Szent István University

Doctoral School of Management and Business Administration

THE IMPACT OF CONSUMER ATTITUDES ON PALESTINIAN CONSUMERS FOOD CHOICE

"The Palestinian-Israeli conflict effect on consumers intentions to buy Israeli and Palestinian manufactured food products in the Palestinian market."

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research importance

The 21st century witnessed a massive acceleration in globalisation that combined with the growth of international trade. These phenomena make consumer markets all around the world more saturated with products imported from different foreign countries, including opponent countries' products [Yang et al., 2015]. Conflicts among countries could occur for different reasons as struggles over the territories ownership, economic pressures, or religious conflicts that may cause tension in the relations among them [De Nisco et al., 2016]. In these situations of conflict, it is noticed that political conflicts between nations exert a significant impact on consumers' consumption behaviour [Yang et al., 2015]. This has resulted in a higher interest in investigative consumer attitudes towards products of different national origins [Cazacu, 2016;Akdogan et al., 2011].

The manufactured food sector is one of the important industrial sectors in any country. In the Palestinian market, this sector is suffering from the nature of the Palestinian market structure and the political conflict between Palestine and Israel, which negatively affect this industry. This study will investigate the effect of the market instability – caused by political conflict- on consumer attitudes (Animosity and Ethnocentrism), manufacturers branding strategy and consumer intentions.

Unlike past research, this study will investigate consumer animosity and ethnocentrism attitudes in the context of an ongoing conflict, rather than negative past events. As a researcher, I believe that this provides a more in-depth insight into the nature of consumer antipathy toward foreign goods since fresh memories about intercountry conflicts offer a better reflection of negative consumer sentiments and their effect on purchasing behaviours and consumer intentions [Leonidou et al., 2019].

1.2 Research problem and objectives

As it is well known, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is considered as the world's most intractable conflict that begun after Israel's establishment in 1948 and continues to the present day [Anthony et al., 2015;Hassouneh et al., 2018]. Despite a large number of previous studies that inspected the effects of consumer ethnocentrism, animosity and product judgments on consumer purchase intention of foreign and domestic products, still, a very few studies have been made to analyse the Palestinian market [Hassouneh, 2017] and they did not take in their considerations the socio-cultural effects or the role of branding strategies as mediating variables that could affect or change the direction of the relationship.

This research work mainly aims to identify the effects of both of political instability and cultural and social factors on Palestinian consumer choice toward domestic manufactured food brands and identifying the effect of local food manufacturers branding strategies on their customer's attitudes towards preferring domestic food brands over Israeli competitor brands and other foreign imported brands. Thus, this study will focus on consumer ethnocentrism and animosity attitudes that affected by the prevailing cultural and political situation in the area, and it will take in considerations two branding elements, which are country of origin and brand name, and determine their role in building brand differentiation for domestic food manufacturers and measure their influence on consumer choices of manufactures food brands. Therefore, the study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Highlight the effect of political stability on Palestinians food manufacturers.
2. Determine the consumers' preferences toward domestic manufactured food products.
3. Determine the role of political instability in shaping the consumers' animosity attitudes.
4. Determine the role of subjective norms (social pressure) in shaping consumers ethnocentrism attitudes.
5. Determine the effect of consumers attitudes on consumers intention to buy domestic products.
6. Determine the effect of the Palestinian food manufacturers branding strategies effect on consumers intentions to buy domestic food products.
7. Providing a holistic view to better understand consumer behaviour in troubled markets.

1.3 Research hypotheses

The study tested the following main hypotheses:

H 1: Political stability (PS) has a positive effect on consumer animosity attitudes (AIP).
H 2: Subjective norms (SN) has a positive effect on consumer ethnocentrism attitudes (EDP).
H 3: Political stability (PS) has a positive effect on the consumer's intention to buy (INB).
H 4: Consumer animosity attitudes (AIP) mediate the relationship between political stability (PS) and consumers intention to buy (INB).
H 5: Consumer ethnocentrism attitudes (EDP) mediate the relationship between political stability (PS) and consumers intention to buy (INB).
H 6: Subjective norms (SN) have a positive effect on the consumer's intention to buy (INB).
H 7: Consumer animosity attitudes (AIP) mediate the relationship between subjective norms (SN) and consumers intention to buy (INB).
H 8: Consumer ethnocentrism attitudes (EDP) mediate the relationship between subjective norms (SN) and consumers intention to buy (INB).
H 9: Brand image (BI) has a positive effect on the consumer's intention to buy (INB).
H 10: Country of origin image (COO) has a positive effect on the consumer's intention to buy (INB).
H 11: Consumer animosity attitudes (AIP) have a positive effect on the consumer's intention to buy (INB).
H 12: Brand image (BI) mediates the relationship between consumer's animosity attitudes (AIP) and consumers intention to buy (INB).
H 13: Country of origin image (COO) mediates the relationship between consumer's animosity attitudes (AIP) and consumers intention to buy (INB).
H 14: Consumer ethnocentrism attitudes (EDP) has a positive effect on their intention to buy (INB).
H 15: Brand image (BI) mediates the relationship between consumer's ethnocentrism attitudes (EDP) and consumers intention to buy (INB).
H 16: Country of origin image (COO) mediate the relationship between consumer's ethnocentrism attitudes (EDP) and consumer's intention to buy (INB).

1.4 Research Design

In the current research work, the units of analyses are individual Palestinian consumers. The study was based on different cultural and behavioural aspects. However, through the previous decades, various models were built to study and interpret people's behaviours. Most of these studies created models that can find a solid background regarding the main factors, dimensions, or motivations that could trigger any individual behaviour toward an object [Bray, 2008]. This study will depend on the theoretical backgrounds of the theory of planned behaviour concepts, Hofstede's

dimensional model of national culture, Schwartz's Cultural Value Orientations and Inglehart's World Values models to create the study model and hypotheses.

Depending on the previously mentioned models and by reviewing a wide range of related previous studies, this research work suggests its own conceptual model, figure 1.1; the researcher followed the steps mentioned in the research design, figure 1.2, to approve its validity and fit. All necessary steps taken in the study were illustrated in the Research Design; in the doctoral thesis mentioned information was separated in the following sections: Introduction, Literature Review, Materials and Methods, Results and Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations.

Figure 1.1: The study conceptual model. Source: Own creation.

Literature review

Previous studies were explored to provide better understanding for the different research variables and their inter-relationships.

Study model and hypotheses

After reviewing previous studies and different cultural and behavioral models, a conceptual model is suggested.
Eight main hypotheses and eight sub hypotheses are suggested to be tested.

Methodology and data analysis

According to the complexity of the research model, both of qualitative and quantitative approaches were followed.
Data collected by interviewing government officials, food manufacturers and food distributers. In addition to using structured questionnaire to gather data from individual consumers.
Data were analyzed by applying different statistical approaches such as: frequency analysis, cross tabulation, exploratory factor analysis, and variance-based structural equation modelling.

Findings and conclusions

The hypotheses tested according to the data analysis results and the study model fit was tested, and the main findings and conclusions were represented.
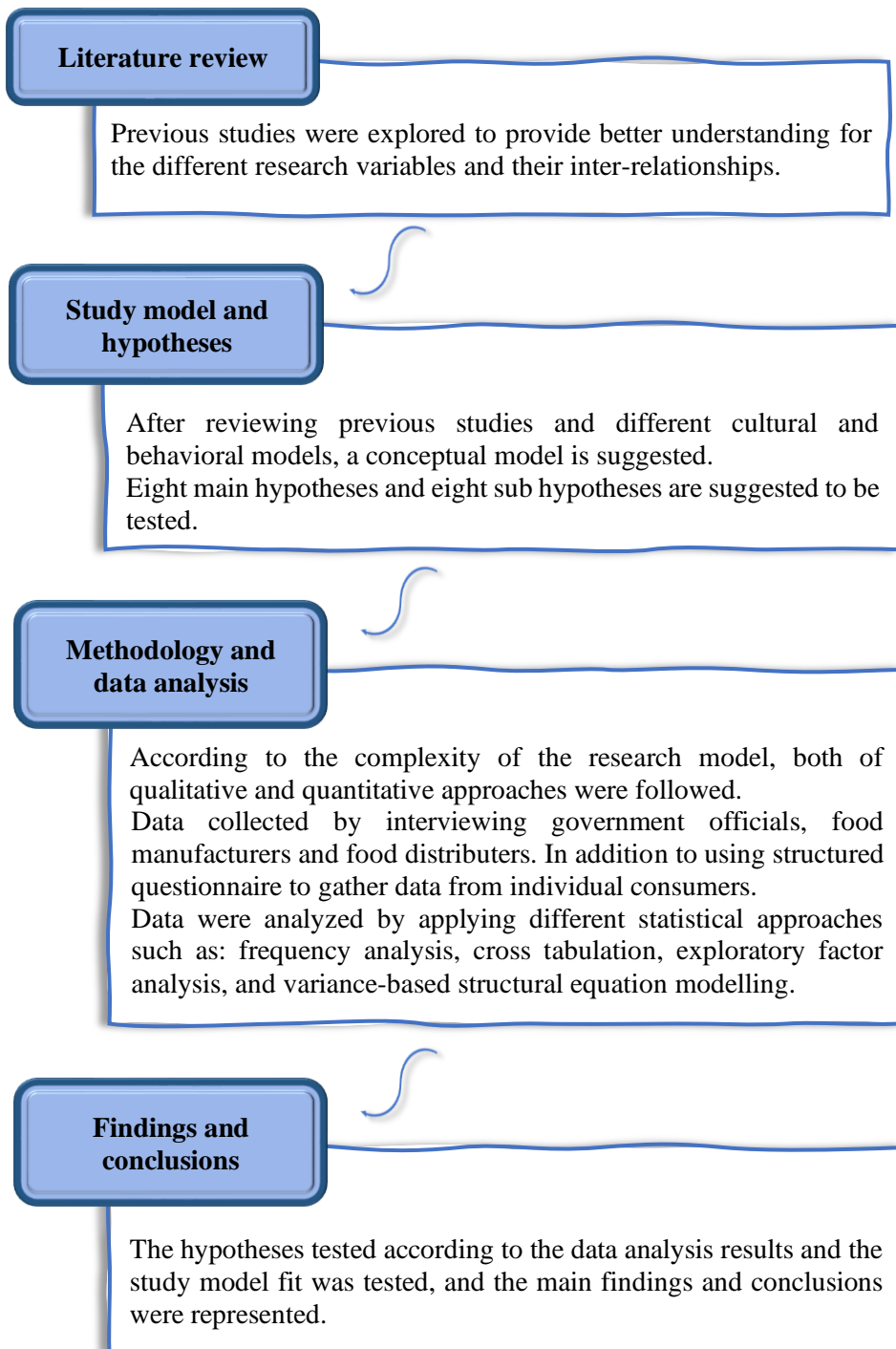
Figure 1.2: research design.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Study context

Consumer decisions towards buying imported products have been wildly considered in the literature. Different motives and clarifications have been proposed to clarify the primary stimuli behind choosing the final products. Three central stimuli had dominated the literature. Ethnocentrism is the first stimulus that induces consumer purchasing behaviour, which pronounces consumers' emotional state towards domestic products as subjects of pride and identity. Animosity is the second stimulus that affects consumer purchasing behaviour towards foreign or imported products. The third stimulus that found to influence consumer purchasing behaviour is their judgments of the products' place of origin [Hassouneh, 2017].

This research work executed in the Palestinian market. This market had been chosen for its complexity that resulted from the continuous political conflicts between the Palestinians and the Israeli. In addition, the study will focus on the food manufacturing sector, which is one of the vital industrial sectors in the Palestinian market.

2.1.1 Trade between Palestine and Israel

Since the first development of the Palestinian authority until now Israel stays an important trade partner for the Palestinians. For too many years Israel was the top destination for main Palestinian export products. However, for the first look, the Palestinian market may seem like an open market with all of its trade relations with the regional countries and other world countries. But with spotting a closer look at the trade figures we see that the most substantial portion of trade is actually made only with one country which is Israel, see table 2.1, and therefore, the Palestinian market becomes one of the most closed economies in the world [PalTrade, 2014].

Table 2.1: The West Bank trade with Israel as a percentage of total trade. Source:[Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2018].

West Bank - Israel	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Imports %	77.3	71.8	69.9	68.6	69.0	68.9	66.5	54.3	54.7	52.1	54.1
Export %	89.4	87.5	85.4	86.8	82.2	87.5	84.4	84.1	83.3	82.7	83.7

2.1.2 The manufactured food industry

Food manufacturing and agricultural industry sector are one of the oldest sectors in Palestine. The cultivated land in Palestine is around 16% of the total area, which give this sector a crucial role in maintaining food security in Palestine and contribute significantly in the Palestinian economic growth [Paltrade, 2016].

The manufactured food industry consists of three major active categories: the conservation of fruits and vegetables, meat and dairy, and the conversion, purification, and distilling of animal and vegetable fats. These three categories include various food products such as confectioneries and sweets, flour mills, dairies and milk products, processed meat, Water and soft drinks and beverages, spaghetti and other grains products, canned and frozen food, oils, and traditional

products as tahini, hummus, halaweh, za'atar, freekeh, etc., and animal feed [Paltrade, 2016; The Palestinian Federation of Industries, 2009].

The food sector is growing rapidly, both vertically and horizontally. At the end of 2017, there were about 2250 working firms in this sector; the number reached 3377 working firms in 2019, recording a growth rate of 50% in the last two years. The labour force also increased in the last two years, from 17583 employees in 2017 to 18297 in 2019 with a growth rate of 4% [The Palestinian Federation of Industries, 2009].

The growth of the agricultural and manufactured food sectors is still not enough, and the Palestinian market still in need to import some kinds of foodstuff that are not available in the local market or products of high demand and short production. The imported manufactured food products reached around 583.6 million US$ in 2018, and in the last five years, the imported food products value increased by 33.2%. Most of these products are imported from Israel were in 2018, the imported food products that came from Israel constitute around 59.8% of total imported manufactured food products [Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2018].

The Palestinian exports of food products is not a different case than imports; the Palestinian capabilities to exports is still very limited for some main political and economic constraints. However, the exports of manufactured food products from Palestine to different countries around the world in 2018 reached 60.6 million US$. Scoring a growth rate in the last five years of 12.3% with most of the exported products are going to the Israeli market where the share of Israel as an exporting destination reach 58.5% [Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2018].

2.2 Methodology

The study model was suggested and built by the researcher himself depending on different behavioural and cultural theories and models. The study model includes eight different variables, two independent variables, one independent variable, and four variables play multi-role as independent and dependent variables. The main independent variable of the study is consumers intention to buy domestic manufactured food products (INB); political instability (PS) and subjective norms or social pressure (SN) were dealt with as independent variables that affect consumers attitudes and intention to buy (INB); consumers attitudes of ethnocentrism (EDP) and animosity (AIP) play tow different role in the model were they affected by PS and SN and at the same time affect INB; similarly, brand image (BI) and country of origin image (COO) is affected by consumers attitudes and affect INB.

2.3 Study sample

The study will take Palestinian consumers as a population and apply the research to measure their buying choice and behaviour toward manufacturing food brands. Furthermore, it will take a convenience sample from the total population. Nevertheless, due to geographic and political limitations, the study will be conducted only in the West Bank region.

2.4 Data collection and analysis methods

Regarding the study model complexity, different approaches were applied for data collection and analysis. The researcher starts collecting data by conducting interviews with governmental officials and food manufacturers and distributors; these interviews aim to provide a better understanding of the Palestinian market situation and the main study variables. In addition, a structured 5-point Likert scale questionnaire is used to collect data from individual consumers.

The questionnaire was built by depending on different scales that used by previous studies to measure consumers attitudes and intention and is guided by the (CETSCALE) of Shimp and Sharma [1987], the questionnaires of Klein et al. [1998], Souiden et al. [2018], and Antonetti et al. [2019].

Different statistical software as SPSS-23 and SMART-PLS-3 were used for analysing the data, and multi analytical approaches were used as frequency test, cross-tabulation, exploratory factor analysis, and variance-based structural equation modelling to test for the hypotheses acceptance and model fit.

For interviews, eight different interviews were conducted; two of them with governmental officials, three domestic food manufacturers, and three distributors.

For questionnaires, around 1000 questionnaire were distributed by using printed and electronic questionnaires forms; about 600 questionnaires were retained, and only 528 valid questionnaires are used for data analysis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Interviews analysis and results

Interviews are divided into a standardised interview where the interviewee will ask the same set of questions in each interview and those that are semi-standardised interviews where each interview takes its form but follows a specific research question around a series of themes [Arsel, 2017]. The later form of interviews will be followed in this study since the nature of the studied relations is not fully understood, and the primary purpose of the interviews is to gather as much as possible information from the interviewees according to their knowledge and expertise in the Palestinian market.

The present exploratory part of the study is meant to shed light on the main research problem, and it aims to provide a better understanding of the effect of the political situation in the Palestinian market on food manufacturing business and their consumer's behaviour.

After conducting the interviews with government officials and economic experts and summarising the interviewee's answers. The empirical evidence collected suggests that the Palestinian market is still suffering from the prevailing situation of high instability in the political environment caused by the continuous struggle between the Palestinian and the Israeli parties. Market stability is affected by many factors as Palestinian-Israeli conflict, public uprising (Intifada), internal political conflict, economic recession, and government financial problems.

The political conflict with Israel has the most significant impact on market stability. The political conflict limited the government ability to set effective regulations to support and protect local manufacturers despite the different trade regulations that signed between the Palestinian and the Israeli since most of these agreements are biased toward the Israeli side. In addition, the Israeli part is the only controller of the ports and airports that the Palestinian manufacturers use for importing and exporting, therefore, the Israeli use this advantage to limit the competitive abilities of the Palestinian manufacturers.

The second group of interviewees are domestic food manufacturers, the interview with them aims to highlight how their businesses are affected by the market instability situation and to what level do they think that the local government can protect and support them. The same group of interviewees also sked to determine their competitiveness ability in facing the threat of foreign and Israeli products and what do they need to face such threats.

According to the results of the interview with domestic food manufacturers, we can conclude that they tend to believe that the government is not giving them enough support and protection to face the threat of foreign competition which complies with the results of the interview with the government officials. And according to the interviewee, domestic businesses are facing fierce competition with foreign brands, especially the Israeli one. The Israeli products are of higher quality, and despite its higher prices, consumers still prefer to buy them because they believe they are better than the domestic products. Furthermore, the domestic food producers who we interviewed market themselves as a domestic product and give this image to their target market. This image of "domestic product" is considered as a strength when political conflict raises since consumers tend to boycott the Israeli products. But it still needs to be more strengthen the brand image and building more trust in domestic products by enhancing its quality which considered as the main weakness of domestic products in facing foreign producers.

The last group of interviewees are domestic retailers. The interview aimed to better understand the nature of consumers buying behaviour toward domestic and Israeli products. According to the interviewee, the Palestinian consumers do not mind buying either Israeli products or domestic products, and that their buying decision is more affected by the offers and discounts on those products. The consumers' decision also affected by the level of political tension in the market. At times of high-tension consumers tend to buy domestic products and boycott Israeli ones. But when the tension intensity decrease, they go back to their regular buying habits and consumption patterns.

3.2 Quantitative analysis

This section of the study will discuss the results of the quantitative analysis of the collected data from the study questionnaire. The data analysis is divided into four parts; the first part will show the sample demographic distributions and nature. For getting these data results, SPSS-23 will be used, and a frequencies test will be conducted. In the second part of the analysis, data about the product attribute that affect the consumer decision toward buying manufactured food products and customers' preferences will be analysed. In order to do this, SPSS-23 will be used to conduct frequencies tests. Also, a cross-tabulation analysis will be conducted to discover the effect of the respondent's demographic variables on their preferences by depending on chi-square. The third part of this section will conduct a component factor analysis by using SPSS 23 program to determine the main study variables components. The last part of the study will use SMART-PLS 3 to test the resulted variables reliability and validity and test the study suggested model relationships and correlations among independent, moderating, mediating and dependent variables of the study and test the primary study hypotheses. At the end of the analysis part, a modified model will be built according to the significant correlations only.

3.2.1 Frequency analysis: consumer's preferences

The questionnaire designed to discover the respondent's preferences toward the country of origin of manufactured food products, the main factors that could affect their buying decision for manufactured foods, why they prefer to buy domestic products regarding several factors and to find up what marketing activities the respondents consider as essential for them and could affect their intention to buy domestic manufactured food products. A 5-Likert scale of 1= highly unfavourable or not important and 5= highly favourable or important.

The results showed that the respondents are favouring to buy domestic products with a mean= 3.93 followed by products made in Turkey with a mean= 3.85, EU with a mean= 3.61. On the other hand, the unfavourable countries were Jordan with a mean= 2.92, Egypt with a mean= 2.80, and the most unfavourable products were those produced in Israel with a mean= 2.32. These results support the study assumption that the Palestinian consumers prefer to buy domestic products over imported ones, especially the Israeli products.

The results also showed that the respondents marked products taste and flavour as being the most important factor for them with a mean= 4.60 followed by product freshness with a mean= 4.48, package design with a mean= 4.21, price with a mean= 3.98, product country of origin with a mean= 3.52 and brand name with a mean= 3.47. The data analysis shows that all six previous factors are important for consumers' when making their buying decision. Still, they hold different weights for each one of them regarding their varied importance.

Regarding the test for why respondents prefer to buy domestic products, the results showed that the respondents prefer them due to their freshness, good taste, good quality and availability in the

market with a mean of 4.07, 4.05, 4.03 and 4.01 respectively. At the same time, the respondents showed a little importance for the social image that they may get from buying domestic products with a mean= 2.74.

The respondents consider the brand reputation and the domestic producer's ability to introduce new products are the two most important marketing factors that could affect their decision with means of 4.07 and 4.06, followed by the offered price discounts and creative advertising campaigns with means of 3.76 and 3.16. Offering free samples for buyers is also considered to be important for the respondents with a mean of 3.04, and the least important factor was considered by the respondents to be offering free gifts for buyers with a mean of 2.86.

3.2.2 Independence test

In this section, data will be tested for exploring the occurrence of significant relationships between demographic variables (gender, education, income, religion, resident, age, nationality) and consumer preference of manufactured food products country of origin, preferably local products attributes, and marketing activities that could affect their intention to buy.

In similar researches such as the research of Guiné [2016], Chung-Herrera Beth [2010] and Ahmed Zafar [2010], the Chi-Square (χ^2) test of independence is commonly used to determine whether or not two nominal categorical variables are related, and Cramer's V test was applied for estimating the strength of the effect. The null hypothesis of the Chi-Square test states that no relationship exists on the categorical variables in the population; or that the two variables are independent. If the p-value (labelled Asymp. Sig.) is less than .05, we can presume that the variables are dependent on each other and that there is a statistical relationship between the categorical variables [Sekaran and Bougie, 2016]. In this study, the alpha level associated with a 95% confidence level.

3.2.2.1 Demographic variables vs country of origin

In the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to show their preferences for food products according to their country of origins. A one-way ANOVA test was used to test the significant differences in consumers preferences of a specific country of origin based on their demographic variables.

The results of the ANOVA test show that demographic variables of gender, place of residents, education, and age have no significant effect on consumer preferences toward food products that originated from Palestine, Turkey, Jordan, and Egypt. While, gender, place of residence, and age affected the consumer preferences for Israeli products – see table 3.1-; and place of residence, education, and age affected the consumer preferences for EU products – see table 3.2-.

The results suggest that city residents have a higher preference toward food products manufactured in Israeli and EU in comparison to village residents. Younger respondents (18-28 years old) have a higher preference toward food products manufactured in Israel in comparison to the group of respondents with ages between 40-50 years old and group higher than 50 years old. In addition, respondents who are holding a postgraduate degree have a higher preference toward food products manufactured in the EU in comparison to respondents who are holding a high school degree or less. However, for products manufactured in EU, Post hoc comparisons using the Games Howel test, indicated no significant differences between the mean score for the different age groups, this may be related to that the data is not sufficient to make statements about pair-wise differences.

Table 3.1: one way ANOVA test for demographics v.s Israeli products. Source: Own research.

Israeli products		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	Between Groups	10.825	1	10.825	5.028	.025
	Within Groups	1132.440	526	2.153		
	Total	1143.265	527			
Place of residence	Between Groups	17.652	2	8.826	4.117	**.017**
	Within Groups	1125.613	525	2.144		
	Total	1143.265	527			
Age	Between Groups	31.773	3	10.591	4.993	**.002**
	Within Groups	1111.492	524	2.121		
	Total	1143.265	527			

Table 3.2: one way ANOVA test for demographics v.s EU products. Source: Own research.

EU products		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Education	Between Groups	14.870	2	7.435	4.587	**.011**
	Within Groups	850.977	525	1.621		
	Total	865.847	527			
Place of residence	Between Groups	16.177	2	8.089	4.998	**.007**
	Within Groups	849.669	525	1.618		
	Total	865.847	527			
Age	Between Groups	17.393	3	5.798	3.581	**.014**
	Within Groups	848.454	524	1.619		
	Total	865.847	527			

3.2.2.2 Demographic variables vs preferable local products attributes

According to the results of Pearson Chi-square test, there is no evidence for any statistically significant relationships at p-value<.05 between respondents' gender, place of residence, income, and age and locally manufactured product attributes of quality, price, taste, availability, freshness, and social image. Conversely, the participant's education level was found to have a significant relationship with product quality and taste.

The crosstab results show that the product quality is important for 73% of respondents with high school or less education level, 70.5% of respondents with undergraduate education level and 59.7% of respondents with postgraduate education level.

Regarding product taste, the crosstab results show that it is important for 98.9% of respondents with high school or less education level, 74.1% of respondents with undergraduate education level and 61.7% of respondents with postgraduate education level.

3.2.2.3 Demographic variables vs marketing activities

According to Pearson Chi-square test results, there is no evidence for any statistically significant relationships at p-value<.05 between respondents education level, residence place, and income and local manufactured product marketing practices of brand reputation, prices discounts, offering free samples, offering gifts, and creating a creative advertising campaign. In opposition, the participants' gender was found to have a significant relationship with brand reputation and offering free gifts, and participants' age was found to have a significant relationship with offering free gifts.

The crosstab results show that providing free samples is important for 37.1% of male respondents and 45.3% of female respondents. Having a good brand reputation is also found to be important to 66.1% of male respondents and 76% of female respondents.

Regarding good brand reputation, it is found to be important to 63.8% of respondents of the age group of 18-28, 83.9% for the respondents' age group of 29-39, 77.5% for the respondents' age group of 40-50, and 70.6% for respondent with ages higher than 50 years old.

3.2.2.4 Cross-tabulation analysis summary

The compilation of the previous data analysis according to the Chi-square test, revealed that the respondent's demographic variables could affect their preferences and decisions in different ways. Some of the consumer preferences were found to be impacted by consumers' demographics much more than others at different levels of impact. However, the chi-square can only tell us whether two variables are related to one another. It does not necessarily imply that one variable has any causal effect on the other. In order to establish causality, a more detailed analysis would be required. However, still, in general, we can conclude at this level of the study that the studied demographic variables are essential for the study and could affect consumer's intention to buy at different levels of impact.

3.2.3   Exploratory Factor analysis

To investigate the construct dimensions, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was performed to check if the actual data was consistent with the proposed factor structures. Principal Components extraction method with Varimax rotation will be applied.

Thirty-nine questions related to variables affecting the consumer intention to buy toward domestic products were factor analysed using principal component analysis with Varimax rotation. The analysis yielded eight factors explaining a total of 62.67% of the variance for the entire set of variables as shown in Table 3.3, which indicates how much of the variability in the data has been modelled by the extracted factors.

Table 3.3: Total Variance Explained. Source: Own research.

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	10.722	27.493	27.493	10.722	27.493	27.493	4.060	10.409	10.409
2	4.256	10.912	38.405	4.256	10.912	38.405	4.039	10.357	20.766
3	2.373	6.084	44.489	2.373	6.084	44.489	3.942	10.107	30.874
4	1.813	4.648	49.137	1.813	4.648	49.137	3.292	8.442	39.316
5	1.699	4.355	53.493	1.699	4.355	53.493	3.286	8.425	47.740
6	1.335	3.422	56.915	1.335	3.422	56.915	2.581	6.619	54.359
7	1.205	3.090	60.004	1.205	3.090	60.004	2.082	5.339	59.698
8	1.040	2.667	62.672	1.040	2.667	62.672	1.160	2.973	62.672

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

According to the component matrix, the first seven factors were included in the analysis while the last variable was excluded since it includes only one item so it was excluded from the analysis and all of the other factors were renamed according to their components, as shown in table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Latent factors components. Source: Own research.

Item code	Item #	Content of statement	Factor loadings
1st factor: Intention to buy (INB); Cronbach Alpha coefficients = .887			
INB 1	Q24	I prefer to buy domestic products.	0.761
INB 2	Q25	Currently, I purchase domestic products.	0.702
INB 3	Q26	In the future, I will continue buying domestic products.	0.674
INB 4	Q27	I have a favourable attitude toward domestic brands.	0.641
INB 5	Q28	My overall evaluation of the domestic product's brand is good.	0.610
2nd factor: Country of origin image (COO); Cronbach Alpha coefficients = .865			
COO 1	Q32	I believe that domestic product quality is fair according to its prices.	0.782
COO 2	Q34	I trust domestic producers.	0.712
COO 3	Q33	I believe that the prices of domestic products are lower than the foreign ones.	0.712
COO 4	Q35	I believe that domestic products are reliable.	0.682
COO 5	Q36	I believe that domestic products are safe for me and my family's health.	0.671
COO 6	Q37	I believe that domestic products are of good quality.	0.568

COO 7	Q38	I believe domestic brands often enhance their quality to meet consumer's needs	0.526

3rd factor: Animosity (AIP); Cronbach Alpha coefficients = .851

AIP 1	Q11	I feel angry toward Israel.	0.785
AIP 2	Q12	I dislike Israel.	0.737
AIP 3	Q14	The Israelis are doing business unfairly with Palestine.	0.715
AIP 4	Q13	Israel does not care about what other nations think of their actions.	0.703
AIP 5	Q15	I do not like the Israeli mentality.	0.672
AIP 6	Q16	Palestine should not have any diplomatic relations with Israel.	0.657
AIP 7	Q17	I do not like that Israeli political policy caused a downturn in the Palestinian economy.	0.640

4th factor: Ethnocentrism (EDP); Cronbach Alpha coefficients = .849

EDP 1	Q18	It is not right to purchase foreign products, because it raises unemployment rates in the Palestinian market.	0.766
EDP 2	Q19	Purchasing imported products is unacceptable behaviour for me.	0.731
EDP 3	Q20	Palestinian products will always be my first and last choice.	0.664
EDP 4	Q21	I would buy foreign products only if I cannot find a substitute Palestinian product.	0.612
EDP 5	Q22	I should purchase Palestinian products to support my country's economy.	0.568
EDP 6	Q23	I will feel guilty if I buy foreign products while there is a substitute domestic product.	0.512

5th factor: Subjective norms (SN); Cronbach Alpha coefficients = .834

SN 1	Q6	People close to me do not support purchasing Israeli products.	0.767
SN 2	Q7	My friends and colleagues believe that I should not buy Israeli products.	0.762
SN 3	Q9	People around me do not encourage me to buy Israeli products.	0.744
SN 4	Q8	My family members will be unhappy if I buy Israeli products.	0.738
SN 5	Q10	If I buy Israeli products, people around me would think that I am supporting the Israeli government cruelty towards the Palestinians.	0.666

6th factor: Political stability (PS); Cronbach Alpha coefficients = .754

PS 1	Q3	I believe that the different signed agreements between the Israeli government and the Palestinian authorities are causing political instability in the Palestinian market.	0.715
PS 2	Q1	I believe that the Palestinian market is politically unstable.	0.712
PS 3	Q2	I believe that the Israeli government policies toward the Palestinians are causing political instability in the Palestinian market.	0.699
PS 4	Q4	I believe that conflicts between the Palestinian political parties are causing political instability in the Palestinian market.	0.696
PS 5	Q5	I think the level of the Palestinian market instability will stay the same in the near future.	0.614

7th factor: Brand image (BI); Cronbach Alpha coefficients = .775

BI 1	Q29	I will choose to buy domestic products even it is a little bit of lower quality than imported products.	0.661
BI 2	Q30	I believe domestic brands often lead ahead of other brands in launching new products.	0.605
BI 3	Q31	I am willing to pay some extra money to buy domestic products.	0.574

The results of the factor analysis will be used as inputs in the SMART-PLS 3 program to conduct a structural equation model analysis. The seven variables and their components will be entered for further analysis to test the study hypotheses and model. The results of the factor analysis will also be reassured by using SMART PLS 3 by conducting a path analysis and make sure that all of the components are suitable for further analysis before testing the significance of the relationships between the latent variables.

3.3 Structural equation analysis

Two sets of linear equations formally define PLS-SEM: the inner model (or structural model) and the outer model (or measurement model). The inner model specifies the relationships between latent variables, whereas the outer model specifies the relationships between a latent variable and its manifest variables (indicator variables) [F. Hair Jr et al., 2014]. A latent variable that never appears as a dependent variable is called an exogenous variable. Otherwise, it is called an endogenous variable. The combination of inner and outer models leads to a complete partial least squares model [Hair et al., 2011].

Smart-PLS software will stop the estimation if the stop criterion of the algorithm reached, or when reach the maximum number of iterations (300 iterations), whichever comes first. Since we aim to obtain a stable estimation, we want the algorithm to converge before reaching the maximum number of iterations [Wong, 2013]. In this study, the algorithm converged only after two iterations, which indicate that the sample size is adequate, with no existence of outliers or too many identical values in indicators, so our estimation is good.

3.3.1 Measurement model analysis

The analysis process will start with assessing the measurement model to make sure that the constructs that establish the basis for the assessment of the structural model relationships are accurately measured and represented. The construct measures' will be evaluated regarding internal consistency reliability by using composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha (CA) and will be assessed for discriminant validity and convergent validity. For the assessment of discriminant validity, two measures have been put forward—the Fornell– Larcker criterion and cross-loadings. For convergent validity, the average variance extracted (AVE) will be examined [F. Hair Jr et al., 2014].

The measurement model was built according to the results of the EFA buy using the SPSS program. After entering the extracted variables that resulted from the EFA and their components, the factors loadings were calculated again by using the SMART-PLS program. Indicators with loadings below 0.700 were deleted from the analysis if their removal affects the values of convergent validity AVE and composite reliability CR; the majority of indicator loadings were higher than .700 except for AIB7 (0.687), COO2 (0.569), COO7 (0.667), PS4 (0.690), and PS5 (0.550) but all of these indicators were retained in the measurement model since they do not noticeably affect AVE or CR values in spite that their loadings are lower than 0.700.

Cross loadings will be extracted by correlating the component scores of each latent variable with each of the indicator variables. If each indicator's loading is higher for its designated latent construct than for any component scores of the other constructs, and each of the constructs loads highest with its assigned items [Hair et al., 2011]. The data analysis shows that indicators have higher values on their relevant latent variable as compared with other constructs. So, the condition for cross-loading is achieved, and it can be inferred that the construct indicators are not interchangeable. Furthermore, all of the retained factors have a factor loading ranged between

0.550 (PS5) and 0.879 (BI3) and most of the factors have a loading higher than 0.750; therefore, unidimensionality achieved.

In this study, internal consistency was measured by using both Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. All of the variables were found to have a satisfactory reliability coefficient above 0.80 for CR ranged between 0.835 for PS and 0.917 for INB. Also, all the variables were found to have satisfactory reliability according to CA values that ranged between 0.757 for PS and 0.887 for INB. These results suggest that the construct measures of AIP, BI, COO, EDP, PS, INP, and SN exhibit sufficient levels of internal consistency reliability.

The sum of the study variables scores a sufficient convergent validity AVE>.50; The AVE values varied from 0.507 for PS to 0.690 for BI. This discloses that all of the variables in the measurement model can explain at least 50% of the variance of its indicators on average. So, convergent validity is also confirmed.

In PLS-SEM, two measures of discriminant validity are commonly used. For the first measure, cross-loadings; and the second measure is the Fornell-Larcker criterion [Hair et al., 2011]. In addition to these two tests, HTMT test will also be applied as proposed by Henseler et al. [2015].

Fornell-Larcker criterion test requires a latent variable to share more variance with its assigned indicators than with any other latent variable. Accordingly, the AVE of each latent variable should be greater than the latent variable's highest squared correlation with any other latent variable [Hair et al., 2011]. As screening the values of the AVE of each latent construct and the correlation of the latent variables. The Fornell-Larcker criterion was achieved successfully for all variables since each latent variable AVE value found to be greater than the variable highest squared correlation with any other latent variable.

The HTMT ratio is the geometric mean of the heterotrait-heteromethod correlations (i.e., the correlations of indicators across constructs measuring different phenomena) divided by the average of the monotrait-heteromethod correlations (i.e., the correlations of indicators within the same construct). In a well-fitting model, heterotrait correlations should be smaller than monotrait correlations, meaning that the HTMT ratio should be below 1.0.

Because the HTMT is an estimate of the correlation between constructs, its interpretation is straightforward: if the indicators of two constructs exhibit an HTMT value that is smaller than one, the true correlation between the two constructs is most likely different from one, and they should differ. There are two ways of using the HTMT to assess discriminant validity: (1) as a criterion or (2) as a statistical test [Henseler et al., 2015].

Using the HTMT as a criterion involves comparing it to a predefined threshold of 0.850. If the HTMT value is lower than 0.850, it can be assumed that discriminant validity is achieved [Henseler et al., 2015]. The data analysis shows that the highest value for HTMT.$_{850}$ is equal to 0.752 (INB --> BI).

HTMT$_{inference}$ measured by employing bootstrapping, and the highest upper confidence interval limit is .821 which is lower than 1, which means that the value one falls outside the confidence interval's range, this suggests that the two constructs are empirically distinct. Thereby, we conclude that discriminant validity has been established between the different given pairs of reflective constructs.

According to the results of cross-loadings, Fornell-Larcker criterion, and Heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT), we conclude that discriminant validity was achieved.

Multicollinearity exists when two or more independent variables are highly intercorrelated. A common rule of thumb is that problematic multicollinearity may exist when the variance inflation factor (VIF) coefficient is higher than 4.0 [Hair et al., 2011]. All the indicators' VIF values in the measurement model and in the structural model are lower than 4 for the measurement model and the structural model. So, there are no collinearity problems in the measurement model nor the structural model.

3.3.2   The goodness of fit for the structural model

After the measurement model has been successfully validated, the structural model can be analysed. The model will be assessed using three criteria: 1) path coefficients (β); 2) path significant (p-value); and 3) variance explain (R^2).

The results of R^2 reveal that the latent variable PS weakly explain 25.3% of the variance in AIP. Besides, the two latent variables AIP and EDP weakly explain 38.2% of the variance in BI and weakly explains 27.2% of the variance in COO; and the two latent variables SN and PS weakly explains 21.5% of the variance in EDP; Also, the six latent variables AIP, SN, COO, EDP, PS, and BI moderately explain 61.2% of the variance in the main study independent variable of INP.

The T-Statistics for all outer lodgings are larger than 1.96 and ranged from t=76.516 (BI3 $\rightarrow$ BI) to t=9.996 (PS5$\rightarrow$ PS) so we can conclude that the outer model loadings are highly significant.

The model predictive relevance is another aspect that explored. The model predictive relevance proposes that the model must be able to satisfactorily predict each endogenous latent construct's indicators [Hair et al., 2011]. Q² comes in two types, the cross-validated redundancy, and communality. We followed the Hair et al. [2011] and Akter et al. [2011] recommendation for using the cross-validated redundancy since it uses the PLS-SEM estimates of both the structural model and the measurement models for data prediction.

The Stone-Geisser's (Q^2) values greater than zero means that the structured model is predictive of the given endogenous variable under examination. A Q^2 with a zero or negative value implies the model is irrelevant to the prediction of the given endogenous factor [Garson, 2016]. With all the Q^2 values higher than zero ($Q^2>0$) for all endogenous variables, we can conclude that the model acceptably predicts each endogenous latent construct's indicators, and the model has an acceptable predictive ability toward the main latent variables.

SRMR is a measure of approximate fit of the model. It measures the difference between the observed correlation matrix and the model-implied correlation matrix. Thus, the SRMR shows the average magnitude of such differences, with lower SRMR being a better fit. By convention, a model has a good fit when SRMR is less than 0.08 [Henseler et al., 2016;Garson, 2016].

SRMR was calculated for both of the saturated models, which are the model that assesses the correlation between all constructs, and for the estimated model which is a model that is based on a total effect scheme and takes the model structure into account. The results indicate that both of the saturated model (SRMR= 0.062) and the estimated model (SRMR =0.073) are achieving a good fit as their SRMR scores are less than 0.08.

3.4 Discussion of the hypothesis's tests

To analyse the significance of the structural model relationships, the path coefficients and their corresponding significance levels are calculated. The strength and significance of the path coefficients are evaluated regarding the relationships (structural paths) hypothesised between the constructs. To do this, it is necessary to verify significance through the t-values and the strength of the relationships. Using a two-tailed t-test with a significance level of 5%, the path coefficient will be significant if the T-statistics is larger than 1.96 [Wong, 2013]. In terms of relevance, path coefficients are usually between -1 to +1, with coefficients closer to +1 representing strong positive relationships, and those closer to -1 indicating strong negative relationship [Sarstedt et al., 2017].

The study analytical model is considered complex and having a lot of direct and indirect (mediating) relationships see figure 3.1, for this reason, and to make the model assessment more understandable, the assessment will be divided into three stages, the first stage will assess the total (direct + indirect) effect of political stability and subjective norms (SN) on consumers attitudes of animosity (AIP), attitudes of ethnocentrism (EDP), and consumers intentions (INB). The second stage will intend to assess the total effect of branding strategies on their intention (INB). The third stage of assessment will focus on the total effect of consumer attitudes on their intentions (INB).
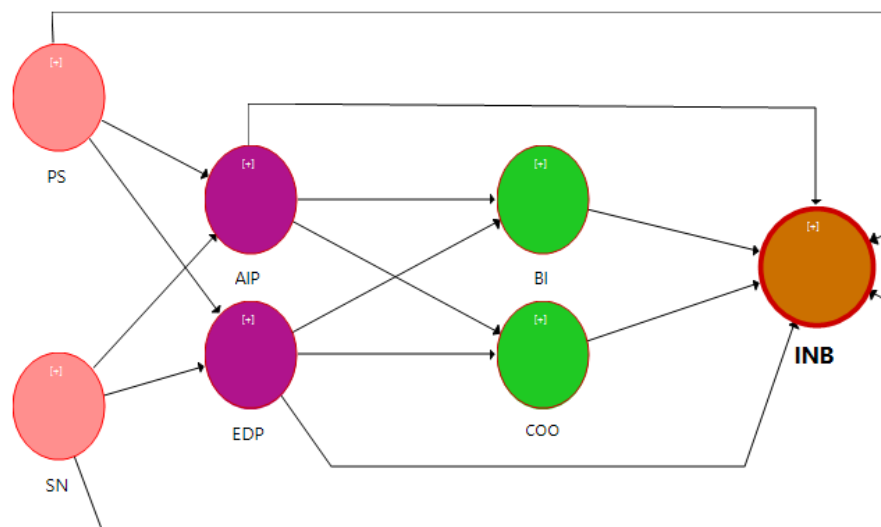

Figure 3.1: Analytical model. Source: Own research.

3.4.1 Stage one: effect of PS and SN on consumer attitudes (AIP, EDP) and intentions (INB)

PS and SN → AIP and EDP

When analysing the path coefficient estimates of the structural model, we start with the first endogenous variable AIP. According to the structural model, AIP is affected by PS and SN, see. PS has the highest significant (t=9.021, p<.001) positive effect (β=.391) on AIP; SN also has a significant (t=7.168, p<.001) positive effect (β=.260); the model explains 25.3% of AIP variance (r^2=.253) which considers weak but acceptable explanation. PS (f^2= .199) has a medium contribution in explaining AIP while SN (f^2= .088) has a small contribution.

According to the results regarding AIP, we can conclude that the Palestinian consumer's animosity attitudes toward Israel will be higher when there are high levels of political tension between the

Palestinian and the Israeli parties and when consumers face a higher level of social pressures by people around them regardless of their demographic characteristics. Thus, the study hypothesis H1 is accepted.

The second endogenous variable to be analysed is EDP. According to the structural model, EDP is affected by SN and PS. The model analysis implies that SN has a significant (t=11.336, p<.001) positive effect (β=.450) on EDP while the PS did not indicate any significant effect on EDP; and the model explains 21.5% of EDP variance (r^2=.215) which considers weak but acceptable explanation.

According to the results regarding EDP, we conclude that the Palestinian consumer's ethnocentrism attitudes will be higher when there are high levels of social pressure imposed on them by their family members and people around them regardless of the political stability situation. Thus, hypothesis H2 is accepted.

PS and SN → INB

The t-statistics results imply that PS is significantly (t=3.312, p=0.001) positively (β=.137) affecting INB. However, the results indicate that the effect of PS on INB was insignificantly (t=1.467, p=.142) direct, but actually, it was significantly (t=2.900, p=.004) an indirect effect. Thus, when market instability got higher, consumers would tend to have stronger intentions to buy domestic manufactured food product since this relationship is mediated by consumers animosity attitudes (PS -> AIP -> INB) (t=3.042, p=.002, β=.057), where at times of higher political stability their animosity attitudes become stronger, and they tend to lower their buying of Israeli products and tend to support the domestic product and got stronger intention to buy it. Conversely, the mediating effects of EDP found to be insignificant in the relationship between PS and INB. These results lead us to accept H3 and H4 and reject H5.

Consumers intention to buy (INB) also significantly (t=7.907, p<0.001) positively (β=.309) affected by subjective norms (SN). In spite that SN has a significant total effect on INB, it still doesn't infer a significant (t=0.089, p=.929) direct effect on INT; instead, the higher magnitude of its effect was indirect (t= 10.639, p<.001, β= .312). As the bootstrapping results impose, four mediation paths are found to be significant which are: SN -> EDP -> INB (t=5.055, p<.001, β=.132), SN -> AIP -> INB (t=2.979, p=.003, β=.038), SN -> EDP -> COO -> INB (t=6.133, p<.001, β=.079), and SN -> EDP -> BI -> INB (t=3.709, p<.001, β=.064).

Therefore, we can figure out that SN actually doesn't have a direct effect on consumers intention to buy domestic manufactured food products, but it got a significant effect when other factors mediate it. When social pressure increases on consumers from people around them, this will positively affect their ethnocentrism and animosity attitudes which lead them to support domestic products and increase their intention to buy domestic manufactured food brands. Also, SN will lead to higher ethnocentrism attitudes which will positively affect their perceived image toward the country of origin and brand name image of domestic food products, which in turn will totally positively affect their intention to buy. According to these results, we accept each of the study hypotheses H6, H7 and H8.

The relationship between SN and INB is moderated differently by COO (β=.079), and BI (β=0.064) as mediating factors that combined with the mediation effect of ethnocentrism attitudes, the magnitude of the mediating effect is small but it still statistically significant. Thus, when there are high social pressure levels exerted on consumers, they expected to have a more referable

country of origin and brand name perceived image which will positively affect their intention to buy.

3.4.2   Stage 2: branding strategies (BI, COO) and consumer intention (INB)

According to t-statistics results, BI has a significant (t=4.159, p<.001) positive (β=.227) effect on INB, and the COO also has a significant (t=9.282, p<.001) positive (β=.337) effect on INB. Thus, both the branding strategies of domestic food producers of brand image and country of origin image prove to affect the consumer's intention to buy domestic food products. The consumer's intention to buy domestic food products will be stronger when consumers affected by the implied strategies and hold a strong perceived image toward domestic brands. Thus, H9 and H10 are accepted.

The structural model analysis implies that BI is directly affected by ethnocentrism and animosity attitudes, and indirectly affected by political stability and subjective norms with the mediating effect of EDP and AIP. The model explained 38.2% of BI variance(r=.382). EDP has significant (t=18.389, p<.001) positive effect (β=.623) on BI; while AIP effect found to be insignificant (t=.329, p=.742) on BI. SN also proves to have a significant (t=0.326, p<0.001) indirect positive effect (β=0.280) on BI that's mediated by EDP (SN -> EDP -> BI). Conversely, the mediating effect of AIP (SN -> AIP -> BI) found to be insignificant (t=9.118, p=0.745); also, the indirect effect of PS on BI if found to be insignificant (t=1.090, p=0.276) and the mediating effect of EDP (PS -> EDP -> BI) (t=1.531, p=0.126) and AIP (PS -> AIP -> BI) (t=0.322, p=0.748) were also found to be insignificant.

In the structural model, EDP (f^2=.571) has a large contribution in explaining BI, while the contribution of AIP was insignificant (f^2<.020) in explaining BI.

According to this result, consumers' ethnocentrism, attitudes in addition to social pressure are considered the main factors that could affect the perceived image of domestic brands name, and when the society highly exert its influence on consumers, they tend to have a stronger ethnocentrism attitude, and as a result, they will tend to have more preferable brand image toward domestic products.

Regarding COO, the structural model shows that it is affected by the same factors as BI; the model explained 27.2% of its variance (r^2=.272). EDP has a significant (t= 13.736, p< .001) positive effect (β=.519) on COO, while the effect of AIP is found to be insignificant (t= 0.215, p= .830). The indirect effect of SN on COO also found to be significant (t= 8.915, p< .001) positive effect (β=.236); this effect is significantly(t= 8.366, p< .001) mediated by EDP (β=.234) (SN -> EDP -> COO), and insignificantly(t=0.210, p= .833) mediated by AIP (SN -> AIP -> COO). Also, it is noticed that the indirect effect of PS on COO was insignificant (t=0.1.344, p= .179), and the mediating effect of EDP (PS -> EDP -> COO) (t=1.522, p=0.128) and AIP (PS -> AIP -> COO) (t=0.212, p=0.832) were also found to be insignificant.

However, in the structural model, EDP (f^2=.337) has a large contribution in explaining COO, while the contribution of AIP was insignificant (f^2<.020) in explaining COO.

According to these results, the customer's perceived country of origin image is profoundly affected by the consumer's ethnocentrism attitude as the results indicate that when consumers have strong ethnocentrism attitudes, they will tend to have a preferable country of origin toward domestic food products. Besides, the social pressure that consumers face from people around them also affecting their perceived image of the domestic products country of origin. However, the social pressure

indirectly affects COO, where the indirect relation is mediated by EDP, this is a logical, rational relationship between SN and COO since social pressure usually enforce the ethnocentrism attitudes that in turn affect their perceived image for domestic products country of origin.

3.4.3   Stage 3: consumers attitudes effect on consumers intentions

Consumer intention to buy found to be significantly (t= 2.570, p= .010) positively (β= .145) affected by AIP and significantly (t= 15.941, p< .001) positively (β= .610) affected by EDP. beside the direct effect of EDP on INT, it also have a significant (t= 9.139, p< .001) indirect positive (β= .316) effect through the two mediation variables of (EDP -> BI -> INB) (t=4.055, p<.001, β= .141) and (EDP -> COO -> INB) (t=7.690, p<.001, β=.175). Nevertheless, the mediation effect of BI (t= 0.324, p= .746) and COO (t= 0.214, p= .830) between AIP and INB is found insignificant.

According to these results, we can say that when consumers are holding strong ethnocentrism attitudes and animosity attitudes, they will attend to have a stronger intention to buy domestic products as a way to express their attitudes. The relationship between EDP and INB is also mediated by both branding elements of local brand image and country of origin image while the same mediation effect was not significant in the relationship between AIP and INB. Thus, when consumers hold strong ethnocentrism attitudes, they will hold a preferable perceived image toward the local brands and thus, in turn, will increase their intention to buy domestic manufactured food brands. According to these findings, we can accept H11, H14, H15, and H16, and reject H12 and H13.

In the structural model, COO (f^2=.180) has a moderate contribution in explaining INB, followed by EDP (f^2=.113), and BI (f^2=.070) with small contribution; all other factors contribution was insignificant (f^2 <.020) in explaining INB.

As shown in the structural model, six factors are affecting the INP and explained 61.2% of its variance (r^2=.612). Bootstrapping results demonstrate that the effects of PS, SN, AIP, EDP, BI, and COO are having a significant direct or/and indirect effect on INB.

After the main supposed hypotheses were tested, and the initial study model redefined by excluding the insignificant relations and showing only the significant one that could in total affect the consumer intention to buy domestic products directly or indirectly which is considered the focal dependent variable of this study and according to the analysis results of the supported hypotheses, a final study model (significant model) had been built -figure 3.2-.
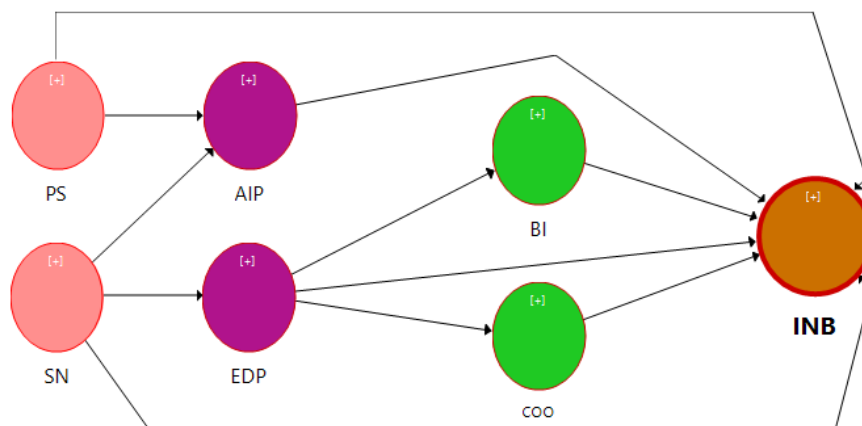

Figure 3.2: Final best-fit model. Source: Own research.

Table 3.5: Summary of hypotheses testing. Source: Own research.

No.	Hypothesis	Accepted/ Rejected
1	Political stability (PS) has a positive effect on consumer animosity attitudes (AIP).	Accepted
2	Subjective norms (SN) has a positive effect on consumer ethnocentrism attitudes (EDP).	Accepted
3	Political stability (PS) has a positive effect on the consumer's intention to buy (INB).	Accepted
4	Consumer animosity attitudes (AIP) mediate the relationship between political stability (PS) and consumers intention to buy (INB).	Accepted
5	Consumer ethnocentrism attitudes (EDP) mediate the relationship between political stability (PS) and consumers intention to buy (INB).	Rejected
6	Subjective norms (SN) have a positive effect on the consumer's intention to buy (INB).	Accepted
7	Consumer animosity attitudes (AIP) mediate the relationship between subjective norms (SN) and consumers intention to buy (INB).	Accepted
8	Consumer ethnocentrism attitudes (EDP) mediate the relationship between subjective norms (SN) and consumers intention to buy (INB).	Accepted
9	Brand image (BI) has a positive effect on the consumer's intention to buy (INB).	Accepted
10	Country of origin image (COO) has a positive effect on the consumer's intention to buy (INB).	Accepted
11	Consumer animosity attitudes (AIP) have a positive effect on the consumer's intention to buy (INB).	Accepted
12	Brand image (BI) mediates the relationship between consumer's animosity attitudes (AIP) and consumers intention to buy (INB).	Rejected
13	Country of origin image (COO) mediates the relationship between consumer's animosity attitudes (AIP) and consumers intention to buy (INB).	Rejected
14	Consumer ethnocentrism attitudes (EDP) has a positive effect on their intention to buy (INB).	Accepted
15	Brand image (BI) mediates the relationship between consumer's ethnocentrism attitudes (EDP) and consumers intention to buy (INB).	Accepted
16	Country of origin image (COO) mediates the relationship between consumer's ethnocentrism attitudes (EDP) and consumer's intention to buy (INB).	Accepted

4. STUDY CONTRIBUTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Palestinian market is witnessing a unique political situation because of the enduring conflict between the Palestinians and the Israeli for more than 70 years until now. This conflict enforced two unique attitudes of ethnocentrism and animosity, which directly and indirectly affecting consumer's intention to buy and made consumers more sensitive to the products country of origin. Additionally, the Palestinian market is an open market that allows several foreign products to enter the market freely.

As best as can be ascertained, very few studies on consumer behaviour under these conditions are conducted, and little is known about the effect of these conditions and attitudes on consumer buying behaviour. However, this study can be considered as the first of its kind in obtaining the data directly from the Palestinian consumers and measured the effect of political stability and social pressure on consumer's attitudes and how these attitudes affecting their intentions to buy manufactured food products. Therefore, this study results made a significant contribution to both academics and practitioners.

4.1 Theoretical contributions

This study has investigated the main determinants which influence consumer's intentions to buy and has established and examined a distinctive conceptual model of manufactured food buying intentions in the Palestinian context. The study model analysis examined the influencing of political stability, subjective norms, ethnocentrism attitudes, animosity attitudes and a group of demographic variables on consumer's intention to buy. The final best-fit structural equation model obtained in this study suggests that: (i) Palestinian consumers' ethnocentrism attitude and animosity attitudes are affected by the political stability levels and also affected by the level of exerted social pressure; (ii) consumers ethnocentrism attitudes directly affecting domestic products brand image and country of origin image; (iii) the perceived image of domestic products (BI, COO) is indirectly affected by social pressure, and the relationship is mediated by consumers ethnocentrism attitudes; (iv) all of the political stability, social pressure, ethnocentrism, animosity, brand image, and country of origin image constructs had significant direct or indirect (mediation) influences on consumers intention to buy domestic products.

4.2 New scientific results

This study has added to current literature and provided a new frame of knowledge to the growing research in the field of manufactured food purchase behaviour. Providing valuable insights into determinants of consumerism in troubled markets in general, the research addresses specifics of consumer behaviour in the Palestinian market as it relates to domestic vs foreign-manufactured food purchases. The significant new results are summarised as follows:

1. Consumer preferences

One of the objectives of this study was to analyse consumer preference for domestic vs foreign-manufactured food products. As the Palestinian market is open to foreign goods, domestic food manufacturers face stiff competition, especially since consumers tend to perceive imported products to be of higher quality. Unlike previous research, the influence of product COO on consumer intent to buy was tested while considering the demographic variables of age, gender, education, income, and residence.

As in other study findings, the results of my study show that ethnocentrism and animosity attitudes have both a direct and indirect impact on Palestinian consumers desire to purchase domestic over foreign products of equal quality, and the least preferred imported products are those from Israel. Also, I found that consumers' tended to believe that domestic products are of fair quality and are fresher and more flavorful.

The addition of demographics to this study provided more detailed information. It appears that most of the demographic variables had no significant influence on consumer preference for domestic and foreign products. However, this research results show that both gender and place of residence significantly impacted consumer preference for Israeli products specifically. The differences were more obvious when there was a large disparity between the number of males and females in the sample. Also, differences were significant when considering city or village residence. That could be due to the fact that Palestinians are a fairly homogeneous community or that village residents feel the impact of Israeli activities more than city residents.

2. Marketing activities

The relationship between demographics and domestic food manufacturers' marketing strategies was also analysed in this study. One clear result is that consumers are influenced to buy specific brands of domestic products depending on the reputation or positive BI and by the frequency that a manufacturer puts new products on the market. Not surprisingly, the majority of consumers like to be introduced to new products with free samples. Although all age groups consider free samples important, those in mid-career who likely have growing families appear to consider that more than either younger or older adults. Specifically, as shown in the crosstab results, offering free samples is important to 37.1% of male respondents and 45.3% of female respondents overall. Broken down by age, free samples are important to 63.8% of 18-28 year olds, 83.9% of respondents aged 29-39, 77.5% for 40-50 year olds, and 70.6% for those older than 50.

3. The effect of political instability and subjective norms on consumer attitudes

The data collected for this study comes from consumers who face daily challenges resulting from ongoing political conflict. This gives the results high value as a study of current literature indicates that this is the first time research has been done on the direct effects of political instability on shaping consumer animosity attitudes and the role of subjective norms (social pressure) on ethnocentrism in the marketplace.

After analysing the data, I found that political instability directly affects consumers' animosity attitudes while it has no effect on consumers ethnocentric attitudes. The nature of the conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis impacts consumers' daily lives and causes feelings of insecurity which increase the attitude of animosity.

Subjective norms also approved to directly impact both animosity and ethnocentric attitudes since the Palestinian community is considered a collectivist community and the opinion of others, especially family members and close friends, profoundly affect an individual's attitudes and behaviours. As these relationships have not been directly tested before in the Palestinian market context, we can consider these findings to be new and original results.

4. The effect of consumer attitude on consumer intentions

Another aim of the study was to define the effect of consumers' attitudes on marketplace purchases. This research work studied the effect of ethnocentric and animosity attitudes on consumers intention to buy domestic Palestinian products.

The findings of this research work support the occurrence of the direct effect of both ethnocentrism and animosity on consumers' intention to buy domestic products. This study is unique as it looks at the effect of both of ethnocentric attitudes and animosity attitudes in a politically unstable environment; additionally, this study is the first of its type that deals with ethnocentrism and animosity as mediating variables and proved the occurrence of a mediating effect in the study context.

5. Branding strategies effect on consumer intentions

In this study, new information is also addressed in the analysis of the effect of Palestinian food manufacturers' branding strategies on consumers' intentions to buy domestic food products. It appears that this is the first study dealing with BI and COO as a mediating variable impacting consumers' ethnocentric and animosity attitudes and consumers' intention to buy. This research result shows that while consumer ethnocentrism fosters decisions to buy domestic products, BI and COO mediate that impact. Conversely, I found that BI and COO appear to have no influence on animosity attitudes and intention to buy. This new information will be of significant importance for domestic food manufacturers when building their branding strategy, especially since there is a dearth of such information about the Palestinian market.

6. Providing a new holistic model for understanding consumer intentions in troubled markets.

Perhaps the most important goal of this study is to promote a better understanding of consumer behaviour in a troubled market. For achieving this goal, multiple variables were considered by using a holistic model that analysed the direct and indirect relationships between all of the variables; according to the results, I give a comprehensive view of how market instability, subjective norms, consumers' attitudes, and branding strategies could affect consumers' intentions to buy in troubled markets such as the previously unexamined Palestinian market.

The study model shows direct and indirect relationships between the study variables. The first relationship indicates that the level of political stability directly affects consumers' intention to buy domestic products, while, indirectly, the mediating effect of animosity attitude affects intentions to buy. The second significant relationship was between subjective norms and consumers' intention to buy domestic products. Consumers' intentions are directly affected by subjective norms, while the mediating variables of consumers' animosity attitudes, ethnocentrism, brand image, and country of origin image provide an indirect effect.

4.3 Conclusions

4.3.1 Consumer behaviour toward domestic products

The consumers residing in Palestine are interested in both Palestinian as well as Israeli products. Generally, they still prefer domestic over Israeli products, particularly when there is heightened political conflict between the two sides. That is mediated, however, by consumer evaluation

criteria such as product taste and flavour, freshness, price, package design, and the brand name reputation as well as it's country of origin.

Data analysis revealed that Palestinian consumers prefer to buy domestic products because of availability and because they consider them to be fresher and tastier. Consumer preference also leans toward brands with a good reputation and proven ability to introduce new products regularly.

4.3.2   Branding strategy and consumer intention to buy

The primary aim of this study is to give recommendations for domestic food manufacturers regarding their branding strategies; the two branding elements of brand name image and country of origin positively affect the consumer's intention to buy. That is, when consumers perceive a brand to have a positive brand image and good reputation as well as being produced in a preferable country, they will tend to buy it, and this is the case regarding domestic products where consumers consider domestic products to be safe and of decent quality.

Consumer attitudes and the market situation are both affected by the brand image and country of origin image. This study found that friends and family can impose social pressure that leads a consumer to conform to group opinion and adopt a positive image toward domestic products or a negative image toward Israeli products. Again, this relationship is mediated by a consumer's ethnocentric attitudes, encouraging them to a positive evaluation of domestic products and the desire to support their country's economy. On the other hand, when consumers hold a positive attitude toward foreign, non-Israeli, food products and believe that those products are of higher quality and provide them better value, that tends to decrease their opinion of similar domestic products. This does not, however, apply to Israeli products; even when consumers consider them to be of higher quality, they still consider the local brands to be their preferred choice and believe them to be better. This behaviour can be explained by their ethnocentric and animosity attitudes.

4.3.3   Political stability, subjective norms, and consumer's intentions to buy

Political stability is one of the main study independent variables that affect a consumer's attitudes and intention to buy. The level of political stability directly affects the INB, which shows that, at periods of intense conflict between Palestine and Israel, Palestinian consumers tend to boycott Israeli products and buy more domestic products and vice versa. Consumers animosity attitudes toward Israel mediate this relationship; that is, at times of increased political conflict, consumer's animosity attitudes are enforced, and this, in turn, will affect their behaviours and intentions.

Subjective norms or social pressure also strongly affects consumers' attitudes and intentions to buy. Particularly when family or close friends exert social pressure, a consumer's ethnocentrism and animosity attitudes increase. Adding in the perceived image of Palestinian brands, consumer intent to purchase domestic products also increases. Thus, the Palestinian consumer is more likely to purchase domestically produced manufactured food products rather than Israeli or any other foreign products when social pressure is heightened.

4.4 Business implications

With this study, it has been observed that there exist various corporate challenges with the relationship between the variables and the intention of the consumers to buy goods produced in Palestine. As this study deals basically with the food products, this study automatically becomes important to anyone who wants to establish a food-related business in Palestine. This research work defines the various factors responsible for the purchase of food products in the country, hence

this provides future directions to the businessmen in the food industry here. It would also be helpful in designing marketing strategies to target potential consumers' and attain maximum profits.

4.5 Study limitations

The nationalism and enmity factors are two very sensitive topics, and the related information is also very delicate in the market of Palestine. But, we cannot avoid the fact that Israel has control over the major area of the country and thus there is a probability that the users taking the surveys were afraid or suspicious about filling the questionnaire. Majority of the men in the country refused to take the survey, and this makes women as most of the study respondents. Due to this only, the response rate was also affected. The actual response rate was even less than 50%. Therefore, the sample size is considered to be non-representative.

4.6 Recommendations

If we consider the current scenario, then the market of Palestine is being severely affected by political uncertainty. In order to overcome this, the local manufacturers are talking to the government policy fabricators, so that new methods could be found to save the markets from being fully captured by foreign brands. The main focus is on Israeli products. The entire procedure is challenging and would take more time due to the regulatory and political situation of the government of the country.

Amongst the people of Palestine, there are high levels of nationalism and enmity, which makes them strongly opt for the locally produced goods and prevent buying goods produced in Israel. The local food manufacturers of Palestine can make use of this for their benefit and can focus on the fact that their brand is local and national and would help the country to grow economically. This could be a great marketing strategy and economy generator.

However, just by focusing on the enmity and nationalism factor, the manufacturers in Palestine could not increase their sales, as the consumers are smart, and they pay attention to the quality too. Thus, it is essential for the food manufacturers to produce such products which are high in quality and offer an improved flavour and taste which the consumer desires. Also, by constantly bringing new products into the food industry, the consumers can be retained for a longer time. Producers should know that these are tactics by which the foreign brands capture the market, so they must keep this in mind to become a successful manufacturer in the country.

Finally, based on these research results, it is strongly recommended that Palestinian food manufacturers implement more creative marketing strategies to build consumer trust in domestic products by using differentiation strategies based on the product brand name image and the product country of origin image. Facing stiff competition from Israeli and other foreign brands, it would be wise to use indirect comparative advertisements and blind tests to demonstrate the superior quality of domestic prod

5. SUMMARY

In the last few decades, the Palestinian market witnessed many political changes that dramatically affect its main economic indicators and imposed different challenges on local business working there. The political conflict between the Palestinian's and the Israeli's considered as the main cause of high ambiguity and uncertainty of the Palestinian market environment since Israel imposed several constraints on the Palestinians as individuals and business. These constraints include controlling the movements of individuals and goods, controlling borders and therefore controlling importing and exporting, using the Israeli currency in the Palestinian market trades, putting quotas for some specific goods that the Palestinians can import or export, putting constraints on the nature of raw materials that the Palestinian's can produce or import, besides many other constraints that negatively affect the attractiveness of the Palestinian market.

For Palestinians, Israel is considered a hostile country that occupies their lands for more than 70 years and controlled their lives and daily activities for a long time. After long years of conflict, the Palestinians build different attitudes, and they start to behave according to these attitudes. This study focuses primarily on two central attitudes of ethnocentrism attitudes and animosity attitudes.

Ethnocentrism attitudes were endorsed by the Palestinian consumers' desire to protect their country and play a role in supporting its economy. Consumers with high ethnocentrism attitudes try their best to buy domestic products instead of foreign products because they believe that by doing so they will be supporting local business and reducing unemployment rates, and they consider this behaviour as being a part of their social responsibility toward their community and country. On the other hand, consumers animosity attitudes drive Palestinian consumers to boycott the Israeli products since they consider it also as a hostile country. Buycotting behaviour usually explained as a pressure tool that consumers use to affect the Israeli economy and governmental unfair policies and procedures.

Through the literature, several studies investigated the effect of ethnocentrism and animosity on consumers intention to buy around the world. Most of the studies focused in one of the attitudes and few of the studies focused on the effect of both them as this research work. In most of the previous studies, the effect of ethnocentrism and animosity attitudes on consumers intention to buy found to be significant.

Consumers attitudes and intentions to buy also affected by the level of the social pressure that exerted by the society around them. Consumers thoughts and behaviours are approved to be affected by their family members and close friends' opinions. For example, if the consumer lives in a society with high animosity attitudes, he will find himself indirectly forced to follow the boycott behaviour; and the same case is applied for ethnocentrism attitudes and he will also indirectly forced to support and buy domestic products even if he does not hold strong attitudes.

Consumers attitudes are also affecting the perceived image of domestic and international products and highly affect their branding strategies. Therefore, manufacturers need to carefully choose their brand names and the country or the place of the origins of their products and make sure that they perceived positively by their target markets due to their important effect on consumer intentions and buying behaviour.

After reviewing the previous literature, this research work designed to study the effect of the political stability and subjective norms on consumers intentions to buy manufactured food products through the mediation of consumers ethnocentrism and animosity attitudes and manufacturers branding strategies in the Palestinian market context.

The Palestinian market was chosen due to the continuing long political conflict that affects its business environment and the lack of previous studies that investigated the effect of political instability on Palestinian business and consumers. This research work also focused on the food manufacturing sector for its importance for the Palestinian economy and for the Palestinian consumers who are daily buy food products.

This research work has seven main objectives of highlight the effect of political stability on Palestinians food manufacturers, determine the consumers' preferences toward domestic manufactured food products, determine the role of political instability in shaping the consumers' animosity attitudes, determine the role of subjective norms (social pressure) in shaping consumers ethnocentrism attitudes, determine the effect of consumers attitudes on consumers intention to buy domestic products. I define the effect of the Palestinian food manufacturers branding strategies effect on consumers intentions to buy domestic food products, and providing a holistic view to better understand the consumer behaviour in troubled markets.

To achieve these objectives, a study model was built, and primary data were collected by following both qualitative and quantitative approaches. At the first, in-depth interviews with government officials, local food manufacturers and local distributors were conducted to highlight the main research problem and better understand the main variables of the study.

In the quantitative part, a questionnaire was developed and distributed on Palestinian consumers to understand their attitudes structure and their behaviours. After testing the collected questionnaire, only 528 questionnaires were valid and used for the analysis part. The data were analysed by using SPSS and SMART-PLS programs, and different statistical tests were applied with focusing on structural equation modelling analysis.

The results of this research work revealed the following main findings:

1. Palestinian consumers usually buy both of the domestic products and Israeli products. However, they still prefer the domestic products over the Israeli one especially when the political conflict intensity increases and the consumer intention to buy domestic products increases when they perceive them to have a positive brand image and good reputation.
2. Consumer perceived image is affected by consumer attitudes and political instability level.
3. At a time of increased political conflict, consumer's animosity attitudes are enforced, and this, in turn, will affect their behaviours and intentions.
4. The level of the practiced social pressure over the consumers would enforce their ethnocentrism and animosity attitudes and affect their buying intentions.

This study had been made under a prolonged political conflict that is still continuing until nowadays which give it a higher value for the study since the data is collected from consumers who are facing the daily challenges that made by this political conflict. This research work add to the literature review regarding consumer behaviour and enrich the main knowledge structure by investigating the main determinants that influence consumer's intentions to buy in troubled markets. This research work has the following main new findings that had not been studied before by any other research:

1. Palestinian consumers prefer to buy domestic products more than the foreign imported products, and the least preferred imported product for them is the Israeli products. Consumers found to prefer domestic products because they consider them to be more freshener, have a good taste, and of fair quality.
2. In the Palestinian market context, political instability is directly affecting the consumers' animosity attitudes, while it has no effect on consumers ethnocentrism attitudes.

3. This study is the first of its type that deal with ethnocentrism and animosity as mediating variables and a proved the occurrence of mediating effect in the study context.
4. This study deal with brand image and country of origin image as a mediating variable between consumers ethnocentrism and animosity attitudes and consumers intention to buy. The results showed that both of the brand image and country of origin image mediate the relationship between consumer ethnocentrism attitudes and their intentions to buy. Still, this effect does not appear between animosity attitudes and consumer intentions to buy.
5. Providing a holistic model for studying the effect of multi variables as, political stability, subjective norms, ethnocentrism attitudes, animosity attitudes, country of origin, and brand image on consumers intention to buy,

The results of this study can be used by interested government officials to enhance their strategies and policies toward the manufactured food sector; also, business in manufactured food sector can use the findings of this study to build more competitive branding strategies and provide them a better understanding of the main variables that could affect their consumers' behaviour. Besides, other industrial sectors can also use these findings to better understand the effect of the political instability on their business and consumers.

APPENDIX I: list of publications

List of Publications in Conference Proceedings

1. ABDALRAHMAN, M. 2017. The Expected Impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution on Marketing Decision. *In:* KÁPOSZTA, J. & NAGY, H. (eds.) *"Innovation as a driving force of sustainable development" 4th VUA YOUTH Scientific Session.* Gödöllő: Szent István Egyetem. ISBN: 9789632696935.

2. ABDALRAHMAN, M. 2018. SMEs Supply Chain Challenges in Turbulence Markets: Case Study of Palestinian SMEs. *In:* VAJNA ISTVÁNNÉ TANGL, A. (ed.) *Business and Management Sciences: New Challenges in Theory and Practice. Conference on the 25th Anniversary of the Doctoral School of Management and Business Administration: Book of Abstracts = Gazdálkodás- és szervezéstudomány: Új kihívások az elméletben és gyakorlatban. Tudományos konferencia a Gazdálkodás és Szervezéstudományok Doktori Iskola alapításának 25. évfordulója alkalmából: Előadások összefoglalói.* Gödöllő: Szent István Egyetem Egyetemi Kiadó. ISBN 978-83-63978-85-3.

3. ABDALRAHMAN, M. 2019. Country of origin as a food choice evaluation criterion. *In:* KENDE, Z., BÁLINT, C. & KUNOS, V. (eds.) *18th Alps-Adria Scientific Workshop : Alimentation and Agri-environment : Abstract book.* Gödöllő: Szent István Egyetem Egyetemi Kiadó. Doi: 10.34116/NTI.2019.AA.1

4. ABDALRAHMAN, M. & KHAZAMI, N. 2018. Halal Clean Food Branding Between New Young Muslim Generation And Non-Muslims Customers. *In:* DINYA, L. & CSERNÁK, J. (eds.) *"Fenntarthatósági kihívások és válaszok" [elektronikus dok.] ["Sustainability challenges and answers"] ["Herausforderungen und Antworten von Nachhaltigkeit"].* Eger: EKE Líceum Kiadó. ISBN 978-615-5621-74-1.

5. ABDALRAHMAN, M. & LEHOTA, J. 2018. Effective Marketing Logistics as a basis for competitive advantage. *In:* ILLÉS, B. C., KARCZEWSKA, A. & SKIBA, Ł. (eds.) *Problems of Management in Contemporary Organizations.* Czestochowa: Oficyna Wydawnicza Stowarzyszenia Menedzerów Jakosci i Produkcji (SMJiP). ISBN 978-83-63978-85-3.

List of Publications in Peer-Reviewed Journals

1. ABDALRAHMAN, M. 2018. Branding strategies in the family business. *ACTA AVADA,* 5**,** 16-25. ISSN 2351-6399.

2. ABDALRAHMAN, M. 2019. Consumer Behaviour Toward Modern Food Products and Trends. *MEDNARODNO INOVATIVNO POSLOVANJE / JOURNAL OF INNOVATIVE BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT,* 11**,** 77-82. DOI: 10.32015/JIMB/2019-11-2-9

3. ABDALRAHMAN, M. & LEHOTA, J. 2019. The Effect of Consumer Perceived Trust and Image Toward Food Brands on Consumers' Willingness to Buy. *TÁPLÁLKOZÁSMARKETING,* 6**,** 41-56. DOI*:* https://doi.org/10.20494/TM/6/1/3

4. ABDALRAHMAN M., ISTVÁN F., LEHOTA J. 2018. The Influence of Consumer Ethnocentrism on Consumer Purchase Intention of Domestic Food Products. GAZDASÁG ÉS TÁRSADALOM 3 - 4, 126-140. DOI: 10.21637/GT.2018.3-4.08

List of Publications in Books

1. ABDALRAHMAN, M. 2018b. Marketing Environment Analysis, the importance of strategy, planning, and risk analysis. In: FEHÉR, I. (ed.) Principles of Agrimarketing. Gödöllő: Szent István Egyetem Egyetemi Kiadó. ISBN: 978-963-269-745-1

2. ABDALRAHMAN, M. 2018. Place: Marketing logistics, distribution channels and bargaining power. *In:* FEHÉR, I. (ed.) *Principles of Agrimarketing.* Gödöllő: Szent István Egyetem Egyetemi Kiadó. ISBN: 978-963-269-745-1

3. ABDALRAHMAN, M. & LEHOTA, J. 2018. Marketing logistics: creating sustainable competitive advantage through the integration of marketing and supply chain management. *In:* BYLOK, F., ALBRYCHIEWICZ-SŁOCIŃSKA, A. & CICHOBLAZINSKI, L. (eds.) *8th* International *Conference on Management: Leadership, Innovativeness and Entrepreneurship in a Sustainable Economy.* Czestochowa: Wydawnictwo Wydzialu Zarzadzania Politechniki Czestochowskiej. ISBN 978-83-63978-85-3, (monograph).

4. FEHÉR, I. & ABDALRAHMAN, M. 2018. Basic elements of marketing: "Application of the basic principles of marketing in agricultural sector". *In:* FEHÉR, I. (ed.) *Principles of Agrimarketing.* Gödöllő: Szent István Egyetem Egyetemi Kiadó. ISBN: 978-963-269-745-1

5. SZABÓ, I. & ABDALRAHMAN, M. 2018. Promotion: Integrated marketing communication. *In:* FEHÉR, I. (ed.) *Principles of Agrimarketing.* Gödöllő: Szent István Egyetem Egyetemi Kiadó. ISBN: 978-963-269-745-1

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