



DOI 10.2478/sbe-2018-0029

SBE no. 13(2) 2018

COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN EFFECTS ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOURS. A CASE OF MOBILE PHONES

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Abstract:

In the period of market globalisation, global trade has changed immensely. Country-of – origin play a significant role in global marketing as it has created huge market opportunities for both firm and countries around the globe. Many companies are venturing in overseas market as they would benefit from a larger market share and lower cost of the goods and hence, these companies have to mention about the country-of-origin on the label of their products so that consumers can know where the goods originate from. This research will enable entrepreneurs and businesses who are in the commercial industry to have a better insight on the perception of consumers about the country-of-origin effects in the context of brands of mobile phones. The study further highlighted about the impact of a country's image on the consumers' purchase intentions. For this study, both qualitative and quantitative approach were used and both primary and secondary data were captured with the usage of convenience sampling technique. With evolutions in technology and mobile phones sectors, it was imperative to investigate on the above topic so as to reveal insightful details about country-of-origin effect on consumer buying behaviours as well as on country-of-manufacture and country-of- assembly.

Key words: *Country-of-origin, Consumer, Mobile, Marketing, Mauritius*

1. Introduction

Country-of-Origin (COO) referred to where the goods originate in and it is no longer a new phenomenon. The development of the COO dated back to World War 1 where at that period countries that have been defeated like Germany, were obliged to put the sign COO on their goods, by those that won. Cai (2002) pointed out that the purpose of this action was to penalise countries like Germany so that to create a bad image for them. Other researchers defined COO as where the products have been

developed, assembled, designed and manufactured (Lin and Chen, 2006; Aiello *et al.* 2010; Samin *et al.* 2012; Munjal, 2014). For instance, though Sony is a Japanese brand, there are other goods of the same brand which are being assembled in Singapore. Hence, it is being labelled as “Assembled in Singapore” whereas when the Sony products are being manufactured in Japan, it would be “Made- in Japan” (Rezvani *et al.* 2012).

Consumers have different perceptions on the country where the products were manufactured. The same country could thus be regarded in a different manner around the world, i.e., in some countries as a high-status and reliable COO while at the same moment as a low-grade COO elsewhere and the perception of the country also evolves over time. In general, the attitudes towards the COO is connected to the perceptions of the goods for its historical, socio-economic, political and cultural characteristics. Below is the list of different mobile phone brands with their COO:

- Nokia- Finland
- Huawei and Lenovo –China
- Sony- Japan
- LG and Samsung- South Korea
- HTC- Taiwan
- Apple- United States

An important aspect of the COO analysis is the ethnocentrism phenomenon. Consumers tend to judge a domestic product more favourably than that of a foreign product.

COO has been one of the most interesting subjects during the past few years where consumers are keen to know about the “Made-in” of their products that they bought (Josiasen *et al.* 2013; Rezvani *et al.* 2012). This is because of the falling barriers of trade between countries, thus, enabling consumers to have access to various new brand of mobile phones which are available on the market (Bandyopadhyay, 2014). Hence, COO plays a pivotal role in competitive market and in the consumer behaviour.

The research became more significant due to the recent problems encountered by Samsung’s latest Galaxy Note 7 which have exploded in September 2016 (Hollister, 2016). Smith (2016) stated that the reason behind the explosion was due to overheating of the battery of the mobile phone. Thus, consumers to safeguard themselves from the dangers of the mobile phone, might give importance to the COO or the Country-of-Manufacture (COM) of the mobile phone. Mauritius, although having a small market for its consumers, gets influenced by the changes that are happening around the globe and hence, this can have an impact on the consumer’s purchasing intentions and also, on the consumer’s attitudes towards the different brands of mobile phones.

2. Literature review

In today's globalized market place, Mauritian consumers have access to a large number of local products as well as imported ones. Consumers draw conclusion about these goods based on the countries that it comes from and this is known as COO. Many of the consumers gave importance to the "Made- in" label while in some cases when COO is not favourable, consumers gave particular attention to the brand of the products and hence, having an influence on the consumer buying behaviour and on their purchase decisions.

Theoretical Review

Consumer and Consumer Behaviour

Al- Jeraisy (2008) defined consumer as an individual who buys goods or services for their own use. Noel (2009) defined consumers as an individual who recognizes a need and look for a good that would fulfill this particular need.

Types of Consumer Buying Decision Behaviour

Kotler and Armstrong (2012) identified that there are four different types of buying decision which are the complex-buying, dissonance-reducing buying, habitual buying and finally variety-seeking buying behaviour .

Kotler and Armstrong (2012) pointed out that a consumer goes through the complex buying behaviour when the product is complex and when there is a major difference among the brands of the products.

Dissonance-reducing buying behaviour was explained as when the consumers are greatly involved in products that are costly, irregular or risky for purchase and however, there is only little difference between brands.

Habitual buying behaviour happened when the consumers are not greatly involved in the purchase of the goods and there is little difference between the brands while variety-seeking buying behaviour was defined when there is great difference among brands of the goods and the consumers are lowly involved with the mobile phones and the switching costs to other brands are high.

Buying a mobile phone is complex as consumer often required more information about the brand, features, COO and style. Thus, complex buying behaviour and variety seeking behaviour are relevant for mobile phones.

Furthermore, other different types of buying tendencies have been identified such as the price sensitivity and impulse buying (Hanzaee and Irani, 2011).

Hanzaee and Irani (2011) defined price sensitivity as the extent to which consumer's behaviour are influenced by the price of the goods. It was also referred to as the price elasticity of demand and defined impulse buying as unintended buying of goods or services.

Consumer Buying Process

The consumer buying process consisted of five different stages namely the problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision and lastly post-purchase behaviour (Kotler and Keller, 2012).

Country-of- Origin (COO) Concept

COO was first studied by Schooler (1965) where he defined it as the “Made-In” concept. Other researchers defined COO as where the products have been developed, assembled, designed and manufactured (Lin and Chen, 2006; Aiello *et al.* 2010; Samin *et al.* 2012; Munjal, 2014). COO is commonly being used to indicate the product quality in case of lack of information (Lusk *et al.* 2006). Munjal (2014) pointed out that the purpose was to differentiate from other similar products.

Elliott and Cameron (1994) have broadly defined Country-of-Origin Effect (COE) as “any influence, positive or negative that COM might have on the consumer choice and behaviour towards a product.” Apetrei and Petrușca (2010) defined COE in the global marketing context as the perceptions and attitudes of a particular country extended on its commodity.

Effect of COO on the Consumer Buying Behaviour

In this part, the main concentration would be upon the consumer evaluation towards mobile phone. The consumer evaluation consisted of a part of the consumer pre- purchase decision. COO remained a pivotal factor when evaluating a product since there are many global brand on the market (Bandyopadhyay, 2014). When purchasing a particular product, a consumer generally evaluates a product based on different dimensions such as the quality, convenience, disposal and durability. Johansson *et al.* (2000) stated that if a consumer has a favourable or unfavourable experience towards a particular product or brand, he/she would evaluate the product differently based on his own experience. However, regarding to the mobile phone market, it would be impossible for a consumer to evaluate each brand due to some constraints like money, effort and time (Munjal, 2014). Cox (1962) was the first researcher to develop a model on the consumer evaluation process. He proposed that a product can be viewed as an “Arrays of Cues”.

Consumer Ethnocentrism (CE)

This notion of CE has been derived by the sociologist Sumner (1906) where he defined CE as how the consumers view things in a manner that is superior and all others make reference to it. A consumer tends to assess a domestic product more favourably than that of foreign products as it brings many advantages to the country such as creation of jobs and development of the economy and they tend to discard values and symbols that are different from their culture, political and economic (Watson, 1999; Akdogan and Ozgener 2012; Renko *et al.* 2012; Kalicharan, 2014). Apetrei and Petrușca (2010) argued that a product nationality perception can be influenced by the following aspects:

- The image of foreign products versus domestic products;
- Generic products perceive COO as the core products;
- The manufacturing companies national or international image;
- The image which is being spread to the consumers through the brand name or logo.

Country Image (CI)

Nagashima (1970) was the first researcher to define CI as “the image, reputation that consumer attached to a product of a specific country. That picture is often being influenced through the history, tradition and background of that country.” Another definition was provided by Roth and Romeo (1992) where he defined CI as “the general perception that consumers form towards products based on their production and strengths and weakness of the country’s marketing.” Rezvani *et al.* (2012) pointed out that CI is frequently connected to the economic, political, technological and social part of every country. Consumers who had specific views about products from other countries and consequently, this had an adverse effect on the consumer’s attitudes towards brands from those countries (Laroche *et al.* 2003; Pappu *et al.* 2007; Fernanda and Janaina, 2012; Ngoc, 2014). The CI is formed in the minds of the consumers based on the person’s knowledge, experiences, exposure and preferences towards a particular country. CI is shaped by the information which is being spread on various different communication channel (Kouba *et al.* 2013). Country image is developed at both the country level as well as the product level (Pappu *et al.* 2007).

Purchase Intention

Since the market is competitive and firms are always finding new ways about how they could attract customers, therefore leading them to have many options before choosing a particular brand and hence, affecting their purchase intentions. Revzani *et al.* (2012) defined purchase intention as the willingness of the consumers to take personal action towards a particular brand, i.e., in short what the consumers think, they will buy.

Marketing Strategy

Kotler and Keller (2012) defined strategy as a broad plan that states how its mission, goals, and objectives will be achieved. Kotler and Armstrong (2012) defined marketing strategy as the marketing reasoning by which a firm expects to build customer value and attain these by forming profitable relationships. According to Peter *et al.* (1999), marketing strategy was defined as a group of stimuli placed in consumers’ environments intended to influence their affect, cognition and behaviour. These stimuli consisted of brands, packaging, advertisement, price tags and salesperson’s communication.

The marketing mix is the set of strategic marketing tools that the business uses to produce the response it wants in the target market. It comprised of the 4Ps such as the product, price, promotion and place (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012).

Empirical Reviews

COO Effects on Product Evaluation

Vukasović (2015) conducted a research on the COO effects on products evaluation and consumer perception in the food industry, most specifically about meat products. The researcher made use of the correlation model to test the different analysis variances and it was found that there was a significant correlation between the factors such as meat type, group and test type. The study also revealed that COO has an impact on consumer perception, consumer preferences and also in the buying decision process.

Saeed *et al.* (2014) explored her research on COO effect on Pakistani Consumers' evaluation of French cosmetics. The research discovered that the Pakistani customers are not highly ethnocentric towards French cosmetics and that COM has a positive relationship with the consumer evaluation process. Furthermore, the study also identified that consumers with high product knowledge depended more on COO cues for their product evaluation.

The COO Effects on Consumer Behaviour

Murtaza (2016) explored her research on the effect of COO on mobile phone buying behaviour of consumers which was a case study from Pakistan. The result revealed that there is a positive effect on buying behaviour of Pakistani customers between brand image and technological innovation. In addition, it showed also that Pakistani customers with high income level is greatly influenced by the CI while for the low income consumers, they purchase their mobile phones from their country. Agrawal and Kamakura (1999) have conducted their research on whether COO is a competitive advantage or not and where the main objective of the study was to evaluate whether COO has an effect on the consumer behaviour. The findings of the study proved that marketers from different countries set a reasonable price accordingly to the product quality rather than the image shaped by the COO cue.

COO Effects on Consumer Purchase Intentions

Yunus and Rashid (2016) conducted their research on the influence of COO on consumer purchase intention for mobile phone brand in China where the objective of the study was to examine the determinant factors of COO that consumer considered in buying mobile phones brand that came from China. To measure the consumer's purchase intentions, several pre-determinants aspects such as CI, perceived product quality and brand familiarity have been used. It was discovered that all the pre-determined factors were significant and they are highly correlated in affecting the consumer purchase intention in China towards the mobile phone brands.

COO Effects on Consumer's Willingness to Buy Foreign Products

Cai *et al.* (2004) carried out their research on the COO effects on consumer's willingness to purchase imported goods and an experiment was conducted in order to determine the COO effect of imported goods' on the consumer's buying intentions. The research showed a significant interaction COO effect, representing that the COO information influenced subjects' readiness to purchase the products. Additionally, a non- durable goods was found to be more price owned elasticity from a country than that of a durable good from the same state.

Walley *et al.* (2014) carried out their research on the effect of COO on Chinese food consumers. The findings of the study shown that the Chinese favoured food products originating from other countries instead of China and they perceived the imported products to be of higher quality. Another interesting disclosure of the study was that the Chinese relate quality to the "Made-in" of the goods.

Research Gaps

The study done by Murtaza (2016) was conducted in Pakistan. The research gap is that even though Pakistan and Mauritius are developing countries, the usage of mobile phones might or might not be identical as each country has their own culture and each country would perceive the COO of the mobile phones differently and the buying patterns of both countries will be different. Hence, this objective was set in order ***to identify what influence COO has on consumer behaviour towards mobile phones (objective 1).***

The research done by Yunus and Rashid (2016) was conducted in China and the results might not tally with Mauritius as Mauritian consumers have different perceptions on different countries and thus, it can have an influence on their purchase intentions. The gap analyzed is that consumers perceived mobile phones that are manufactured in developed countries to be of higher quality than in developing countries and hence, affecting their purchase decisions. Therefore, this objective was set so as ***to determine if COO has an effect on the purchase intentions for Mauritian mobile phone users (Objective 2).***

From the empirical review, several authors have studied about the subject in different context mostly in the food and cosmetics sector and so far, not much research has been conducted and there is no such research done in the Mauritian context on mobile phones. The purpose of this research differs from others of which the aim is ***to develop a suitable marketing strategy for mobile phones in Mauritius after understanding the implication about the influence and impact of COO (objective 3).***

3. Research methodology

The research became more significant due to the recent problems encountered by Samsung's latest Galaxy Note 7 which have exploded in September 2016 (Hollister, 2016). Smith (2016) stated that the reason behind the explosion was

due to overheating of the battery of the cell phone. Thus, consumers to safeguard themselves from the dangers of the mobile phone, might give importance to the COO or the Country-of-Manufacture (COM) of the mobile phone. Mauritius, although is a small market, gets affected by the changes that are happening around the world and hence, this can have an influence on the consumer's purchasing intentions and also, on the consumer's attitudes towards the different brands of mobile phones.

Below were the research questions for this study:

- How Country-of- Origin influence the consumer behaviour towards mobile phones?
- What effect Country- of-Origin has on the purchase intention for mobile phone users?
- What marketing strategy could be developed for mobile phones in Mauritius after understanding the implication about the influence and impact of Country-of- Origin?

A hypothesis is explained as a proposition that describes the occurrence of a definite set of phenomena that direct the study (Kothari, 2004). Hypotheses were developed in order to identify the relationships within the classifications and to disclose the pattern of the data gathered. Thus, a hypothesis has been defined for this study.

H₀: There is no relationship between Country- of- Origin and the purchase intention for mobile phone.

H₁: There is a relationship between Country- of-Origin and the purchase intention for mobile phone.

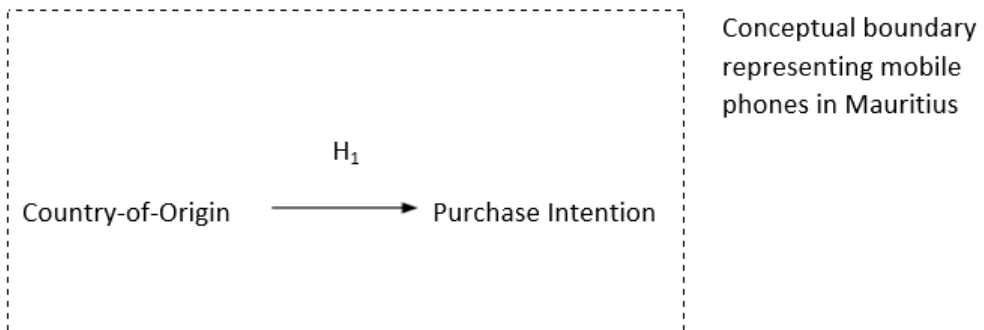


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

For this research, descriptive and exploratory research were used and also, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in order to gather detailed information. The methods for collecting primary data for this project were obtained by making reference to Kothari (2004) in order to address the current research questions as mentioned above and also, to get an in-depth and detailed information about the topic. The techniques were as follows:

- Survey via Questionnaire

A self-administered questionnaire as well as online questionnaire were used for this project. The questionnaire consisting of a number of questions set in an arranged order. It consisted of close ended questions which were used in order to know about the Mauritian's perception towards COO for different mobile phone brands.

- Interviews of the Reseller of Mobile Phone

Personal face-to-face interviews with the reseller of mobile phones were done with 2 of them.

For this study, secondary data have been used such as different online-journal article, magazine, different website and books so that to gather maximum information for this study. The method that has been used to collect primary data was through the questionnaire and interviews. The questionnaire design stage was designed with great care so that to avoid any errors or bias. Greener (2008) pointed out that pilot testing is essential as it aids in identifying the validity of the questionnaire and enhances the layout and scales of the questionnaire. The purpose of doing a pilot testing was to ensure that everyone has understood the questions. Amongst the 10 respondents who participated in the pilot study, some could requested for clarification of some of the key terms connected to this study and the researcher provided the necessary guidance.

This study was mainly targeting the whole population in Mauritius so that to obtain their views about COO. The sample size was referred to as the number of people who would represent the entire population in Mauritius. The larger the sample size the more likely it would represent the whole population and less bias information would be gathered (Saunders *et al.* 2009). As per the Central Statistic 2015, the estimated Mauritian population is 1 275 986. The formula for the calculation of the sample size provided by Glenn I. (1992) was as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n is the sample, N is the population and e is the level of precision. Consequently, the ideal sample size for the Mauritian population was 400. But due to financial constraints, only 150 people would be surveyed. In this research, the sampling design used was the non-probability sampling mostly the convenience sampling techniques, where each respondent was given the same chance of being selected.

The two most significant aspect of any research are validity and reliability. Tavakol and Dennick (2011) defined validity as the degree to which an instrument measures what it truly wished to measure. Reliability means the capability of a questionnaire to measure precisely an element (Parsian and Dunning, 2009). The reliability and validity analysis were evaluated using the Cronbach Alpha.

4. Analysis and findings

The findings have been presented and discussed in this chapter based on the questionnaire set for 150 participants with a response rate of 100%. These were analysed through the use of IBM statistical package SPSS version 22 and were presented through charts and tables followed by a discussion based on findings from the literature reviews, the survey of the study and on more recent secondary data.

Majority of the respondents who participated in this survey was female with 59.33% as compared to male which is only 40.67%. According to the Mauritius Statistics (2015), it revealed that there are more female than male in Mauritius and therefore, this tallied with the results above as their difference in percentage could clearly explain that there was more female involvement in this study.

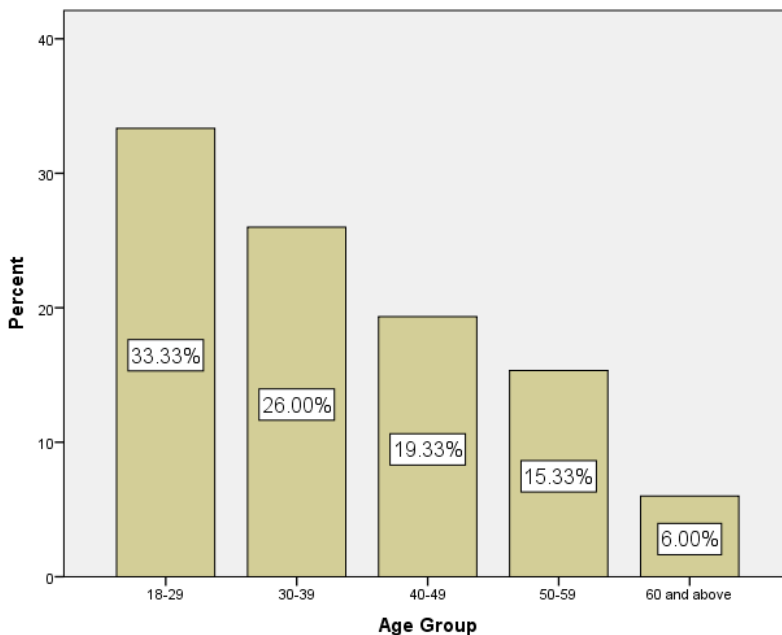


Figure 2: Age Group

As shown in the bar chart above, the age group 18-29 has the highest percentage (33.33%) who has participated in this study and thus, it can be deduced that they were the heavy users of mobile phones for this research. The least percentage was the age group 60 and above as they were not much willing to participate in this research. According to Autio (2005), participants with different age group might not have similar needs and thus, shaping differently the buying behaviour.

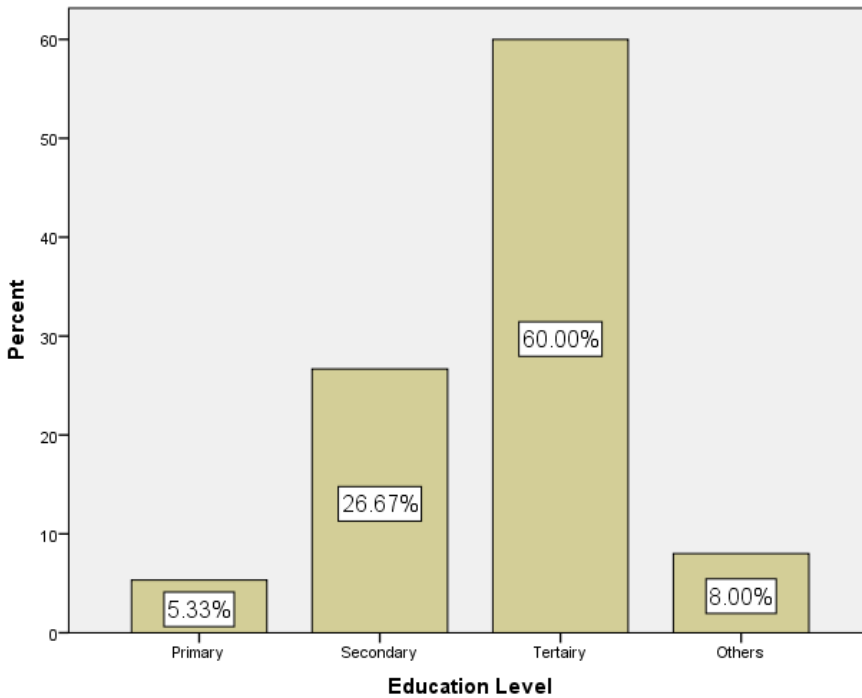


Figure 3: Education Level

As shown in the above figure, most of the respondents have reached the tertiary level with 60% as majority of the respondents were Universities students. The second highest education level was secondary with 26.67% and this is because in Mauritius education is free and accessible to every person and also, it is compulsory for each individual to go to school till the age of 16. Hence, each individual should have at least reached the secondary level and thus, this proved that Mauritians are knowledgeable. However, the least level of education is primary with 5.33% and as per Weller and Gould (2015), the reasons why someone stopped from primary level were mainly because of health or financial issues.

Mobile Phone Users

97.33% of the participants owned a mobile phone as nowadays mobile phones are being considered as a necessity item instead of a luxury one and this also proved that the number of mobile phone users in Mauritius is large. Besides, possessing a mobile phone helped in exchanging information and to keep in touch with friends and relatives irrespective of the time. Only 2.67% amongst the 150 respondents do not own a mobile phone as they were in the age group of 60 and above and they might feel that it is not necessary to possess one. Marketers must try to devise strategies for this age group as it might be difficult to convince them to buy a mobile phone.

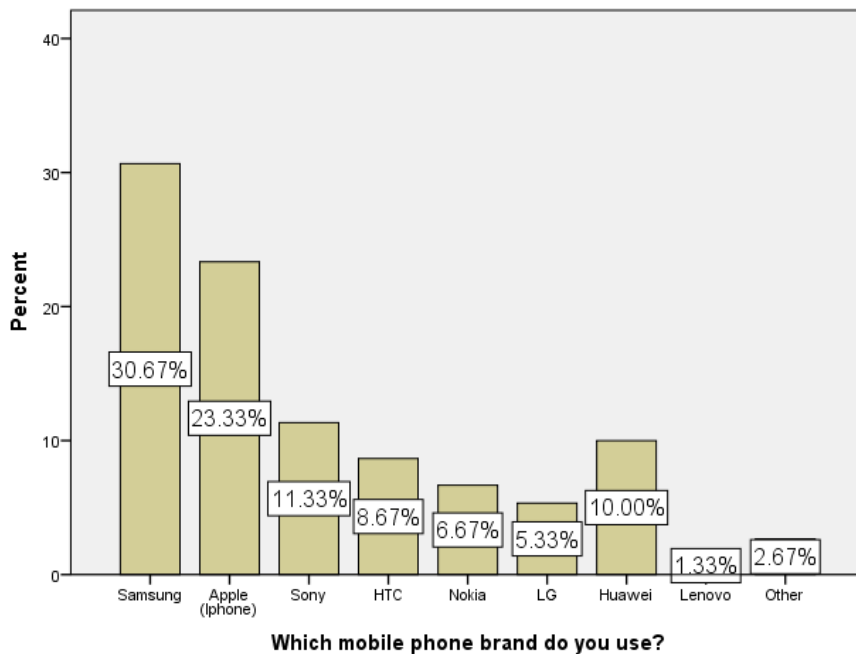


Figure 4: Mobile Phone Brands

Samsung brands appeared to be the preferred mobile phone brand in Mauritius as seen in the figure with 30.67% of response. Particularly, Samsung is now seen to be the most prominent mobile phone brands worldwide according to Chau *et al.* (2015) and the reason was because Samsung has a range of different model of mobile phones which is available on the market and it targets both low and high income earners. Besides, this showed that the problems that the brand Samsung are facing did not really bother the Mauritian consumers as most of them own a Samsung mobile phones. The results of this research correlated with the study of (Norazah, 2013) where Samsung were found to be the first amongst other brands. The lowest was Lenovo with 1.33% which can be inferred that the Mauritian consumers do not really like this particular brand as maybe Lenovo was incapable of positioning itself in the minds of the Mauritians respondents.

Country of Origin

44.67% always considered COO when buying a mobile phone. It is because they wanted to know from where the mobile phone originates and there is a tendency to believe that mobile phones that are manufactured from developed countries are of superior quality than in developing countries and this tallied with the work of (Mostafa, 2015; Pilelienø and Petkevipiëno, 2014). 16% indicated that they don't give importance to COO when buying a mobile phone and this goes in line with the work of Ghalandari

and Norouzi (2015) who pointed out that these people considered mostly the brand reputation of the mobile phones.

Most of the Mauritian respondents agreed to the fact that COO is important as it helped in determining the level of technology sophistication of the mobile phones and perceived it to be a vital element to ponder when purchasing a mobile phone. But COO is not the first element that they considered when buying a new brand of mobile phone. The results of this study matched with the work of (Ghost *et al.* 2006) and the respondents considered COO to be crucial when buying mobile phones.

Majority of the respondents (88.67 %) looked for information before buying a mobile phone. This goes in line to Kotler and Armstrong (2012) who stated that consumers adopt the complex buying behaviour when there is a huge different in brands. Hence, this proved that most of the Mauritian consumers would do extensive research so that firstly they can opt for the best mobile phone brand and secondly, to gather maximum information about the mobile phones like its features, COO and so on. The only 11.33% don't look for information, this might be because they are only interested in the basic features of the mobile phones.

Most of the respondents (46 %) looked for information through the internet. A possible reason was because nowadays internet has become a powerful tool that aids in finding lots of information and therefore, having an influential impact on their decision making and this finding is consistent with the study of Zameer *et al.* (2012). Besides, companies are making use of different social media like Facebook, Instagram and so on to communicate with their customers. There is a minority of them who searched for information from advertisements (billboards, newspapers) and through other medium with both having a 10% of response rate. A likely reason could be because these consumers are more at ease in finding the relevant information from these sources.

Table 1: Mean Test for Level of Quality

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
China(Huawei & Lenovo)	150	1.00	5.00	2.74	1.09
Finland (Nokia)	150	1.00	5.00	3.29	.95
Japan(Sony)	150	1.00	5.00	3.77	.79
South Korea (LG & Samsung)	150	1.00	5.00	4.13	.813
Taiwan(HTC)	150	1.00	5.00	3.65	.819
United States (Apple)	150	1.00	5.00	4.63	.70
Valid N (listwise)	150				

United States and South Korea have a mean of above 4 and hence, it can be deducted that the Mauritian respondents agreed that mobile phone from these countries are of superior quality as compared to other countries like China, Finland and

others which has a mean score of 2.74 and 3.29. The Mauritian perceived developed countries to be best in term of quality. In the study of (Ghost *et al.* 2006), India and Korea countries were perceived by the Indian consumers to be of low quality products as both mean scores were below 3 and they perceived Japan to be the highest since it is a leader in technology.

Table 2: Mean Test for Mobile Phones that are Safe for Use

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
China(Huawei & Lenovo)	150	1.00	5.00	3.04	.975
Finland (Nokia)	150	1.00	5.00	3.43	.89
Japan(Sony)	150	1.00	5.00	3.75	.79
South Korea (LG & Samsung)	150	1.00	5.00	3.83	1.02
Taiwan(HTC)	150	1.00	5.00	3.59	.84
United States (Apple)	150	1.00	5.00	4.37	.90
Valid N (listwise)	150				

South Korea and United States' mobile phones were perceived by the Mauritian consumers to be safe for use as both has a mean of 3.83 and 3.75 respectively. This proved that Mauritian consumers were not affected greatly by the problem that Samsung faced with its Galaxy Note 7 as explained in the Introduction chapter and this might be due to the trust that they had in the brand Samsung.

Table 3: Mean for Evaluation of Several Factors

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Country-of –Assembly	150	1.00	4.00	2.52	.98
Country-of –Manufacture	150	1.00	4.00	2.99	.93
Country- of- Origin	150	1.00	4.00	2.94	1.03
Valid N (listwise)	150				

A mean of 2.99 and 2.94 can be inferred that COM and COO are important to the Mauritian consumers when evaluating different mobile phone brands. Hence, it proved that COM and COO are gaining importance amongst the Mauritian consumers and it could be that they would perceive that country to be highly reliable and a high-status one. Another assumption could be that the country where the mobile phones are being manufactured guarantee an assurance of standards.

Consumer Ethnocentrism

The highest scores of the mean test for CE was 4.83 which means that the respondents were in favour of the foreign goods as compared to local one and this was

shown clearly in the table as all the other mean test were between “neutral” and “agree”. This explained that the Mauritian respondents favoured foreign products as it would benefit the consumers from a wide variety of goods even though they know that this would cause damage to the economy. However, as compared to the results of (Petrovicova and Gibalova, 2014), the same test was done and the mean scores for all the statement was below 3 which can, hence, be deducted that Slovak consumers were in favoured of local goods in their country.

Table 4: Mean Test for the Effect that CI has on the Purchase Intention
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
On a scale of 1 to 5, do you think that Country image affects your purchase decisions for mobile phone?	150	1.00	5.00	3.29	1.01
Valid N (listwise)	150				

A mean of 3.29 can be inferred that majority of the Mauritian respondents were neutral as it could be that they don't really consider if the country has a good image or otherwise before making a purchase. As pointed out by Laroche *et al.* (2003), consumers having specific opinions about a product from a particular country can have a positive/adverse effect on their purchase intentions. An assumption might be that the Mauritian consumers would make their purchase based on the performance and also, on the brand reputation of the mobile phones.

36.67% of the respondents had an intention to buy a new mobile phone. Some likely reasons might be due to constant changes in technology or simply it could be that the mobile phones have become obsolete, broken and so on. 34% do not have any intentions to buy a new mobile phone in the new future as it could be that their current mobile phone is fulfilling their needs and on the contrary, it could be that they do have an intention for buying one as 29.33% amongst them intends to buy one and it could be that some would fall in that category.

42% were willing to spend between Rs 10,001 to Rs 20,000 and thus, it clarified that majority of the Mauritian consumers purchased a mobile phone between that range. Marketers can try to market mostly its mobile phones to that category of consumers, these might be students or working people. An assumption that could be deducted is that maybe that these consumers are not willing to spend much on mobile phones because of certain risks associated like breakdown of the mobile phone and repair cost which tends to be high or it could be that they would buy a mobile phone of that range because Samsung stores and Mauritius Telecom use to give 1 mobile phone free upon purchase of another mobile phone. 26% wanted to spend above Rs 20,001 in Mauritius maybe because of the innovation that the mobile phone possessed.

Interview with the Resellers of Mobile Phones

The interview consisted of only two resellers of mobile phones due to several constraints. The aim of this interview was to get a deep insight of COO towards mobile phones. Both of them stated that COO is crucial when it comes to mobile phones and this should be communicated to each customer. They mostly advertised their mobile phones through different medium such as radio shows, flyers, banners, billboards, television and on social media mainly, on Facebook and therefore, it would be impossible for them to communicate the COO for each mobile phones through these medium. Thus, they communicate it personally to the consumers. They also pointed out that the issue that brand Samsung faced hadn't greatly affected the Mauritian consumers, though that the sales for Samsung brand has fallen slightly.

Reliability Test**Table 5: Cronbach's Alpha Test****Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.748	36

The table above shows a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.748 and according to George and Mallery (2003), it means that it is acceptable. Therefore, it can be inferred that the questionnaire was reliable and validated.

Hypothesis Testing

The Pearson correlation analysis was used to test the relationship between the scale data, i.e., to test if there is a relationship between the COO and purchase intention as shown below:

H₀: There is no relationship between Country- of- Origin and the purchase intention for mobile phone.

H₁: There is a relationship between Country- of-Origin and the purchase intention for mobile phone.

Table 6 demonstrated the result of the Pearson correlation analysis between COO and purchase intentions where $r = 0.261$, $p = 0.001$ and $n = 150$. It also showed that there is a weak positive relationship between COO and purchase intentions. In addition, at the 5% level of significance ($p = 0.001 < 0.05$), thus, H₀ is rejected and it can be concluded that there is a relationship between COO and purchase intention. It can, therefore, establish that the Mauritian consumers give importance to COO when buying a mobile phone. Furthermore, this research goes in line with the study of Yunus and Rashid (2016), which also proved that there is a relationship between COO and

purchase intentions for mobile phone in China and on the contrary, it contradicted with the interview of the resellers in Mauritius.

Table 6: Pearson Correlation Analysis between COO and Purchase Intentions

Correlations		Country- of- Origin	Purchase decisions for mobile phone
Country- of- Origin	Pearson Correlation	1	.261**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	150	150
Purchase decisions for mobile phone	Pearson Correlation	.261**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	150	150

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Summary of Achievement of Study Objectives

Table 7: Summary of findings

<p>Objective 1: To evaluate the influence that COO has on the consumer behaviour towards mobile phones.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 44.67% always considered COO when purchasing a mobile phone. A mean test of above 3 can be inferred that the Mauritian consumers agreed to the fact that COO is important and it helped in determining the level of technology sophistication of the mobile phones and perceived it to be a vital element to ponder when purchasing a mobile phone. 88.67% do look for information before buying a mobile phone and 46% searched for information through internet and 18% through the mobile phone salesperson. 	<p>Objective 2: To assess the effect that COO has on the purchase intention for mobile phone users.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A mean of 3.29 can be inferred that Mauritian respondents were neutral as they do not consider if the country has a good image or otherwise before making a purchase. 36.67% do have an intention to purchase a mobile phone and 29.33% do intend to purchase on in the new future. Majority of them (42%) were willing to spend a sum of Rs 10,001 to Rs 20,000 on mobile phones. A mean above 3 can be inferred that the Mauritian consumers are more willing to do their purchase in renowned stores. The hypothesis testing of this study revealed that there is a weak and positive relationship between COO and purchase intentions. 	<p>Aim: To develop a marketing strategy for mobile phones in Mauritius after understanding the implications about the influence and impact of COO.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 46% searched for information through internet. They are more likely to do their purchase at renowned stores. According to what the resellers of mobile phones said, COO is crucial and thus, should be communicated to the customers which otherwise could not be communicated through other medium like billboards and so on. Hence, content marketing will be developed.
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5. Recommendations and conclusion

While highlighting the objectives of this study, focus was laid on key findings made from the analysis chapter such that fruitful recommendations could be made as well as future research needs in the same field of study.

Celebrity Endorsement

Makumbura (2015) stated that celebrity endorsement is a powerful method that businesses could adopt in order to promote their mobile phones. As shown from the findings that majority of the respondents preferred mobile phones that are manufactured in developed countries than in developing countries, thus, the latter could adopt this technique as it was shown to be an effective approach to reach the targeted customers. By so doing, this give the impressions that these mobile phones are being used by renowned people and thus, is best in quality.

Customer Engagement

From the findings it can be deducted that most of them preferred a Samsung mobile phones as compared to other brands like Lenovo, Sony, LG, HTC and Nokia. For instance, Sony brand has developed the application "Xperia Lounge" so that to continuously engage its customers through several competitions. Thus, Lenovo, LG, HTC and Nokia could also involve their customers by developing similar strategy as Sony brands. They can try to create an emotional connection with their customers through games, photography competitions and also, they can make use of SMS to inform customers that they have obtained a voucher and this can help in creating customer loyalty.

Video Marketing to reach customers

Video marketing is a new technique which could be implemented by phone manufacturers and resellers (Vidyard, 2015). As revealed from the analysis chapter, majority of the participants looked for information through internet before buying a mobile phone. For instance, when a customer is browsing on the internet, video advertising could be used to show the deals of the mobile phones and they can benefit from a discounted price if they click on the link below after seeing the video. Marketers can make use of emoticon so that to attract the attention of the potential customers.

Social Media

Mangold and Faulds (2009) referred social media as the recognised online word-of-mouth as it comprises of journal and forum that enable customers to provide their opinions about new or existing mobile phones brand on the market. By making use of this medium, marketers can promote various mobile phones brands and it has a greater impact as compared to advertising on radio or television.

The aim of this research was to develop a marketing strategy for mobile phones in Mauritius after understanding the implication about the influence and impact on COO and the objective were firstly to evaluate the influence that COO has on the consumer buying behaviour. This objective was set to know if COO has an impact on the consumer buying pattern and how they would evaluate different countries based on its COO. The second objective was to assess if COO has an influence on the purchase

intentions for mobile phone users. The reason behind this objective was to determine if COO has an impact on the purchase intentions for Mauritian mobile phone users.

The first objective was achieved as most of them always considered COO when buying a mobile phone and also, they agreed that COO is important as it helped in determining the level of sophistication of the mobile phone. Furthermore, they looked for information on the internet and it was found in the findings that they preferred mobile phones that are manufactured in developed countries than developing countries. As for the second objective, it revealed that the Mauritian consumers usually would not make their purchase decision for mobile phones on the country's image. It would rather be on the brand reputation of the mobile phones or on its performance and quality. The findings of this study revealed that there is a weak and positive relationship between COO and purchase intention which proved that COO is important when deciding to buy a mobile phone. Another finding of this study is that the Mauritian consumers usually spent a sum of Rs 10,001 to Rs 20,000 on mobile phones and they are more interested in doing their purchase in renowned stores.

As for the limitations of this study, two interviewers were interviewed however if more interviews have been conducted, more information about the topic could be gathered. The second major drawback was that only 150 questionnaires were distributed due to financial reasons and thus, this might not be a complete representation of the whole Mauritian population. The focus of this study was based only on mobile phones, thus, for future research it can be conducted on consumer products so as to determine the perception of on a larger sample of the Mauritian consumers towards "Made-in Moris" products.

Marketing Strategy

A fruitful marketing strategy that has been developed for this study is content marketing. Kotler and Armstrong (2012) defined content marketing as a strategic marketing method that engrossed on creating and delivering valuable, pertinent and reliable content to attract and retain customers. This can be done by frequently posting useful blogs and articles about the mobile phones and they can include details such as the mobile phone's COO, COM and Country-of-Assembly through these blogs and articles which otherwise could not be communicated through other channels like billboard or even through the mobile phone salesperson. During the interview with the resellers of mobile phones, they revealed that COO should be communicated to each customer as it is very important for the consumer to know from where the mobile phones originate. Furthermore, it can aid in creating brand awareness for new mobile phone launched on the market.

Theoretical Implications

First of all, salespeople and marketers in Mauritius should be given the right training so as they are being able to give their best at their workplace. This could be achieved by giving them on- the- job training so that they know exactly how to market or sell their products to clients. E-learning can also be used to educate the salesperson and marketers as indicated by (Fayad, 2016) so that they can understand more about the product details and also, they would be able to solve customers' query and provide

solutions. As per the Mauritian Statistics (2015), it revealed that the Mauritian population is becoming more an ageing one, thus, marketers will have to do to extensive research in order to satisfy their wants and needs. The elderly people focused more on value creation instead of price and they are more likely to be attracted to new products and technology that will make their life easier and will help them save time. Furthermore, another implication was that authors will need to develop new models on the theories that could be used effectively by marketers and salespersons.

Practical Implications

Marketers can use the findings of this study to know about the mobile phone brands that are being preferred in Mauritius and therefore, they can devise strategies that can boost up the sales of other brands as well. In addition, marketers can use this study to identify about the impact that COO has on the Mauritian consumer buying pattern and hence, marketers can come up with interesting strategies that could inform the consumers about the COO of the mobile phones.

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