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Consumer Perception: Animosity, Ethnocentrism and Willingness to Buy Chinese Products

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Abstract

Global developments have seen the rapid growth of international marketing due to trade liberalization and a reduction in barriers to global trade. This has resulted in opening up of new markets and availability of foreign products in domestic markets. China has taken a leading role in global trade due to its low levels of production costs and technological advancements. Chinese electronic products can now be found most parts of the world. This study attempted at determining the attitudes of consumers towards made in China products. It was guided by the concepts of consumer ethnocentrism and consumer animosity and how these influenced the willingness to buy Chinese electronic products. A sample size of 385 was chosen with 319 participating. Data was collected through a questionnaire adopted and modified from a study by Quang, DinhChien and Long (2017) in Vietnam. Factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modelling (SEM) techniques were used in the analysis. From the findings, it was evident that amongst the Kenyans, consumer ethnocentrism influences the level of consumer animosity. In instances where consumer animosity existed, it did not have an impact on product judgments. Though the respondents had expressed some level of animosity towards China, the same did not have a negative impact on product judgments. In terms of consumer ethnocentrism, the respondents indicated that it had a negative impact on product judgments, an indication that a high level of ethnocentrism will lead to unfavourable attitudes towards a product from a foreign country.

Keywords: *Consumer Animosity; Consumer Ethnocentrism; Product Judgment; Made in China; Willingness to Buy; Kenya*

1. Introduction

The role and influence of China in global business has been growing by leaps and bounds especially in the developing countries where other traditional business partners have a reduced presence. Due to China's foreign policy of non-interference with the internal affairs of trading partners, it has been viewed as a "friendly" partner by most developing countries. As a result, China made products have penetrated these markets to a great extent. Beyond the provision of trade in goods, China has been developing major infrastructural projects in Africa through a process of finance, build and in some cases operate. The appetite for growth has seen a lot of African countries take on monumental loans from China for the construction of various infrastructural projects. Sentiments on the ability of the countries to pay back these loans have been voiced with recent press statements that Zambia and Kenya might have the Chinese governments take over key ports and utility projects due to inability to pay the loans.

It is against the above backdrop that this study attempted to measure the perception of Kenyans towards made in China products. Consumers have different perceptions towards their own products and those of other countries. Electronic products were chosen due to the fact that they were the most common place products that any respondent would likely have come across. They also provide an opportunity to measure the willingness to buy and how that was influenced by the consumer judgment towards the products.

According to Shimp & Sharma (1987), attitude towards foreign products is known as consumer ethnocentrism. Consumer attitudes towards products from their home country has been described as consumer xenocentrism. Attitudes towards products from specific countries based on a negative association has been described as consumer animosity (Klein, Ettenson & Morris (1998). The current study was driven by the concepts of consumer animosity, consumer ethnocentrism, product judgments and the willingness to buy.

2. Consumer Animosity

Consumer animosity is a terminology that has been associated with international marketing based on the perceptions and attitudes that consumers have over certain countries and their products. Propagated by Klein, Ettenson a Morris (1998), it is defined as an individuals' negative feelings and attitudes toward a specific foreign country as a result of past exposure which may be due to traumatic historical events, economic disputes, political disputes, religious disputes, among others. Klein et al (1998) state that animosity is the "remnants of antipathy related to previous or ongoing military, political, or economic events that affect consumers' willingness to purchase foreign products". As such they note that there exists two broad dimensions of animosity: war animosity and economic animosity. However, more researchers have identified other dimensions and sources of consumer animosity (Huang, Phau & Lin, 2010).

In identifying the economic and war animosity, several authors studies past historical events that influenced the attitudes of consumers. Klein et al. (1998) in their seminal research studied war-related animosity by focusing on the Nanjing massacre in 1937 during the Second Sino-Japanese War. Later, Shin (2001), Klein (2002), and Nijssen and Douglas (2004) studies the repercussions of the World War II amongst various protagonists. Other like Podoshen and Hunt (2009) studies the effects the Holocaust on Jewish consumers living in the U.S. and found that many still had animosity towards Germany and thus avoided to buy made in German cars.

In terms of the economic animosity, consumers may perceive the actions of a foreign country as being economically repressive. They thus see the foreign country as being an unfair and unreliable trading partner exerting excessive influence in the home country (Klein et al., 1998; Ang et al., 2004; Funk et al., 2010). According to Rice & Wongtada (2007), economic animosity can be as a result of anger against perceived unfair practices that have direct economic impact on consumers or from fear of being dominated by economic powers. Such may be felt to lead to loss of jobs and closure of domestic firms due to the actions of the foreign country and its products.

Researchers have also found that animosity may be rooted in issues related to politics, religion, or culture other than just economic and war (Kiriri, 2008). Political animosity has been studied amongst different countries who may have had difference in political opinions and approach to global geopolitical issues. Ettenson and Klein (2005) identified political animosity between Australian and France due to the

latter's nuclear testing in the South Pacific. Russell and Russell (2006) reported the animosity between France and the US as a result of the French refusal to support the US in the Iraq war. Similarly, Huang, Phau & Lin (2010) study of effects of territorial disputes between Taiwan and Japan.

Within the Middle East countries and those who profess Islam, religious animosity has been witnessed. Various researchers have studied the effects of religious conflict between Denmark and several countries in the Middle East due to the depiction of the prophet Mohammad in a Danish newspaper (Maher & Mady, 2010; Riefler & Diamantopoulos, 2007; Abosag, 2009; Maamoun & Aggarwal, 2008; Khalil, 2012).

There is a paucity of studies in Africa in relations to consumer animosity. Available studies have been majorly in Southern Africa. Several studies have been done to assess the perception of Mozambicans on products made in South Africa (John & Brady, 2011a; John & Brady, 2011b). Makanyeza and du Toit (2016) studied perceptions of Zimbambeans on pourltyr products from South Africa. Though the mentioned studies did not identify any animosity towards foreign products, they provided different results in regards to perception. In South Africa, Pentz (2011) found a preference for South Africa products in comparison to Chinese products while Muposhi, Dhurup, & Shamhuyenhanzva (2018) found some levels of animosity towards Chinese apparel.

The low levels of consumer animosity in Africa has been due to several reasons. These include a desire for foreign made products. Studies in Nigeria (Okechuku & Onyemah, 1999; Agbonifoh & Elimimian 1999; Festervand & Sokoya, 1994; Lysonski & Durvasula, 2013) found that Nigerian preferred imported brands against the local brands as did Ghanians (Opoku & Akorli, 2009) and Kisawike (2015) in Tanzania. Limited choice also affected a deeper evaluation of foreign products. Kiriri (2018) indicated that, due to the level of economic development, most African countries lacked the capacity to manufacture most of the goods they required and thus minimal alternatives but to depend on foreign products, sometimes from a country with an unfavorable past relationship.

3. Consumer Ethnocentrism

Consumer ethnocentrism is about the attitudes and perceptions consumers have towards foreign products and the appropriateness of purchasing such products. Shimp and Sharma (1987) define consumer ethnocentrism as the beliefs held by

consumers about the appropriateness, indeed morality, of purchasing foreign made products. Quang et al. (2017) posit that ethnocentrism is about judging other people's culture based on of one's own culture. It is therefore about one's cultural superiority leading to negative evaluations on anything that does not align to one's culture. Ethnocentrism is this based on the symbols and values of one's own ethnic or national group which become objects of pride and attachment, whereas symbols of other groups may become objects of contempt (LeVine & Campbell, 1972).

In situations where consumers have a high level of ethnocentrism, possibly driven by nationalistic feelings, purchasing foreign products is seen as being unpatriotic. High ethnocentric tendencies are also influenced by the perception consumers have and relate to the effects of foreign firm and products. Such would be the effects of foreign products on the economic growth, employment/jobs, culture, and general national pride. According to Klein et al. (1998), ethnocentric tendencies may be based on moral beliefs and the perception that domestic products are better compared to foreign products. Customers who have low ethnocentric tendencies evaluate products based on their merits without considering country of origin (Shimp & Sharma, 1987).

Different countries exhibit different levels of consumer ethnocentrism. Some studies have found also in-country differences based on demographic differences. Urban or cosmopolitan dwellers have been found to be less ethnocentric as opposed to non-urban dwellers who are seen to have a very high level of patriotism and therefore highly ethnocentric. According to Shankarmahesh (2006) younger consumers who were more cosmopolitanism tended to be less ethnocentric. Age has also been fund to influence the level of ethnocentrism. The older generation who again tend to be conservative and patriotic in nature tend to display more ethnocentric tendencies than younger people (Balabanis et al., 2002). On the other hand, based on gender, some studies have found that female customers were more patriotic and thus more ethnocentric than men (Balabanis et al., 2002; Sharma, Shimp, & Shin, 1995; Han, 1988).

Consumers from the developed countries have been seen to exhibit different ethnocentric tendencies to those from a developing country. Wang and Chen (2004) and Chryssochoidis et al. (2007) found that consumers from a developed country appreciated more favorably domestic products over imported ones with the reverse being observed in developing countries. Consumers in developing countries often

seek to emulate the apparently glamorous Western consumption practices and lifestyles and purchase the brands they are exposed to through different media, movies, western tourists, and when the citizens of a country travel abroad (Kiriri, 2018).

Studies in Africa have recorded different results in terms of consumer ethnocentrism. Kiriri (2019) found low levels of ethnocentrism among Kenyans. His research was focused on goods as opposed to services. However, Maina, Kibera and Munyoki (2015) found that in terms of services, most Kenyans had a high preference for local commercial bank services as opposed to those from foreign owned commercial banks and thus highly ethnocentric. Other studies in Africa that have found low levels of ethnocentrism include Nigeria (Lysonski & Durvasula), Ghana (Saffu & Walker, 2006), Tanzania (Kisawike, 2015), Mozambique (John & Brady, 2011b), among others. However, consumers in Zimbabwe had a moderately high level of ethnocentrism (Makanyeza & du Toit, 2016) as had consumers in South Africa (Pentz, 2011).

4. Foreign Product Judgements

Foreign products judgments are highly influenced by the attitudes of consumers towards the foreign country and its products. Product attitude is a consumers overall evaluative judgment of a products attributes such as a brand and quality (Erdogan & Uzkurt, 2010). Such an attitude may be related to the attitude towards the source market of the product. According to Klein et al. (1998), animosity towards a specific country would affect consumers' willingness to purchase products from a foreign country rather than their evaluation of these products. Consumers with high levels of animosity and ethnocentrism will negatively judge foreign n based products and thus affect the willingness to buy. According to Quang et al. (2017), most literature indicate a positive relationship between consumer ethnocentrism and judgment of domestic products, and a negative association between consumer ethnocentrism and imported products judgment. Antipathy towards a country is likely to translate into a refusal to buy products originating from such a country, irrespective of judgments on product quality.

Consumer foreign product judgment is also affected by the three components of cognition, affection and conation (Papadopoulos et al., 1998). Cognition refers to the knowledge about the products or services; affection refers to the favorable or unfavorable attitude towards the country of origin; and conation refers to the actual buying behavior (Ahmed, Anang, Othman, & Sambasivan, 2012). The affection

component can play a dominant role in the purchase of foreign products or services (Kinra, 2006). Product judgments can help predict how and why consumers choose between different brands, foreign or domestic brands.

5. Willingness to Buy

Consumer willingness to buy a product is influenced by many different factors among them being consumer animosity and consumer ethnocentrism (Nijssen & Douglas, 2004). Phau, Sequeira, & Dix (2009) stated that the construct of willingness to purchase was an indicator of actual purchase behavior. According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), willingness to purchase was highly correlated to actual behavior. As a result, a consumer's willingness to purchase a product is a predictor of actual purchase of the product (Liao & Hsieh, 2013). When consumers have negative feelings and attitudes towards a particular country, they may refuse to buy products and services from such a country, regardless of their product quality or judgment (Klein et al., 1998).

During the consumer decision making process, consumers have to evaluate different products to make a choice, a process that results in the willingness to buy a particular product. Consumer ethnocentrism and animosity influences significantly the preferences of consumers, during the product purchase process by affecting the formation of positive or negative purchasing intentions.

Consumer animosity has the can lead to sub optimal evaluation of the quality of foreign products, leading to consumer apathy and as a result the tendency to boycott products from the perceived hostile country (Hoffmann et al., 2010). Animosity towards a specific nation affected foreign product purchasing behavior regardless of its relation to consumer's beliefs about the quality of the products from that country (Klein et al., 1998). In a study by Quang et al. (2017), they found that consumer ethnocentrism had a significant and negative impact on willingness to buy. On the other hand, consumer war and economic animosity had a significant and negative impact on willingness to buy.

In this study, the intention was to identify the relationships between product judgments and the willingness to buy. The study also sought to determine the relationships between willingness to buy and both consumer ethnocentrism as well as consumer animosity.

Hypothesis of the Study

H1: Consumer ethnocentrism positively influences consumer animosity.

H2: Consumer animosity has a negative impact on product judgments

H3: Consumer ethnocentrism has a negative impact on product judgments

H4: Product judgments has a negative impact on willingness to buy.

H5: Consumer animosity has a significant and negative impact on willingness to buy

H6: Consumer ethnocentrism has a significant and negative impact on willingness to buy

Methodology

The research design for this study was both descriptive and explanatory. The target population of this study were shoppers who visited various shopping malls in the City of Nairobi, Kenya from where the sample for this study was drawn. Altogether, 385 questionnaires were randomly distributed to the target respondents. The questionnaire was adopted and modified from a study by Quang, DinhChien and Long (2017) in Vietnam. A scale with about 38 items developed from the literature was subjected to a pretest to check on its suitability. Some item wordings were changed to reflect appropriate meaning and relevancy in the Kenyan situation.

Factor analysis was used to explore the data and its structure. To determine the number of factors to extract, the principal component analysis was used as the extraction method while the rotation method was oblique rotation, specifically Promax (Tabachnick & Fiddell, 2007; Thurstone, 1947) with Kaiser Normalization. After the factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to test the fit of the model used. The scale's internal consistency was tested by using reliability analysis with Cronbach's alpha (a minimum of 0.7 was deemed acceptable) while the construct validity was tested by employing confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) which was performed using the structural equation modeling (SEM).

Sample Demographic Profile

As indicated before 385 questionnaires were distributed with 319 returned representing a response rate of 82.9%. From the responses, 48.3% of the respondents

were males while 52.7% were females. In terms of the distribution of the respondent's age, 4.1% were below 20 years; 52% between 20 – 30 years; 30.7% between 31 – 40 years; and, 13.2% over 40 years. In terms of occupation, 17.9% were self-employed, 17.9% employed, and 19.7% were students.

Data Analysis

Reliability Tests

The scale's internal consistency was tested by using reliability analysis achieving a Cronbach alpha of 0.918. The adequacy and suitability of the sample for factor analysis was checked using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure. In this study, KMO test was 0.815 fulfilling the requirements for adequacy of data for factor analysis. The Bartlett's test **of sphericity** was also used. In this study, data were suitable for performing EFA as indicated by the Bartlett's test of sphericity yielding significance ($p < 0.001$, Approximate Chi-square of 1455.160, with 120 degrees of freedom).

Factor Analysis

In order to examine the dimensionality of the scale construct, exploratory factor analysis was undertaken. To determine the number of factors to extract, the principal component analysis was used as the extraction method while the rotation method was oblique rotation, specifically Promax (Tabachnick & Fiddell, 2007) with Kaiser Normalization as recommended.

Five factors emerged after satisfying the two required tests including the Kaiser criterion (eigenvalues greater than 1) and a scree plot. These three factors accounted for 62.8% of the total variance. In identifying the items loading on each component, out of the 23 items in the questionnaire, 16 items were found not to satisfy the requirements for inclusion as their factor loadings were below the recommended 0.5 and thus were omitted. From the analysis, and based on the highest factor loadings of the remaining items, the first and the second factor was composed of four items each, the third and fourth factor had three items each, while the fifth factor had two items. The table below provides the various items and their factor loadings.

Table 1: Factor Analysis Component Loadings

Item	Component				
	CE	EAN	WAN	WB	PJ
Kenyans should avoid buying Chinese products	.746				
It is unpatriotic to buy Chinese products	.833				
Chinese products should be banned in Kenya	.817				
Chinese people should be restricted entry to Kenya	.720				
Chinese employers in Kenya are exploitative towards Kenyans		.707			
China wants to colonize us economically		.715			
We should be very careful in doing business with China		.627			
China wants to gain economic power over Kenya		.677			
China is taking advantage of Kenya's economic situation			.879		
China has exercised too much economic influence over Kenya			.892		
Firms from China are doing business unfairly with Kenya			.590		
I buy Chinese electronic products because they are cheap				.595	
One should be careful when buying and using any electronic products from China				.751	
I will not recommend anyone to buy Chinese electronic products				.736	
Chinese electronic products are not safe to use					.765
Chinese electronic products are not innovative					.770

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

CE= Consumer Ethnocentrism; CA= Consumer Animosity; PJ= Product Judgment; EAN and WAN = dimensions of Consumer Animosity; WB= Willingness to Buy

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) – 1st Order Model

After the factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to test the fit of the scales. The scales' construct validity was tested by employing CFA. According to Byrne (2001) CFA can be used to determine whether the sample data is compatible with the hypothesized model of the study. Maximum likelihood estimation procedure was selected as the best method to conduct CFA as normality is assured in the data set. Several fit indices were used to test the model fit. The chi-square, degrees of freedom, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), comparative fit index (CFI) were determined as recommended by Hair et al. (2010).

In assessing goodness of fit, the ratio of chi-square to degree of freedom ($\chi 2/df$) is used. According to Hooper et al. (2008), $\chi 2/df$ should be less than 3 to indicate acceptable fit. In this study, $\chi 2/df$ was 2.212 indicating an acceptable fit for this model as it was less than the 3. For the RMSEA, MacCallum, Browne, and Sugawara (1996) suggest that a RMSEA value of between 0.00 and 0.05 indicates a close model fit, a value of between 0.05 and 0.08 a reasonable fit, and a value of more than 0.08 a poor model fit. In the current study a RMSEA of 0.062 was achieved indicating a reasonable model fit. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) values should range between 0.0 and 1.0 with values closer to 1.0 indicating a good fit (Hooper et al., 2008). The CFI of this study was 0.916 indicating a good model fit. For SRMR, values that range between 0 to 1.0 are acceptable and considered to be well fitting to the model though if values are lower than 0.05, the model is considered to excellent (Kline, 2000; Hu & Bentler, 1999). The SRMR for this study was .063 indicating an excellent model fit. The various indices are provided in the table below.

Table 4: Goodness of Fit Indices

Measurement	Index	Threshold	Interpretation
Chi- square ($\chi 2$)	207.894	-	-
Degree of freedom	94	-	-
$\chi 2/df$	2.212	Between 1 and 3	Excellent
RMSEA	0.062	<0.06	Acceptable
CFI	0.916	>0.95	Excellent
SRMR	0.063	<0.08	Acceptable

Assessing Validity of Scale Measures

After EFA, it has been recommended that scale validity is undertaken and specifically construct validity. Generally, to assess the construct validity of a test, convergent validity and discriminant validity are adopted (Campbell & Fiske, 1959).

Convergent Validity

According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR). AVE values above 0.7 are considered very good even though 0.5 is also acceptable. Based on the test of the scale, convergent validity was achieved as all the constructs posted an AVE greater than 0.5 which is acceptable (See table below). On the other hand, all the factors recorded a CR of above 0.7. These results indicate that the scale had achieved convergent validity.

Table 5: Convergent and Discriminant Validity Measures

Factors	*CR*	*AVE*	*MSV*
Consumer Ethnocentrism (CE)	*0.817*	*0.53*	*0.359*
Economic Animosity (EAN)	*0.789*	*0.536*	*0.381*
Political Animosity (WAN)	*0.792*	*0.563*	*0.381*
Willingness to Buy (WB)	*0.757*	*0.54*	*0.359*
Product Judgment (PJ)	*0.714*	*0.586*	*0.102*

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity refers to the extent to which factors are distinct and uncorrelated. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), discriminant validity can be assessed by comparing the amount of the variance captured by the construct (AVE) and the shared variance with other constructs (maximum shared variance – MSV). According to Hair et al. (2010), discriminant validity is established where MSV is lower than the AVE for all the constructs. In testing the scale, and as indicated in the table above, all the 5 factors' MSV were lower than the AVE and thus achieving the required thresholds for discriminant validity.

Determinants Correlation Matrix

From the analysis (see Table 6 and Figure 1), the correlation between were significant. All the 5 factors were significantly correlated at $p < 0.001$ level. This is indicated in the table below.

Table 6: Correlation Matrix

	CE	EA	PA	WB	PJ
Consumer Ethnocentrism (CE)	0.728				
Economic Animosity (EAN)	0.354***	0.732			
Political Animosity (WAN)	0.376***	0.617***	0.751		
Willingness to Buy (WB)	0.599***	0.440***	0.325***	0.735	
Product Judgment (PJ)	0.178	0.319*	0.279*	0.178	0.766

*** $p < 0.001$

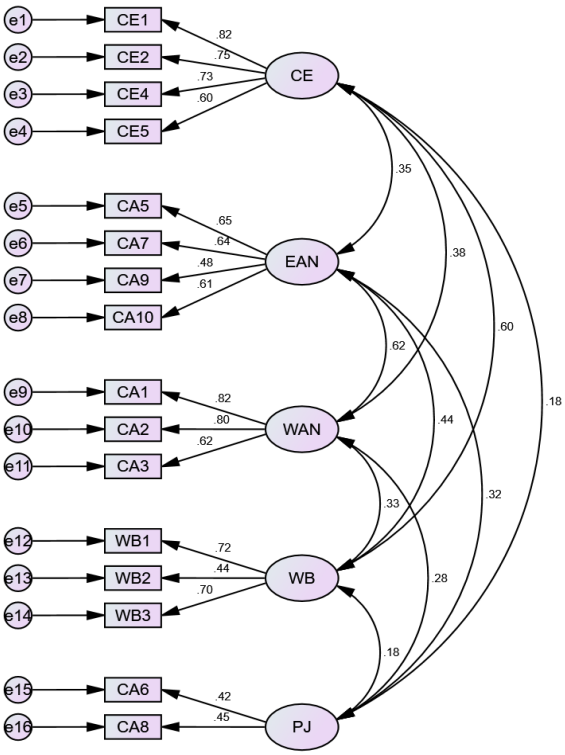


Figure 1: First Order CFA Path Analysis

Second order CFA

A second order CFA model was developed. From the analysis, political and economic animosity converged to form a composite construct of consumer animosity. As such

consumer animosity is seen as composed of the two factors. The second order model was also subjected to goodness of fit tests. As can be seen from the table below, the model satisfied all the goodness of fit indices. The figure below provides the CFA model for the second order path analysis.

Table 4: Goodness of Fit Indices

Measurement	*Index*	*Threshold*	*Interpretation*
Chi- square (χ2)	*292.480*	-	-
Degree of freedom	*98*	-	-
χ2/df	*2.984*	*Between 1 and 3*	*Excellent*
RMSEA	*0.079*	*<0.06*	*Acceptable*
CFI	*0.907*	*>0.95*	*Acceptable*
SRMR	*0.071*	*<0.08*	*Excellent*

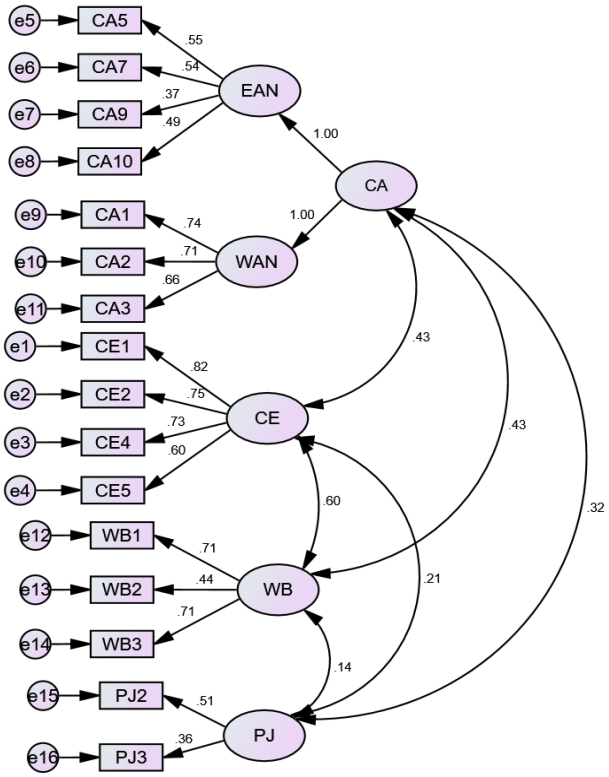


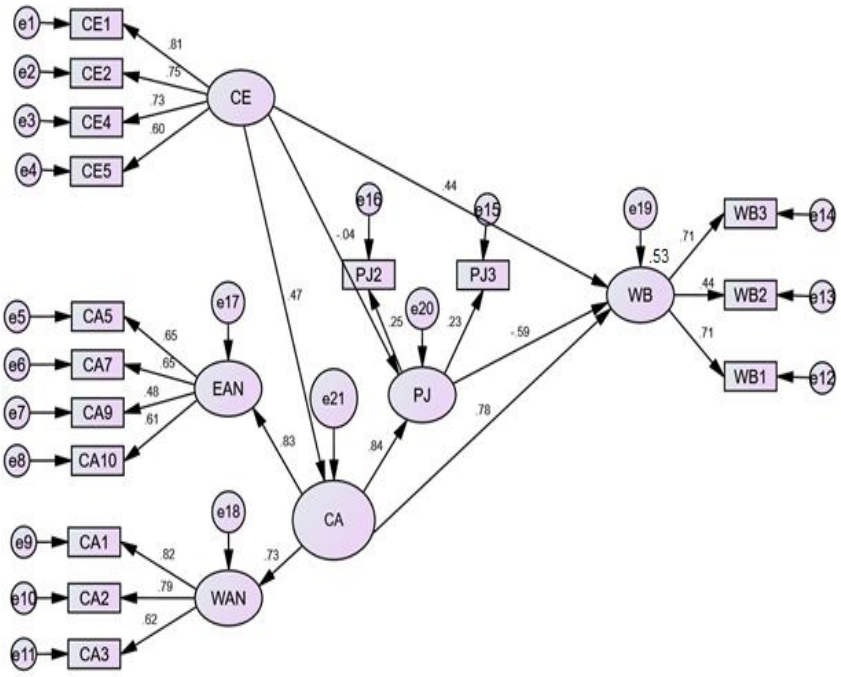
Figure 2: Second Order CFA Path Analysis

Model Fitness Assessment with Structural Equation Modelling

The scale was also subjected to Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). In order to test the fitness of the model, various fit indices were used. The indices were chi-square, degrees of freedom, RMSEA, SRMR and CFI as indicated in the table below. All the fit indices achieved acceptable status and thus indicating model fitness.

Table 7: Goodness of Fit Indices

Measurement	Index	Threshold	Interpretation
Chi- square (χ2)	217.930	-	-
Degree of freedom	97	-	-
χ2/df	2.247	Between 1 and 3	Excellent
RMSEA	0.063	<0.06	Acceptable
SRMR	0.066	<0.08	Excellent
CFI	0.911	>0.95	Acceptable



The SEM model estimates item loadings were all significant at $p < 0.001$. The critical ratios (CR) for each path exceeded the threshold values required. The results show

that CE has a significant and positive impact on CA and WB but a significant and negative impact on PJ. CA was had a positive impact on PJ, EA and WB. On the other hand, PJ had a significant and negative impact of WB. Based on the regression coefficients, an increase in CE, CA and PJ will have a corresponding change in web based service WB. The results of SEM analysis are presented in the table and figure below.

Table 8: The regression path coefficient and its significance

Hypothesis	Path			Beta	P	Supported
H1: Consumer ethnocentrism positively influences consumer animosity	CA	<---	CE	0.468	0.000	Yes
H2: Consumer animosity has a negative impact on product judgments	PJ	<---	CA	0.844	0.015	No
H3: Consumer ethnocentrism has a negative impact on product judgment	PJ	<---	CE	-0.041	0.856	Yes
H4: Product judgment has a negative impact on willingness to buy	WB	<---	PJ	-0.586	0.031	Yes
H5: Consumer animosity has a significant and negative impact on willingness to buy	WB	<---	CA	0.784	0.001	No
H6: Consumer ethnocentrism has a significant and negative impact on willingness to buy	WB	<---	CE	0.436	0.005	No

Conclusions

From the findings, it is evident that amongst the Kenyans, consumer ethnocentrism influences the level of consumer animosity. As such, the higher the ethnocentric tendencies among Kenyans, the higher the level of animosity towards foreign products. In instances where consumer animosity exists, from the results, it does not have an impact on product judgments. Though the respondents had expressed some level of animosity towards China, the same did not have a negative impact on product judgments. In terms of consumer ethnocentrism, the respondents indicated that it had a negative impact on product judgments, an indication that a high level of ethnocentrism will lead to unfavourable attitudes towards a product from a foreign country. As a result of negative attitudes towards a product, the findings were that the same would affect the intentions and willingness to buy. It was also found that consumers who had animosity towards China did not have a negativity towards willingness to buy.

Limitations and Further Research

This study was delimited to a specific population, geographic scope and time scope. The respondents were urban dwellers in Nairobi and as indicated in the literature review, there are always differences between rural and urban populations in terms of consumer ethnocentrism. The findings may therefore be only representative of the urban population whereas the rural population might have a totally different perspectives. In terms of time scope, the study used a cross sectional approach. Within the year of study, there were both positive and negative sentiments about China expressed in the local newspapers. This would have biased the study responses. A longitudinal study would address such tie specific biases. The study used only one product for the element of willingness to buy. It would have been imperative to find out whether the same perspectives applied to other products from China, for example food item, construction products, etc.

Notwithstanding the above limitations, the study contributes invariably to research in an under researched area in Africa. Other researchers could focus on undertaking such a study focusing on different products, comparing the rural and urban respondents, using a longitudinal approach. Research should also be conducted in other Eastern Africa countries to show whether there was any differences in perspectives amongst the regional states, invariably assumed to have same customer characteristics. This would allow a better comparative analysis with those studies undertaken in other parts of the world as well.

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