



2528-9705

Örgütsel Davranış Araştırmaları Dergisi
Journal Of Organizational Behavior Research
Cilt / Vol.: 3, Sayı / Is.: S2, Yıl/Year: 2018, Kod/ID: 81S272



A STUDY ON THE CASE AFFECTING FACTORS ON THE ATTITUDE OF CONSUMERS FOREIGN FOOTWEAR

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ABSTRACT

Market managers are interested in knowing the customers' attitude to better serve their current or new services. This requires information about the factors affecting the attitude of the customers which will help marketers in decision-making related to demand. Foreign goods and incentives to buy luxury brands for Asian consumers, such as Iranian consumers, are increasingly on the rise. So identifying factors affecting consumer purchase motivations are very important, as a result, this study aimed to investigate the factors affecting consumer attitudes on foreign commodities. This research is an applied and descriptive survey in terms of purpose and data collection. The statistical population of the study is consumers of foreign footwear in Isfahan city, due to its unlimited number, 266 people were randomly selected from available samples. The hypotheses of this study were tested using the structural equation modeling technique. The results showed that factors related to brand, brand quality and self-definitional needs have a positive and significant effect. And the image of the country of origin has no significant effect, and finally perceived value has a positive and significant relationship with the attitude toward foreign footwear.

Keywords: Consumer Attitude, Country-of-Origin Image, Self-Definitional Needs, Quality, Foreign Footwear

INTRODUCTION

The concept of attitude has played a crucial role throughout the history of social psychology. The importance of the topic of attitudes is to the extent that some experts have basically considered the topic of social psychology as the study of attitudes. Being aware of individuals' attitudes can be of great importance. If we are aware of consumers' attitudes, so we will be able to predict their behavior and have control over it. For example, if shoes companies are aware of people's attitudes towards the shoes that they product, they can better adapt their shoes to people's attitude and in this way, they will be able to guarantee a higher level of people's satisfaction and also more profit for themselves. The attitudes and beliefs of consumers play an important role in their purchase decisions. Thus, if marketers and managers want to gain more market share and therefore have more profits, they should pay special attention to consumers' attitudes towards their products and services.

The phenomenon of globalization has provided more choices for customers; it has also facilitated the possibility of supplying required goods among various goods (Dehdashti et al., 2014; Suh & Kwon, 2002). The globalization of markets makes constantly marketers face many opportunities and challenges. Since target customers across all markets are accustomed to goods and activities

of foreign competitors' marketing, there exists an increasing interest for understanding the factors associated with customers' preferences regarding the characteristics and features of foreign goods and products (Wood et al., 1999).

This issue has increased the chance of success of Western countries, especially countries with cultures in which social status and prestige are considered to be very important and valuable (Ibid, 181). The inhabitants of developing countries wish to live in accordance with Western culture and are looking for ways to adapt themselves with Western performances through the use of foreign brands (Pelton et al., 2008, 295). This is also the case of the people of our country, and despite a large population below the poverty line who do not have a high purchasing power, they consider the selection of goods with foreign brands as a way of gaining a kind of prestige and style. This stems from the desire of individuals to resemble people living in Western countries. This fact is more severe for younger consumers (Ghaffari Ashtiani et al., 2010).

Unfortunately, in the Iranian shoe market, despite the presence of prominent domestic brands in recent years, these brands have been weakened and replaced by fake foreign featured brands. This fact shows the poor performance of domestic manufacturers in the fields of branding because for Iranian consumers, the tendency to buy domestic or imported Chinese shoes with featured foreign brands is more than the tendency of purchasing products with Iranian brand. Therefore, the shoe industry has been disturbed by the arrival of other rivals and consumers' attitude should well be explored in order to achieve the special position of shoe industry. It is also necessary to clarify the favorable and effective factors in creating positive attitudes in Iranian brands rather than foreign brands.

Theoretical foundations and research background

The attitude towards products is usually defined as a general assessment of consumers regarding the characteristics of a product such as shape, brand and quality (Erdogan & Uzkuurt, 2010). Customers judge foreign products according to their beliefs about them (Kaynak & Kara, 2002). Many factors contribute to customers' attitudes towards foreign products such as country of origin image, social factors, differentiation, brand identity, brand trust, quality and so on. In this part, we investigate four effective factors:

Image of the country of origin

There exist various definitions regarding the image of the producer country. These definitions include from 'The place of production of a commodity that affects the evaluation of this commodity' to 'Intangible barriers to entry into new markets that appear in the form of negative perceptions of consumers against imported products (Gurhan-canli, Z. & Maheswaran, 2000). The image of origin country is also defined as the general perception of customers about the quality of the commodities of a country (Moradi & Zarei, 2011). This perception is made by factors such as characteristics, economics, political and historical background and the traditions of a nation (Roth & Romeo, 1992). For this reason, it is expected that developed and advanced countries have usually left a positive image of themselves in developing countries.

The special image of a country is subjective and contains a set of beliefs and perceptions of people about this country. Each nation has an image that varies over time, as well as between different nations of the world. This image is influenced by the culture of the country, its people and also the level of economic development and the quality of produced commodities by this country (Shakori, 2013). In most studies, the image of origin country includes three cognitive, affective



and interactive components (Papadopoulos et al., 1993; Laroche, 2005; Parameswaran & Pisharodi, 2002). Each of these components are defined as follows:

Cognitive component: Includes consumer's beliefs about the origin country's industrial, technological, and political background.

Affective component: It describes symbols and emotional values about the country of origin from the perspective of consumers.

Interactive component: Indicates the consumer's intention to establish an interaction with the country of origin.

Most studies have investigated the mental image of the origin country, the direct effect of product assessment and the attitudes towards foreign products. Bilkey & Nes (1982) reviewed the literature of the origin country. They found that studies recognize the customer's perception as influenced by the country of origin. Many researchers have suggested that the mental image of the country of origin influences indirectly the decision to purchase through other variables such as product assessment, brand image, brand value, and the perceived value (Parameswaran & Pisharodi, 2002).

Brand-related factors

The brand is defined as any word, design, shape, sound, color, or combination of these factors, used to distinguish the goods or services of a manufacturer or seller from competitors' products and services. Accordingly, the brand is used as an exclusive commercial name for each company and its products and has a legal burden for it. It means that other companies cannot use this name and exclusive brand for their company and products. A famous commercial name can identify product benefits and lead to a more general public awareness about this brand compared to an unknown commercial name (Keller, 2003). Valid business names and their images attract consumers to purchase the product and lead to the repeat purchase and also the reduction of the price related to the behavior change (Brian et al., 2000). Today, the brand plays an important role in the decision-making process of customers. The trade name is considered as an intangible asset of the company that has economic value and generates wealth for the shareholders of the company. The trade name represents the value of a specific product or service. A brand has a positive value from the perspective of customers when they respond favorably to this brand. A famous commercial name can identify product benefits and lead to a more general public awareness about this brand compared to an unknown commercial name (Keller, 2003). Trusted business names and their images attract consumers to purchase the product and lead to the repeat purchase and behavior change (Brian et al., 2000). A brand is valuable while it is able to influence the behavior of those who see the brand, make routine preferences, attitudes and purchasing behaviors (Kim, 1990).

In the present study, we investigate four factors related to the brand. These factors are: Brand awareness, brand prestige, brand loyalty and brand image.

Brand awareness: It is related to the knowledge and awareness of people from the brand. People who are more sensitive to the brand name of the products they purchase and pay more attention to the trade name when buying products, they are aware of the brand. Marketing researchers pay great attention to the consumer's familiarity with a brand because it can play an important role in the decisions of customers (Desai & Hoyer, 2000; Johnson & Rusoo, 1984). Alba & Hutchinson (1987) stated that the awareness usually depends on the obtained experiences by customers about a brand.



Brand image: With regard to luxury products, the brand and its related image are considered as important external signs in purchasing decisions (Kapferere & Bastien, 2009). From the viewpoint of Keller (2009), The image of luxury goods is considered as a major competitive advantage and that is the reason why luxury brands consider more prices for their products (Ait-Sahalia et al., 2004).

Brand prestige: Individuals use the products of featured brands for showing their position. In fact, when the price of a product is higher than usual, its value and prestige increase (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). In various researches, the emphasis has been on the importance of brand prestige as an important factor in the perceived value by customers (Mayer & Tran, 2006, 181).

Brand trust: Many researchers have argued that trust is a prerequisite to start a successful business because consumers are often hesitant in purchasing unless they trust the seller and the manufacturer company (Richard, 2009). The trust to a brand can be measured through the ability of a brand to fulfill its promises (Dehdashti Shahrokh, 2014).

Quality

Different researchers (Keller, 2003; Atligan, 2005; Zeithaml, 1996) believe that the perceptual quality is defined as the overall quality or superiority of a product or service than other options. Consumers prefer foreign products with high quality to domestic products (Speece et al., 2005). There exist different components for the quality that include fashion (design and beauty), size, components, color, performance and the efficiency of clothes. The quality of product is very important because it influences the feeling, texture and other aspects of product performance. In addition to this, consumers are personally dependent to color and may accept or reject the product because of its color (Frings, 2005). The functional characteristics of shoes include rapid drying, air passivity, being waterproof, resistance to odor, light weight, anti-microbial properties and durability (Wang & Foong, 2008). It should be noted that the perceived quality is different with the real quality and is defined as the judgment of consumers about the excellence of the features of a product (Mortazavi et al., 2009). Understanding the quality of a product is often considered as a multi-dimensional measurement including efficiency, design, durability, function, prestige and received value against paid money (Wang & Chen, 2004). In conducted studies on the relationships between the quality and customer perceived value, it has been confirmed that the quality influences intensely the perceived value (Burns et al., 2006). In performed studies by Wang et al. (2004) and Turel & Serenko (2006), findings indicated that there is close relationship between the quality and the perceived value.

According to the subject of this research, in this article, 3 dimensions of the quality including functionality and efficiency, design and composition will be explained.

Functionality and efficiency: These are qualitative features and their complete and proper provision leads to customer's satisfaction. At least, it is an attempt to maintain the organization's business position in the competitive market (Rezaei et al., 2005). If the performance is accompanied by requirements that are offered to customers free of charge, it will increase satisfaction. Otherwise, it will lead to dissatisfaction (Shen et al, 2000).

Design: Is defined as the visual appearance including line, shape and details affecting consumer's perception towards a brand (Fering, 2005).

Composition (components): Is defined as components and materials used to make a product. For some consumers, it is important to know more about the components of the product they use (Fering, 2005).



Self-knowledge needs

It is defined as the need for identification that is incited through the desire and tendency to the needs. Specifically, human being needs to 1- know who he is 2- Feel relatively unique 3- Have a good feeling of himself. Based on aforementioned factors, it is argued that in the domain of the sense of belonging and affiliation to the brand, individuals perceive it for 1- having a character that is similar to itself 2- Being distinct and different 3- Being prestigious. Anyway, many theories of social identity and belonging are based on the triple needs (human self-consciousness and self-knowledge, similarity and consistency of identity, being distinct, different and prestigious) (Stokburg et al., 2012). For the need of self-knowledge, we can define some dimensions. **Similarity:** Two phenomena are called similar and identical, when they have the same or similar characteristics, or can be substitutable and exchanged. From the perspective of Byrne (1961), inner personal similarity facilitates the attraction between individuals, accordingly, when individuals have more perception towards similarities (whether true or false), it creates attraction and interest (Gholipour et al., 2008). The theory of identity similarity that originates from the paradigm of similarity-attraction, states that the preference of an individual towards people or groups depends on the degree of similarity between these groups and the individual (Berscheid & Walster, 1969).

Distinctiveness: By studying social identity, the importance of the role of distinctiveness in the formation of organizational identity was evident. (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) concluded in their studies that in addition to the need for being distinct and differentiated from other individuals, human beings have the tendency to communicate with other groups and people so that they can show in the best way, their distinctive features and attributes that are valuable for them. This concept was then developed in the theory of optimal distinctiveness by Berewer (1991). Humans are always seeking to resolve the constant tension between the need for resemblance to others and differentiation from them, through identifying and joining groups that meet both needs.

Based on this theory, management experts state that the brand's distinction and uniqueness is a key incentive of consumers' sense of belonging and affiliation to a brand (Stockburger et al., 2012). Komar et al. (2009) and Na'ichi et al. (2009) concluded in their study that the need for differentiation and uniqueness could have a positive and significant impact on foreign products, especially those that come from developed countries.

Prestige: It indicates the reputation and credit of a company from the viewpoint of individuals outside the organization (Bergami and Bagozzi, 2000). Accordingly, most researchers in the field of consumer have confirmed the role of self-promoting motivators in joining and connecting consumers to brands. They believe that the prestige of a company or brand gives the sense of belonging and affiliation to individuals (Thompson et al., 2006).

Because many people consider the brand as a human being and tend to establish a communication with a positive and respectable brand (Koo, 2009). Thus, the prestige of a brand can promote the position of the products of this brand (Truong et al., 2009). Also Bhattacharya et al. (1995) consider the prestige as an indicator of success.

Perceived value

In recent years, it has been clear that consumer's behavior can be better understood once we have considered the perceived value (Ostrom & Lacobucci, 1995; Jensen, 1996). The perceived benefit is defined as the belief of a customer regarding the extent to which he will be benefited and enriched while purchasing a product (Kim et al., 2008). Today, customer value is recognized



as one of the most important success factors for the present and future of every organization and brand, because it has a meaningful impact on intentions and behaviors of customers' purchases. Traditionally, the customer value was summarized in two terms of "quality" and "price", but today, there are other ways to create superior value for the customer. The importance of the product perceived value focuses on the fact that it determines the intensity or weakness of the willingness to purchase that the consumer shows. For example, the greater the perceived value, the more willingness to purchase (Monroe & Krishna, 1985). Ango et al. (2001) found in their studies that consumers who have more value consciousness, they have a better attitude towards foreign products. Wang et al. define four dimensions for the perceived value: Functional value, emotional value, social value and losses. In the present research, according to the subject, 3 following dimensions are defined:

Emotional value: It refers to the particular emotional state that is created by foreign brands.

Social value: It implies perceived social benefits while using foreign brands.

Economic value: It refers to what a customer loses in obtaining foreign brands, which includes material (financial) issues and immaterial (time, effort, energy) issues (Wang et al., 2004:171). The first dimension, the functional value is defined in the part of quality, so it does not seem necessary to repeat it.

Attitude of consumer

Hoyer & Macinnis (1997) define the attitude as a sustainable and relatively global assessment of an object, subject, person or action. Attitude means a learned subject for desired or unfavorable responses to an object or purpose (Goltak et al., 2006). For better understanding the concept of attitude, we should assimilate three cognitive, affective and behavioral components of the attitude. The cognitive component of an attitude includes beliefs, opinions, knowledge and a set of information. The affective component of an attitude includes emotion or feeling. The behavioral component of an attitude is related to the intention or a specific behavior about someone or something. From the perspective of Ajzen and Fishbein (1975) attitudes, ways of thinking and people's criteria for evaluating options are constantly changing (Evans & Foxall, 2009). Making proper and successful marketing decisions requires having comprehensive information regarding consumer's behavior (Moon & Minor, 2011).

Hypotheses

Based on the aforementioned theoretical foundations, the hypotheses of this research are as follows:

H1: The image of the origin country has a positive and significant impact on the perceived value.

H2: Brand-related factors have a positive and significant impact on the perceived value.

H3: The quality has a positive and significant impact on the perceived value.

H4: Self-knowledge needs have positive and significant impact on the perceived value.

H5: The hypothesis of the perceived value has a positive and significant impact on the attitude towards foreign products.

METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

The present study aims to investigate the impact of the image of the origin country, factors related to the brand, quality and self-knowledge needs on customers' attitude, considering the mediating role of perceived value. In terms of purpose, this is an applied study and in terms of



data collection method, it is a descriptive and causal survey. The statistical population of this study consists of all citizens of Isfahan city who use foreign shoes. The statistical sample of this study consists of 266 people, this number is calculated using Cochran's formula at the error level of 6%. Questionnaire was used for gathering the opinions of consumers. This questionnaire includes 6 demographic questions and 55 questions for measuring research variables.

Table 1: Resources used for developing research structures questions

Structure	Variable	Questions	Resources
Image of the origin country	Cognitive	1-3	Papadopoulos et al. (1988)
	Emotional	4-6	Papadopoulos et al. (1988)
	Interactive	7-9	Papadopoulos et al. (1988)
Brand factors	Brand awareness	10-12	Nelson & McLeod (2005)
	Brand prestige	13-14	Kim & Beak (2010)
	Brand trust	15-18	Tocquer & Kimpakorn (2010)
	Brand image	19-21	Shukla (2010)
Quality	Functionality	22-25	Wongfoong & Yahyah (2008)
	Design	26-29	Wongfoong & Yahyah (2008)
	Composition	30-32	Faezeh Guilani et al. (2013)
Self-knowledge needs	Distinctiveness	33-35	Bhattacharya & Sen (2003)
	Prestige	36-38	Bhattacharya & Sen (2003)
	Similarity	39-41	Bhattacharya & Sen (2003)
Perceived value	Economic	42-44	Wang & Lo (2004)
	Social	45-47	Wang & Lo (2004)
	Affective	48-52	Wang & Lo (2004)
Attitude		53-55	Komar & Kim (2008)



RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this study, firstly we investigate the demographic variables of the research. The obtained results from the analysis of the information from research statistical sample indicate that 57.9% of the respondents are male and between 20-30 years old. Also, 24% of respondents had a bachelor's degree and 47% of them had free jobs. In the next step, we investigate the fitting of research conceptual model based on the algorithm of partial least squares (PLS). In this method, the fitting of research model is evaluated in three parts of measurement model, structural model and overall model, according to their special indices.

Fitting of the measurement model: In this part, we first investigate the fitting of measurement models by using three factors of index reliability (coefficients of factor loads, Cronbach's alpha coefficients, and composite reliability or CR), convergent validity (AVE) and divergent validity, the results are shown in table 2.

Table 2: Fitting of measurement models

Structure	Cronbach's alpha > 0.7	AVE	Composite reliability > 0.7	Variable	Factor load > 0.4	Cronbach's alpha > 0.7	Composite reliability > 0.7	AVE
The image of the origin country	0.74	0.51	0.8	Cognitive	0.454	0.79	0.88	0.71
				Affective	0.843	0.7	0.83	0.62
				Interactive	0.818	0.69	0.83	0.62
Brand factors	0.84	0.56	0.86	Brand awareness	0.8	0.71	0.84	0.63
				Brand prestige	0.807	0.74	0.88	0.79

				Brand trust	0.885	0.74	0.83	0.57
				Brand image	0.470	0.7	0.81	0.6
Quality	0.75	0.5	0.81	Function	0.756	0.73	0.83	0.56
				Design	0.809	0.71	0.82	0.54
				Composition	0.520	0.74	0.85	0.66
Self-knowledge needs	0.86	0.67	0.89	Distinctiveness	0.871	0.84	0.9	0.75
				Prestige	0.801	0.84	0.9	0.75
				Similarity	0.792	0.73	0.84	0.65
Perceived value	0.84	0.59	0.87	Economic	0.753	0.81	0.89	0.73
				Social	0.693	0.71	0.84	0.63
				Affective	0.877	0.8	0.86	0.57
Attitude						0.78	0.87	0.69

As shown in the table above, the amount of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability for the first and second order hidden variables are higher than 0.7, indicating a proper reliability of the model. Also, the comparison of AVE values of first order and second order hidden variables with a standard value of 0.5 shows the appropriateness of this criterion and the convergent validity of this model is confirmed. Also, for measuring divergent validity, the model of Fornell and Larcker (1981) was used; it states that the AVE for each structure should be greater than the shared variance between the structure and other structures (the square root of AVE should be more than correlation coefficients). The results are shown in table 3.

Table 3: Matrix of the evaluation of divergent validity

	Image of the origin country	Brand	Quality	Self-knowledge needs	Perceived value	Attitude
Image of the origin country	0.714					
Brand	- 0.074	0.748				
Quality	- 0.158	0.364	0.707			
Self-knowledge needs	- 0.134	0.428	0.256	0.818		
Perceived value	- 0.109	0.668	0.502	0.631	0.76	
Attitude	- 0.104	0.627	0.480	0.325	0.664	0.830

According to the above matrix, the square root of AVE values of all research variables (coefficients on the main diameter) are more than the correlation between them, which indicates the appropriate divergent validity and good fitting of the measurement models.

Fitting of the structural model: After investigating the fitting of measurement models, now we investigate the fitting of the structural model of research. For examining the fitting of the structural model, several criteria are used. The first criterion is the coefficients of significant numbers or t. The absolute value of t coefficients should be more than 1.96 so that we could confirm their significance at the confidence level of 95%. According to the data analysis in PLS software, all significance coefficients of z are reported more than 1.96, except for the variable of the origin country image that shows insignificance. These values are presented to confirm the hypotheses and not to confirm the hypothesis of the origin country image. The second criterion for examining the fitting of the structural model is the R2 coefficients related to the hidden endogenous variables of the model (dependent), Chin (1998) suggests three values of 0.19, 0.33, 0.67 as the criterion value for weak, moderate and strong values of R2. The structure of perceived value with a value of 0.64 has a strong R2, also the structure of attitude with a value

of 0.52 has a strong R2. Therefore, the estimated coefficients of determination confirm the strong predictability of the model and finally the fitting of the structural model.

The third criterion for fitting of the structural model is the effect size or measure of impact size, which was introduced by Cohen (1988) and determines the relationship between the structures of the model. For the analysis of the relationship between structures, the impact size criterion uses the index of R2. According to the decision criteria of 0.02, 0.15 and 0.35 that are indicative of weak, moderate and strong values for that criterion, the image of the origin country with the value of zero indicates the weak effect of the image of the country of origin on the perceived value. Brand factors show the strength with the value of 0.34, the quality shows moderate values with 0.15 and self-knowledge needs show strength with the value of impact coefficient of 0.32.

Fitting of overall model: The criterion of GOF (Goodness of Fit) is related to the general part of the structural equation models. According to three criterion values of 0.01, 0.25 and 0.36 as weak, moderate and strong values for GOF, the obtained value is equal to 0.77, indicating a strong overall fitting of the model. This value is calculated using the squares of the mean coefficients of collective values and the coefficients of determination.

After being assured of the fitting of the proposed model, the research hypotheses are tested. Figure 1 shows the significance or t-value of the relationships between variables. As the results show, significance coefficients between variables are more than 1.96, except the image of the country of origin, which is less than 1.96. This fact indicates the significance of research variables and the impact of variables and leads to the approval of other hypotheses.

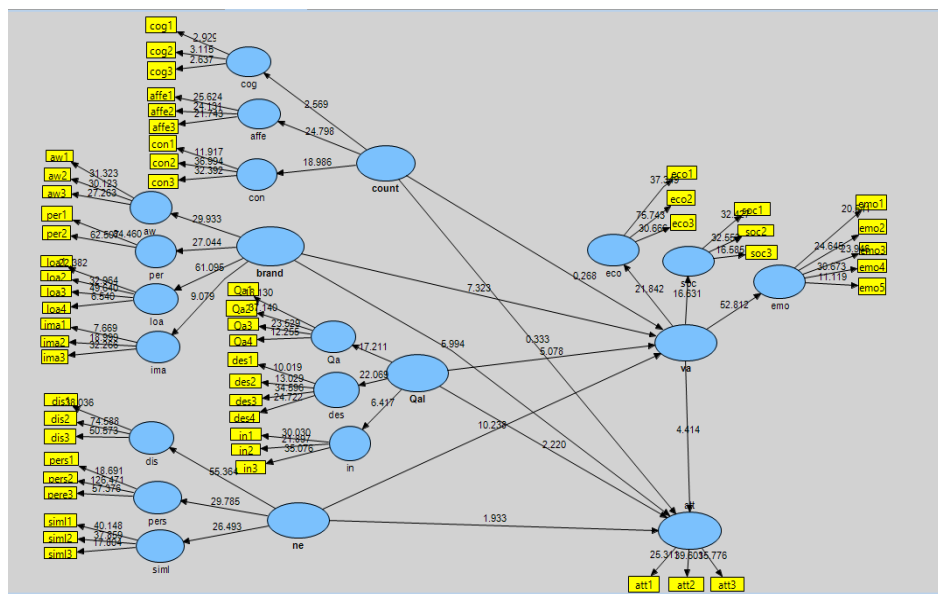


Figure 1: Significance values, t-value

After examining the significance of research variables, now we investigate the path coefficients between research variables. Figure 2 shows the standardized coefficients of paths between variables.

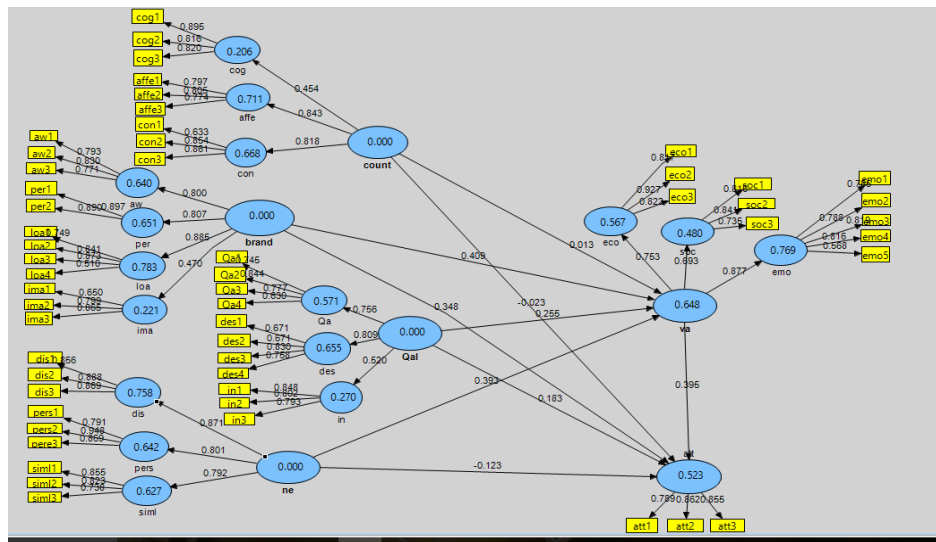


Figure 2: Load factors of research variables

According to the figures 1 and 2 and the extraction of significance values and path coefficients, we test research hypotheses as shown in table 4.

Table 4: Summary of hypotheses tests

Row	Hypothesis	Path coefficient	t statistic	Result
1	Image of the country of origin → Perceived value	0.013	0.268	Rejection of hypothesis
2	Brand factors → Perceived value	0.4	7.323	Approval of hypothesis
3	Quality → Perceived value	0.255	5.078	Approval of hypothesis
4	Self-knowledge needs → Perceived value	0.393	10.238	Approval of hypothesis
5	Perceived value → Attitude	0.395	4.414	Approval of hypothesis

Based on the results of the above table, and given that the value of t statistic in the first hypothesis is less than 1.96, so it can be concluded that at the confidence level of 95%, this relationship is not significant and this hypothesis is rejected. But this amount is more than 1.96 for other hypotheses and they are approved. Subsequently, for examining the role of the variable of perceived value (the mediator variable) in the relation between independent variables (image of the country of origin, brand factors, quality and self-knowledge needs), and consumers' attitude (dependent variable), related tests were used. The results are shown in table 5.

Table 5: Path coefficients between independent and dependent variables of research

Independent variable / Mediator variable / Dependent variable	Path coefficient			Sobel test	Impact factor
	Direct	Indirect	Overall		
Image of the country of origin / Perceived value / Attitude	- 0.023	0.005	0.018	0.28	0
Brand factors / Perceived value / Attitude	0.348	0.158	0.506	3.95	0.34
Quality / Perceived value / Attitude	0.183	0.1	0.283	3.57	0.15
Self-knowledge needs / Perceived value / Attitude	- 0.123	0.154	0.03	4.52	0.32
Perceived value / Attitude	0.395	-	0.395	4.66	-

Note: In the column of overall, total of absolute value of direct and indirect path coefficients are cited

For evaluating the significance of the mediating variable (perceived value), Sobel test was used. In investigating the role of perceived value in the relationship between the image of the origin country and the consumer attitude, as it can be seen in the table above, its direct effect is - 0.023, its indirect effect is 0.005 and the overall effect is 0.018. Based on Sobel's statistic, the mediating role of perceived value in the relationship between image and attitude is not significant. Also, the impact coefficient of perceived value has been zeroed due to its insignificance. Also, in examining the mediating role of the perceived value on the impact of independent variables of brand factors, quality and consumer attitude, as the information in table shows, brand factors and quality have positive and significant impact on consumer's attitude both directly and indirectly (through perceived value). In other words, as it can be seen from the Sobel test and the impact coefficient, the role of perceived value in the effect of brand factors and quality on consumer attitude is positive and significant. Self-knowledge needs have direct and negative impact on the attitude but it has positive effect through the mediator variable of perceived value.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Studies show that the Iranian consumer has the tendency to select foreign brands and products rather than domestic products. Various factors can be mentioned in this regard, among these factors, we can cite the brand's trust and distinctiveness, the brand's uniqueness and the creation of emotional and social value derived from the use of foreign brands (Chirani, 2011). Therefore, considering the importance of customer's choice and its position in marketing, the present study has investigated the effective factors on consumers' attitudes towards foreign products. By this way, by identifying these factors, it will be possible to provide the ground for actions to create a positive attitude in Iranian consumers towards Iranian shoes.

For meeting the country's annual domestic demand, about 200 million pairs of shoes are needed. About 170 million pairs of shoes are produced in the country, and between 30 to 35 million pairs are imported every year. Foreign brands spend high costs on advertising, which is not the case in our country. The presence of foreign brands in the market shows the higher tendency of consumers to buy these brands as well as the power of famous brands of shoes. According to the statistics, there exist 216 domestic and foreign shoes brands, and 120 of them are foreign brands with the proportion of 53%. Therefore, as these brands have not simply reached this position, domestic manufacturers need to invest in branding their products and connect more with consumers (Bakhshali, 2015). The production of bags and shoes has already employed 120000 people in the country. In case of its growth and development, more people can be employed in this area. Thus, it is better that experts pay more attention to this industry. Therefore, considering the importance of the subject and the position of domestic products in the economy of the country, from the perspective of researchers of the present study, it is necessary that a study entitled 'Effective factors on consumers' attitudes towards buying foreign shoes' be conducted and some hypotheses be devised, developed and investigated in this regard.

In the first hypothesis, the obtained results from data analysis indicate the insignificance of the impact of the image of the origin country on the perceived value of the consumer of foreign shoes. This means that the consumer's mental image from the country of origin of foreign shoes production has no significant effect on the perceived value of the customer. That is, the consumer is indifferent to the origin country of the production of foreign shoes. Bogen and Yapark (1993)



found that the value determined by the customer for the country of origin in an effective characteristic in evaluating foreign products. This result is not in line with the result of the present study because in our study, the mental image of the origin country has no effect on the perceived value by consumers. With regard to the first hypothesis, we can cite the following points: despite the consumers' answers about the lower level of economic development, technology and living standards of the country compared to foreign countries, they believe in the use of domestic products. Considering the analysis of questions answered by consumers, it is important to note that policy makers should attempt to establish interactions with other countries, trust domestic producers for strengthening social capital. This issue is beyond the capacity of the domestic manufacturer and should be treated at the level of macro economic and commercial policy making.

In analyzing the second hypothesis, the obtained results from the data analysis indicate the significance of the impact of brand-related factors on the perceived value of the consumer of foreign shoes. These results are in line with the results of Kim et al. (2008) and Bilargin (2003). Given the confirmation of the impact of brand-related factors on the perceived value, it is important to note the following points: Questionnaires of consumers show that consumers have more confidence, more awareness and better image towards foreign products rather than domestic shoes. Therefore, it seems that the economic authorities of the country should pay special attention to the clothing industry and especially to the shoe industry, branding, informing the consumer market regarding the presence of domestic brands and the necessity of illustrating domestic brands.

In analyzing the third hypothesis, the obtained results from the data analysis indicate the significance of the impact of quality on the perceived value of the consumer of foreign shoes. These results are consistent with the study results of Peak et al (2010) and Quintal and Polchinsky (2010). Given the confirmation of this hypothesis, it should be stated that the consumers of foreign shoes have a more positive attitude towards the quality and efficiency as well as the design of foreign shoes. Therefore, it is necessary that domestic manufacturers pay more attention to the diversity, fashion and the use the proper components in their productions so that they could create value for their products from the customers' view and finally, create a positive attitude towards domestic production.

In analyzing the fourth hypothesis, the obtained results from the data analysis indicate the significance of the impact of self-knowledge needs on the perceived value of the consumer of foreign shoes. These results are consistent with the study results Stuckcurger et al. (2012) and Koo (2009). Therefore, according to the results of this study, domestic shoes manufacturers and traders should design and produce a brand that could create the feeling of distinctiveness and uniqueness, prestige and similarity in customers. As a result, when the attitude and perceived value of a customer is more positive towards a domestic brand, this attitude will be more positive and favorable towards all domestic products and brands. The results of the fifth hypothesis indicate the significance of the impact of perceived value on the attitude of consumers. These results are in line with the study results of Carter (2009). Therefore, according to the results of this hypothesis, consumers have a better attitude toward foreign products and feel more value with them. It is recommended to manufacturers to pay more attention to the emotional and social value of consumers. In other words, it is recommended to producers to take into consideration in their production process, the factors that give the consumer emotional, social and economic



value. Since the attitude is considered as an important factor in predicting customer behavior, it should be of special importance for marketers and marketing specialists of commodities and especially shoes.

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