIAN CONSUMERS TOWARDS FOREIGN PRODUCTS

By

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#### ABSTRACT

Consumer purchase behaviour toward foreign products has been for many years an area of ongoing interest in fields that span both consumer behavior and international marketing. This thesis, which is based on the concepts of Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and ethnocentrism (CET), has the following objectives, (1) measure the level of the consumer ethnocentrism among Jordanian consumer in Amman, (2) determinants that influence consumer behavior towards foreign products, (3) explain the structural interrelationships between the external variables conservatism, interest in travel within TRA model, (4) validate and generate a research model that will be able to demonstrate actual purchase consumer behaviour towards foreign products in Jordan. A questionnaire consisting of names of the variables (interest in foreign travel, conservatism, consumer ethnocentrism, attitude toward foreign product, intention toward foreign product, and actual purchase toward foreign product) was used to collect the data for this study. Phone calls were made to 518 households' respondents in Amman. This was done based on systematic random sampling using the telephone directory of Jordan (Yellow Pages). The survey yielded 382 usable questionnaires, with a response rate of 73.74%. Statistical analysis methods (SPSS) and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with AMOS version 7.0 were used to analyse data. The findings indicate that the level of ethnocentrism among Jordanian consumers in Amman is low, (2) all three predictors (conservatism, attitude toward foreign product, and intention) are significant factors influencing purchase behavior, (3) all direct relationships were supported, except interest in travel, (4) all indirect effects were supported, except that intention was not found to be a mediator between "ATT" and "ACT", (5) the TRA with external factors can partially explain the research model (interest in travel is not a significant factor affecting attitude), (6) the results showed that our modified model "GM" predicts Jordanian behavior to buy foreign product more effectively than the original TRA model. Using SEM, the Model Generating (MG) confirmed better fit and larger parsimony compared with the hypothesized (SC) and Alternative Model (AM), as shown in the GOF index, CMIN/df = 1.049; GFI = 0.940; RMSEA = 0.011; TLI = 0.999; P-value = 0.259; SMC = 0.77. This study has several valuable implications. Telephone survey used in this study could be considered as a big contribution. Most previous discussions on Jordanian CET were mainly journalistic account in nature or non-academic findings. They are economic experts who proclaimed in different occasion about there vision towards the Jordanian consumer preferences and the impact of these preferences. Our results contribute to the empirical research findings thus supporting narration and previous proclamations made by Jordanian writers. SEM is strongly recommended for better quality model testing and generating with AMOS software. The two external variables were added, which increased the power of the TRA model and helped towards the ongoing efforts of theory-building in this field. This approach should be continued in future research. In view of the low ethnocentrism, positive attitude and high intention toward foreign product among local consumers in Amman which increases the cash flow toward foreign product (high deficit), it would be appropriate to suggest the following recommendations: (i) an increase in import tariff will unambiguously lead to a general increase in price, since, in equilibrium, tariffs

may be imposed to increase the cost of imported goods in relation to domestic production, thereby reducing the volume of imports and keeping the balance of payments in credit, or to protect domestic industry from foreign competition and will improve the demand on the home made products, (ii) launch a national campaign to increase the level and awareness of ethnocentrism among Jordanian consumers to encourage people to buy local and support local products Investigating the purchase behaviour toward foreign products based only on consumer perspective can be a limitation of this study. Future research can investigate such fields as business purchase behaviour or government purchase behaviour, which may have been neglected here.

#### **PUBLICATIONS FROM THIS RESEARCH**

The following conferences papers and publications have been produced from the research reported in this thesis:

- Abbas, N.A., & Nik, Kamariah, N.M. (2008). Does a demographic characteristic matter among Jordanian consumer ethnocentrism? *The International Journal of Retailing & Marketing management- IJRM.* 2(2), 36-51.
- Abbas, N.A., & Nik, Kamariah, N.M. (2008). Validity test of CETSCALE in Jordan for consumer ethnocentrism. *The International Journal of Retailing* & Marketing management- IJRM. 2(2), 52-69.
- Abbas, N.A., & Nik, Kamariah, N.M. (2007). Antecedents of Consumer Ethnocentrism. ISBN: 978-1-877156-29-9. Proceedings of the Australian and New Zealand Marketing Academy (ANZMAC) Conference 2007-New Zealand
- Abbas, N.A., & Nik, Kamariah, N.M. (2007). Determining the antecedents of consumer ethnocentrism in Jordan. ISBN: 978-1-60530-424-3. Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Business and Management, ICBM - Bangkok
- Abbas, N.A., & Nik, Kamariah, N.M. (2007). International Products and purchase intention in Jordan among Consumer Ethnocentrism.
   Proceedings of the International Economic Conference on Trade and Industry, IECTI – Malaysia
- Abbas, N.A., & Nik, Kamariah, N.M. (2007). Tourism and consumer ethnocentrism: An empirical analysis of Jordanian consumers. Proceedings of Global Academy of Business and Economic Research, GABER – Thailand
- Abbas, N.A., & Nik, Kamariah, N.M. (2008). Validity Test of CETSCALE in Jordan for Consumer Ethnocentrism, ISSN: 1976-8699 Global Marketing Conference at Shanghai, 2008 GMC – China

- Abbas, N.A., & Nik, Kamariah, N.M. (2008) Determining and Validating Jordanian Consumer Ethnocentrism Antecedents. Proceedings of the International Conference on Entrepreneurship 2008 (ICE 2008) Malaysia.
- Abbas, N.A., & Nik, Kamariah, N.M. (2008) Predictor Factors of Consumer Ethnocentrism among Malaysian. Proceedings of the International Conference on Social Sciences and Humanities 2008 (ICoSSH'08). USM University, Malaysia

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#### **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

- Attitude toward Behavior It is previous attitude of a person toward performing that behavior. People think about their decisions and the possible outcomes of their actions before making any decision to be involved or not involved in a given behavior.
- 2. Behavioral Beliefs It is the likely outcomes of the behavior and the evaluations of these outcomes. These beliefs produce a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the behavior.
- 3. **Conservatism** Those that "show a tendency to cherish traditions and social institutions that have survived the test of time and to introduce changes only occasionally, reluctantly and gradually.
- 4. **Content Validity** An aspect of validity assessing the correspondence between the individual items and the concept through ratings by expert judges, and pre-tests with multiple sub-populations or other means.
- 5. Reliability An aspect of reliability measuring the internal consistency of a set of measures rather than the reliability of a single variable.

- 6. Construct Validity An aspect of validity testing how well the results obtained from the use of the measure fit the theories around which the test was designed. In other words, construct validity testified that the instrument did tap the concept as theorized.
- 7. Consumers Ethnocentrism Consumer's preference for domestically produced products, or conversely, as a bias against imported products
- 8. Convergent Validity It is synonymous with criterion validity and with correlational analysis, and is one way of establishing construct validity.
- 9. Discriminant Validity It is another way of testing construct validity. A measure has discriminant validity when it has a low correlation with measures of dissimilar concepts. In other words, discriminant validity reflects the extent to which the constructs in a model are different.
- 10. Independent Variable A variable that influences the dependent or criterion variable and accounts for (or explains) its variance.
- 11. Interest in Foreign travel Attitudes towards traveling and exposure to foreign countries

- 12. Endogenous Latent Construct A latent, multi-item equivalents to a dependent variable. It is a construct that is affected by other constructs in the model.
- 13. Exogenous Latent Construct A latent, multi-item equivalent of an independent variable. It is a construct that is not affected by any other construct in the model.
- 14. Parsimony (Measure of Parsimony) A model high in parsimony (simplicity) is a model with relatively few parameters and relatively many degrees of freedom. On the other hand, a model with many parameters and few degrees of freedom is said to be complex or lacking in parsimony.
- 15. Methods The various means or techniques or procedures used to gather and analyze data related to some research question or hypothesis.
- 16. Methodology The strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and linking the choice and use of methods to the desired outcomes.
- 17. **Multicollinearity** When the independent variables are highly correlated this is referred to as multicollinearrity.
- 18. Normative Beliefs The perceived behavioral expectations of such important referent individuals or groups as the person's spouse, family, friends, and teacher,

doctor, supervisor, and co-workers, depending on the population and behavior studied. These beliefs result in perceived social pressure or subjective norm.

- 19. Pilot Study The study conducts to detect weaknesses in design and instrumentation and to provide proxy data for selection.
- 20. Population The entire group of people that the researcher wishes to investigate.
- 21. Questionnaire A pre-formulated written set of questions to which respondents record their answers, usually within rather closely defined alternatives.
- 22. Square Multiple Correlation It is used to measure the construct reliability. The square multiple correlation (SMC) is referred to an item reliability coefficient. It is the correlation between a single indicator variable and the construct it measures. In other words, SMC is the proportion of its variance that is accounted for by its predictors.
- 23. Structural Equation Modeling A multivariate technique combines aspects of multiple regression (examining dependence relationships) and factor analysis (representing unmeasured concepts-factors with multiple variables) to estimate a series of interrelated dependence relationships simultaneously.

- 24. **Subjective Norm** The social pressure exerted on the person or the decision maker to perform the behaviors. It refers to an individual's perception about what other people think of his or her behaviors in question.
- 25. **Theoretical Framework** It is a conceptual model of how the researcher theories or makes logical sense of the relationships among the several factors that have been identified as important to the problem. The theoretical framework may be referred to as a conceptual framework or as the research model.
- 26. Validity The extent to which the data collected truly reflects the phenomenon being studied.

# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

• AGFI	Adjusted Goodness-Of-Fit Index
• AM	Alternative Model
• AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structures
• ATT	Attitude toward Foreign Product
• CET	Consumer Ethnocentrism
• CFI	Comparative Fit Index
• CON	Conservatism
• DF	Degree of Freedom
• FT	Foreign Travel
• JOD	Jordanian Dinner
• INT	Intention to purchase foreign product
• GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
• GDP	Gross Domestic Product
• GFI	Goodness- of- Fit Index
• LDC	Less Developed Country
• ML	Maximum likelihood
• MG	Model Generating
• N	Population
• n	Sample Size
• NFI	Normed Fit Index
• RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
• SMC	Squared Multiple Correlations
• SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
• SN	Subjective Norms
• TRA	Theory of Reasoned Action
• TPB	Theory of Planed Behavior
• WTO	World Trade Organization

#### **CHAPTER 1**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

#### 1.1 PREAMBLE

This chapter begins with a discussion about the background of this study. It then presents the research problem, objectives, and solutions to a few key questions. The chapter will then outline the research significance, underlying theories and scope of the study. Finally, it will conclude with a presentation of the research structure used to meet the main objectives.

#### **1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Over the past two decades, global trade has increased rapidly due to growing economic opportunities brought about by a reduction in tariffs and other trade barriers (Reardon, Miller, Vidam, & Kim, 2004). Despite this growth, many host countries (importers) such as Jordan, continue to face a significant challenge due to a high "leakage" of cash flow in the trade of imported products.

Deregulation and free trade opportunities have created a new environment for Jordan's economy (Al Faniq, 2008). It has helped transform Jordan's commercial policy after many years of protective measures, such as enclosure and high customs duties, and has opened up its local market to a much greater degree.

This has been the result of Jordan's active efforts in establishing trade treaties with several countries to encourage investment and improve its economy through trade agreements.

# The contents of the thesis is for internal user only

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