THE ROLE OF ETHNOCENTRISM, RELIGIOSITY, ANIMOSITY, AND COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN IMAGE, IN FOREIGN PRODUCT PURCHASE INTENTION CASE STUDY: BUYING SAUDI PRODUCTS BY IRANIAN CONSUMERS

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of the present study is to investigate the role of consumer’s ethnocentrism, religiosity, the country of origin image, and animosity in consumer’s receptivity of buying foreign products. In this regard, research hypotheses were tested based on data gathered from questionnaires distributed among 385 customers of Hyper Star department stores in Tehran by applying structural equation modeling. Data analysis results show that there is a negative and significant relationship between religiosity and purchase intention, religiosity and consumer’s animosity, and also between ethnocentrism and the country of origin image. Besides, research findings confirm the positive significant relationship between religiosity and ethnocentrism, ethnocentrism and consumer’s animosity, the country of origin image and purchase intention, the brand’s country of origin image and product judgment, and product judgment and purchase intention. It was also found that there is negative and significant relationship between consumer’s animosity and purchase intention, and also between consumer’s animosity and the brand’s country of origin image. Nevertheless, the relationships between ethnocentrism and purchase intention, ethnocentrism and product judgment, consumer’s animosity and product judgment, religiosity and product judgment were not supported.

Keywords: Consumer’s Ethnocentrism, Religiosity, Country of Origin Image, Animosity, Purchase Intention

1. Introduction

Market globalization has generated considerable opportunities for domestic and international markets. One outcome among many others is that target customers throughout the world enjoy a far wider range of options for selecting foreign brands and products. Therefore, marketers are more interested in identifying factors influencing upon consumers’ evaluation of imported products (Klein et al., 1998). Discrepancies inherent in history, culture, tradition,
and especially in religions of different countries are driving force for conflicts. History is packed with wars waged over cultural and religious issues. If cultural and religious discrepancies can result in animosity and conflict, logically it is presumed that religious and cultural animosities will impact upon intention of consumers for purchasing products made in countries which are sources of such animosity (Kalliny et al., 2015). The impact of religiosity upon consumer behavior has been approved in a myriad of studies (e. g. Bailey and Sood, 1993, Al-Hyari et al., 2012, Mokhlis, 2006, Ahmed et al., 2013). In fact, positive or negative attitude of consumer toward a country will lead to acceptance or rejection of products and services of that country (Maheswaran and Chen, 2006). Many consumers may feel hostile or against some countries and this feeling may make them boycott buying products of that country (Smith and Li, 2010).

On the other hand, a country considered associated with a product can affect on consumer’s judgment of the quality of the product (Klein et al., 1998). Studies carried out about evaluation of foreign products revealed that inferences about the country of origin influence upon perceived features of the product and the country of origin image leaves considerable effect upon product judgment (e. g. De Nisco et al., 2015, Maheswaran, 1994), and paying more for purchasing the product (Koschate-Fischer et al., 2012). Another factor that plays an important role in purchasing foreign products is ethnocentrism of consumers (Ahmed et al., 2013). Shimp and Sharma (1987), applied ethnocentrism in their judgments and used the phrase “the consumer’s ethnocentrism intentions” to indicate consumer’s attitudes about appropriateness and morality of purchasing foreign made products. In this regard, many researches supported the relationship between ethnocentrism intentions, product judgment, and purchase intention (e. g. Saffu et al., 2010, Ahmed et al., 2013, Klein et al., 1998, Lu Wang and Xiong Chen, 2004()).

Accordingly, the present study seeks to investigate the impact of the country of origin image, ethnocentrism, religiosity, and animosity against the country of origin upon consumer’s judgment of the foreign product and foreign product’s purchase intention. Respecting recent animosities between Iran and Saudi Arabia (Kirkpatrick, 2015) and ethnic and religious discrepancies between these two countries (Cardinali, 2015), Iranian consumers’ intention for purchasing Saudi Arabia products was scrutinized.

2. Literature review
2.1. The Country of Origin Image

The country of origin image is one of the primary variables investigated in studies focused upon consumer’s perception of foreign products. Once Schooler (1965) coined this term for the first time, many researchers attempted to examine its effects upon product judgment and consumer’s purchase (e.g. Ahmed and d’Astous, 2008, Ahmed et al., 2013, Chao, 1998, Koschate-Fischer et al., 2012, Laroche et al., 2005, Maheswaran, 1994).

Nagashima (1970) defined country image perception as an image, reputation, or stereotype that businessmen and consumers associate with products of a specific country. This image is created based on national, economic, political, historical, and traditional profile. Although researchers are not unanimous about an exact definition for country of origin, they apply this term to imply the producing country or the country associated with the product (Okechuku and Onyemah, 1999). Verlegh and Steenkamp (1999) identified three mechanisms for explaining the impacts of country of origin upon consumer’s behavior including; 1- cognitive mechanism according to which the country of origin is referred to as a cue for product judgment, 2- affective mechanism i.e. the country of origin generates symbolic and emotional value, 3- normative mechanism i.e. the country of origin is indicative of personal and social norms of consumers. In this regard, animosity, ethnocentrism, and religiosity are all affective constructs which impact upon consumer’s behavior and are pinpointed in this study.

2.2. Animosity

Nowadays, there is much tension between different countries of the world. These tensions may be over disputed territories (conflicts between Pakistan and India over Kashmir), economic conflicts (between European Union and China over Chinese products), political conflicts (France and Germany disagreement with America over attack to Iraq), or religious ones (reaction of Islamic countries to offensive caricature of the Muslim prophet Muhammad in a Danish newspaper) (Riefler and Diamantopoulos, 2007).

Klein et al. (1998) were the first who examined the effect of tensions between countries upon the purchase behavior of consumers. They expressed consumer animosity as consumer’s reluctance to a foreign country due to previous and current military, political, or economic events which can foster negative attitude of consumer to purchasing products reminiscent of that country (Klein et al., 1998). Recently, the effect of animosity upon behavior of consumers for purchasing foreign products has drawn wide attention of many researchers (Ahmed et al., 2013, Fernández-Ferrín et al., 2015, Hoon Ang et al., 2004, Nijssen and...
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Douglas, 2004, Shoham et al., 2006, Shoham et al., 2016). Despite recent studies and popularity of this issue (consumer animosity) in marketing studies, animosity is a new born construct left under-investigated and more studies need to be carried out to define its effect upon purchase behavior of the inter-cultural consumer and international marketing strategy (Carter, 2009).

2.3.Consumer’s Ethnocentrism

Sumner (1906) provided the original definition of ethnocentrism as “the view of things in which one’s own group is the center of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it…Each group nourishes its own pride and vanity, boasts itself superior, exalts its own divinities and looks with contempt on outsiders”. Ethnocentrism in consumption is an economic form of ethnocentrism that is raised upon in consumer behavior studies and leads to assessments of consumers’ beliefs in appropriateness and morality of purchasing foreign products (Sharma et al., 1995, Shimp and Sharma, 1987). In other words, consumer’s ethnocentrism causes that consumers differentiate between their own countries’ products and those of others and they avoid buying foreign products since they find them as threat to their national interests (Klein et al., 1998). Consumer’s ethnocentrism can be explained based on social identity theory. According to this theory, ethnocentrism occurs as consumer finds himself a member of a discrete group. This process causes that group members form kind of social identity based on beliefs, attitudes, outlooks, values, and behavior which is reflecting the group norms and they find in-groups better, superior, and different from out-groups (Turner et al., 1987, Ahmed et al., 2013).

Accomplished studies in this regard have indicated that the impact of consumer’s ethnocentrism varies between different categories of products. Sharma et al., (1995) argue that the less important a product category, the higher the ethnocentric intentions of consumers is. Besides, Javalgi et al., (2005) pointed that the effect of ethnocentrism of consumers upon judgment and purchase intention of a product acts as a moderating factor for products conceived as highly essential. The effect of consumer’s ethnocentrism also depends on economic development of consumer’s country. According to Wang & Chen (2004), consumers in an economically developed country feel more satisfied with purchasing domestic products than foreign ones. It is quite contrary in developing country so that consumers in developing countries believe foreign products, especially those made in developed nations, are superior to domestic products.
2.4. Religiosity

Cox (1966) argued that following secularization and urbanization of communities, religion turns insignificant. However, religion hasn’t vanished from world communities. There are a wide range of religious groups which effect on public opinion (Haque et al., 2011). Religion endows people with an individual and group identity within a metaphysical and cosmic framework (Ahmed et al., 2013). Researches show that religion is a building block of communities’ culture and affects on many aspects of consumers’ lives (e.g. Alhouti et al., 2015, Haque et al., 2011, Bailey and Sood, 1993, Lupfer and Wald, 1985, McDaniel and Burnett, 1990). Religiosity implies people’s commitment to their religious beliefs (Johnson et al., 2001). It includes six dimensions i.e. belief, experience, religious practice, religious knowledge, individual moral consequences, and social consequences (De Jong et al., 1976).

There are many researches indicative of the effect of religiosity upon consumer’s purchase behavior (e.g. Jianfeng et al., 2009, Mokhlis, 2006). On the other hand, some other studies carried out about religiosity and ethnocentrism are indicative of the impact of both these two variables upon foreign product purchase intention (e.g. Ahmed et al., 2013, Javalgi et al., 2005, Maher and Mady, 2010).

3. Theoretical Framework

It seems that consumers of high level of animosity against a particular country due to economic, cultural, military, and political reasons are inclined to impulsive and quick negative response to products and services of that country. Many previous studies have supported the strong relationship between animosity and foreign product purchase intention of consumers (Ahmed et al., 2013, Bahaee and Pisani, 2009, Klein et al., 1998, Nijssen and Douglas, 2004). Thus, the first research hypothesis is as follows;

H1: there is negative relationship between animosity of the consumer against a foreign country and intention for purchasing the products of that country.

When consumers are severely ethnocentric, they may eschew from purchasing foreign products (Ahmed et al., 2013). Since Shimp and Sharma (1987) introduced CETSCALE for measuring ethnocentrism, many studies have reported the relationship between ethnocentrism and consumers’ purchase intention (Ahmed et al., 2013, Saffu et al., 2010, Sharma et al., 1995). Therefore, the second research hypothesis is as follows;
H2: there is negative relationship between ethnocentrism and foreign product purchase intention.

Nijssen et al., (1999) conducted a study in a border town located between Netherland and Germany. It was demonstrated that ethnocentrism and animosity affect inversely upon foreign product judgment. They concluded that when there was low tension between these two countries (Germany and Netherland) or there was no tension, the impact of ethnocentrism and animosity reduced significantly. The outcomes of another study carried out about Muslim Arabs and Jewish Israelis, this impact upon consumers’ attitude toward foreign products was supported (Rose et al., 2008). Therefore, the third and fourth research hypotheses are as follow;

H3: there is negative relationship between animosity of a consumer against a foreign country and judgment about products of that country.

H4: there is a negative relationship between ethnocentrism and foreign product judgment.

On the other hand, Sood and Nasu (1995) demonstrated in their study carried out in Japan and America that there is relationship between religiosity and purchase intention. Furthermore, Delener (1994) in a study investigating the relationship between religiosity and car purchase intention concluded that religiosity must be regarded as an important variable affecting on consumers’ purchase pattern. Another study conducted by Sirvastava (2010) revealed that in emerging markets such as India, consumer’s religiosity influences upon consumer’s intention for purchasing domestic and foreign products. Several other studies as well ratify this relationship (Ahmed et al., 2013, Alhouti et al., 2015, Al-Hyari et al., 2012). Consequently, the fifth and sixth research hypotheses are as follow;

H5: there is a negative relationship between consumer’s religiosity and foreign product purchase intention.

H6: there is a negative relationship between consumer’s religiosity and foreign product judgment.
Many studies approved the relationship between religiosity and ethnocentrism (Billiet, 1995, Eisinga et al., 1990, Katz, 1992) there is no general agreement about the effect of religiosity on ethnocentrism (Hooghe, 2008). Nevertheless, Ahmed et al., (2013) in a study carried out in Malaysia verified this relationship. In present study, the relationship between religiosity and ethnocentrism of Iranian consumers is pondered. Therefore, the seventh research hypothesis is as follows;

H7: there is a positive relationship between religiosity and ethnocentrism of consumer.

Lwin et al. (2010) study based on varying levels of ethnocentrism and animosity toward America proved that there is a strong relationship between animosity and ethnocentrism. In this regard, another study executed in Croatia investigating the relationship between animosity, ethnocentrism, and product judgment showed that there is a direct relationship between ethnocentrism and animosity against foreign countries (Crnjak-Karanovic et al., 2005). Several other studies also approved this relationship (e. g. Ahmed et al., 2013). Hence, the eighth research hypothesis is as follows;

H8: there is a positive relationship between consumer’s ethnocentrism and animosity against foreign countries.

Sood and Nasu confirmed the impact of religiosity upon animosity toward foreign countries in a study carried out over Japanese consumers (Sood and Nasu, 1995). Besides, another study by Yemelianova (2005) about kinship, ethnicity and religion in post-communist societies revealed that Tsarist ideologists channeled Cossacks’ deep religiosity into animosity towards Muslim neighbors. Furthermore, Ahmed et al., (2013) study about Malaysian consumers confirms this relationship. Thus, the ninth research hypothesis is as follows;

H9: there is a positive relationship between religiosity and animosity of consumers against foreign countries.

On the other hand, many studies carried out regarding country of origin image ratifies this issue that the country of origin image influences upon consumers’ judgment and attitude toward a product. Bilkey and Nes (1982) stated in their review article that most studies they reviewed are indicative of the effect of the brand’s country of origin upon buyers. Besides,
Hong and Wyer (1989) approved the impact of the brand’s country of origin upon product judgment. Additionally, Peterson and Juliber (1995) verified the significant impact of brand’s country of origin image upon product perception through a meta-analysis they did regarding the impact of the country of origin. Some researchers have stressed that the country of origin image influences indirectly and through some other variables such as product evaluation, brand image, brand equity upon customer’s perceived value (e. g. Cervino et al., 2005, Hui and Zhou, 2002, Parameswaran and Mohan Pisharodi, 2002). This relationship was approved in many recent studies, too (e. g. Koschate-Fischer et al., 2012, Godey et al., 2012, Cicic et al., 2015, Aboulnasr, 2015). Thus, the tenth and eleventh research hypotheses are as follow;

H10: there is a positive relationship between the brand’s country of origin image and foreign product purchase intention.

H11: there is a positive relationship between the brand’s country of origin image and foreign product judgment.

Research shows that consumers who consider foreign product purchase immoral, have more negative attitude toward the quality of foreign products and prefer the domestic ones (Chryssochoidis et al., 2007, John and Brady, 2011, Klein et al., 1998, Shimp and Sharma, 1987). Social psychology supports this logic since it defines ethnocentrism as having a “we group” based on which the in-group is considered as the center but out-groups are judged based on their relationship with this center (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). This discrimination helps that a negative attitude forms toward out-groups in comparison with in-groups. Lantz and Loeb (1998) stated that ethnocentrism can be generalized to all social groups including nations. As a consequence, citizens of a country are considered as in-group, products made within that country are in-group products, and products made oversee are regarded as out-group products (Verlegh, 1999). Although abundant studies investigated the impact of ethnocentrism upon product evaluation and foreign product purchase receptivity, some have as well verified the effect of ethnocentrism upon general image of a country (e.g. De Nisco et al., 2015). Therefore, the twelfth research hypothesis is as follows;

H12: there is a negative relationship between consumer’s ethnocentrism and brand’s country of origin image.
Some studies demonstrated that animosity leaves negative and significant effect upon consumer’s receptivity of the product made in the enemy country not upon their evaluation of the quality of such products (Ettenson and Gabrielle Klein, 2005, Klein et al., 1998). Nonetheless, many previous researches about brand’s country of origin image hypothesized that consumers use the name of countries as an image cue for their preferences about products’ quality (Bilkey and Nes, 1982, Laroche et al., 2005). Thus, present study scrutinizes the impact of consumer’s animosity upon his/her image of the brand’s country of origin. Therefore, the thirteenth research hypothesis is as follows;

H13: there is negative relationship between consumer’s animosity and his/her mental image of the brand’s country of origin.

Many country of origin researches (COO) indicate that there is a positive and significant relationship between consumer’s product judgment and purchase behavior (e. g. Ahmed et al., 2013, Cheah and Phau, 2006). Ettenson and Klein (2005) demonstrated that product judgment is predictive of customers’ purchase behavior. Furthermore, Smith and Li (2010) carried out a research about Japanese products’ boycott by Chinese people and found out that there is relationship between product judgment and contribution in boycott. Hence, the fourteenth research hypothesis is as follows;

Figure 1. The Research Conceptual Model

Many country of origin researches (COO) indicate that there is a positive and significant relationship between consumer’s product judgment and purchase behavior (e. g. Ahmed et al., 2013, Cheah and Phau, 2006). Ettenson and Klein (2005) demonstrated that product judgment is predictive of customers’ purchase behavior. Furthermore, Smith and Li (2010) carried out a research about Japanese products’ boycott by Chinese people and found out that there is relationship between product judgment and contribution in boycott. Hence, the fourteenth research hypothesis is as follows;
H14: there is a positive relationship between consumer’s product judgment and consumers’ intention of buying foreign products.

Accordingly, the conceptual model of the present research is as figure 1.

4. Research Methodology

Present study model is analyzed based on data gathered from 385 questionnaires distributed among customers of Hyper Star department stores in Tehran by applying structural equation modeling and through LISREL software. In fact, data gathering was conducted by referring to librarian documents and distributing questionnaires. The questionnaire included three main parts; 1. Guidelines: this part explained the purpose of data gathering and the necessity of participant’s cooperation. To this end, the value of data obtained from the questionnaire was highlighted so that participants are motivated enough to respond adequately; 2. Demographic questions: this part included four main questions such as questions about education, age, sex, and income level.

| Table1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (n=385) |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| variable        | Type            | Frequency       | %               | mode            |
| Gender          | male            | 240             | 62.18%          | male            |
|                 | female          | 145             | 37.56%          |                 |
| Age (year)      | 18-24           | 44              | 11.43%          | 25-34           |
|                 | 25-34           | 156             | 40.52%          |                 |
|                 | 35-44           | 115             | 29.87%          |                 |
|                 | 45-54           | 54              | 14.03%          |                 |
|                 | Over 55         | 16              | 4.16%           |                 |
| Level of Education | Below Diploma | 32              | 8.31%           | BA              |
|                 | Diploma         | 96              | 24.94%          |                 |
|                 | BA              | 182             | 47.27%          |                 |
|                 | MA              | 72              | 18.70%          |                 |
|                 | PhD             | 3               | 0.78%           |                 |
| Income (Million Tomans) | Below 0.5 | 25              | 6.49%           | 1 to 1.5        |
|                 | 0.5 to 1        | 51              | 13.25%          |                 |
|                 | 1 to 1.5        | 149             | 38.70%          |                 |
|                 | 1.5 to 2        | 92              | 23.90%          |                 |
|                 | Over 2          | 68              | 17.66%          |                 |
The distribution of participants is depicted in table 1; 3. Items related to research model variables: in present research, Ladan oil produced by the Savola Group which is a Saudi Arabia Company was used as a product reminiscent of Saudi Arabia (the Savola Group, 2016). Therefore, at the beginning of this section, there is a specific question pondering if respondents are aware of the country of origin. Besides this question, there are 26 other questions as follow; 3 items measuring “religiosity” (Ahmed et al., 2013, Wilkes et al., 1986), 5 items measuring animosity (Ahmed et al., 2013, Nijssen and Douglas, 2004), 4 items measuring “ethnocentrism” (De Nisco et al., 2015, Shimp and Sharma, 1987), 5 items measuring “product judgment” (De Nisco et al., 2015), 5 items measuring “country of origin image” (De Nisco et al., 2015, Papadopoulos and Heslop, 2000), 4 items measuring “purchase intention” (Ahmed et al., 2013, Pullman et al., 1997). Likert five point scale was used for designing this section (relevant variables and items are attached).

5. Research Findings

Structural equation modeling was used for testing the relationship between research variables (Bagozzi and Yi, 2012, Joreskog et al., 1979). shows the model in standardized estimation situation and figure 3 shows the research model in t-value situation which is indicative of the relationship between observed variables (in rectangles, measured directly by the researcher) and latent variables (circles, inferred from the relationship or correlation between measured variables).

In structural equation modeling, coefficients are divided into two groups. The first group is the so-called measurement equation which shows the relationship between latent variables (ovals) and observed ones (rectangle). These equations are called loading factors. The second group is structural equations which shows the relationship between latent and latent variables and they are applied for hypothesis testing. These are called path coefficients. According to this model, path coefficient is significant at 95% significance level if t value is out of (-1.96 to + 1.96) but if t value is within this interval, path coefficient is not significant. At 99% significance level, path coefficient is significant if t value is out of (-2.58 to +2.58).
Confirmative factor analysis was used to investigate construct validity. Confirmative factor analysis results are summed up in table 2. As depicted, loading factors of research variables are all significant at 99% significance level so it can be stated that research variables enjoy appropriate construct validity. Besides, all Cronbach’s Alpha values of each variable was estimated over 0.7 which is indicative of internal consistency of data gathering instrument (Cramer, 1994).

**Figure2. The research model in standardized estimation situation**
In structural equation modeling, goodness of fit indexes are not indicative of model’s fitness per se but they must be interpreted altogether. Accordingly, table 3 represents the most fundamental goodness of fit indexes and it shows a good fit of the model (Hair, 2010). As shown in the table, the various indexes used show that the fit of the saturated model is good. According to path coefficient and t value represented in figure 2, 3, and table 4, there is negative relationship between religiosity and purchase intention ($t = -2.61, p = -0.20$).
AN=Animosity, RELG=Religiosity, COOI=Country of Origin Image, ET=Ethnocentrism, PJ=Product Judgment, PI=Purchase Intention

Figure 3. The research model in t-value situation

It was also found out that at 99% significance level, there is negative and significant relationship between consumer’s animosity and purchase intention (t = −2.00, β = −0.12), and between consumer’s animosity and country of origin image (t = −2.17, β = −0.16).
the other hand, the relationship between ethnocentrism and purchase intention, ethnocentrism and product judgment, consumer’s animosity and product judgment, religiosity and product judgment was not supported.

### Table 3. The model’s goodness of fit indices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>NNFI</th>
<th>NFI</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>AGFI</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>chi²/df</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommended value</td>
<td>&lt; 0.08</td>
<td>&gt; 0.90</td>
<td>&gt; 0.90</td>
<td>&gt; 0.90</td>
<td>&gt; 0.80</td>
<td>&gt; 0.90</td>
<td>&lt; 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real Values</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>1.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- chi²/df is the ratio between Chi-square and degrees of freedom.
- GFI is Goodness of Fit Index.
- AGFI is the Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index.
- CFI is the Comparative Fit Index.
- NFI is the Normed Fit Index.
- NNFI is the Non-Normed Fit Index.
- RMSEA is Root Mean Square Error of Approximation.

### Table 4. Summary of Hypotheses Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Hypotheses</th>
<th>Path coefficient</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>The Result of the Hypothesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1 Animosity → purchase intention</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>-2.00*</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2 Ethnocentrism → purchase intention</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3 Animosity → product judgment</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>-1.17</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4 Ethnocentrism → product judgment</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5 Religiosity → purchase intention</td>
<td>-0.22</td>
<td>-2.61**</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6 Religiosity → product judgment</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>-1.58</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7 Religiosity → ethnocentrism</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>19.17**</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H8 Ethnocentrism → consumer’s animosity</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>4.71**</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H9 Religiosity → consumer’s animosity</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>5.47**</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H10 Country of origin image → purchase intention</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>7.29**</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H11 Country of origin image → product judgment</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>7.27**</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H12 Ethnocentrism → country of origin image</td>
<td>-0.76</td>
<td>-9.73**</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H13 Animosity → country of origin image</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>-2.17*</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H14 Product judgment → purchase intention</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>4.01**</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** **p < 0.01, *p<0.05**

6. **Discussion and Conclusion**
Present study was an attempt to pinpoint the influence of four variables i.e. consumer’s animosity, ethnocentrism, the country of origin image, and religiosity upon foreign product judgment and purchase intention by Iranian consumers. Since there is much uproar between Iran and Saudi Arabia, participants’ opinion about, Ladan oil produced by Savola Group in Saudi Arabia, which is considered a low involvement product, was investigated.

According to data gathered from 385 customers of Hyper Star department stores of Tehran City, and based on statistical results of structural equation modeling, at 95% significance level, the first research hypothesis was supported. Therefore, it can be stated that there is significant relationship between consumer’s animosity and purchase intention. Since $\beta$ is negative, the relationship between the two variables is negative. This finding agrees with those of some other previous researches (Ahmed et al., 2013, De Nisco et al., 2015, Klein et al., 1998). Therefore, the more a consumer feels hostile to the country of origin, he is less inclined to purchase the product of that country. Besides, it was revealed that there is relationship between religiosity and foreign product receptivity at 99% significance level. Since $\gamma$ is negative, it can be declared that the relationship between the two variables is negative. Ahmed et al., (2013) confirmed this relationship in their study. Therefore, the higher the religiosity of the consumer, the less the foreign product purchase intention. Nevertheless, the relationship between animosity and religiosity of consumer, and product judgment was not supported. Besides, the relationship between consumer’s ethnocentrism with product judgment and foreign product receptivity was not supported.

On the other hand, since hypotheses 7, 8, and 9 were supported at 99% significance level, there is direct and significant relationship between religiosity and ethnocentrism, ethnocentrism and consumer’s animosity against foreign countries, and between religiosity and animosity against foreign countries. Several other previous studies verified this result (Ahmed et al., 2013, De Nisco et al., 2015, Klein et al., 1998). Therefore, it is expected that the more each of these variables increases in the positive side, the other two variables increase accordingly and vice versa.

Since hypotheses 10 and 11 were supported at 99% significance level, there is a relationship between country of origin image and product judgment and purchase intention. Since $\beta$ is positive, this relationship is direct and in the same direction. Therefore, it is expected that the more the consumer’s country of origin image enhances in the positive direction, the more positive his evaluation of the product and his purchase intention will be. It was also found out
that there is a negative relationship between consumer’s ethnocentrism and his country of origin image at 99% significance level, and also between consumer’s religiosity and the country of origin image at 95% significance level. Thus, it is anticipated that as consumer’s ethnocentrism and religiosity increases in the positive direction, his country of origin image will decrease in the opposite direction. On the other hand, it was demonstrated that there is direct and significant relationship between product judgment and purchase intention at 99% significance level.

There were some limitations in present research. The study was carried out on a low involvement product. It is recommended that future studies to be done on high involvement products. Second, sampling was merely done out of Tehran inhabitants. If sampling was run in different regions of Iran, better understanding about research issue could be achieved. Therefore, future studies can expand the extent of sampling to other regions of Iran.

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