How Consumers Perceive the Products Made in China: A Case Study of Iran's Apparel Market

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This paper aims to measure Iranian consumers' attitudes towards products labeled "Made in Iran, "Made in Turkey" and "Made in China" in the apparel industry. In this research, a structured questionnaire consisting of 31 items is employed; overall, the results indicate that Iranian consumers have positive attitudes towards apparel labeled "Made in Turkey". Additionally, they are positive toward cognitive, affective and conative components of attitudes as well. In contrast, they do not have positive attitudes towards apparel labeled "Made in Iran" or "Made in China". Our findings indicate that Iranian and Chinese apparel manufacturers should pay more attention to Iranian consumers' interests providing they want to draw attention to their products. Turkish apparel manufacturers should also observe Iran's growing market. Hence, Turkish manufacturers should do more promotional activities in order to maintain their market share in Iran.

INTRODUCTION

A significant part of consumer behavior studies has focused on consumers' perceptions of influencing factors such as: packaging, brand, advertisement and so on. Country-of-origin (COO) is one of the influencing factors on international consumer behaviors. The impact of COO relies on the fact that consumers differentiate between products from different countries. As international trade activity is becoming a fundamental part of the world economy, it is even more important to measure consumers' attitudes towards both domestic and foreign products (Netemeyer et al.., 1991). Consequently, for many international consumers, a product's COO can be an important cue in evaluating both domestic and foreign products (Ahmed et al., 2002). As the "*Made-in"* label raised consumers' awareness of sourcing, it also came to stand for attractive features of products from certain countries. It has been demonstrated that information regarding

the COO of a product can have significant effects on its evaluation by buyers, and in some cases, even determine its choice (Baumgartner and Jolibert, 1977; Chao, 1989).

Apparel produced in Turkey and China is sold in large quantities all over Iran. Iranians purchase apparel labeled "Made in Iran" as well. According to Table 1, Turkey and China are key business partners for Iran. Basically, there is a positive attitude toward apparel made in Turkey among Iranian consumers. That is, individuals from higher social classes are more prone to purchase Turkish brands than their counterparts in lower social classes. Furthermore, many Iranian people travel to Turkey to buy apparel during sale seasons. In a nut shell, Iranians prefer Turkish apparel in comparison to Chinese and domestically produced products.

Although most Iranian consumers use Chinese products, these products usually do not have a positive reputation. This contrast motivated researchers to investigate consumers and explore their real image toward Chinese apparel. Having a real understanding of the issue could be useful for various stakeholders. On the other hand, there are some successful Iranian brands which are able to compete with foreign brands inside the country. These brands employ modern marketing approaches and try to maintain their market share in opposition to international brands. Most studies in this area have been carried out about products of one single country. The present research adopts a different approach by contrasting the attitudes of Iranian consumers toward "Made in Iran" apparel compared to those "Made in Turkey" and "Made in China".

Research Objectives

In this paper we compare Iranian consumers' attitudes toward apparel labeled "Made in Iran", "Made in Turkey" and "Made in China". Although some studies have focused on multi-dimensional conceptualizations of a product's origin, given that there are no substantial differences in effect-size between the one-dimensional and multi-dimensional conceptualizations of a product's origin, we will consider it as a one-dimensional construct that stands for the country where the product was made. Therefore, this study tries to answer the following questions:

1) How are Iranian consumers' attitudes toward apparel made in Iran?
2) How are Iranian consumers' attitudes toward apparel made in Turkey?
3) How are Iranian consumers' attitudes toward apparel made in China?
4) Do Iranian consumers have different attitudes toward apparel labeled "Made in Iran", "Made in Turkey" and "Made in China"?
5) What is the ranking of Iranian consumers' attitude toward apparel labeled "Made in Iran", "Made in Turkey" and "Made in China"?

IRAN, TURKEY AND CHINA: OVERALL STATISTICS

According to The World Factbook (2001), China was ranked as having the second-largest economy in the world after the US with 10.3% real growth rate in 2010, having surpassed Japan in 2001. China is the world leader in gross value of industrial output; mining and ore processing, iron, steel, aluminum, and other metals, coal; machine building; armaments; textiles and apparel; petroleum; cement; chemicals; fertilizers; consumer products, including footwear, toys, and electronics; food processing; transportation equipment, including automobiles, rail cars and locomotives, ships, and aircraft; telecommunications equipment, commercial space launch vehicles, satellites. According to International Trade Center (2011) statistics, the total export value of China to the world in 2010 was 1,578,193,001 thousand USD.

At 8.2%, Turkey experienced the highest real growth rate among all European countries in 2010. Turkey's main industries consist of textiles, food processing, autos, electronics, mining (coal, chromate, copper and boron), steel, petroleum, construction, lumber, and paper (The World Factbook, 2011). According to International Trade Center (2011) statistics, the total export value of Turkey to the world in 2010 was 113,979,452 thousand USD.

Iran, with a 1% growth rate in 2010, has the following industries: petroleum, petrochemicals, fertilizers, caustic soda, textiles, cement and other construction materials, food processing (particularly sugar refining and vegetable oil production), ferrous and non-ferrous metal fabrication, and armaments. According to the International Trade Center (2011), Iran's imports from the world, China and Turkey in all products amounted to 48,190,647, 11,097,796 and 3,043,426 thousand USD respectively.

TABLE 1
STATISTICS IN 3 DIFFERENT APPAREL CATEGORIES FROM TURKEY AND CHINA (THOUSAND USD)

Categories	Country	Imports to Iran	Exports to world	Iran's imports from world
articles of apparel, accessories, knit or crochet	Turkey	3,144	7,741,746	257,051
	China	243,085	66,719,182	
articles of apparel, accessories, not knit or crochet	Turkey	24,661	4,639,898	128,456
	China	80,271	54,370,828	
other made textile articles, sets, worn clothing and etc.	Turkey	44,422	1,838,930	176,710
	China	120,536	19,751,277	

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (COO)

COO as one of the influencing factors on consumers' buying behavior is a relatively new research interest. The influence, characteristics, and antecedents of COO images are among the most highly studied topics of international business and consumer behavior (Papadopoulos and Heslop, 2003). Studies have proved that consumers around the world use COO as a factor in product evaluation (e.g. Bilkey and Nes, 1982; Hong and Wyer, 1989; Maheswaran, 1994)

COO effects on buyers' product perceptions have been extensively studied ever since Ernest Dichter commented that "the phrase "Made in . . . ." can have a tremendous influence on the acceptance of products". These studies investigate how consumers see products sourced from certain countries (Roth and Romeo, 1992). Further, Nagashima (1970) suggests that the "Made In" image is the picture, the reputation, the stereotype that businessmen and consumers attach to products of a specific country. This image is created by such variables as representative products, national characteristics, economic and political background, history and traditions. It has a strong influence on consumer behavior in the international market, as it is associated with mass communication, personal experience, and views of national opinion leaders.

Knight (1999), comments that Han (1989), Parameswaran and Yaprak (1987) perceive country image as "reflecting consumers' general perceptions about the quality of products made

in a particular country and the nature of people from that country". Therefore, a product's national origin acts as a signal of product quality (e.g., Han, 1989; Li and Wyer, 1994) and also affects perceived risk and value as well as likelihood of purchase (see Lielefeld, 1993 for a review). The COO effect is related to consumers' images of the specific products marketed by firms associated with that COO.

Researchers have shown that the image associated with COO plays a significant role in consumers' perception of products. It is accepted that COO serves as a signal, enabling consumers to make an instant decision. Consumers may rely on such signals when more systematic search is very expensive or more comprehensive information is unavailable (Granzin & Olsen, 1998). A large body of research shows that consumers use product–country images as information when they evaluate products. This results in different evaluations of identical products with different COO labels, even when additional product information is presented (Agrawal and Kamakura, 1999; Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999).

Han (1989) suggests that COO image allows consumers to assume the quality of an unfamiliar foreign brand. This is similar to the role of price which assists consumers in their evaluation of the quality of a product when other important information is lacking. Erickson, Johansson and Chao (1984) found a "halo effect" of COO: that is, country image affects beliefs about tangible product attributes, and in turn affects overall evaluation. Han (1989) found that when unfamiliar with a country's product, consumers infer product information into country image, which then influences consumers' attitudes toward other attributes.

Different studies have distinguished between these different effects, including "country-of-design" and "country-of-assembly" (Chao,1993; Ahmed and d'Astous,1996), "country-of-manufacture" and "country-of-origin" (i.e., the country with which the product's firm is associated), (Samiee, 1994), "country-of-brand" (Hulland, 1999), "Country of components" (Tse and Lee), country of design (COD), "country of parts manufacture", "country of assembly" (Insch and Mcbride, 1998), "Country of parts and components" and "country of the corporation" (Li et al., 2000).

Iyer and Kalita (1997) suggest that COO image relates to the perception of the level of economic development of a country: the higher the perceived level of industrialization of a country, the more positive is the perception of the quality of its workers (Li and Monroe, 1992), which in turn is reflected in the perceived quality of its products. Consumers from developed countries favor products from developed countries; this preference may include products made in the consumer's home country instead of products originating in less developed countries. Consumers may favor domestic goods for many reasons including familiarity, and because of the belief that it helps the economy and provide jobs as well as bolstering national pride (Pecotich *et al*. 2007).

Erickson, Johansson and Chao (1984), found that country of origin may bias consumers' product beliefs. They found for example that perceptions of cars' economy were biased upward for Japanese cars, while perceptions of the quality of the cars were biased upward for German cars. In contrast, the preferences of consumers from less developed countries were towards products from well developed countries so the purchasing preference will also be for products from developed countries (Bruning, 1997). Pecotich et al. (1996) found that developed countries such as Japan, Germany and the USA are associated with high quality products whereas newly developing nations such as Korea, China and the Philippines are associated with poorer quality products. Countries with the lowest reputation are those about which consumers know very little, countries like the Eastern European countries. According to Johansson, Ronkainen and Czinkota

(1994) exemplify that products from less developed countries receive less attention than products from developed countries.

CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS COO

There is a general agreement that attitude is an evaluative judgment about objects, persons and issues which represents a person's enduring favorable or unfavorable evaluations and emotional feelings guiding action tendencies toward those objects. Attitude, generally defined as summative evaluations of a product or brand, has provided a wealth of cumulative contributions in marketing and consumer research (Kwun, 2010). Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) posit that individuals respond to an object (or an idea) or a number of things (or opinions) and explore the construct of attitude as a learned predisposition of humans. Individuals' attitudes toward products, company, brand and country also influence on their buying behaviors.

Attitudes are tendencies in action towards objects or experiences (Alcock, Carment, Sadava, Collins, and Green 1997). In theorizing about the attitude concept, Eiser and Van der Pligt say "attitudes are concerned with *describable* objects and events, *evaluations* of such objects and events, and guides to how one *ought to act* with respect to such objects or events" (Eiser and Van der Pligt, 1988). Therefore, attitudes are conceptualized as having three components – cognitive (beliefs), affective (emotions or feelings) and conative (response) (Hawkins et al., 2004, p. 387)

Rosenberg and Hovland (1960) have referred to these three components of attitude as "cognition" (concerned about whether something is true or false), "affect" (concerned with feelings, evaluations and emotions) and "behavior" or "conation" (concerned with intentions and decisions to act). Consumers' attitudes towards foreign products differ significantly from country to country (Beverland and Lindgreen, 2002; Lotz and Hu, 2001; Nagashima, 1970; Saminee, 1994). Considerable research suggests that consumer attitude is a strong criterion construct in understanding consumers' summative evaluations of a product or brand and of their behavioral intentions (e.g., Ajzen, 2001; Bolton and Drew, 1991; Kraus, 1995; Gresham et al., 1984; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Consumers often perceive stereotype images about countries and these images are subsequently used as information cues in judging products from different origins (Lotz and Hu, 2001).

Realizing that consumers may use one of the extrinsic cues: i.e., COO, as a signal to infer beliefs regarding product attributes such as quality; researchers mainly studied the use of COO as a cognitive cue (Steenkamp, 1990). While most studies in this area have treated COO as a multidimensional construct that evokes various product-attribute-related responses, some studies have shown that country of origin is not merely a cognitive cue. Instead it can be an affective image attribute which has direct influence on consumers' decision making (Cai, 1994). As such, "country-of-origin is not merely a cognitive cue for product quality, but also relates to emotions, identity, pride and autobiographical memories" (Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999, p. 523). While Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) conceptualize attitudes on the basis of a sum of cognitions or beliefs about an object or experience, Fishbein and Middlestadt (1995) argue that attitudes can only be understood by examining a person's beliefs and feelings together.

A number of authors (e.g., Laroche et al., 2005; Papadopoulos et al., 1990; Parameswaran and Pisharodi, 1994; Roth and Romeo, 1992) suggest that the Coo construct should comprise a cognitive component, which includes consumers' beliefs about a particular country, an affective component that describes the country's emotional value to the consumer, and a conative component, capturing consumers' behavioral intentions with regard to the sourcing country.

Papadoupoulos et al. (1993), have suggested that consumer perceptions of a product's COO are based on three components associated with the standard attitude model namely their "cognitions" which include knowledge about specific products and brands, consumer "affect" or favorable/unfavorable attitude towards the COO, and their "conative" behavior which is related to actual purchase of a foreign brand. Sometimes, the "affect" or emotional component may be given overriding predominance by consumers and overshadow the "cognitive" or rational component in evaluation of a foreign or local brand name.

According to Balogu & McClear (1999), country image is composition of cognitive and affective evaluation of a given country, the total package of variables constitute the general impression that a person hold on a country. The influence, characteristics, and antecedents of COO images are among the most highly studied topics of international business and consumer behavior (Papadopoulos and Heslop, 2003). Kris Brijs (1977) unravels country of origin semiotics as a theoretical basis for a meaning centered approach towards country of origin effects. Yi Cai (1994) indicates the Country of origin effects on consumers' willingness to buy foreign products. Besides, Zafar et al. (2001) identifies the COO and brand effects on consumers' evaluations of cruise lines. Firew Kifle Gudero (2001) reveals the effect of country of origin of a production on consumers' buying behavior.

Brijs et al.(2006) states the critical reflections and empirical evidence rehabilitating the importance and understanding of COO. Apart from them, Pierre Balestrini and Paul Gamble (2006) and Xiaoling Hu et al. (2008) in separate researches indicate the COO effects on Chinese wine consumers. Maurice Ndalahwa Marshalls (2007) represent the Country image and its effects in promoting a tourist destination. Ken Chinen and Yang Sun (2011) express the Effects of COO on Buying Behavior which mainly Study the Attitudes of United States Consumers to Chinese-brand Automobiles. Finally, Karami et al. (2011) divulge the Iranian Consumers attitudes on Products Made in China in Iran's Market.

THE STUDY AND METHOD

Based on International Trade Center (2011) of Commerce, China is the second largest trading partner of Iran. Chinese products are accessible throughout Iran. Karami et al. (2011) show, although most of Iranian consumers consume Chinese products, in general, they do not have an affirmative word of mouth toward"Made in China". This contrast motivated researchers to investigate consumers and explore their real image toward Chinese products. Having a real understanding of the issue, could be useful for various stakeholders.

On the other hand, Turkey as one of the Iran's neighbors has a strategic relationship and considerable trade with Iran. Most of Iranian consumers use Turkish apparel and it seems that they are satisfied with Turkish products.

In order to figure out the issue, the overall objective of the current research is to understand Iranian consumers' attitude toward apparel labeled "Made in Iran", "Made in Turkey" and "Made in China". The specific sub-objectives of this research are to demonstrate consumers' attitudes, including cognitive, affective and conative elements, toward those apparels.

TABLE 2
THE ITEMS OF AMENDED QUESTIONNAIRE
(ALL ITEMS ARE ASKED FOR 3 COUNTRIES)

Part I: Dimension	Statement
Cognitive	How do you evaluate apparel labeled "Made in Turkey", "Made in China" and Made in Iran", in terms of: Quality Cope Color perpetuity Durability
Affective	I feel well when I use Iranian clothes. I feel comfortable when I use Iranian clothes. Iranian clothes are satisfactory. Iranian clothes are luxurious. Iranian clothes are reliable.
Conative	I prone to buy Iranian clothes. If I chance upon Iranian clothes in the store, I will purchase it. I greatly seek Iranian clothes when I need apparels. I recommend my friends to buy Iranian clothes. I like to gift my family or friends with Iranian clothes.
Part II: Nationalism	I support made in Iran products, even if they are not satisfactory. We should buy foreign products, just when we cannot find any domestic one. Consumers, who buy foreign products, are responsible for domestic unemployment. If the quality of Iranian products is the same as foreign products, I prefer to buy Iranian products even with higher prices. We should support Iranian manufacturers. Buying made in Iran products, is of benefit to domestic businesses.

Survey Development and Data Collection

The review of literature indicates that different methodological approaches have been employed in studying the effects of COO on consumers' perceptions. These approaches range from survey methods to qualitative, conjoint, experimental, and other designs. The present study utilizes a quantitative research methodology.

In this research a semi-structured questionnaire was designed and pretested. A sample of 260 Iranian consumers selected and surveyed. 223 questionnaires were gathered by the researchers, and finally 216 questionnaires were analyzed (response rate 85%).

The questionnaire is divided into three separate sections. Part I records a brief profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, education level, and marital status. Part II focuses specifically on the issue of COO influences and is articulated as followed: 10 questions for cognitive dimension of attitude, 9 questions for affective dimension and 6 questions for conative dimension. The amended questionnaire including 14 items which is extracted after exploratory

and confirmatory factor analyses is presented in table 2. Using a 5-point Likert scale, respondents are asked to indicate to what extent they agree with each statement of questionnaire. Experts acknowledged the content validity of the questionnaire. Moreover, using Exploratory Factor Analysis (as KMO was 0.952 and higher than the acceptable level of 0.6), we approved the construct validity of the questionnaire.

The Reliability of questionnaire is evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha (it shows the score of 0.93 which is higher than the acceptable level of 0.7) and therefore the questionnaire has been reliable enough. The remained items of the questionnaire are represented in table 2. Moreover, SPSS 16.0 computer statistical program is used to analyze the data. In order to answer the main research questions; general linear model repeated measures and factor analysis were used.

RESULTS

In order to approve the construct validity of the questionnaire, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses are run. As illustrated below, model fits the observed data.

TABLE 3
MEASUREMENT MODEL FIT

Latent construct	Item	Factor Loading (first order) for Iran	Factor Loading (first order) for Turkey	Factor Loading (first order) for China
COGNITIVE	Q1	0.79	0.61	0.72
	Q2	0.71	0.67	0.72
	Q3	0.73	0.75	0.80
	Q4	0.70	0.71	0.77
AFFECTIVE	Q5	0.77	0.74	0.70
	Q6	0.77	0.73	0.65
	Q7	0.78	0.74	0.77
	Q8	0.73	0.70	0.76
	Q9	0.81	0.74	0.73
CONATIVE	Q10	0.80	0.74	0.77
	Q11	0.79	0.67	0.65
	Q12	0.82	0.78	0.80
	Q13	0.84	0.85	0.86
	Q14	0.70	0.70	0.69

Note: Factor loadings are from CFA

Since KMO and Bartlett's Test score is higher than acceptable score of 0.6, factor analysis is reasonable. Table 3 display acceptable factor loadings for all 14 questions for each country. Following indicators for each country show that model fits the observed data:
For Iran: chi-square= 218.06, df= 74, p-value=0.00000 and RMSEA= 0.095.
For Iran: chi-square =185.98, df= 74, p-value=0.00000 and RMSEA= 0.084.
For Iran: chi-square =160.21, df= 74, p-value=0.00000 and RMSEA= 0.074. RMSEA between0.08 to 0.1 is completely acceptable for fitness of a model (Browne & Cudech, 1993; MacCallum et al, 1996; Steiger, 1989).

In order to test Iranian consumers' attitudes towards Made in Iran, Turkey and China in apparel Industry; we tested repeated measures of ANOVA on attitude and its components for each country. In order to evaluate Iranian consumers' nationalism, we carried t-student for one sample, which indicate that Iranian consumers have fairly high sense of nationalism.

TABLE 4
IRANIAN CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS IRAN, TURKEY AND CHINA MADE APPARELS

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Attitude – Iran	2.6735	.91164	216
Attitude – Turkey	3.9555	.75334	216
Attitude – China	2.0248	.77527	216

TABLE 5
MULTIVARIATE TESTS[b]

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
factor1	Pillai's Trace	.786	392.433[a]	2.000	214.000	.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.214	392.433[a]	2.000	214.000	.000
	Hotelling's Trace	3.668	392.433[a]	2.000	214.000	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	3.668	392.433[a]	2.000	214.000	.000

a. Exact statistic
b. Design: Intercept
Within Subjects Design: factor1

TABLE 6
MAUCHLY'S TEST OF SPHERICITY[b]

Within Subjects Effect		Mauchly's W	Approx. Chi-Square	Df	Sig.	Epsilon[a]		
						Greenhouse-Geisser	Huynh-Feldt	Lower-bound
dimension1	factor1	.947	11.679	2	.003	.950	.958	.500

Tests the null hypothesis that the error covariance matrix of the orthonormalized transformed dependent variables is proportional to an identity matrix.
a. May be used to adjust the degrees of freedom for the averaged tests of significance. Corrected tests are displayed in the Tests of Within-Subjects Effects table.
b. Design: Intercept
Within Subjects Design: factor1

As it is showed above, Iranian consumers have positive attitude towards made in Turkey apparels, however, their attitudes are not positive toward made in Iran and China apparels.

TABLE 7
IRANIAN CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD MADE IN IRAN APPAREL IN ITS 3 COMPONENTS

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cognitive - Iran	2.6204	.89214
Affective – Iran	2.5926	1.06877
Conative - Iran	2.8074	1.10741

TABLE 8
MULTIVARIATE TESTS[b]

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
factor1	Pillai's Trace	.089	10.423[a]	2.000	214.000	.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.911	10.423[a]	2.000	214.000	.000
	Hotelling's Trace	.097	10.423[a]	2.000	214.000	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	.097	10.423[a]	2.000	214.000	.000

a. Exact statistic

b. Design: Intercept
Within Subjects Design: factor1

TABLE 9
MAUCHLY'S TEST OF SPHERICITY[b]

Within Subjects Effect		Mauchly's W	Approx. Chi-Square	Df	Sig.	Epsilon[a]		
						Greenhouse-Geisser	Huynh-Feldt	Lower-bound
dimension 1	factor1	.905	21.274	2	.000	.914	.921	.500

Tests the null hypothesis that the error covariance matrix of the orthonormalized transformed dependent variables is proportional to an identity matrix.

a. May be used to adjust the degrees of freedom for the averaged tests of significance. Corrected tests are displayed in the Tests of Within-Subjects Effects table.

b. Design: Intercept
Within Subjects Design: factor1

TABLE 10
IRANIAN CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD MADE IN TURKEY APPAREL IN ITS 3 COMPONENTS

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Cognitive – Turkey	4.2118	.65680	216
Affective – Turkey	3.8861	.94371	216
Conative - Turkey	3.7685	1.00794	216

TABLE 11
MULTIVARIATE TESTS[b]

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
factor1	Pillai's Trace	.212	28.837[a]	2.000	214.000	.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.788	28.837[a]	2.000	214.000	.000
	Hotelling's Trace	.270	28.837[a]	2.000	214.000	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	.270	28.837[a]	2.000	214.000	.000

a. Exact statistic

b. Design: Intercept
Within Subjects Design: factor1

TABLE 12
IRANIAN CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD APPAREL MADE IN CHINA

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Cognitive – China	2.1366	.89240	216
Affective – China	1.9611	.83078	216
Conative – China	1.9769	.89652	216

TABLE 13
MULTIVARIATE TESTS[b]

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
factor1	Pillai's Trace	.063	7.244[a]	2.000	214.000	.001
	Wilks' Lambda	.937	7.244[a]	2.000	214.000	.001
	Hotelling's Trace	.068	7.244[a]	2.000	214.000	.001
	Roy's Largest Root	.068	7.244[a]	2.000	214.000	.001

a. Exact statistic

b. Design: Intercept
Within Subjects Design: factor1

As it is indicated above, Iranian consumers have positive attitudes towards made in Turkey in general and in all related components (cognitive, affective and conative). In contrast, they do not have positive attitudes toward apparel labeled "Made in Iran" and "Made in China" and in its components. However, they are positive towards apparel labeled "Made in Iran" in comparison to apparel labeled "Made in China". The reason could be derived from the sense of nationalism

TABLE 14
IRANIAN NATIONALISM
One-Sample Test

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference 'Lower	Upper
NATIONALISM	4.518	213	.000	.25300	.1426	.3634

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In this paper, we examined the attitudes of Iranian consumers toward apparel labeled "Made in Iran", "Made in Turkey" and "Made in China". The goal of this paper was to answer to four distinctive questions: what are attitudes of Iranian consumers toward apparel labeled "Made in Iran"? What are attitudes of Iranian consumers toward apparel labeled "Made in Turkey"? What are attitudes of Iranian consumers toward apparel labeled "Made in China"? Are there any differences among Iranian consumers' attitudes toward apparel labeled "Made in Iran","Made in Turkey" and "Made in China"? Three components of attitude model are used in order to answer the aforementioned questions. Based on this model, attitude is divided into cognitive, affective and conative components.

In order to elicit respondents' attitudes toward apparel from the aforementioned countries, a structured questionnaire consisting of 31 questions was developed. The questionnaire was divided into three separate sections. Part I recorded a brief profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, education level, marital status, and employment. Part II focused specifically on the issue of Iranian consumers' attitudes; in this part each question asked respondents' attitudes toward apparel from the countries mentioned and was articulated as follows: 10 questions for the cognitive component of attitude, 9 questions for the affective component, and 6 questions for the conative component. Finally, Part III contained 6 questions assessing respondents' nationalism. 260 respondents were selected and questionnaires were hand-delivered to them in 4 major shopping centers. From among these respondents, 223 questionnaires were gathered by the researchers, and at the end, 216 questionnaires were analyzed (response rate 85%).

Results of exploratory factor analysis indicate that out of 25 items questioned in the second part of the questionnaire, 15 questions were strongly related to Iranian consumers' attitudes. By the results of confirmatory factor analysis, we omitted one more question. The final analysis was based on 20 questions consisting of 4 questions to indicate the cognitive component, 5 questions relating to the affective component, 5 questions relating to the conative component and 6 questions to determine nationalism. Results indicate that the attitude of Iranian consumers toward apparel labeled "Made in Iran" is not positive. However, the conative component of their attitude is more positive than other components. In addition, the attitude of consumers toward

apparel labeled "Made in China" is also not positive. Nevertheless, the cognitive part of their attitudes is more positive than other components. Despite the attitude toward apparel labeled "Made in Iran" and "Made in China", Iranian consumers' attitudes are positive toward apparel labeled "Made in Turkey". Considering the national competiveness of Turkey in the textile industry, these findings are highly reasonable.

In order to answer the fourth question, results indicate that Iranian consumers have a more positive attitude toward apparel labeled "Made in Turkey", but a less positive attitude toward apparel labeled "Made in China". In other words, Iranian consumers' attitudes are totally positive in all three components toward apparel labeled "Made in Turkey", while totally negative toward apparel labeled "Made in China". Their attitude toward domestic apparel is in between. This finding is in line with the degree of Iranian consumers' nationalism.

The findings of the current study are consistent with the findings of Karami et al. (2011), which indicates that Iranian consumers do not have positive attitudes toward apparel labeled "Made in China" in general. Finally, the findings show that Iranian consumers exhibit a relatively high degree of nationalism in their buying behaviors. By determining the way COO interacts with variables influencing consumer attitudes toward brands, marketers can determine when and how to utilize this information to potentially increase the probability of consumer favorableness of their cross-border partnerships.

These findings indicate that Iranian and Chinese apparel manufacturers should attend to Iranian consumers' needs and wants in order to increase sales in the country. Especially, producers should pay attention to the growing income per-capita and consumers' purchasing power in Iran that make Iranian consumers interested in purchasing quality apparel. Chinese and Iranian apparel manufacturers should focus more on design, packaging, and other aspects of their products. On the other hand, these manufacturers ought to be more vigilant in their marketing communication as well. Chinese apparel manufacturers should consider Iranian consumer's media preferences, point of purchase behaviors, family structures, and cultural sensitivities, in order to communicate more efficiently.

Turkish apparel manufacturers should also pay more attention to Iran's growing market to enhance their market share specifically in comparison to Chinese apparel and try to promote their position in Iranian consumers' minds. Considering the fairly high extent of nationalism among Iranian consumers, it seems that Iranian firms can increase their market shares by improving the quality of their apparel.

However, our findings are not sufficient to identify Iranian consumers' attitudes toward apparel labeled "Made in Iran", "Made in Turkey" and "Made in China" in general. Therefore, there is an immediate necessity for more research to explore Iranian consumers' attitudes toward apparel from these countries. For this purpose, the research should include more product categories and a larger sample of respondents. Furthermore, consumers of different social classes in Iran may have different attitudes toward products made in these three countries. Hence, future research should focus on identifying the correlations between consumers' social class and their attitude toward products labeled "Made in Iran", "Made in Turkey" and "Made in China".

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