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Research Article

Exploring the nexus between country of origin and purchase intentions towards Korea cosmetics: Evidence from Myanmar's market

Atar Thaung Htet¹ **ABSTRACT**


As the firms reach on global stage to penetrate and grasp global market, country-of-origin is popular concept for this concept. Thus, this study tries to explore country-of-origin and examine the effect of country-of-origin on purchase intentions of Korea cosmetic in Myanmar. The specific objectives of this study are- to explore the consumers' perceptions on country-of - origin dimensions in Myanmar cosmetic market, to examine the users' intentions to purchase on Korea cosmetic in Myanmar and to analyze the effect of country of origin on purchase intention of Korea cosmetics in Myanmar. The required 193 respondents were selected by convenience sampling techniques in this study. The descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression analysis used in this study in order to analyze the collected data. Quality & technology excellence, product superiority and trust, product class and knowledge and xocentrism were major dimensions of country of origin in this study. This study found that all of this country-of-origin dimensions except product class & knowledge have positively significant effect on purchase intentions of Korea cosmetics in Myanmar. Therefore, this study made some practical recommendation for market practioners in Myanmar how to focus on each dimension of country-of-origin produced the effective marketing strategies and suggested the comprehensive frameworks for other emerging markets in south east Asia regions for academic world.

Keywords: Country-of-Origin, Quality & technology excellence, Product superiority & trust, Product class & knowledge, Xocentrism, Purchase Intentions

1. Introduction

The improvement of economy, technology, science, society and education in the 21st century has provided people with a better standard of living and styles. The rise of wellness and self-care made people more active, liberal moving ahead and taking part in every walk of life so they became more concerned about their looks and appearance. Consumers today are investing much money upon beauty products, which promise them to relieve stress, relaxation and overall wellness. The increase in buying power and the rising importance of wellness have contributed to the growth of the beauty and personal hygiene industry. Since the shift towards beauty and personal hygiene are changing, the trend is not only limited to women at all. But also, men are becoming more conscious about their personal appearance.

The concept of masculinity is changing in these centuries and all the genders are more comfortable investing in beauty and personal hygiene products. Brands and manufacturers need to keep up the continuous changing trends, creating gender-neutral products to cater all the genders and ensure inclusivity in their product line in order to remain relevant in this market. The cosmetic industry has been expanding rapidly in both developed and developing countries. The cosmetic market in Asia has increased more than US\$70billion. The Asian market of cosmetics has become one of the fastest growing markets. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) includes Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Vietnam, and Myanmar (Katkar, Galatage, Honmane & Darandale, 2019). The

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targeted cosmetics items are categorized such as skin care products, make up products, hair care products and fragrance products. But currently, the attitudes towards using cosmetics are changing among the population.

Nowadays, the beauty and health market in Myanmar is growing fast. As reported in 2013, Myanmar has spent about US\$407million on cosmetic and toiletries products (Katkar, Galatage, Honmane & Darandale, 2019). The beauty markets in Myanmar are growing faster and bigger. In the past, Myanmar people used the traditional Tanakha as a daily cosmetic to protect from sunburn and for the clear, smooth skin. Starting from the 1980s, both international and local cosmetics entered the market and Myanmar people started to use those products (PHYU, 2019). Myanmar consumers started to purchase different beauty products from different brands to enhance their appearance. In these days, there are countless of foreign and local brands which are used in Myanmar.

In Myanmar, as in other countries, customers play a crucial role in the success or failure of the business. All the companies and brands are competing with each other to provide the best quality products, excellent customer services, building a potential relationship with the consumers and trying to increase the consumer's purchase intentions. People, especially women have been interested in beauty since ancient days. At that time, they didn't dare to put on chemical and artificial products but that trend has changed now. With the rise of technology, continuous rapid growth, expansion of social groups and consumer attitudes toward beauty products are changing into a positive view because those things can enhance their natural looks. Recently many kinds of beauty brands can be found in the local market which consists of both local and international. Those brands try to distribute their products in different ways but unexceptionally South Korean cosmetic companies.

Those South Korean Cosmetics companies has gained more popularity due to several factors in Myanmar. These several factors can be included because of the Korean Wave and The Country of Origin. As a result, we can find a lot of Korea beauty and cosmetics products easily in the local market and Myanmar consumers now have a lot of choices on which brand they would like to try. Unlike in ancient time, we don't need to wait any longer for the products to arrive and use. Korean cosmetic products have entered the Myanmar cosmetic market and gained more recognition by Myanmar consumers for a few years now due to the Korean Wave, which is brought by Korean dramas, movies, music, and the country-of-origin image. This study aims to contribute to research on the topic of how effect of Country-of-origin attribute on purchasing of Korean cosmetic products in Myanmar.

2. Problem Statement

Korean culture which includes movies, drama, music, television shows, cuisine, beauty, clothing trends and Korean language is now gaining a huge amount of recognition not just only across Asia but also around the world. This effect creates a ripple effect resulting in increased consumption and export of Korean goods. But The Korean Wave gained a huge amount of popularity and the Korean products were started to be use in the early 2010s when the country began to open up to the world after decades of military rule. Myanmar's embrace of Korean beauty products can be attributed by the influence of the Korean wave.

In recent years, the country-of-origin attribute has gained significance important in a realm global marketing. The concept of "country of origin" originated during World War 1, when defeated nations compelled to affix their products with a symbol denoting their place of origin. In particular, it represents not only the image, reputation and stereotypes that businessmen and consumers attribute to the products of a given country, but also the set of beliefs that consumers have about the countries themselves. Another way Country-of-Origin (COO) can also be defined as a 'Made in' or 'Manufactured in' label. Consumers have different attitudes and beliefs toward brands from different countries. If a consumer has a predetermined picture of a country, they might make their decision based on those ideas rather than the product itself. COO is perceived as a quality cue and it has a power to influence the consumer's purchasing behavior. COO becomes more important and has more effect on consumer attitude, purchase behavior, and competitiveness rather than location of the production or assembly since consumers tend to emphasize the brand's COO. As an effect, it decreases as consumers find more information and consumers become more rational about the quality of a product.

Nowadays, more companies are competing on the global market, and these companies manufacture their products worldwide and those products might affect the perception of the consumer on the quality of the product based on the country where the product is produced. Over the recent years, Korea has established itself as a prominent contender in the worldwide cosmetic industry, and Korean beauty products have gained renown for their innovation

in ingredients, packaging, and marketing strategies. Korean cosmetics have garnered a strong reputation for their effectiveness and high quality, resulting in their widespread popularity among consumers. Korean cosmetics predominantly emphasize the use of natural components, including herbs, plants, and other organic elements known for their skin-enhancing properties. Furthermore, Korean cosmetics are recognized for their innovation in integrating cutting-edge technologies and novel ingredients. It's noteworthy that Korean cosmetics adhere to rigorous quality control protocols to maintain consistently high standards for their products. For the packaging, Korean cosmetics pay high attention to their products to appeal to consumers. Korean cosmetic companies invest heavily in research and development to create formulations that are highly effective and safe for skincare. Their cosmetics are often designed with unique and innovative formulations to address specific skincare concerns such as hyperpigmentation, anti-aging, and sensitive skin. Korean cosmetics have a significant online and offline presence, with the majority of consumers leaving positive reviews and feedback for their products. These factors helped Korean cosmetics gain a reputation for product superiority and trust from consumers.

The realm of Korean cosmetics spans a diverse spectrum of product classes and categories, tailored to address specific skincare and cosmetic requirements. The notable quality and effectiveness of Korean cosmetics have fostered a heightened level of trust and confidence in these products. Furthermore, the Korean skincare sector adheres to rigorous regulations that oversee manufacturing processes and ensure product safety, further bolstering consumer trust. In the realm of Korean beauty cosmetics, xenocentrism may manifest as the unwavering belief that these products are superior solely because of their Korean origin, without any impartial evaluation of their ingredients, performance, or appropriateness for various skin types. Korean Wave has made its mark in Myanmar and the Korean cosmetic industry has gained a significant boost in Myanmar. The primary aim of this study is to investigate the effect of country of origin on purchase intention of cosmetic products in Myanmar.

3. Research Questions

This study conducts to address the following research questions:

- How does consumers perceive on COO in dimensions of Myanmar cosmetic market?
- How does consumers' make intentions for Korea Cosmetic products in Myanmar.
- How does Country of Origin effect the purchase intention of Korea Cosmetics in Yangon?

4. Objective of the Study

This research tries to achieve the following research objectives:

- To explore the consumers' perceptions on country-of – origin dimensions in Myanmar cosmetic market.
- To examine the users' intentions to purchase on Korea cosmetic in Myanmar.
- To analyze the effect of country of origin on purchase intention of Korea cosmetics in Myanmar.

5. Literature Review

This section makes the review on previous literature works covered for country-of -origin, purchase intentions and the relationship of this two predictand and predictor variables. In addition, this section highlighted the ways of hypotheses development and conceptual framework of this study after making the systematic literature review.

5.1. Country of Origin

Over recent years, there has been significant growth in international trade and the expansion of the global market. Companies and international marketers have actively sought new avenues in the global marketplace, intensifying the competitive landscape among businesses. There are many factors that have an impact on this growth as well as consumer products and services evaluation, such as brand name and perception of the country. Among these, country of origin is one of the most important affecting this competitive market. Studies showed that country of the factors that most concerned marketers in respect of its impact on consumer purchase intention (Long-Yi Lin, 2006).

The impact of country of origin on the buyer's intention dated back over three decades and purchase intention was one of the main issues considered in purchase behavior and the international business literature (Ghazali, Othman, Yahya & Sarif, 2008). While consumers weigh numerous factors when they made a purchase decision, including

brand, color, and design, researchers couldn't overlook the impact of factors such as the country of origin. In other words, country of origin was a higher risk for international trade because it reflected consumer intention.

In brief, in respect of other studies and the literature, country of origin was abbreviated as "COO", which referred to the country that manufactures, designed or assembled a product or brand with which it was associated (Lee & Lee, 2009). According to (Hong & Wyer, 1989), the effects of country of origin in consumers' cognitive process they were presented with the COO cue along with other cues such as price and brand, could be observed in two ways. Those two ways were the halo effect and the summary construct. In the case of the halo effect, it had a direct influence on consumers' perceptions of products from unfamiliar countries and indirectly influenced their overall evaluations through these perceptions.

Country of origin was also labeled by other names like "country of manufacture", "country of assembly" and "country of design", in all issues it had a power to reviewing date about products and customer's purchase behavior, as a result buyers thought about different countries according to their awareness and beliefs, so they considered their purchase in respect of this impact (Jiménez Torres & San Martín Gutiérrez, 2007). There were numerous factors that examine the effect of country of origin on purchase intention. This study used the four dimensions for country or origin (quality & technological excellence, product superiority & trust, product class & knowledge and xenocentrism) that effect on purchase intention.

5.2. Effect of COO (quality & technological excellence) on Purchase Intention

In today's business landscape, numerous companies engage in global competition, manufacturing their products worldwide. The geographical origin of these products can influence consumers' perceptions of product quality, based on the country where the product was manufactured. Durability is another vital aspect of quality, and modern consumers are highly mindful of product longevity. They tend to favor products that demonstrate endurance and withstand the test of time. (Pappu, Quester & Cooksey, 2006) perceived COO had reflected a different level of product quality. (Aaker, 1991) had pointed out that perceived quality was actually an overall or superiority of the product and brand with respect to its intended purpose such as buying purpose. Achieving technological excellence goes beyond merely possessing the latest features; it also involves effectively leveraging these features to meet consumers' needs. Incorporating cutting-edge technology into products can enhance their quality. Modern consumers often regard technologically advanced products as superior in quality, which can significantly impact their purchase intentions. After reviewing this literature, the hypothesis 1 was developed for this study:

H1: COO - Quality & technological excellence will positively affect the cosmetics purchase intention of Korea-made cosmetics in Myanmar.

5.3. Effect of Product Superiority and trust on Purchase Intention

Products which offered a superior quality to price ratio were more likely to stimulate purchase intention (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Brand reputation was also an important part of product superiority. (Aaker, 1991) has stated that brands had consistently delivered superiority products over the time and enjoyed the heightened level of trust. This trust record of excellence and bolstered purchase intentions. Trust functioned as a mutual relationship between consumers and brands. Consumers were more inclined to buy from the brands that they trust, it signaled reliability and consistency (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Alemán, 2001). Customer reviews and ratings were another trust-building mechanism and in this digital age, most of the customers rely on the experiences of other consumers to guide on their purchase intention (Cheung & Lee, 2012). Trust was found to mediate on the relationship between product superiority and purchase intention; it acted as a bridge between the perceived quality of the product and the intention to purchase (Chen & Chen, 2010). Therefore, the second hypothesis of this study is:

H2: COO - Product superiority & trust will positively affect purchase intentions of Korea Cosmetics in Myanmar.

5.3. Effect of Product class and knowledge on Purchase Intention

A product class can be defined as a product category that categorizes the various goods and services within the market. Consumers possess distinct needs and preferences for different product categories. These product classes aid consumers in categorizing their requirements and facilitate the identification of relevant products with greater ease. Consumers' knowledge encompasses information and comprehension regarding the product and its associated

categories. The extent of a consumer's knowledge about a specific product class can have a notable impact on their purchase intentions. Product knowledge depended on the awareness and understanding of the product, or consumer beliefs about the product in it. The knowledge of the product was linked to the consumer's awareness and understanding of the product by the customer or the consumer's confidence in the product (Lin & Chen, 2006). Consumers with high knowledge seemed to be more judicious and selective, resulting in a higher chance of purchase (Janiszewski & Van Osselaer, 2000). According to this literature works, the third hypothesis of this research emerged as below:

H3: COO – Product class & Knowledge will positively affect the purchase intentions of Korean cosmetics in Myanmar.

5.4. Effect of Xenocentrism on Purchase Intentions

Xenocentrism is the inclination to favor foreign or imported products or ideas over those originating in one's own culture and country. This tendency frequently leads consumers to prioritize foreign brands or products over domestic alternatives. Most research has shown that consumers were more likely to perceive that foreign product were more fashionable, higher quality or innovative, which could positively influence the purchase intention (Usunier & Valette-Florence, 2007). According to (Phau & Prendergast, 2000) and (Bian & Forsythe, 2012), since foreign products were sometimes associated with higher social status and prestige, consumers were more inclined to purchase those kinds of products due to their perceived prestige, which was driven by xenocentrism. Xenocentrism also influenced the product quality and trust. Most of the foreign products were perceived by having higher quality and reliability, consumer's trust upon those products was also becoming higher due to their foreign origin (Han, 1989).The fourth hypothesis of this study was developed by gaining insight on literature works of xenocentrism and purchase intentions.

H4 : COO – Xenocentrism will positively effect on purchase intentions of Korea cosmetics in Myanmar.

5.5. Conceptual Framework of this Study

This study plan to investigate the effect of country-of – origin on purchase intention of Korea cosmetics in Myanmar. The country-of-Origin concept was developed by using four dimensions- quality & technological excellence, product superiority & trust, product class & knowledge and xenocentrism. This conceptual framework diagram shown in Figure (1).

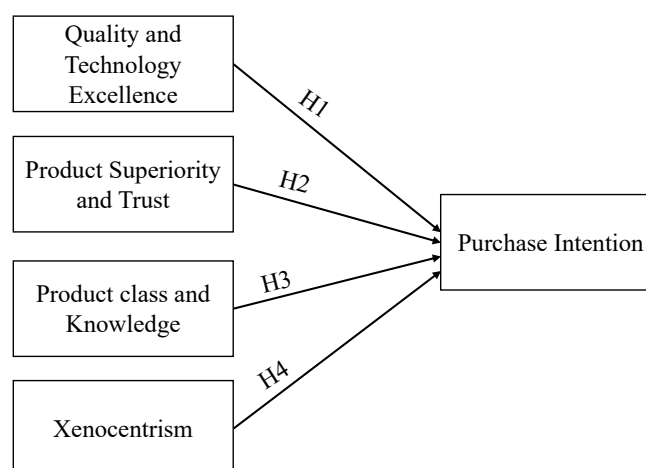


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

Source: Author Work

6. Research Design

This section explains how conducting this research with three parts. The first one is data collection techniques and data analysis techniques, the second is questionnaire design and the final one is operationalization of variables. The

major objectives of this study are to make strong evidence for proposed research hypotheses. All of these techniques described in this section covered for those research hypotheses and research objectives.

6.1. Data Collection and Analysis

To achieve these objectives, both primary and secondary data are used in this study. Secondary data are obtained from textbooks, previous research papers and internet websites. In order to determine the required sample size, this study used the Cochran (1977) infinite sample formula because of the target population is absolutely above five million at study area. According to the Cochran (1977), if the target population is five billion or above, researcher can assume this population as infinite population. This research accounted as z score value is 1.81 because of margin of error or standard error is 7%. The output of this sample formula is 193 as required sample size for this study. The convenience sampling method applied in this study. For specifically, data collector stood at front of the famous shopping mall, supermarket and shopping center namely GMP shopping center, City Mart, Ocean super center, Market place, Sein gay Har shopping center at Yangon, conducted the survey on shoppers with convenience ways to gain the required sample size within the recognized survey period.

Reliability analysis, correlation test and multiple linear regression analysis were major statistical tools for exporting the research findings. All data were analyzed by using IBM SPSS software, exercising 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error. After transformed the collected data from excel to SPSS software, conducted the reliability analysis by adjusting the Cronbach alpha value, tested the relationship of dependent and independent variables and constructed the regression model.

6.2. Questionnaire Design

This study used the structural questionnaire to collect the required data. There were two parts for questionnaire. The questions of first section majority focused on respondents' demographic profile such as gender, age, education, monthly income etc. Five-point Likert scale question type was used in the second part of structure question cover for analyze the attributes of conceptual frameworks and make evidence for proposed hypotheses. There were sixteen scale items for country -of-origin adopted from (Kala & Chaubey, 2016) and four items for purchase intention was adopted from (Nguyen, YẾN-Khanh & Thuan, 2021). All of these scale items were converted into five-point Likert scale-type questions ranging from 1 to strongly disagree, 2 to disagree, 3 to neither agree nor disagree, 4 to agree, and 5 to strongly agree.

6.3. Operationalization of Variables

According to Smyth (2004), operationalization is inventing or contravening an idea or explanation. Operation model or design identifies each of the series of the logical steps, variables, and assumed interactions- bridging the gap from the beginning to the end of the total process by which the research is dependent upon. In this study the dependent variable was purchase intention and independent variable was COO. The relationship of variables was shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Operationalization Variables

Objectives	Variables		Indicators	Measurement	Type of Analysis
	Independent	Dependent			
To explore the consumers' perceptions on country-of -origin dimensions in Myanmar cosmetic market.	Country of origin		Quality & technology excellence Product superiority and trust Product class and knowledge Xenocentrism	Five Point Likert Scale	Descriptive
To examine the users' intentions to purchase on Korea cosmetic in Myanmar.		Purchase Intention	Attitudes Readiness Continuous	Five Point Likert Scale	Descriptive
To analyze the effect of country of origin on purchase intention of Korea cosmetics in Myanmar.	Country of origin	Purchase Intention	Quality & technology excellence Product superiority and trust Product class and knowledge Xenocentrism Purchase Intention	Five Point Likert Scale	Correlation & Multiple linear regression

Source: Author Work

7. Results of Empirical Analysis

7.1 Profile of Respondents

The demographic variables of the study were determined by gender, age, education level, monthly income and occupation. Gender was grouped into males and females; 11 males, (5.7%) and 182 females, (94.3%) particularly. Ages were categorized into four groups; less than 20, 21-30, 31-40 and above 40 years; the frequencies of respondents were 41 or (21.2%), 138 or (71.5%), 10 or (5.2%) and 4 or (2.1%) particularly. Educational level was classified into four groups, high school, bachelor, master and doctor and above with respondents of 93 or (48.2%), 87 or (45.1%), 13 or (6.7%) and none of the respondents were doctor degree and above. There were four categories for monthly income. They were less than 100,000, 100,000 to 300,000, 300,000 to 500,000 and more than 500,000, with the frequencies of 66,60,28,39 and percentages are 34.2%, 31.1%, 14.5% and 20.2%. Occupation was categorized into five groups, student, employee, business owner, retired and others with respondents of 100,72,19,2 and 0. The percentages were 51.8%, 37.3%, 9.8%, 1.1% and 0%. These statistical data was shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Profile of Respondents

Category		Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	11	5.7%
	Female	182	94.3%
	Total	193	100
Age (in years)	Less than 20	41	21.2%
	21-30	138	71.5%
	31-40	10	5.2%
	Above 40	4	2.1
	Total	193	100
Education	Highschool	93	48.2%
	Bachelor	87	45.1%
	Master	13	6.7%
	Doctor and above	-	-
	Total	193	100
Monthly Income (MMK)	Less than 100,000	66	34.2%
	100,000 to 300,000	60	31.1%
	300,000 to 500,000	28	14.5%
	More than 500,000	39	20.2%
	Total	193	100
Occupation	Student	100	51.8%
	Employee	72	37.3%
	Business Owner	19	9.8%
	Retired	2	1.1%
	Other	-	-
	Total	193	100

Source: Survey Data (2024)

7.2 Reliability Analysis

In this study, Likert-scales were commonly used. Therefore, before they are used, each dimension's reliability should be tested. Reliability alludes to the degree to which a scale produces predictable outcomes if the estimations are rehashed on various occasions. Reliability analysis is controlled by getting the extent of precise variety on a scale, which should be possible by deciding the relationship between the scores obtained from various organizations. In this way if the relationship in reliability analysis is high, the scale yields steady outcomes and is in this way solid. Cronbach's alpha value is used in this study as an indicator of internal accuracy of the scales used in the questionnaire. The Cronbach's alpha value of each variables described in Table 3.

Table 3. Reliability Analysis

SR.No	Variables	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
1.	Quality and Technological Excellence	4	0.971
2.	Product Superiority and Trust	4	0.892
3.	Product Class and Knowledge	4	0.809
4	Xenocentrism	4	0.890
5	Purchase Intention	4	0.907

Source: Survey Data (2024)

Cronbach's alpha is very important and the range of Cronbach's alpha should become from 0.0 to 1.0 but for research purposes, some researchers suggested that the minimum standard for reliability should be 0.70 or higher. Table (3) showed that Cronbach's Alpha of all the factors in this study was more than 0.8, which means that the respondents' answers are accurate. Therefore, it can be interpreted that the data is considered to be reliable and valid.

7.2.1. RQ 1: Explore the Respondents' Perceptions on COO

This section analyzes the effect of country of origin on buying Korean cosmetics products. The four factors which are quality and technological excellence, product superiority and trust, product class and knowledge and xenocentrism are analyzed in this part. The mean value and standard deviation of each statement of COO described in Table 4.

Table 4. Respondents' perception on COO

No	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
	Technology & Quality Excellence		
1	I believe Korean Cosmetics are high quality products	3.90	1.00
2	I believe Korean Cosmetics are manufactured by using well advanced technologies	3.92	0.98
3	I believe Korean Cosmetics include more naturally ingredients than other countries product	3.68	1.02
4	I think Korean Cosmetics product's country of origin determines the quality of a product	3.80	1.05
	Overall Mean Value of Technology & Quality Excellence	3.82	
	Product Superiority and Trust Excellence		
1	When I am buying a new beauty product, the country of origin (Korea) is the first piece of information that I consider	3.39	1.09
2	If I have a little experience with a cosmetic product, I search for country-of-origin information to help me make a more informed decision.	3.83	1.10
3	I look for the "Made in..." labels in beauty product before making a purchase	3.87	1.12
4	I trust Korean Cosmetics products because of the country Korea	3.61	1.11
	Overall Mean of Product Superiority and Trust Excellence	3.67	
	Product Class & Knowledge		
1	I think it is not very important to look for made in Korea label when I buy a beauty product that is less expensive	2.78	0.93
2	When I buy expensive items, I always seek to find out the beauty product's country of origin.	3.86	1.05
3	The influence for country of origin seems to be more important for luxury goods than for necessity beauty products	3.68	1.09
4	I think it is important to have some knowledge about cosmetics before buying the cosmetics products	4.16	1.12
	Overall Mean of product Class and Knowledge	3.62	
	Xenocentrism		
1	I would always prefer to buy cosmetics products made in the Korea	3.40	1.08
2	Using Korean Cosmetics always make me feel contented	3.70	1.05
3	Cosmetics products made in Myanmar are generally of a lower quality than similar products from Korea	3.69	1.07
4	Korean Cosmetics products occupy a very strong competitive position in comparison to the Myanmar Cosmetics products	3.81	1.09
	Overall Mean of Xenocentrism	3.65	

Source: Survey Data (2024)

Consumers are aware that Korean Cosmetics are popular because of their authentic and natural ingredients. However, these are cosmetics products and they have to use some ingredients to make long lasting products. That's why it gets the lowest mean score from the respondents. However, the overall mean score is 3.82, which indicates

that all the respondents agree with the effect of Quality and Technological Excellence on buying Korean cosmetics products.

The respondents agree with all of the statements of product superiority and trust and all of the mean values are more than 3.4. It means that when the respondents look for the beauty cosmetics, they may search Korean beauty products as well as other cosmetics too. Since the total overall mean score is more than 3.6, it means that the respondents agree that product class and superiority can influence on buying cosmetics products.

Most of the respondents think it is important to have some knowledge about cosmetics before buying the cosmetics products. Consumers are aware to have knowledge first before buying some new cosmetics because it can make more certain to choose the right kind of product and it can lead to make the right decision. However, the overall mean score is 3.62 and it indicates that the respondents agree with the product class and knowledge effect on buying cosmetics products.

Since there are a lot of local and foreign cosmetics in the market, the respondents may also try to use other brands' cosmetics in order to know about their results. However, since the overall mean is 3.65, it shows that respondents agree that xenocentrism can impact on buying Korean cosmetics products.

7.2.2 RQ 2: Analyze the Respondents' Intentions to Purchase of Korea Cosmetics in Myanmar.

This section will show the analysis of purchase intentions of Korean cosmetics products with four questions. The mean values and standard deviation of each and overall mean are shown as follows.

Table 5. Respondents' intentions to purchase

No	Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	There is a high possibility I will buy beauty products made in Korea	3.66	1.14
2	I will buy Korean Cosmetics if it is available in the stores where I normally shop	3.31	1.06
3	There is a high possibility I recommend to other people who also want to buy cosmetics products made in the Korea	3.50	1.06
4	I will repurchase Korean products that I am currently using or have tried before	3.84	1.06
	Overall Mean of Purchase Intention	3.57	

Source: Survey Data (2024)

According to table (5), the respondents agree with all of the statements of purchase intention and all of the mean value except one is more than 3.4. The statement no. (2) is the lowest mean value with 3.31, in which I will buy Korean Cosmetics if it is available in the stores where I normally shop. It may be because in Yangon, there are a lot of cosmetics stores where consumers know about the new cosmetics which are available at the shop and also mentioned above in table (4.7), consumers may not always prefer to buy Korean cosmetics products, since there are different kinds of brands and products in the market. But also, according to statement no. (4), which has the highest mean score with 3.84, in which I will repurchase Korean products that I am currently using or have tried before. It can indicate that consumers are more likely to but the same product again if that product suits their preferences. That's why they are not sometimes aware of the other new products and they don't have a chance to try them. However, the overall mean score is more than 3.5, it indicates that all respondents agree with the purchase intention of Korean cosmetics products.

7.2.3. RQ 3: Effect of Country-of -Origin (COO) on Purchase Intention

This section includes the analysis of the effect of Country of origin on purchase intention. The four factors of country of origin (quality & technology excellence, product superiority & trust, product class & knowledge and xenocentrism) that effect on purchase intention of Korea cosmetics in Myanmar. The result of multiple linear regression analysis shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Result of multiple linear regression analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t value	p value
	Beta	Standard Error	Beta		
Constant	-.004	.143		-.025	.980
Quality and Technological Excellence	.161**	.067	.160	2.405	.017
Product Superiority and Trust	.303***	.057	.305	5.342	.000
Product Class and Knowledge	-.045	.058	-.039	-.769	.443
Xenocentrism	.552***	.055	.537	10.12	.000
R square	.813				
Adjusted R Square	.809				
F-Value	203.739***				

Source: Survey Data (2024)

According to the result of multiple linear regression analysis , xenocentrism, product superiority and trust and quality and technological excellence have a positive significant effect on purchase intention. Both Xenocentrism and Product superiority and trust shows 1% effect on purchase intention. While quality and technological excellence at a 5% effect on purchase intention. It shows that xenocentrism, product superiority and trust and technological excellence can increase the purchase intention.

7.2.4 Results of Hypotheses Testing

This section discussed the hypothesis testing of the study variables. The rule of thumb was to accept the proposed hypotheses if the independent variables (attributes of COO) significant relationship with the dependent variable (purchase intention). The significance was tested at the critical P value of 0.05.

Table 7. Hypothesis testing.

Sr No.	Hypothesis	Rule	P Value	Comment
1	H1: Quality & technological excellence will positively effect on cosmetics purchase intention of Korea made cosmetics in Myanmar.	Accept H1 if P value < 0.05	.017	The alternative hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, quality & technological excellence has positively significant effect on purchase intention.
2	H2: Product superiority & trust will positively significantly effect on purchase intentions of Korea Cosmetics in Myanmar	Accept H2 if P value < 0.05	.000	The alternative hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, the product superiority & trust has positively significant effect on purchase intention.
3	H3: Product class & Knowledge will positively effect on purchase intentions of Korea cosmetics in Myanmar.	Accept H3 if P value < 0.05	.443	The alternative hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, product class and knowledge has no significant effect on purchase intention.
4	H4: Xenocentrism will positively effect on purchase intentions of Korea cosmetics in Myanmar.	Accept H4 if P value < 0.05	.000	The alternative hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, xenocentrism has a positively significant effect on purchase intention

Source: Survey Data (2024)

8. Conclusions

This study aims the effect of COO on purchase intention of cosmetic users in Myanmar market. Country of Origin is factor tested in this study, which includes technological excellence, product superiority and trust, product class and knowledge and xenocentrism. The relationship between xenocentrism and purchase intention showed the highest, the second followed by product superiority and trust and the third followed by quality and technological excellence. As a result, both xenocentrism and product superiority show 1% effect on purchase intention. This study made some recommendations for business world and academic world based on the findings of this research.

8.1. Managerial Implications

This study makes some recommendations for marketers in Myanmar cosmetic market. For the side of Quality and technology: to draw in Myanmar customers, highlight the high caliber and cutting-edge features of international cosmetics, especially those from reputable nations like Korea. Market practitioners of Myanmar market should try to establish credibility, highlight product certifications, client endorsements, and openness. Allow the product to be both well-known and exceptional. Moreover, strategic planners should make use of leverage as Xenocentrism too appeal to Myanmar consumers, present the products as authentic imports rather than heavily localized versions, given the country's strong xenocentric inclination or desire for international brands. Customers should be informed about the various product categories so that they may make better decisions when making purchases, especially for specialized or less popular cosmetics. Product class, often categorized as luxury, premium, or mass-market, is traditionally linked to consumer perceived value and affordability. However, in Myanmar's market, social and cultural factors may diminish the importance of product class, particularly in a market where foreign brands (especially Korean) are perceived as inherently superior. This finding challenges the price-quality heuristic in consumer behavior, as consumers may focus more on perceived image and branding rather than product category.

8.2 Academic Implications

The further study should examine xenocentrism and cultural Influence to learn more about how xenocentrism affects Myanmar's customer behavior and contrast results with those from nearby economies. Moreover, the extend research to additional product categories in order to determine whether trends are continuous in Myanmar, find out if the desire for international brands extends to other areas, such electronics or apparel. Finally, the further should develop the frameworks for emerging markets such as Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and Philippines in order to help researchers and marketers, theoretical models that concentrate on developing markets with a high xenocentrism, like Myanmar, must be developed.

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ETHICAL AND SCIENTIFIC PRINCIPLES STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

The author(s) declare that ethical rules and scientific citation principles were complied with throughout the preparation process of this study.

STATEMENT OF RESEARCHERS' CONTRIBUTION RATE TO THE ARTICLE

1st author contribution rate: 100%