

EFFECT OF BRAND CUES ON CONSUMERS' PREFERENCE FOR TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTS IN THE CONTEXT OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

AlJohani, Majed Saad^{1*}, Ahmad, Azhar²

¹Graduate School of Business, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia(UKM), 43600 Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

²Faculty of Economics & Management, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia(UKM), 43600 Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

*For correspondence; Tel. + (60) 1124330200, E-mail:majedmarwani@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: *The study debates the factors that influence or drive consumers' preference for electronic goods and their intention to loyalty on the basis of several factors of brand cues such as country of origin (COO), brand name, and advertising content in the context of developing countries. The main purpose of this article is to theoretically determine the multi-criteria of brand cues in terms of understanding how consumers use these cues to evaluate mobile phone products and select their preferred brand which affects their intention to repurchase. Also, this paper may provide some insights into factors of the brand cues that can be important for the international marketers to devise the effective marketing strategies to build competitive advantage and develop their consumers' loyalty towards a mobile phone brand. Finally, a proposed conceptual framework is designed to identify the relationships between variables in the context of mobile phone purchase in the developing countries.*

Keywords: country of origin (COO), brand name, advertising, brand preference, loyalty intention

1. INTRODUCTION

In this increasingly competitive world, firms are required to have a deeper understanding of consumer behavior and also to edify consumers about the brand in order to evolve efficient marketing strategies. Nowadays, marketing practitioners try to expand their brand scope through foreign marketplaces in order to develop strategic opportunities in extending the business actions of a company [1].

In electronic products, technology has facilitated the development of several revolutionary products which put consumers in a difficult situation to make decisions regarding product quality. Therefore, it is very important for marketing managers and manufacturers to know the nature of consumer purchase behaviour towards electronic devices in order to build effective marketing strategies to increase market share [2,3]. It was observed there are multiple attributes that can influence consumers and their purchase decisions which are based on different brand cues. These brand cues can be divided into intrinsic and extrinsic cues [4]. Extrinsic cues are considered a critical dimension of perceived product quality. Thus, consumers' products and brands are formed from an array of information cues such country of origin, brand name, price, advertising, packaging [5].

According to Moslehpour & Huyen [6], customers prefer brands that are well-known all over the world, but most consumers often have limited information to evaluate complex products such as technology goods in the context of developing countries [7]. According to Cue Utilization Theory (CUT) and previous studies such as [8,7], extrinsic information cues can treat this important issue of a shortage of information. Consumers are surely using various criteria in selecting their goods or services, which is considered important indicators for product or brand quality such as country of origin, price, brand name, quality, technology, and other criteria of product attributes [9]. Simultaneously, country of origin, brand name and advertising are considered as a multi-criteria of extrinsic product cues for quality product evaluation [10,11]. Therefore, extrinsic information cues can impact perceived consumers pattern of product or brand evaluation and purchase intention [10-12].

In this context, brand preference is also an essential point in understanding consumer behavior of brand choice as well as enhancing brand loyalty [13]. Yuliya, Robin, & Linda [14] stated that brand perceptions are a primary step for scholars to recognize customers' preference for the brand and also the various perceptions of brands by consumers drive consumer behavior to brand purchase. Although consumer's preferences toward foreign brand name in developing countries context [15,16], there are very few of studies that address understanding of the effect of various factors such as extrinsic brand cues on brand preference in the context of emerging markets [17]. The study strives to provide insights into the importance of consumer perceptions on different brand cues factors in shaping brand preferences. Therefore, the study attempts to bridge these research gaps.

Based on this discussion, the current study strives to explore the effect of country of origin, brand name, and advertising on consumers' preference towards various foreign brands as well as loyalty intention by framing two research questions as follows:

1. Do perceived brand cues are the most important criteria for consumers to select their brand and loyalty intention?
2. Does a consumer evaluate technology products based on brand cues?

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Complex technology goods marketing has provided difficult challenges for marketers with an increased number of competitive firms in building a strong brand in order to increase the long-term market share [18,6]. Surprisingly, the importance of preference towards foreign brands of electronic goods has not been given extensive attention in addressing extrinsic brand cues associated with managing brands [15] [16]. As the preferences are changing speedily due to the availability of a wide range of goods [4], it is important for marketers amid increasing competition to build a strong brand in order to increase the long-term market share [18,4]. Therefore, this present study tries to understand brand preferences through COO, brand name, and advertising and its relationships with consumers' assessment and their behavior intention towards electronic brands in the context of

developing countries.

In addition, this paper aims to provide more insights of the role of brand cues in building loyalty by simultaneously including the combined role of customer perceptions of the firm's advertising with a brand name, COO, and customer preference. Thus, this study attempts to explain relationships between the aforementioned constructs based on Cue Utilization Theory.

Cue Utilization Theory (CUT)

Cue Utilization Theory (CUT) aids researchers to realize the effect of brand familiarity, which concentrates on consumer experience whether direct or indirect with the brand [19]. According to (CUT), products consist of an array of cues that serve as surrogate indicators of quality to buyers [20]. The brand attributes or brand cues can affect consumers' perception, which may be fundamentally categorized as extrinsic cues and intrinsic cues [4]. Johan and Courtney [21] defined intrinsic cues as "the physical characteristics of a product such as colour, flavour, variety, and vintage (p. 308)". However, extrinsic cues as characteristics that are product-related but not physically part of it [22] such as place of origin, brand name, price, type of outlet, presentation, the influence of advertising level, promotion, packaging, store personnel, are determined by marketing efforts [23].

In addition, the objective to measure the quality is determined by extrinsic attributes, which exist in the form of non-physical but related to the product such as brand name, the stamp of quality, product information and so on [24]. Many studies have found that extrinsic cues can significantly influence product or brand evaluation [25-26]. It occurs since consumers are manifestly more familiar with extrinsic cues than with intrinsic cues. According to the study purpose, this article focuses on multi-dimensions of extrinsic brand cues, namely, country of origin, brand name, and advertising content.

Country of Origin (COO)

COO is one of an important extrinsic information cue, often used to assess the products quality. the effect of COO has remained somewhat unexplored in the technology marketing context. It is one of the most important factors that remarkably affect the buyer's decision process [27]. The country of origin (COO) has been referred to "the country of manufacture or assembly" and identified via "made in" or "manufactured in" labels [28]. For example, Toyota, Sony, and Honda products are considered to be Japanese; Apple Mobile Phones are USA's products. Consumers try to trend to many well-known products or brands with particular countries. According to Simon [29], in developing countries, consumers have a strong preference for foreign brands. In this case, COO is one of the essential extrinsic cues used as an indicator of consumers' product or brand evaluation [27].

The results of a large number of marketing studies have shown that the product's COO impacts on different aspects of consumer evaluation and choice behaviour. The country image has an effective role in consumer perceptions toward products and brands from a given country, which in turn may influence behavioural intention for purchase [28]. For example, consumers prefer to use products or brands of technology products such as mobile phone designed or assembled produced in Japan to products designed or

assembled produced in developing countries. Previous research has confirmed that country of origin influences perceived product quality through consumers, consumer product assessment and selection [22,14], and consumer preference, and buyer's intention [30,14]. In addition, Empirical research has stated that COO influences consumer perception of product quality and brand loyalty [14]. However, evidence found that COO does not have impact consumers' purchase intentions [11]. Thus, COO image is considered the primary evaluation criteria for selecting specific products among others. The effect of COO image emerges from the prior experience and knowledge that customers have a positive or negative perception about a particular country [28]. Previous studies found that COO image plays an important role in consumer's perceptions towards global brands of mobile phone [31] and its influence on their purchase intention. In other words, the effect of COO appears to be stronger for consumer durables than for non-durables [31]. In this regard, COO can influence customers' perception of the brand, brand loyalty, brand choice and brand preference [8]. These literature discussions show us the exact nature of the direct and indirect effect of COO on purchase intentions.

Brand Name

Kotler defined a brand as "a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, that is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or a group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors". Brand plays a crucial role in gaining and retain competitive advantage and long-term market share [32]. However, researchers have confirmed that when goods from less developed countries are related to a highly regarded brand name, the influence of a brand often exceeds a negative COO image [29].

Consumers' positive brand beliefs can affect their purchase intentions and selection of the brand [31]. These behavioral responses have an influence on brand equity. In other words, consumers use brand cues to form beliefs and evaluations about a product, which in turn affect their behavioral intentions. The consumption of well-known brands is especially high for consumers in developing countries. This means that brand names are a valuable source of information to consumers. Researchers found that consumers in emerging countries strive to buy foreign brands to meet wants [31] and consumers are more favored to foreign brands [33]. It is obvious that the product's brand name may affect consumers' preference for the brand [29].

Brand origin may be an important determinant of brand assessment and purchase intention [32]. In addition, the brand origin is also an important dimension of brand equity, purchase decision- making, and brand selection, and purchase intentions [32,34]. Thus, the brand may serve as an important cue of extrinsic information cues, which in turn reinforces customers trust for a brand. In this context, Strong brand names lead to competitive advantages, increase firms' profits as well as more loyalty for customers, and to decrease the risk of marketing activity [8]. Many of the previous studies have used the brand name as the main cue by consumers in evaluating companies' products [10,35].

Moreover, practical studies illustrate that brand name influences consumer attitudes (preference) towards brand

[33,36] and intention to rebuy the product brand [33]. A strong brand name helps consumers to distinguish their brand among other brands in the context of mobile phone products [35]. Furthermore, when consumers are familiar with a brand, they have a strong, unique and good image in his mind. This knowledge mirrors the awareness of the brand or COO image associated with the brand [8]. However, some researchers revealed that the symbolic image of a brand has a negative impact on consumers' brand preference when a brand's perceived symbolic image is higher than their expectations [15]. Ahmed and D'Astous stated that the brand name is often related to the source country of a product in which the product is designed. Consumers and practitioners use COO and brand names as acting of evaluating products.

Advertising Content

Advertising is defined by Estelami, [37] as "Marketing communications carried out through the mass media or direct marketing means, with the intention of motivating the purchase of specific financial products or encouraging particular forms of financial behavior". Advertising is one of the important marketing tools and a prime element which supports the integrated marketing communications strategy of many firms today world. Advertisers strive to affect attitudinal and behavioral loyalty by developing a strong brand in order to enhance consumers' preference towards certain and to build a strong emotional attachment to their brands via a deeper and clearer understanding of their target segments [17].

Due to the complexity of products which may be difficult for some customers to evaluate the feature and weakness of competing products, advertising can treat these problems [37-17]. According to Kwok et al., [30], consumers who have high knowledge about the origin of the brand can determine their preferable brands. In other words, in developed countries, consumers with a high level of knowledge tend to assess products more favorably than consumers with limited knowledge. Thus, lack of product knowledge can lead to erroneous inference of a product or brand performance. In addition, advertising aims to create a positive reputation for the firm and its products, which in turn can influence consumer evaluations towards products or brand and the sales of the products [38]. Therefore, consumers prefer the brand's advertising programs to search for more information about the brand.

Moreover, advertising may help companies to build relationships with their customers and expand their market share [39]. In other words, Advertising helps in building and keeping brand equity over time, and defending brand from competitors in international markets as well as in supporting promotional strategies. Boateng and Okoea indicated that advertising has the ability to build a strong brand. Consumers with a positive attitude for advertising can appear a favorable response, whereas consumers with a negative attitude may appear unfavorable responses [38]. Advertising is an important marketing tool in creating awareness among customers and intense advertising spending is considered as a signal of high quality and shows. Hence, advertising can affect the consumer's intentions to purchase a product or brand. Although advertising aim to create consumer loyalty for a product or brand over time [40], previous research

found that advertising does not directly affect brand loyalty [41]. Effective advertising has the ability to increase brand name recognition. Many researchers recognize that the content, nature, and quality of advertising can also play an important role in brand equity dimensions [42]. However, little attention has been paid by researchers regarding these issues. Even though some studies indicate the potential role of advertising for the development of consumers' preferences toward foreign brands, this impact has not been explicitly addressed.

This study strives to explain how advertising affects customer perception of the firm's products that are more critical in shaping brand loyalty. Also, an understanding of the direct and indirect effect of advertising will help marketing practitioners grasp the true influence of advertising in enhancing brand loyalty and increasing companies' market share

Brand Preference

Zajonc & Markus suggested that "preference is a behavioural tendency that exhibits itself not so much in what the individual thinks or says about the object, but how he acts toward it". Also, Hellier et al., who defined brand preference as "The extent to which the customer favors the designated service provided by his or her present company, in comparison to the designated service provided by other companies in his or her consideration set", which in turn enhances customers' purchase.

Brand preference refers to "consumers' predisposition towards certain brands that summarise their cognitive information processing towards brand stimuli" [16]. Hence, a brand preference may be a function of consumer' cognitive beliefs about the brand's attributes. In addition, brand preference is considered as a transition situation between the inputs and outputs of consumer selection. Consumers usually use the exporter country of a product or brand as an extrinsic information cue in brand evaluations and their preference.

In this context, the exporter country of brands can be a major determinant of consumer brand preference [43]. For example, the study by Simon, Mark, & Yimin noted that Chinese consumers have a strong preference for brands from top industrial countries. This means that brand preference combines the desired attributes and consumer perceptions. In addition, the level of consumer knowledge of the actual origin of brands can influence consumer preference towards a particular brand and purchase intention [31]. Overby & Lee. stated that brand preferences perform consumer behaviors to favor a particular brand. Consequently, understanding consumers' preference for brand contributes to building strong brands capable to build a long-term relationship with consumers.

Brand preference is considered as a result from stimuli of pre-purchase originating from effective marketing activities of companies or word-of-mouth (WOM) communication, or the consumer's evaluation result of post-purchase of the product's performance against consumer's expectation. In addition, consumer perceptions of brand cues positively influence their preferences towards certain products or brand [16]. Based on the literature of review, brand cues can help explain the difference between stated preferences and actual behaviour. Also, this study tries to understand consumer brand

preference emerged from the knowledge and experience of the brand, which in turn, affects purchasing decisions.

Loyalty Intention

Brand loyalty is consumer attitudes on a brand preference from previous use of a product. Consumer loyalty represents repurchase behavior, and psychological commitment to a brand [31]. Customer loyalty is considered as a multidimensional concept. Also, loyalty raises revenue and decreases the costs of customer acquisition and retention. Brand loyalty is defined as "stated preferences, commitment or purchase intentions of the customers" [44]. Intention to repurchase may be measured by asking consumers about their future intentions to repurchase a given product [45]. In marketing literature, there has been widely discussed the concept of brand loyalty in term of its different dimensions of attitudinal and behavioral loyalty.

Many researchers have found that loyalty measurement is a set of behavioral dimensions such as repurchase intention, private purchase, the share of category requirements, and attitudinal dimensions such as word of mouth, commitment, and affirmative stated intention to purchase [46]. According to Mellens et al., attitudinal brand loyalty is defined as "stated preferences, commitment or purchase intentions of the customers". The attitudinal loyalty measured are in accordance with feelings of the consumer to the brand and stated intention (e.g. probability to recommend and probability to repeat purchase of the same brand). Therefore, the behavioral concept of brand loyalty represents repeat customer purchasing of the same brand.

Based on brand loyalty dimensions, the dimension of behavioral loyalty interprets share of purchasing the same-brand frequently, while the attitudinal loyalty approach interprets psychological commitment of buyers in purchasing act, as intent to recommend and purchase a brand without conducting any actual purchase in account [46, 47]. Bloemer & Kasper argued that real brand loyalty should include brand preferences and repurchase behaviors that present in a long term commitment, brand commitment, and psychological processing (decision making and evaluation) function while. Therefore, the attitudinal behavior evaluation can be linked to customer's feelings towards brand loyalty intentions such as willingness to recommend and rebuying a product from the same brand [47,48].

Effect of Brand Cues in Developing Countries

Review of literature shows that a number of factors influence consumer choice of technology products such as mobile phones in the context of developing countries [48,49,50]. For example, Aidoo and Nyamedor [48] found that an important factor of consumers' choice of mobile phone brand is the reliable quality of the mobile phone brand. Mokhlis and Yaakop [49] studied the importance of different choice criteria in mobile phone selection among Malaysian consumers. They found that the most important factors influencing consumer choice of mobile phone as price, image, personal recommendation, media influence.

Due to the appearance of complicated products, COO can help international marketers in explaining the divergences between oversea products or brands for customers. Malasi [51] examined the effect of products attributes on mobile

phone preference among university students in Kenya. The author found brand attributes such as colour, visible name labels, packaging for safety, the degree of awareness, and design of the product have a significant influence on the student's preference for a mobile phone. Furthermore, Khan and Rohi [50] found that brand image can influence consumers' brand choice of mobile phones in the context of developing countries. Raymond K. Dziwornu [52] indicated that consumers may purchase phone brand through recommendations by friends and families who had used the brand before. According to Petruzzellis, various criterion of brand cues such as brand name and COO have a positive influence on consumer minds when considering decisions regarding technological products. Thus, attempting this study to understand consumer preference regarding mobile phones in the context of developing countries, highlighted some considerations of brand cues such as COO, brand name and advertising to build an appropriate brand strategy.

3. CONCLUSION

With the increasing number of brands and competition in the global marketplace, marketers and researchers need to have a better understanding of product information. Consequently, quality differentiation among electronic brands has become a challenging task for consumers. According to Cue Utilization Theory (CUT), consumers may rely on multi-criteria of brand cues such as country of origin and brand name to expedite their decisions. International marketers employed advertising as an important tool in order to differentiate their products from those of their competitors.

Therefore, the goal of this investigation is to understand extrinsic brand cues phenomena by focusing on the brand name, COO, advertising. Hence, from the aforementioned literature review, the study debates the factors that affect or motivate consumers in their mobile phone choice decision in the context of developing countries. For example, many studies have indicated that brand name and country of origin [15-17] and advertising, packaging [8] can impact perceived consumers pattern of product or brand evaluation and purchase intention. Isiklar & Buyukozkan found that consumers use a multi-criteria to evaluate their electronic brand choices such as a mobile phone. In the literature linked to complex products, few researchers have examined simultaneously the effect of COO and brand on purchase behaviour [28]). Within this context, there is a lack of empirical research examining consumers' brand preferences toward international brand name in developing countries [20-21].

Furthermore, according to the literature, there are few studies that had been carried out to understand the effect of brand cues on consumer preference for electronic brands and repurchase intention in the context of developing countries as targeted emerging markets. Future research can address these important issues to bridge the research gap and as such discuss it on a wide variety of electronic products. Finally, it would be worthwhile for researchers to explore important factors of brand cues that influence consumer behaviours due to differences in attitudes towards foreign brands of durable as personal computers.

Proposed Framework

In conclusion, this study suggests the contracture conceptual model to employ the roles of consumer perception of brand cues and its effect on brand preference in determining consumer loyalty intention towards electronic products. A proposed model is designed to examine the hypothesized relationships between the study variables, and the target population of interest is from the emerging markets.

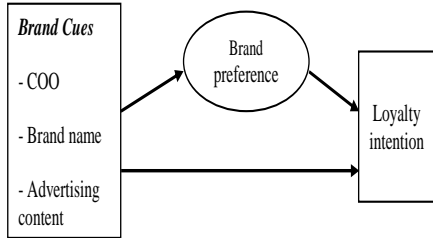


Figure 1: Effect of brand cues on brand preference and loyalty intention

Source: Authors (2018)

4. REFERENCE

[1] Pehrsson, A., "Strategy antecedents of modes of entry into foreign markets", *Journal of Business Research*, 61: 132-140(2008).

[2] Soni, R., R. R. Lohani, M. Sagar_ "Factors affecting consumer purchases decision of laptop" *Indian Journal of Marketing* 40: 3-14 (2010),

[3] Geetha, D., "Consumer's preference of laptop" *Int. J. Soc. Allied Res* 2: 129-139 (2014)

[4] Kulshreshtha, K., Bajpai, N., Tripathi, V. " Consumer preference for electronic consumer durable goods in India: A conjoint analysis approach" *International Journal of Business Forecasting and Marketing Intelligence*, 3: 13–37 (2017)

[5] Qasem, A., Baharun, R. "Toward an integrative model of consumers' perceived for brand quality and preferences: a theoretical perspective" *International Journal of Marketing and Management Research*, 2:1-17 (2011)

[6] Massoud Moslehpour, Nguyen Thi Le Huyen "The Influence of Perceived Brand Quality and Perceived Brand Prestige on Purchase Likelihood of iPhone and HTC Mobile Phone in Taiwan" *Research in Business and Management* 1: 62-77 (2014)

[7] Fatma Smaoui, Fatma Abdellah Kilani, and Mourad Touzani "Country-of- origin versus brand: consumers' dilemma when choosing between generic and branded drugs in emerging countries" *Journal of Product & Brand Management* 25: 148 – 159 (2016)

[8] Moradi, H., Zarei, A. "Creating consumer-based brand equity for young Iranian consumers via country of origin sub-components effects" *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 24: 394–413 (2012)

[9] Cordell, V. V. "Interactions effects of country-of-origin with branding, price, and perceived performance risk" *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 5: 5-20 (1993),

[10] Diamantopoulos, A., Schlegelmilch, B., Paliawadana, D., "The relationship between country-of-origin image and brand image as drivers of purchase intentions" *International Marketing Review*, 28: 508-524 (2011)

[11] Round, G., Roper, S. "Exploring consumer brand name

equity: gaining insight through the investigation of response to name change" *European Journal of Marketing*, 46: 938-951 (2012),

[12] Fandy T., Haja T. R., " Examining brand origin recognition accuracy in Indonesia" *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 28:878-897 (2016)

[13] Sarmin Sultana "Factors affecting the Consumer Brand Choice Preference towards New Package of Cellular Phone: A Study on Comilla Region" *Global Disclosure of Economics and Business*, 4:181-196 (2015)

[14] Yuliya Strizhakova, Robin A. Coulter, Linda L. Price "The young adult cohort in emerging markets: Assessing their global cultural identity in a global marketplace" *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 29:43-54 (2012)

[15] J. Hu, X. Liu, S. Wang, Z. Yang "The role of brand image congruity in Chinese consumers' brand preference" *Journal of Product and Brand*, 21: 26-34 (2012)

[16] Reham Ebrahim, Ahmad Ghoneim, Zahir Irani, Ying Fan "A brand preference and repurchase intention model: the role of consumer experience" *Journal of Marketing Management*, 32: 1-30 (2016)

[17] George K. Amoako, Peter Anabila, Ebenezer A. Effah, Desmond K. Kumi "Mediation role of brand preference on bank advertising and customer loyalty: A developing country perspective" *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 35: 983-996 (2017)

[18] David A. Aaker, Robert Jacobson "The Value Relevance of Brand Attitude in High-Technology Markets" *Journal of Marketing Research*, 38: 485-493 (2001)

[19] Campbell, M.C., Keller, K.L. "Brand familiarity and advertising repetition effects" *Journal of Consumer Research*, 30: 304 (2003),

[20] Richardson, P. S., Dick, A. S. and Jain, A. K. "Extrinsic and intrinsic cue effects on perceptions of store brand quality" *Journal of Marketing*, 58: 28-36 (1994).

[21] Johan Bruwer, Courtney Buller "Country-of-origin (COO) brand preferences and associated knowledge levels of Japanese wine consumers" *Journal of Product & Brand Management* 21(5):307 – 316 (2012)

[22] Don Schultz, Varsha Jain "Exploring the luxury brand country of origin impact on purchasing behaviors in India. *Asia- Pacific Journal of Business Administration*, 7 216-236 (2015)

[23] Steenkamp, J. B. E. "The relationship between price and quality in the marketplace" *De Economist*, 136: 491–507 (1988).

[24] Mohd, R. Shaharudin, Anita, A. Hassan, Suhardi, W. Mansor, Shamsul, J. Elias, Ety H. Harun, Nurazila A. Aziz "The Relationship Between Extrinsic Attributes of Product Quality with Brand Loyalty on Malaysia National Brand Motorcycle/Scooter" *Canadian Social Science*, 6: 165-175 (2010)

[25] Alba, Joseph W., Carl F. Mela, Terence A. Shimp, Joel E. Urbany "The Effect of Discount Frequency and Depth on Consumer Price Judgments" *Journal of Consumer Research*, 26: 99–114 (1999),

[26] Miyazaki, Grewal, C.Goodstein "The effect of Multiple Intrinsic Cues on Quality Perceptions: A Matter of Consistency" *Journal of Consumer Research*, 32 (2005)

[27] Haim Hilman, Jalal Hanaysha "The Impact of Country of Origin on Relationship Quality: Empirical Evidence from

- Automotive Industry" *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 6:165-174 (2015)
- [28] Ahmed, Z.U., Johnson, J.P., Yang, X., Chen, K.F., Han, S.C., Lim, C.B. "Does country-of-origin matter for low-involvement products?" *International Marketing Review* 21(1): 102-120 (2004)
- [29] Simon Kwok, Mark Uncles, Yimin Huang "Brand preferences and brand choices among urban Chinese consumers" *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 18: 163 - 172 (2006)
- [30] Ahmed Alamro, Jennifer Rowley "Antecedents of brand preference for mobile telecommunications services" *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 20: 475-486 (2011)
- [31] Norjaya Mohd Yasin, Mohd Nasser Noor, Osman Mohamad " Does image of country-of-origin matter to brand equity?" *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 16: 38-48 (2007)
- [32] Mostafa, R. H. A. " The impact of country of origin and country of manufacture of a brand on overall brand equity" *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 7: 70-83 (2015)
- [33] Neelam Kinra " The effect of country-of-origin on foreign brand names in the Indian market" *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 24: 15 - 30 (2006)
- [34] Sanyal, S. N., Datta, S. K. "The effect of country of origin on brand equity: an empirical study on generic drugs" *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 20: 130-140 (2011)
- [35] Zoran Krupka, Durdana Ozretic-Dosen, Jozo Previsic "Impact of Perceived Brand Name Origin on Fashion Brand's Perceived Luxury" *Acta Polytechnica Hungarica*, 11: 153-168 (2014)
- [36] H.H. Chang and Y.M. Liu "The impact of brand equity on brand preference and purchase intention in the service industries" *The Service Industries Journal*, 29: 1687-1706. (2009)
- [37] Estelami, H. "Marketing Financial Services", 2nd ed., Dog Ear, Indianapolis, IN (2012)
- [38] Sora Kim, Eric Haley, Gi-Yong Koo "Comparison of the Paths from Consumer Involvement Types To Ad Responses Between Corporate Advertising And Product Advertising" *Journal of Advertising*, 38:3, 67-80 (2009)
- [39] Henry Boateng, Abednego Feehi Okoe "Consumers' attitude towards social media advertising and their behavioural response: The moderating role of corporate reputation" *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 9(4):299-312(2015)
- [40] L. Petruzzellis "Mobile phone choice: technology versus marketing. The brand effect in the Italian market" *European Journal of Marketing*, 44: 610 – 634 (2010)
- [41] Hong-Youl Ha, Joby John, Swinder Janda, Siva Muthaly, "The effects of advertising spending on brand loyalty in services" *European Journal of Marketing*, 45: 673-691 (2011)
- [42] Sriram S., Balachander S., Kalwani MU., "Monitoring the dynamics of brand equity using store-level data" *Journal of Marketing*, 7: 61-78 (2007)
- [43] John Hulland, " Use of Partial Least Squares (PLS) in Strategic Management Research: A Review of Four Recent Studies" *Strategic Management Journal* 20: 195-204 (1999)
- [44] Mellens, M., Dekimpe, M. and Steenkamp, J. " A review of brand- loyalty measures in marketing" *Tijdschrift voor Economie en Management*, 41: 507- 533 (1996)
- [45] Jones, T. O., & Sasser, W. E., " Why satisfied customer defect" *Harvard Business Review*, 73(6), 88-99 (1995)
- [46] Jarvis, L. P., and Wilcox, J. B. Repeat purchasing behavior and attitudinal brand loyalty" *Additional evidence. Marketing* :1776-1976 (1976)
- [47] Schiffman, L. G., & Kanuk, L. L. " Consumer behavior" 8th ed. New York: Prentice-Hall, (2004)
- [48] Aidoo, E., Nyamedor " A study on Factors that determine the Choice of Brands of Mobile Phone: A Case study in the Kumasi Metropolis" A Bsc. Dissertation submitted to the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, University of Cape Coast, April, (2008)
- [49] Mokhlis, S., and Yaakop, A., "Consumer Choice Criteria in Mobile Phone Selection: An Investigation of Malaysian University Students" *International Review of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 2(2): 203-212 (2012).
- [50] Khan and Rohi "Investigating the Factors Affecting Youth Brand Choice for Mobile Phones Purchase—A Study of Private Universities Students of Peshawar" *Management & Marketing Challenges for the Knowledge Society*, 8: 369-384 (2013)
- [51] Malasi, J. M. " Influence of Product Attributes on Mobile Phone Preference among University Students: A Case of Undergraduate Students" *International Journal of Academic Research and Management Sciences*, 1: 2226-3624 (2012)
- [52] Raymond K. Dziwornu " Factors Affecting Mobile Phone Purchase in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana: A Binary Logit Model Approach" *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 5: 151-163 (2013)

*For correspondence; Tel. + (60) 1124330200, E-mail: majedmarwani@yahoo.com