

# Antecedents of Country-of-Origin Image and Its Effect on Behavioral Intentions



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## Abstract

The effects of country-of-origin image (COI) on product preferences/ evaluation and purchase intention have been long examined under different contexts. However, literature lacks when it comes to identifying antecedents of COI. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to (1) identify a set of antecedents of COI and (2) test the validity of two-dimensional COI construct composed of cognition and affect. In this study four possible socio-psychological antecedents of COI were determined from the literature. Using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), the research model is tested based on the data collected in Turkey and Germany. In this context, the effects of four socio-psychological constructs on COI were tested and significant effects of psychic distance, cosmopolitanism, xenocentrism and ethnocentrism were identified. Moreover, it was determined that COI has been conceptually misevaluated in the literature to the extent of a theoretical myopia. Although some authors pointed out this theoretical gap and tabulated studies based on how COI was measured to reveal the problem, they did not produce a clear solution.

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This study collected items from the literature to measure affective and cognitive dimensions of COI and found a good fit to the data. Conation/behavioral dimension is placed in the model as an outcome of COI, not as a dimension that forms the construct of COI. Furthermore, strong associations between COI and behavioral intentions were identified across four brands and two different samples.

**Keywords:** Country of origin image, psychic distance, cosmopolitanism, xenocentrism, ethnocentrism

## Ülke İmajının Öncülleri ve Davranışsal Niyetler Üzerindeki Etkisi

### Öz

Ülke imajının ürün tercihleri/değerlendirme ve satın alma niyeti üzerindeki etkileri farklı bağlamlar altında uzun süredir incelenmektedir. Diğer taraftan, ülke imajının öncüllerini belirleme konusunda literatürde bazı eksiklikler bulunmaktadır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmanın amacı (1) ülke imajının bir dizi öncülünü belirlemek ve (2) biliş ve duyuştan oluşan iki boyutlu ülke imajı yapısının geçerliliğini test etmektir. Bu çalışmada, ülke imajının dört olası sosyo-psikolojik öncülü literatürden belirlenmiştir. Araştırma modeli, Yapısal Eşitlik Modellemesi (YEM) kullanılarak, Türkiye ve Almanya'dan toplanan verilere dayalı olarak test edilmiştir. Bu kapsamda dört sosyo-psikolojik yapının ülke imajı üzerindeki etkileri test edilmiş ve psikolojik mesafe, kozmopolitanizm, zenosentrizm ve etnosentrizmin anlamlı etkileri tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca, ülke imajının literatürde kavramsal olarak teorik miyopluğa varacak kadar yanlış değerlendirildiği tespit edilmiştir. Bazı araştırmacılar bu teorik boşluğa işaret etmelerine ve ülke imajının nasıl ölçüldüğüne yönelik bazı temel çalışmaları tablollaştırarak bu sorunu net bir şekilde ortaya koymalarına rağmen, net bir çözüm üretememiştir. Bu çalışmada, ülke imajının duygusal ve bilişsel boyutlarını ölçmek için maddeler toplanmıştır ve modelin verilere iyi bir uyum sağladığı tespit edilmiştir. Normatif/davranışsal boyut, modele ülke imajını oluşturan bir unsur olarak değil, ülke imajının bir sonucu olarak yerleştirilmiştir. Ayrıca, dört marka ve iki farklı örnekleme, ülke imajı ve davranışsal niyetler arasında güçlü ilişkilerinin olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Ülke imajı, psikolojik mesafe, kozmopolitanizm, zenosentrizm, etnosentrizm

## **Introduction**

The changing nature of the technological possibilities in especially communication and logistics has transformed the world in a way that everything become more accessible and connected. Boundaries became blurred and mobility increased. Companies benefited from lowering barriers due to technological advancements and entered into foreign markets. Their goods/services also dispersed to different continents, geographies and countries. Over the course of time, local/national companies have become global players that reach a potential to address a huge number of consumers through goods and services distributed across the world.

Consumers are exposed to many purchase decisions on a daily basis among various product/service choices that are essentially hard to fully distinguish. Therefore, they rely on certain information available in the market. Consumers developed certain beliefs, attitudes and associations related to the products that originate from certain countries, which is called as the country of origin (COO) effect (Koroglu and Yildiz, 2022). COO information is one of the cues on which many consumers rely when it comes to having inferences about the quality of the products/services offered. According to Laroche et al. (2005), the fact that consumers attach importance to COO information provides strategic implications for marketers in terms of both domestic and international markets.

Consumers rely on certain informational cues to evaluate products and to make a purchase decision. That is, they gain insights into the nature of the products through certain intrinsic cues such as taste, smell, style, quality etc. and extrinsic cues such as reputation, brand name, price etc. (Ahmed and d'Astous, 2008). Because the COO element does not change the physical aspects of the product, it is considered as an extrinsic cue. On way to the purchase decision, consumers try to utilize various information available in the market. However, considering that consumers are exposed to hundreds of brands and their various products, doing daily purchasing rituals can be quite difficult due to the excessive amount of information to be processed. Therefore, consumers might be prone to base their judgements about the products on certain heuristics

as COO because many scholars suggested that consumers are inclined to associate the origin of the products with quality (Cakici and Shukla, 2017; Chattalas et al., 2008; Steenkamp, 1990; Hong and Wyer, 1989; Han and Terpstra, 1988; Bilkey and Nes, 1982).

In the literature examination, the COO effect on product evaluation is mainly based on quality perception and purchase intention (Ozturk et al., 2019; Oztay and Birinci, 2020; Koroglu and Yildiz, 2022), which has been designed either in single-cue or multi-cue studies (Ahmed et al., 2004). Peterson and Jolibert (1995) stated that some studies only used COO as an informational cue and examined its effect on quality and purchase intention. Others used COO and other informational cues such as price, brand (Ahmed et al., 2004), store information (Garret, 2017), product and model (Leonidou et al., 2007) etc. together in the research model and determined their relative effects on product evaluation and purchase intention. Maher and Carter (2011) claim that recent studies have focused more on the factors causing the preference of the products that originate to certain countries. Consumer attributions to certain countries such as competent, lovely, superior etc. resulted in the emergence of the concept of country-of-origin image. Maher and Carter (2011) defined this term as “the attitudes that consumers of one country hold toward another country”.

Verlegh and Steenkamp (1999), Laroche et al. (2005), and Roth and Diamantopoulos (2009) claim that many of the studies in the area of COI/COO utilizing both single and multi-cues approaches have cognitive-oriented view. However, according to Maher and Carter (2011), COI also provides symbolic and emotional (affective) associations with the products that originate to different countries and normative associations (e.g., purchase of the domestic products for the economic well-being of the country). Therefore, Verlegh and Steenkamp (1999) strongly criticized COI studies in the literature as being overwhelmingly cognitive-oriented. That is, there is an immense need for studies that take affective and conative/normative approaches into consideration. COI studies focused too much on the relationship of COI with product

evaluation and purchase intention and failed to pay a sufficient level of attention on other variables which are of significant value in the consumer behaviors (e.g., Johansson et al., 1985; Han, 1990; Dodds et al., 1991; Ahmed et al., 2004; Winit et al., 2014; Garrett et al., 2017). The effect of COI on product evaluation and purchase intention is quite relevant and interesting. However, many studies conducted following quite similar cognitive dominant methodologies in which various information to the interviewees was provided and they were expected to process the information like machines. Relying on their information processing, they were expected to develop evaluations, attitudes and intentions related to the products. However, the decision-making mechanism of consumers does not have to solely rely on information gathering, processing and then decision-making.

Although rational choice theory of classical economics successfully explains rational behaviors of humans, marketing science teaches us the fact that humans do not always act rationally in every decision-making (Izmir, 2021). Bagozzi (1975) introduced marketing man as an alternative to homo-economicus of classical economics and emphasized that consumers are sometimes eager to pay more for less due to various reasons. Levy (1959) mentioned that consumers do not solely purchase physical benefits of the products, they also buy a set of symbols attached to the products. Given the gravity to the bounded-rationality arguments, cognitive dominance in COI studies might undermine, the validity of the results in the COI literature and make a call for the requirement of behavioral studies, per se. Roth and Diamantopoulos (2009) also argued on the dominance of cognition-oriented studies and raised an awareness for inclusion of affective components in the design of COI studies.

As Peterson and Jolibert (1995), and Verlegh and Steenkamp (1999) evaluated the direction of COO literature in their meta-analyses, insistence on the design of COI studies that examine its effect on product evaluation and purchase intention through either single-cue or multi-cues approaches leads to methodological myopia (e.g., Costa et al., 2016; Izmir, 2016; Ahmed et al., 2004; Dodds et al., 1991; Bilkey &

Nes, 1982 etc.). It is vitally important to examine the effect of COI on certain behaviors (WOM, loyalty, suggestion, purchase and repurchase) in different contexts. Integration of affective/behavioral perspectives not only to the literature reviews of the empirical studies but also to the research designs becomes more of an issue. Although there are studies integrating affect as an element of COI with a behavioral perspective, they are very limited.

Another issue in COI literature is the identification of its antecedents. Although several studies have evaluated some variables that can be considered as antecedents of COI (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos, 2016 and Shimp and Sharma, 1987), literature lacks when it comes to testing a set of possible antecedents of COO in a single study. The effects of normative constructs such as ethnocentrism, xenocentrism, cosmopolitanism etc. on product evaluation/preference and purchase intention have been tested. Consumer ethnocentrism concept has been widely studied in terms of its relationship with product judgement and willingness to buy foreign products. Nevertheless, alternative constructs (cosmopolitanism, xenocentrism, psychic distance etc.) that cause to the development of in-group and out-group biases and their relative effects on product judgement and willingness to buy has not fully examined (Zeugner-Roth et al., 2015). However, to the best knowledge of the authors, the relative impacts of these variables on COI has never been researched (Roth and Diamantopoulos, 2009; Balabanis et al., 2007). Hence, this research aims to identify the effects of four possible antecedents of COI, which are consumer ethnocentrism, xenocentrism, cosmopolitanism and psychic distance. These antecedent variables shape in-group/out-group behaviors and can be considered as four main drivers of consumers' socio-psychological traits. Furthermore, this research also aims to test the validity of the two-dimensional COI construct, composed of cognition and affect, and the effect of the two-dimensional COI on a set of behavioral intentions. In this context, antecedents of COI will be identified and the effect COI on behavioral intentions will be examined.

## Literature Review

The Elaboration likelihood model (ELM) by Petty and Cacioppo (1986) suggests that when consumers have motivations to examine a product further (in high involvement situations) in terms of its both internal and external cues, they use central route and elaborate the product in detail. If they are, for some reason, not eager to spend too much time on the details of the product (in low involvement situations), they use peripheral route and focus more on the external cues. COO studies have been evaluated under the mechanism of this cognitive model (Han, 1989; 1990). However, due to accessibility and cost issues, Chattalas et al. (2008) state that companies moved their business operations out of the countries where they initially originated. This brought up such concerns as country of manufacture/assembly (COM/COA), country of design (COD) and brand origin (BO). In that, it is almost impossible to originate a product in a certain country. Therefore, the product technically can originate in more than one country if the value-chain is put to further inquiry. The first concern to be raised is consumers do not always have full information to process. The second problem is consumers do not necessarily need to use COO information as heuristics in making purchase decisions assuming that they have limited cognitive ability to process excessive information available in the market.

The issues related with the availability of the information to the consumers and consumers' ability to process the information available require due attention because they might have confounding effects on the findings of the COO/COI studies. Hence, these two vitally important issues will be addressed.

Firstly, although cognitive-focused studies in COO literature emphasized the significance of the multi-cue approaches, consumers do not have to act in a way that necessarily evolves in information gathering, processing and alternative evaluations. Consumers might simply prefer to rely on emotions in the purchase behavior (Godey et al., 2012). Moreover, consumers usually are not fully informed about various value-chain processes of a certain product. Therefore, they are prone to making lots

of COO misclassifications while processing the available information. In their experimental study, Cakici and Shukla (2017) demonstrated that when there is a cognitive dissonance between real and misclassified COO and animosity against a misclassified country, COO misclassifications significantly impact purchase intentions. This can be considered as a vitally important finding in the COO studies, given that consumers depend more upon their hunches rather than probing COO related information. This finding gives strong insights into the development of better international marketing strategies because both marketing practitioners and scholars became aware of the fact that misclassified countries may cause cognitive dissonance and animosity in consumers' minds. In that, it is proven that communication of COO information gains vitality.

Secondly, Laroche et al. (2005) failed to support the renowned "Halo Effect" and "Summary Construct" models by Han (1989, 1990), which proves that COI does not have to make certain impacts under certain situations. Han (1989) claimed that according to the Halo Effect model, COI indirectly affects product evaluations through product beliefs under low familiarity. On the other hand, when consumers are familiar with a county's products, overall beliefs affect COI and COI directly affects product evaluations. Laroche et al. (2005) illustrated that COI effect does not have to work under the mechanisms Han claimed. Furthermore, Laroche et al. (2005) realized that cognition-based COI makes a stronger impact on beliefs than product evaluations (in which willingness-to-buy was also measured), while affect-based COI makes stronger impact on product evaluation (willingness-to-buy) than beliefs regardless of familiarity. This finding is in line with Maher and Carter (2011) who tested the effects of affect and cognition dimensions of COI on product-country image (PCI) (beliefs) and willingness-to-buy. They found that cognitive dimension of COI impacts PCI (beliefs), while its direct effect on willingness-to-buy was non-significant (Maher and Carter 2011). However, impact of COI directly affected willingness-to-buy, while its effect was non-significant on PCI. That is, they supported the view that cognition impacts action tendencies through affects. Based on this

empirical evidence, it can be said that COI is more than sole heuristics and consumers use it when they do not have either too much information, or motivation to process the available information.

In Maher and Carter's (2011) study, affect and cognition dimensions of COI were based on the Stereotype Content Model, and Behavior from Intergroup Affect and Stereotype (BIAS) map developed in the field of social psychology by Fiske et al. (2007) and Cuddy et al. (2007). Chattalas et al. (2008) also used a similar way to measure COI. However, conversely to the theory of BIAS map by Cuddy et al. (2007), Chattalas et al. (2008) used warmth as an affective dimension of COI although the original theory clearly regards warmth as a cognitive element.

Roth and Diamantopoulos (2009) argue that not only research designs and models in the COO literature, but also the scales measuring COI are cognitive oriented. Although they did not offer a new measurement tool for COI, they tabulated the collection of COI scales having been widely used in the COO studies, and classified these scales in terms of their cognitive, affective and normative/conative-orientation. Contrary to the general view in the COI studies (Laroche et al., 2005; Knight et al., 2003; Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999; Peterson and Jolibert, 1995), Roth and Diamantopoulos (2009) claimed that COI has only two dimensions, namely cognitive and affective. They suggest that conation is an outcome of these two distinct dimensions of COI. Furthermore, Roth and Diamantopoulos (2009) presented a better picture of various COI effects through their conceptualization of two-component view model and hierarchy models. The roles of the cognition and affect dimensions in these models demonstrated distinct features in terms of their effects on conations. In the two-component model, both cognition and affect make an impact on conation. However, in the hierarchy models, the interplay among cognition, affect and conation shows some certain characteristics based on familiarity and learning. Roth and Diamantopoulos (2009) tried to explain various COI effects mentioned in the extant literature. Future studies should focus on examining the extent to which the models Roth and Diamantopoulos proposed are valid. However, the literature review

showed that, conversely to the past studies, recent studies are moving toward the direction where conation is being considered as a consequence of COI, which consists of affective and cognitive dimensions.

As COO literature points out, there are many factors making an impact on the perception of COI. Furthermore, it has been identified that COI effect under different circumstances illustrates various outcomes. Many studies are based on cognitive methodological designs or application of different cognitive variables to research model. Therefore, considering the various findings under different contexts, the discussion of the possible antecedents and attitudinal-behavioral consequents of COI becomes vitally important for the development of the literature.

## **Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development**

### **Psychic Distance**

The concept of psychic distance (PD) is a degree to which individual level of factors in a domestic country differ from foreign country in terms of education, language, economic development and culture (Sousa and Bradley, 2006). Arguments on the concept go as far back as the Uppsala internationalization process to select foreign markets based on psychic proximity (distance) with the home country (Johansson and Vahlne, 1977). Countries with lower psychic distance are more suitable for entry because differences between home country and foreign country decrease (Evans et al., 2008). Although PD has been widely used in the business decision-making of internationalization strategies, the concept could be applicable to the field of consumer behaviors in the international context because it gives a clear understanding of culture, demography, and development level.

The perceptions of consumers toward similarities and differences of the foreign country with domestic country are expected to result in the development of a set of stereotypes to the country and its products. Psychic distance concept gives strong signals on the characteristics of a market and socio-economic level of a given country. It has been

considered as a reliable tool for decision-making in the international marketing strategies. Durand et al. (2016) regard COI as a contingent factor to the effect of PD in the establishment of import-export relationships. Although PD contains many macro-level factors (Dow and Karunaratna, 2006) relevant for COI perception, it has not gained sufficient attention from the literature. There are limited studies that seek the effect of this this concept on consumer decision making. Although Fakhrai-Rad and Izmir (2013) state that PD has been mostly used in B2B industry, they identified that PD and COI are two important determinants of the consumer behaviors in the automobile industry. They claim that PD perception of Swedish consumers strongly associate with the perceived quality and image of the German cars compared with American and Japanese cars. Hakanson et al. (2016) also supported the relationship between country of origin and PD constructs. The hypothesis developed based on this theoretical background is as follows:

***H1:** Psychic distance from a foreign country positively affects foreign country of origin image, while negatively affecting domestic country of origin image if the foreign country is more developed than the domestic country.*

The perceived difference between home country and foreign country impacts consumer preferences for foreign country products (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos, 2004). The emphasis by O'Grady and Lane (1996) on the issue that psychic distance is a perception on the individual level can steer the direction of PD studies from being a tool for internationalization strategy-making to consumer behaviors. PD contains elements which are used as a basis for the development of COI. After this concept is adopted to consumer market from B2B, it is expected that PD will capture a certain level of variance in predicting COI.

As Brewer (2007) argues, PD is also a matter of familiarity with the foreign country which is a considerably important topic for COI (Chattalas et al., 2008; Han, 1989). Chattalas et al. (2008) argue that if consumers are not familiar with a county's products, or at least with the country, they approach to the products of the country suspiciously

because they do not have a set of knowledge to evaluate the products. If the foreign country has a low level of psychic distance toward the home country and if the foreign country is developed enough, consumers of home country are expected to have a positive perception about the foreign country.

### **Consumer Ethnocentrism**

Ethnocentrism is a belief, according to which things that belong to the home country and culture are perceived more superior than the foreign countries. Consumer ethnocentrism (CE) is defined as the appropriateness and morality of buying domestic products. Ethnocentric consumers are inclined to buy only domestic products. They believe home-made products are more superior and buying foreign-made products hurts the economy of the country (Shimp & Sharma, 1987). CE causes consumers to develop biases against products of foreign countries. Therefore, product preferences are shaped by ethnocentrism level and COI perceptions, in that ethnocentric consumers are prone to evaluate foreign-based products negatively (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos, 2004). Ethnocentrism can be considered as an in-group favoritism and out-group contempt (Nes et al., 2014). Consequently, the following hypothesis has been established:

***H2:** Consumer ethnocentrism negatively affects foreign country of origin image, while positively affecting domestic country of origin image.*

Cleveland et al. (2009) state that objects and symbols representing a nation are a source of pride. The strength of CE is more salient when the association between specific product categories and national culture is tight. Cleveland and his colleagues state that expression of cultural elements is substantially more visible in food and fashion industries. Bruning (1997) explain the effect of CE on the basis of national loyalty and differentiated stereotypical attitudes and behaviors (COI) from CE. COI is related to the quality perception and emotional connotations attributed to the products of a certain country, whereas CE is an in-group act and a

conscious behavior based on various individual reasons. Zeugner-Roth et al. (2015) state that the positive impact of CE on preference for products based on home country is explained by the bias of domestic consumers against products based on out-group.

Yim-Wong et al. (2008) support the view that ethnocentrism makes consumers have more positive attitudes toward home-made products and develop purchase intention. Ethnocentric consumers are immune to quality defects and unnecessarily high-priced products regardless of the development level of the home country. Contrary to the general belief in CE studies, Kinra (2006) found that overall, foreign products in the Indian sample who had a high ethnocentrism were perceived more favorably than home-made products in terms of technology, quality, status and esteem, value, credibility across various product categories with some exceptions. Therefore, Zeugner-Roth et al. (2015) mention that attachment to the national identity does not have to mean ethnocentrism.

### **Consumer Xenocentrism**

Xenocentrism is a tendency to give more value to the products, style, ideas, culture etc. of foreign countries than domestic country. According to Mueller et al. (2016), consumer xenocentrism from a marketing perspective can be defined as a tendency to rate foreign products more favorably and preference for foreign-based products which share very similar features with products based on domestic country. Consumers with xenocentric inclinations have biases against domestic goods/services, while favoring foreign-based ones even if they are identical in quality and functionality. Mueller and his colleagues claim that consumer xenocentrism (CX) is universal and more salient in underdeveloped and developing countries.

Gaur et al. (2015) state that if individuals in a country undervalue their own culture and favor foreign cultures, which is quite common in developing economies where the differences between social classes are salient, consumer xenocentrism is rather common. Dependence on other economies, integration policies, and cultural imperialism lead to

consumer xenocentrism especially in under-developed and developing countries. Kinra (2006) state that entrepreneurs in Latin American countries tend to make investment in American franchises, instead of launching new national businesses. Gaur et al. (2015) mention that consumption patterns in the countries where xenocentrism is high are more symbolic, self-esteem and self-image oriented.

Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2016) argue that studies have utilized animosity to explain consumer biases against products of and purchase intention for the foreign brands. However, animosity does not explain certain situations. That is, consumers in Middle Eastern countries have high animosity toward the USA and Western allied countries, but they are quite willing to buy Western-based products, which results in a paradoxical state. Based on the results of these studies, the following hypothesis is derived:

***H3:** Consumer xenocentrism positively affects foreign country of origin image, while negatively affecting domestic country of origin image.*

Eshleman et al. (1993) state that xenocentrism make consumers believe that what is foreign is much better and more superior than one's home country's lifestyle, products and ideas. Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2016) emphasize that the ethnocentrics capture non-existing virtues, whereas the xenocentrics focus on non-existing faults. These two important variables help to gain an impression on in-group and out-group behaviors. Bartsch et al (2016) claim that xenocentrism has not been conceptually evaluated sufficiently and is not soundly grounded in a certain theory. Therefore, in this study, it is expected to contribute to the improvement of its theory in relation with COI.

### **Consumer Cosmopolitanism**

Consumer cosmopolitanism is a concept whereby how consumers develop a positive orientation to out-groups is explained. This construct has been initially developed in the field of sociology and introduced to marketing, afterwards (Parts and Vida, 2011). Consumer cosmopolitanism, ethnocentrism, psychic distance and xenocentrism constructs help

marketers understand the orientation of the consumers on the continuum between in-group and out-group behaviors. Consumer cosmopolitanism construct has been used in the international marketing studies, which shapes foreign vs domestic product preferences of consumers (Riefler and Diamantopoulos, 2009).

Zeugner-Roth et al. (2015) divided cosmopolitan consumers into two: pure cosmopolitans who have moderate and low attachment to their home country and national cosmopolitans who have strong attachment to their home country. These two groups of cosmopolitan consumers tend to purchase foreign products, as well. Zeugner-Roth and her colleagues found that cosmopolitanism also impacts purchase behavior for products of not only foreign countries but also the home country. Within this framework, the following hypothesis has been formed:

**H4:** *Consumer cosmopolitanism positively affects foreign country of origin image as well as affecting domestic country of origin image positively but relatively weaker.*

Zeugner-Roth et al. (2015) argued that pure cosmopolitans and national cosmopolitans do not indicate any difference in foreign context, while they significantly differ in domestic context. They claimed that cosmopolitan consumers have a wider perspective, and thus their judgements are less biased. The effect of consumer cosmopolitanism on preference for foreign products has not been widely examined (Parts and Vida, 2011). In particular, its effect on COI has largely remained unanswered. Without empirically testing, Eroglu and Machleit (1989) speculated that cosmopolitanism and ethnocentrism may impact on the COO effect. Parts and Vida (2011) mention that the effect of cosmopolitanism on behaviors toward foreign products/brands have been rarely evaluated. In their study, they found that consumer cosmopolitanism is a predictor that has a direct and positive relationship with the purchase behavior of the foreign products.

Cosmopolitanism is a global mindset and openness for variety in both cultural context and foreign product/brand choices. Cosmopolitan

consumers are oriented towards out-group while still maintaining their roots in the domestic culture, because cosmopolitanism provides an “open and non-judgmental stance” toward the external world (Levy et al., 2007). However, the concept has been mostly evaluated as an out-group orientation, but findings of Zeugner-Roth et al. (2015) point out its effect on the development of in-group behaviors, as well.

### **Country of Origin Image**

Country of origin image (COI) is a general perception, reputation and stereotype of consumers attributed to a country and its products (Nagashima, 1970). The effect of COI on a set of attitudes and behaviors has been examined in many different contexts (Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999; Javalgi et al., 2001; Knight et al., 2003; Laroche et al., 2005; Thelen et al., 2010), however, its effect on services has not largely been studied (Javalgi et al., 2001). To this extent, it is plausible to suggest the following hypothesis:

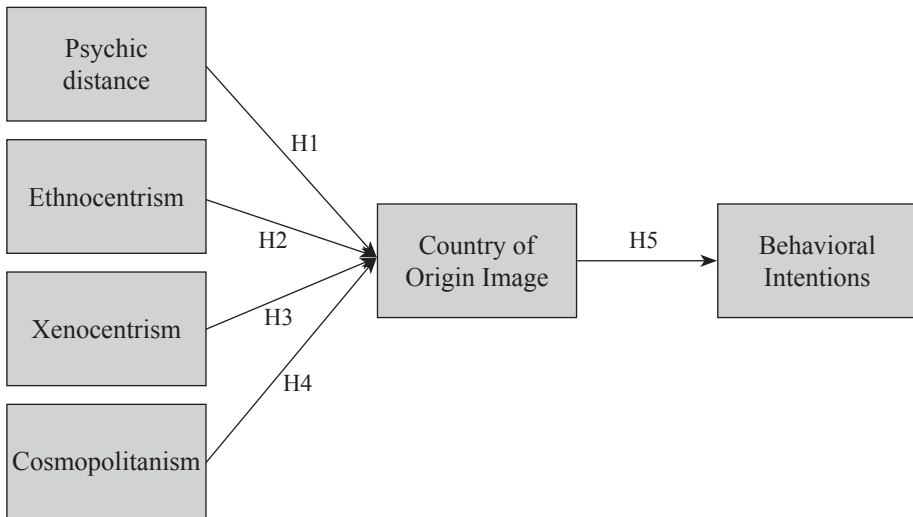
***H5:** COI positively affects a set of behavioral intentions of the consumers.*

Chattalas et al. (2008) mentioned that national stereotypes occur at product type level, and COO effect is more salient for technically complex, fashion and luxury products, which are more symbolic consumption oriented. Therefore, the COO effect is much stronger for hedonic products than for utilitarian products. Maher and Carter (2011), Ahmed and d’Astous (2008) and Kinra (2006) argue that COI shapes certain attitudes and behaviors of the consumers towards products and brands of foreign and domestic countries.

### **Behavioral Intentions**

Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2011) suggest that COI affects the inferences of the consumers about products/services of the brands and make an impact on a set of behavioral intentions. Cakici and Shukla (2017) mention that it is of great significance for marketing to study the

attitudes of consumers toward products/services of foreign countries and their intention to purchase. Kang and Yang (2010) also emphasized the importance of COO information on attitudes toward products/services and intentions to purchase them. According to Ozer et al. (2018), purchase intention is a planning state before the real action of purchasing a product/service, and intentions are different from attitudes in being a conscious effort on whether to act in a certain way or not.



**Figure 1: Hypothesized research model**

In line with the COI literature, many studies have focused on attitudes and behaviors toward products/services of various brands (Han, 1990; Laroche et al, 2005). Based on the extant literature and theory of COO/COI, the hypothesized model of this research is presented in Figure 1.

## Method

### Context of the Research

Contrary views and cognition-dominance in the COO literature caused this study to adopt a different research design in which a new

perspective is meant to be provided. Mostly, studies have been conducted on national level (Han 1990; Chattalas et al., 2008; Godey et al., 2012; Cakici and Shukla, 2017); however, minorities, which can account for millions in population, seem to be neglected. Identification of the differences between dominant ethnical element and sub-ethnics groups in a country might help gain a better understanding of COI perceptions on national basis.

This research focused on a comparative study between Turks in Turkey and Germany. It is expected that some insights into in-group and out-group behaviors, and acculturation issues will be provided based on the possible outcomes derived from these samples. The variables in the research model are mainly behavior oriented. The effects of COI on various attitudinal/behavioral elements, which are considered vital for consumer behaviors, were tested. It is considered very important to examine the effect of COI composed of both the affective and cognitive elements on behavioral intentions because literature has mostly determined this effect through cognitive-dominant perspectives. Therefore, the effect of COI composed of cognitive and affective dimensions has been neglected. Considering that COI should conceptually be based on both cognition and affect (Roth and Diamantopoulos, 2009), the cognitive dominant studies excluding affective elements in the COI/COO literature cause a huge theoretical and methodological mistake.

Another important issue is the effects in-group and out-group behaviors in the development of COI perception. Gaur et al. (2015) argue that development of cultural and socioeconomic structures of Latin America is shaped by the USA, which results Latin Americans in underestimating themselves. Under-evaluation of Latin American products made Latin American manufacturers send their products to the USA first and later bring the products from the USA as if they were manufactured there. This shows the importance of understanding in-group/out-group behaviors. Therefore, investigating the effect of a dominant culture on a sub-culture on a national basis would help to gain more insights into COI theory. This is why the effects of a highly industrialized country like Germany

and its culture on a sub-culture that originates to a developing country can help comprehend in-group and out-group behaviors better. In this context, brands from goods and service industries were selected from both Turkey and Germany. Two German-based brands and two equal Turkey-based brands that are also accessible in Germany were selected. Bosch and Lufthansa Airlines are Germany-based; Beko and Turkish Airlines are Turkey-based brands in goods and service industries.

### **Sample and Data Collection**

This study was conducted on two different samples. One sample is based on Turkey, and the other consists of Germany-based Turks. The Germany-based Turks are the first immigration wave that has begun in Germany decades ago as a labor force during the development of German industry after World War II. There are districts in Germany which are densely populated by immigrant Turks and in these areas is where Turks were randomly selected for the data collection. The only criteria to be added in the sample was to have a good command of Turkish language and to be over the age 18 due to ethical concerns. Considering the possible incomprehension of the questionnaire, firstly, one-to-one survey method has been utilized under the supervision of a professional surveyor. Initially, the survey was meant to be applied through the written form of the questionnaire. Then, due to the length of the questionnaire and unwillingness to take time to fill it, an online form of the questionnaire was developed. QR code or the direct link of the on-line questionnaire was shared with people who said to be willing to participate in the research. Some of the questionnaires were filled under the supervision of the surveyor when participants were willing to fill it immediately, but the overwhelming majority of the responses went on-line because respondents wanted to have the liberty to fill the questionnaires in their own convenient time. In the Germany sample, individuals in the population were uneager to participate in the survey for various reasons. Due to the trust issues to a great extent, the majority of the individuals in the population declined to attend the survey. Participation rate was so

low; therefore, social media was also utilized to increase the participation in the survey through several Facebook groups and other kinds of social media platforms whose members are Turks living in Germany. In total, 251 respondents participated to the study in the Germany sample and all of them were used in the analysis due to no missing data concerns via designing possibilities in the on-line survey method.

To reach a more representative sample, considering the certain limitations and availability issues, online survey method has been also used for the data collection in Turkey sample. Same way in the Germany sample, Turks living in Turkey at the age of 18 and over were deemed eligible. For the sample based on Turkey, the link of the survey was randomly distributed to the respondents subject to the study via various social media platforms and face-to face. Through this method, more representative sample characteristics are meant to be achieved because the researcher had the liberty of distributing the survey across Turkey. In total, 211 respondents participated to the study in Turkey sample and all of them were used in the analysis due to no missing data concerns via the designing possibilities in the on-line survey method.

### **Analysis**

Firstly, data were improved through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 21.0. After the improvement of the data, confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) of the latent variables in the research model was performed to assess the construct validity (discriminant and convergent validity) of the scales. Then, the test of the hypothesized model was conducted through Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using the Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) 20.0.

### **Measures**

Psychic distance was measured based on the studies of Brewer (2007); Dow and Karunaratna (2006); and Sousa and Bradley (2006) because a PD scale that has been adopted to consumer context was non-available in the literature. Ethnocentrism and Cosmopolitanism were

measured by (Cleveland et al., (2009). Xenocentrism was measured by Lawrence (2012). COI scale was based on the collection a set of studies (Papadopoulos et al., 1990; Parameswaran and Pisharodi, 1994; Nebenzahl and Jaffe, 1996; Knight et al., 2003; Buhmann, 2016;) that has measured COI in different contexts because Roth et al. (2009) stated that a sound measurement scale that correctly captures dimensions of COI was not available in the literature. In the measurement of these constructs, five-point Likert scale is used. Items of the scales are illustrated in the Appendix.

### **Findings and Discussion**

Exploratory factor analysis was performed for each scale used in the study because COI and psychic distance scales were formed by the collection of more than one study. Therefore, factorial distributions of the items of each scale were checked in line with Hair et al.'s (2006) suggestions. Scales measured in Germany and Turkey samples were put to exploratory factor and reliability analyses, but details of the analyses were not mentioned here because of the space limitations. KMO value is greater than 0,50 and Bartlett's test is significant on 0,001 level for each scale. Lowest factorial loadings of the items for each scale are greater than 0,40. Varimax method is used in rotation procedure. Cronbach's Alpha level for each scale is found to be greater than 0,70. The item-to-total correlations exceeded 0,50 and inter-item correlations are greater than 0,30.

When it comes to confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), literature suggests that there is no golden rule in the evaluation of the model fit (Markland, 2007; Marsh et al., 2004), yet indices such as  $\chi^2/df < 3$ ; CFI  $> ,900$ ; SRMR  $< ,08$ ; RMSEA  $< ,07$  are the most widely used ones suggested by Kline (2016:269), and Hair et al. (2014a:584) to evaluate the model fit. This study also uses these fit measures to evaluate the extent of the model fit of the measurement and structural models. Two step model by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) was used for evaluation of the measurement model. First of all, latent variables in the measurement model were put to

CFA and fit index values were checked. Then, the structural model was built, fit index values were checked, and hypotheses were tested. In terms of the fit index values ( $\chi^2/df < 3$ , CFI  $> .900$ , SRMR  $< .08$ , RMSEA  $< .07$ ), both the measurement and structured models were found to be successful for the constructs in Germany and Turkey samples.

Convergent and discriminant validities are supposed to be checked to ensure construct validity of the measurement model (Hair et al., 2014). Construct validity is ensured by Average Variance Extracted (AVE), which should be 0,50 and above, and Composite Reliability (CR), which should be 0,70 and higher. Each construct satisfied the requirements in terms of convergent validity. Discriminant validity is ensured if AVE is greater than the squared correlations between each construct in the measurement model (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Measurement models in Germany and Turkey samples also met the requirements in terms of discriminant validity. Due to space limitations, the procedures used in the test of the research hypotheses was not mentioned in detail here, which can be provided upon request. Hypotheses in the model were tested for German and Turkish-based brands in Germany and Turkey samples.

COI was measured for both Turkey and Germany in this study. When German brands were evaluated, COI of Germany and when Turkish brands were evaluated, COI of Turkey was put to examination. Results of hypotheses tests are illustrated in Table 1. H2, H3 and H4 are partially, and H1 and H5 are fully supported. The effect of psychic distance on COI is positive for Germany and negative for Turkey. When the perceived psychic distance to Germany increases, the COI of Turkey decreases. That is, Germany is a highly developed country and literature clearly suggests that highly industrialized countries are perceived more positively (Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999). Consumers who perceive greater psychic distance between Turkey and Germany are inclined to underrate COI of Turkey. Likewise, consumers who perceive a greater psychic distance between Germany and Turkey favors COI of Germany more positively. When psychic distance to a highly-developed-country is high, domestic COI is perceived unfavorably. However, when psychic distance to a highly-

developed-country is high, consumers who live in a less developed country perceive the COI of foreign country more favorably. This conclusion seems to be generalizable across samples formed in both Turkey and Germany. Although psychic distance concept has been historically used by the firms in determining their international marketing strategies (O'grady and Lane, 1996; Sousa and Lages, 2011), use of this construct in the consumer market to predict a set of attitudes and behaviors of the consumers is not common (Ponsignon et al., 2021). Reaching significant and consistent results in both samples, this study provides valuable insights into the use of this construct in the consumer market and prediction of the in-group and out-group attitudes and behaviors of the consumers.

The effect of ethnocentrism on COI is significant for the COI of Turkey under both Turkey and Germany samples. Ethnocentrism is found to be important for the perception of the domestic COI rather than foreign COI. On the contrary, it was expected that ethnocentrism would have led to the formation of certain biases toward foreign countries and resulted at a negative impact on the COI of foreign country. However, the effect of ethnocentrism was non-significant for the foreign COI perception in Turkey. Interestingly, Germany sample showed that ethnocentrism was also positively associated with COI of Germany because it seems as if Turks in Germany regard Turkey and Germany as their in-group. This finding seems to be reasonable for Germany sample because decades of exposure to German culture is expected to make an impact on the acculturation of Turks in Germany. Therefore, Turks in Germany might have developed a certain level ethnocentrism not only for Turkey but also for Germany because of their long interactions with the German society. The reason lying behind this tendency can be explained by the fact that Turks in Germany might get stuck in between Turkish and German cultures. Jaffe and Nebenzahl (2006) claimed that the ethnocentric consumers are the group whose behaviors are the hardest to predict. They mention that the difficulty of predicting the behaviors of the ethnocentric consumers results from the fact that on the one hand they, in general, abstain from the consumption of what is foreign; on the other hand, they are prone to

developing positive attitudes and behaviors toward the consumption of the products of certain foreign countries. However, according to Oberecker and Diamantopoulos (2011), although foreign countries are portrayed as out-group for ethnocentric consumers, they might perceive certain countries as in-group due to the effect of consumer affinity. Independent from the ethnocentric tendencies, consumer affinity might help shaping the perceived country image, and a set of attitudes and behaviors toward the products of the foreign countries. For this particular case, Turks in Germany might have developed affinity to Germany and hence regard Germany as their in-group.

**Table 1: Hypotheses testing**

Relationships			Standardized Estimates								Hypotheses
			Germany Sample				Turkey Sample				
			Bosch	Luftansa	Beko	Turkish Airlines	Bosch	Luftansa	Beko	Turkish Airlines	
Psychic Distance	→	Country Image	0,189*	0,188*	-0,235**	-0,285***	0,341***	0,346***	-0,414***	-0,370***	H1- Supported
Ethnocentrism	→	Country Image	0,138	0,153*	0,248**	0,222**	0,061	0,068	0,208*	0,232**	H2- Partially Supported
Xenocentrism	→	Country Image	0,134	0,109	-0,244**	-0,252***	0,199*	0,181	-0,217*	-0,235*	H3- Partially Supported
Cosmopolitanism	→	Country Image	0,355***	0,328***	0,037	-0,028	0,210*	0,218*	-0,078	-0,050	H4- Partially Supported
Country Image	→	Behavioral Intentions	0,180*	0,349***	0,243**	0,209*	0,323***	0,265**	0,167*	0,381***	H5- Supported

The effect of xenocentrism is significant and negative toward COI of Turkey in both Germany and Turkey samples. On the other hand, xenocentrism is only determined as significant and positive for COI of Germany in the Turkey sample under Bosch brand. As a result, it can be said that when the xenocentrism level of the consumers increases, perceived foreign COI enhances, whereas, perceived domestic COI decreases. Consumers who regard what belongs to their culture as inferior develop positive out-group and negative in-group behaviors because they are inclined to envy and capture only the virtues of the foreign culture. Xenocentrism level of the Turks in both samples caused favorable foreign

and unfavorable domestic COI perceptions. This result is in line with the studies of Gaur et al. (2015), Mueller et al. (2015), and Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2016). Xenocentric Turkish consumers regard COI of Turkey as inferior because it is their in-group and a developing eastern country. On the other hand, they regard Germany as superior because it is a highly developed Western country and their out-group. According to Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2016), one of the most salient features of xenocentrism is the consumers' development of negative stereotypes against their in-group and favoring the values of their out-group.

Non-significant effect of xenocentrism on COI of Germany in the Germany sample might result from the possibility that Turks in Germany might have failed to position Germany as either in-group or out-group because of a sense of getting stuck in between Turkish and German cultures. That could be the reason why they failed to take a certain position toward COI of Germany in relation to xenocentrism. Another reason might result from the possibility that one part of the Turks in Germany might belong to Western culture, and they, hence, might not have xenocentric tendencies as opposed to their counterparts in Turkey. Therefore, even though xenocentrism of the Turks in Germany did not affect the COI of Germany, they might despise the COI of Turkey because of their contempt to their Eastern origins which might threaten their Western self-image, status and self-esteem. According to Eshleman et al. (1993), xenocentric consumers regard foreign alternatives more superior than the domestic products, ideas, and lifestyles. Hence, Turks in Germany might prefer to be associated with Western values by contemning their own culture.

Cosmopolitan consumers are regarded as more open-minded due to their equal distance toward various cultures. Hence, their evaluation is considered more objective and unbiased (Levy et al., 2007; Cleveland et al., 2009). However, the effect of cosmopolitanism on COI was found to be significant for only the COI of Germany. Zeugner-Roth et al. (2015) state that even though cosmopolitan consumers are nourished from their domestic culture (in-group), they tend to be out-group oriented because

this consumer group likes diversity and is motivated to experience different cultures. It was unexpected to come up with non-significant effect of cosmopolitanism on the formation of in-group behaviors toward COI in especially Germany sample. On the one hand, Turks in Germany are expected to experience quite a cosmopolitan life due to their ethnical and cultural difference from national culture and decades of exposure to the practices of the dominant (German) culture. On the other hand, Turks in Germany have been long criticized for remaining in their shells and being isolated from German society so as not to lose their true Turkish identity. However, the results imply that cosmopolitanism seems to be a pure out-group orientation because it did not make any significant effects on the COI of Turkey (in-group) in both Germany and Turkey samples. Maybe, cosmopolitanism might have impact on in-group only in the context of the purchasing habits, not in the formation of COI.

Results showed that COI of Turkey and Germany had strong effects on a set of behavioral intentions. However, literature supports the view that the link between COI and behaviors are weaker than the link between COI and attitudes (Papadopoulos, 1993; Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999; Wang et al., 2012; Izmir, 2017). Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2011) explains this weak effect by stating that (purchase) intentions are mediated by product/brand evaluations in the COI studies, yet intentions have more antecedents than only product/brand evaluations. Nonetheless, this study identified significant and relatively stronger effects of COI on behavioral intentions than the past studies. The strongest effect of COI is observed on a set of behavioral intentions toward, respectively, Turkish Airlines and Luftansa. Overall, perceived COI of Germany showed significantly stronger effects on behavioral intentions than the COI of Turkey. The strong effects of COI on behavioral intentions identified in this study can be explained by the integration of the affective dimension to the construct of COI. It can be said that previous studies failed to predict the strong affective reactions of the consumers on the development of certain behaviors.

## Conclusion

In-group and out-group behaviors of Turks living in Turkey and Germany in relation to COI is mainly driven by psychic distance, ethnocentrism, xenocentrism, and cosmopolitanism on different levels. These four socio-psychological constructs help consumers develop perceptions toward domestic and/or foreign COI. It has been identified that cosmopolitanism levels of the Turkish people in both samples have only significant effects on the formation of the foreign COI. In this ethnic sample, the impact of the psychic distance on COI is identified as the strongest. The effect of psychic distance on COI is positive for out-group and negative for in-group. Elements of a culture that belong to a developing country could be undervalued compared to a highly industrialized country. In this study, xenocentric consumers have favored COI of Germany, and despised COI of Turkey. The Turks, especially in Germany, might be more prone to underestimate COI of Turkey to be a member of the out-group. Negative effect of xenocentrism on COI of Turkey in both samples and relatively stronger link between xenocentrism and COI of Turkey within the Germany sample seem to support this view. As an in-group construct, the effect of ethnocentrism is significant on the COI of Turkey. This construct also showed a positive effect on COI of a foreign country in the Germany sample because of complex acculturation processes and possible perception of Germany as an in-group.

Mueller et al. (2016) mention that ethnocentrism is an in-group favoritism and out-group contempt, whereas xenocentrism can be considered as in-group contempt and out-group favoritism. The findings of this study support this view in that the effect of xenocentrism on COI was found positive on foreign COI and negative on home COI in both samples. However, ethnocentrism remained only as an in-group favoritism rather than an out-group contempt. In the Germany sample, due to possible confusions of the Turks as a foreign element who have been exposed to German culture for a long-time, clear-cut perceptions and an understanding on in-group and out-group might have not been developed. This result seems to be logically and empirically sound, since

the Turks in Germany as a foreign element might abstain from Turkish ethnocentrism to integrate in the German society. Moreover, xenocentric tendencies might dominate certain groups among the Turks due to the differences in the development, technology and economy between Turkey and Germany. Although xenocentrism showed foreign favoritism and national contempt in the Turkish sample, non-significant out-group behaviors were detected in the Germany sample because of the possible confusion of the Turks in Germany about their in-group and out-group. In-group contempt for the Turks in Germany might imply that they regard xenocentrism against Turkey as a means for gaining acceptance from the society and status because out-group seems to be perceived more superior than the in-group in this particular case. In conclusion, the xenocentric Turks showed a negative in-group behavior, while ethnocentric Turks displayed a favorable orientation toward in-group, which are in parallel to Zeugner-Roth et al.'s (2015) study.

The possible reason for non-significant effects of some of the socio-psychological constructs on COI perceptions in Germany could be explained through the impressions gained during the conduct of the survey in Germany. Many German based Turks clearly or explicitly stated that the Germans regard them as Turks, while Turkey based Turks call them Germans. It seems that Turks in Germany are not accepted as an element of the society by either Turkey based Turks or Germans. Based on the insights gained from the random conversations, Turks in Germany are stuck in between cultures. They feel as if they do not belong to either of these two social groups. Therefore, inconsistent findings in the effects of the socio-psychological constructs on COI might result from the sense of being stuck in between. Therefore, they failed to show consistent in-group and/or out-group behaviors. To explain inconsistent findings in the Turkey sample, there is an immense need for further studies because to the best knowledge of the authors, no study has ever empirically tested the joint effects of these socio-psychological constructs on COI in any context. The effects of the four socio-psychological constructs on domestic and foreign COI were partially supported depending on

the context. Overall, inconsistent findings might be emanated from its context dependence considering that effects of four socio-psychological constructs were found to be significant, at least once, based on the context.

As literature points out (e.g., Chattalas et al., 2008; Balabanis and Diamantopoulos, 2011; Cakici and Shukla, 2017) COI is associated with attitudinal and behavioral constructs. This study identified strong associations of COI with behavioral intentions, despite the fact that literature mentions that this relationship is weak. It is thought that the strong associations between COI and behavioral intentions resulted from the integration of the affective dimension to the COI construct. Moreover, this study showed resemblance with Roth and Diamantopoulos (2009), since two-dimensional COI construct which consists of cognitive and affective dimensions was supported and displayed strong associations with behavioral intentions, which are also in line with the extant literature (Chattalas et al., 2008; Roth and Diamantopoulos, 2009; Maher and Carter, 2011). However, some studies in the past (e.g., Peterson and Jolibert, 1995, Laroche et al., 2005; Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999; Knight et al., 2003) have evaluated normative/conative dimension as an element of COI construct. This study did not fall into this theoretical trap, and also fortified the view that COI consists of cognitive and affective dimensions. Conation could only be an outcome of cognitive and affective dimensions of COI.

### **Theoretical Contribution**

Theoretical contribution of this study is the joint effects of PD, ethnocentrism, xenocentrism and cosmopolitanism of consumers are examined on the formation of the COI perception. Findings of this study provide insights into the nature of the relationships between these four socio-psychological constructs and COI because this study can be regarded as exploratory in its nature. In this study, two-dimensional construct of COI, composed of cognitive and affective dimensions, were supported. Furthermore, the link between COI and behavioral intentions was put to further inquiry in both service and goods industries. This

study showed that the effect of COI on behavioral intentions remained almost identical in both service and goods industries. Moreover, as a common theoretical error in the COI studies, behavioral dimensions have been evaluated as an element of COI rather than its consequence. This study supports the view that behavior is an outcome of COI rather than a dimension.

### **Marketing Implications**

This study illustrated that PD, cosmopolitanism, ethnocentrism, and xenocentrism level of the consumers affect their COI perceptions differently in accordance with the contexts of the decision-making process. Consumers are prone to showing certain in-group and out-group behaviors. Therefore, companies should be aware of whether they are positioned in in-group or outgroup in the minds of the consumers.

The arguments in the extant literature on the fact that conation is an outcome of COI are supported because COI showed strong associations with behavioral variables. That is, marketers should apply affective and cognitive elements to the products/services in the advertisement and marketing communications efforts. Brands that originate to the countries with a strong COI should emphasize it more strongly because it helps firms to develop a set of behavioral intentions for both services and goods. Therefore, use of COI is also advised in the service sector because COI helps firms reduce the intangibility of the services by providing insights into the quality of the product.

### **Limitations and Direction of the Future Studies**

The most important limitation of this study is the access to data due to the various concerns and un-eagerness of the respondents to participate the survey. Researchers who want to work on the ethnic samples should be aware of this barrier to data. Because of the total number and homogeneity of the participants, this study may not be fully representative of real demographical distribution of the Turks living in Germany. More studies should be conducted on the joint effects of PD,

ethnocentrism, xenocentrism and cosmopolitanism of consumers on COI to understand the nature of their true relationships. Future studies should also examine the effect of COI on behavioral intentions in different contexts to fortify the findings of this study because literature lacks when it comes to examining the relationship between COI and behavioral variables.

**Research and Publication Ethics Statement.** This study was carried out in accordance with principles of research and publication ethics.

**Contribution of the Authors.** The manuscript was prepared by the authors.

**Conflicts of Interest.** There is no conflict of interest for this study.

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**Appendix 1: Scales used in the study****Consumer Ethnocentrism (Cleveland et al., 2009)**

1. Turkish people should not buy foreign products, because this hurts Turkey's businesses and causes unemployment.
2. It is not right to purchase foreign products, because it puts Turkish people out of jobs.
3. A real Turkish should always buy Turkey-made products.
4. We should purchase products manufactured in Turkey instead of letting other countries get rich off of us.

**Consumer Xenocentrism (Lawrence, 2012)**

1. I prefer to buy foreign made products/services.
2. All other things being equal, I prefer to buy foreign products/services.
3. I find that I enjoy using foreign made products/services more so than products/services made in Turkey.
4. I get a better feeling from buying a foreign made-product/service than from buying one that is made in Turkey.
5. Compared to Turkey, there are many other countries I prefer to buy from.
6. I feel better about buying most foreign products/services than Turkey's products/services.

**Consumer Cosmopolitanism (Lawrence, 2012)**

1. I satisfy my curiosity about other cultures by purchasing products/services from that culture.

2. I like to buy products that are not typically available in the Turkey.
3. I enjoy getting a taste of other cultures by purchasing foreign products.
4. When given the chance, I enjoy international media such as magazines,  
television, movies or books.
5. I enjoy attending events primarily intended for people from other cultures.
6. I enjoy trying products/services that are popular in other countries.

**Psychic Distance** (Dow and Karunaratna, 2006; Sousa and Bradley, 2006; Brewer, 2007)

1. Turkey and Germany are quite similar in terms of education.
2. Turkey and Germany are quite similar in terms of development.
3. Turkey and Germany are very similar politically.
4. Turkey and Germany are quite similar in terms of people's lifestyles.
5. Turkey and Germany are quite similar in terms of consumers' preferences.
6. Turkey and Germany are very similar socio-culturally.
7. Turkey and Germany are quite similar in terms of consumers' purchasing power.

**Country of origin image** (Papadopoulos et al., 1990; Parameswaran and Pisharodi, 1994; Nebenzahl and Jaffe, 1996; Knight et al., 2003; Buhmann, 2016)

***Cognitive COI***

1. Products/services of this country are good quality.
2. People are well-educated in this country.

3. Technical skills of workforce are high in this country.
4. This country is highly industrial.
- 5 Products/services of this country are imitations, not innovations.

### *Affective COI*

1. I like this country.
2. Products/services of this country has an emotional appeal.
3. This country is an attractive country.
4. This country makes me feel excited.

### **Behavioural Intention** (Jang and Namkung, 2009; Cakici and Shukla, 2017)

1. I would recommend this product/service to my friends or others
2. I would say positive things about this product/service to other
3. I would like to purchase this product/service for myself.
4. I would like to purchase this product/service for my family and friends.

### Genişletilmiş Özet

## Ülke İmajının Öncülleri ve Davranışsal Niyetler Üzerindeki Etkisi

Tüketiciler birbirine çok benzer mal/hizmet seçenekleri arasından ihtiyaç duyduğu ürünü satın alma kararını vermede güçlük çekmektedir. Bu nedenle, tüketiciler bu kaostan kurtulmak ve zaman tasarrufunda bulunmak için piyasada mevcut olan belirli bilgilere güvenirlir. Tüketiciler, bazı ülkelerden gelen ürünlerle ilgili belirli inanç, tutum ve çağrışımlar geliştirmektedir ve literatürde bu durum menşe ülke etkisi olarak adlandırılmaktadır (Koroğlu ve Yıldız, 2022). Ürünlerin/hizmetlerin kalitesi hakkında çıkarımlar yapılması söz konusu olduğunda, menşe ülke bilgisi birçok tüketicinin güvendiği ipuçlarından biridir. Laroche vd.'ye (2005) göre, tüketicilerin menşe ülke bilgisine önem vermesi, hem iç hem de uluslararası pazar açısından pazarlamacılar için stratejik çıkarımlar sağlar. Ülke imajının ürün değerlendirme ve satın alma niyeti üzerindeki etkileri farklı bağlamlar altında uzun süredir incelenmektedir.

Tüketiciler, ürünleri değerlendirmek ve satın alma kararı vermek için belirli ipuçlarına güvenirlir ve tat, koku, stil, kalite vb. gibi belirli içsel ipuçları ile itibar, marka adı, fiyat vb. gibi dışsal ipuçları aracılığıyla ürünlerin doğası hakkında fikir edinmeye çalışırlar (Ahmed ve d'Astous, 2008). Menşe ülke unsuru ürünün fiziksel özelliklerini deęiřtirmedięinden dolayı dışsal bir ipucu olarak kabul edilmektedir. Tüketiciler satın alma kararı aşamasındayken piyasada mevcut olan çeşitli bilgileri kullanmaya çalışır. Ancak tüketicilerin yüzlerce markaya ve bunların çeşitli ürünlerine maruz kaldığı düşünöldüğünde, işlenecek bilgi miktarının fazla olması nedeniyle günlük satın alma ritüellerini yerine getirmek oldukça zor bir hal almaktadır. Tüketiciler ürünlerin kökenini kalite ile ilişkilendirmeye meyilli olduklarından dolayı, menşe ülke gibi belirli sezgisel yöntemler aracılığıyla ürünler hakkında bazı kanılara varmaya çalışırlar (Çakıcı ve Shukla, 2017; Chattalas vd, 2008; Steenkamp, 1990; Hong ve Wyer, 1989; Han ve Terpstra, 1988; Bilkey ve Nes, 1982).

Literatür incelemesinde, menşe ülke imajının kalite algısı ve satın alma niyeti üzerindeki etkilerinin (Öztürk vd., 2019; Öztay ve Birinci, 2020; Koroğlu ve Yıldız, 2022), temel olarak ya tek ipuçlu ya da çok ipuçlu olarak tasarlanan

çalışmalarla (Ahmed vd., 2004) ölçüldüğü tespit edilmiştir. Peterson ve Jolibert (1995), bazı çalışmaların menşe ülkeyi yalnızca bilgiye dayalı bir ipucu olarak kullandığını ve bunun kalite ve satın alma niyeti üzerindeki etkilerini incelediğini belirtmiştir. Bazı araştırmacılar ise, menşe ülke değişkeni ile birlikte fiyat, marka (Ahmed vd., 2004), mağaza bilgileri (Garret, 2017), ürün özellikleri (Leonidou ve diğerleri, 2007) vb. değişkenlerin ürün değerlendirmesi ve satın alma niyeti üzerindeki nispi etkilerini tespit etmeye çalışmıştır.

Laroche vd. (2005) ve Roth ve Diamantopoulos (2009), ülke imajı alanındaki çalışmaların çoğunun bilişsel yönelimli bir bakış açısına sahip olduğunu iddia etmektedir. Verlegh ve Steenkamp (1999) literatürdeki ülke imajı çalışmalarının çoğunlukla bilişsel yönelimli olmasını eleştirmektedir. Yani bilişle birlikte duyguları da dikkate alan çalışmalara büyük bir gereksinim vardır. Roth ve Diamantopoulos (2009) biliş odaklı çalışmaların literatürdeki baskınlığına işaret ederek ülke imajı çalışmalarının tasarımına duygusal bileşenlerin de dahil edilmesi gerektiği konusunda bir farkındalık yaratmaya çalışmıştır

Diğer taraftan, ülke imajının öncüllerini belirleme konusunda literatürde bazı eksiklikler bulunmaktadır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmanın amacı (1) ülke imajının bir dizi öncülünü belirlemek ve (2) biliş ve duyuştan oluşan iki boyutlu ülke imajı yapısının geçerliliğini test etmektir. Bu çalışmada, ülke imajının dört olası sosyo-psikolojik öncülü literatürden belirlenmiştir. Araştırma modeli, Yapısal Eşitlik Modellemesi (YEM) kullanılarak, Türkiye ve Almanya'dan toplanan verilere dayalı olarak test edilmiştir. Bu kapsamda dört sosyo-psikolojik yapının ülke imajı üzerindeki etkileri test edilmiş ve psikolojik mesafe, kozmopolitanizm, zenosentrizm ve etnosentrizmin anlamlı etkileri tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca, ülke imajının literatürde kavramsal olarak teorik miyopluluğa varacak kadar yanlış değerlendirildiği tespit edilmiştir. Bazı araştırmacılar bu teorik boşluğa işaret etmelerine ve ülke imajının nasıl ölçüldüğüne yönelik bazı temel çalışmaları tablolaştırarak bu sorunu net bir şekilde ortaya koymalarına rağmen, net bir çözüm üretememiştir. Bu çalışmada, ülke imajının duygusal ve bilişsel boyutlarını ölçmek için maddeler toplanmıştır ve modelin verilere iyi bir uyum sağladığı tespit edilmiştir. Normatif/davranışsal boyut, modele ülke imajını oluşturan bir unsur olarak değil, ülke imajının bir sonucu olarak yerleştirilmiştir. Ayrıca, dört marka ve iki farklı örnekleme, ülke imajı ve davranışsal niyetler arasında güçlü ilişkilerinin olduğu tespit edilmiştir.

Bu çalışmanın teorik katkısı, ülke imajı algısının oluşumunda psikolojik mesafe, etnosentrizm, zenosentrizm ve kozmopolitanizmin ortak etkilerinin incelenmesidir. Çalışmanın bulguları, bu dört sosyo-psikolojik yapı ile ülke imajı arasındaki ilişkilerin doğasına dair içgörüler sağlamaktadır. Bu çalışmada bilişsel ve duygusal boyutlardan oluşan iki boyutlu ülke imajı yapısı desteklenmiştir. Ayrıca, ülke imajı ile davranışsal niyetler arasındaki ilişki, hizmet ve mal pazarında derinlemesine tartışılmış ve bu ilişkinin her iki pazarda da çok benzer olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca, ülke imajı çalışmalarında davranışsal unsurların bu kavramın bir boyutu olarak ele alınması yaygın bir teorik hata düşülmesine sebebiyet vermektedir. Bu çalışma, davranışın bir boyuttan ziyade ülke imajının bir sonucu olduğu görüşünü desteklemektedir.

Bu çalışma tüketicilerin psikolojik mesafe, kozmopolitanizm, etnosentrizm ve zenosentrizm düzeylerinin karar verme sürecinin bağlamlarına göre ülke imajı algısını farklı şekilde etkilediğini göstermiştir. Tüketiciler belirli grup içi ve grup dışı davranışlar sergilemeye eğilimlidirler. Bu nedenle şirketler, tüketicilerin zihninde grup içi mi yoksa grup dışı mı konumlandırıldığının farkında olmalıdır. Pazarlamacılar, reklam ve pazarlama iletişimi çalışmalarında ürünlere/hizmetlere duygusal ve bilişsel öğeler uygulamalıdır. Ülke imajı tüketicilerin hem hizmetler hem de mallar için bir dizi davranışsal niyet geliştirmelerine yardımcı olmaktadır. Bu yüzden, güçlü bir ülke imajına sahip ülkelere dayanan markalar ülke imajını ön plana koymalı ve bunu daha güçlü bir şekilde vurgulamalıdır. Özellikle hizmet sektöründe ülke imajının kullanımı tavsiye edilmektedir, çünkü ülke imajı, ürünün kalitesine ilişkin içgörüler sağlayarak hizmetlerin soyutluğunun azaltılmasına yardımcı olmaktadır.

