

## **The Relative Importance of Indicators of Perceived Jordanian Islamic Garments Quality: An Application of Non-Jordanian Consumers in Foreign Markets**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims at identifying the relative importance of quality measures elements of the Jordanian Islamic garments as perceived by non-Jordanian consumers in foreign markets. In addition, it examines the moderating effect of demographic characteristics and the country of citizenship on the perceived quality of Jordanian garments. The study's population consists of consumers of Islamic women garments in the UK and Canada.

A structured questionnaire was sent to several Islamic women clothes retail shops, in both the UK and Canada, where Jordanian Islamic clothes are being displayed. Depending on this study type and hypotheses, frequency table, percentages, t-Test, and ANOVA test, were used for hypotheses testing. The reliability and validity of the scales were found to be satisfactory.

The study found that the four most important quality indicators as perceived by Non-Jordanian consumers of the Islamic women' garments are: The product attributes (design, appearance, sizing and textile factor), price (value), store attributes, and promotion . It was also found that all of the study's quality indicators of Jordanian Islamic garments were positively perceived by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets. Furthermore, the perceived quality indicators were found to differ in terms of the demographic variables (age, education level, income level, and marital status) .

**Keywords:** Perceived quality, Garments, Country of Origin, Quality indicators.

### **INTRODUCTION**

After years of rapid growth, total clothing sales began to decline in the early 2000's as the Jordanian clothing industry experienced turmoil with an increased competition. This decline might be contributed to the formation of various trade agreements and the establishment of liberal trade policies by the Jordanian government with several countries. These agreements have resulted in the abolition of protectionist measures and the removal of most trade barriers. As a result, all clothing companies in Jordan were virtually confronted with the consequences of this new commercial reality.

Several consumer-oriented factors have also contributed to challenges in the Jordanian clothing industry. Some of them include fluctuations in economy, changes in consumer demographic and lifestyle, profiles, and the loss of consumers markets.

As clothing industry experience these changes, the clothing market becomes more difficult to capture. These changes have also emphasized the importance of exploring effective tools for clothing business success. Indeed, an increased competition justifies the claim that competition is often quality-based strategies guided by satisfying customer needs, and enhancing business performance objectives.

### **Significance of the Study**

This research has several theoretical and managerial

implications. From a managerial perspective, several manufacturers who are attempting to determine why the consumers buy their products will find this research important. Empirical studies such as this will provide manufacturers with the tools to attract and retain consumers. Additionally, this study is important for marketing managers of Jordanian Islamic garments' manufacturing companies to increase the Jordanian goods market share in foreign countries markets, by analyzing the perception of end-users in these markets of the garment's quality. Therefore, it would indicate the relative importance of quality measures, so that the producers can develop on them. From theoretical perspective, this research will contribute to a better understanding of the quality needs of Islamic clothes, extend current research and provide a basis for further study.

Principally, this study aims to:

1- Identify the relative importance of quality measures elements of the Jordanian Islamic garments as perceived by Non-Jordanian consumers in foreign markets.

2- Examine whether the perceived quality of Jordanian garments are different in terms of the consumers' demographic characteristics (age, education level, income level, and marital status).

**Research Problem and Questions**

Previous researches indicate that consumer purchasing behavior is affected by various elements that compose their perceived quality of the products. Yet, little is known about how consumers would perceive the quality of Jordanian garments.

This study provides answer to the following questions:

1- What are the elements of the quality indicators that affect the consumers purchasing preferences toward the Jordanian garments, and what is the relative importance of each of these indicators?

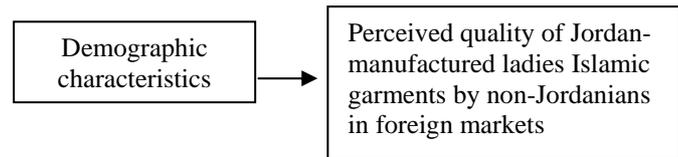
2- Is the quality perception of Jordanian garments different in terms of the consumers' demographic characteristics (age, education level, income level, and marital status).

**Research Models and Operational Definition of the Study Variables**

**Independent variables**

- **Product Attributes**
  - Appearance
  - Design, shape, style
  - Textile and sizing
  - Brand name
  - Country of origin
- **Price value**
- **Store Attributes**
  - Image
  - Location
  - Size
- **Promotion Attributes**

**Dependent variables**



**Variables Operational Definitions**

**Perception:** (Schiffman, Kanuk, 1997) defined perception, as it is the process by which an individual

selects, organizes, and interprets stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world.

**Appearance:** (Maria, 2000) described the

appearance as referring to the main features or the general shape of the model that should be available in cloths, and should meet the acceptance of a large number of consumers.

**Design:** (Maria, 2000) explained the design as to dress engineering in all parts that should appear in harmony upon assembling; in terms of size, shape, style, measures, and colors.

**Textile and Sizing** (Maria, 2000) described textile and sizing factor as referring to the dress fabric, and the size of the final products. The importance of this factor comes from the idea that the consumer makes his first comparison between the garments upon textile differences and preferences.

**Brand name:** (Maria, 2000) referred the trade mark to legal designation indicating that the owner has exclusive use of a brand or part of a brand and the other tailors are prohibited by law from using it. .

**Country- of- Origin :** (Johansson et al., 1985) defined country-of-origin as the country where the headquarters of the company that manufactures and markets the product or brand is located.

**Price (value):** (Kotler, 2002) defined price, as it is the value exchanged for products in a marketing exchange.

**Store image:** (Maria, 2000) referred store image to the total conceptualized or expected reinforcement that a person associates with shopping at a particular store.

**Promotion:** (Kotler, 2002) Promotion is the communication that builds and maintains favorable relationship by informing and persuading one or more audiences to view an organization positively and to accept its products.

**Perceived Quality:** Consumers often judge the quality of a product or service on the basis of a variety of informational cues that they associate with the product. Some of these cues are intrinsic to the product or service, other are extrinsic. Schiffman, Kanuk, (1997).

**Study hypotheses;** The main hypotheses of the study are stated in null format as follows:

**H01:** All the quality indicators of Jordanian Islamic garments are perceived negatively by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets.

This hypothesis is divided into the following sub-hypotheses:

**H0a:** Product attributes (appearance, design, textile and sizing brand name and country of origin) of Jordanian Islamic garments are perceived negatively by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets.

**H0b:** Price (value) of Jordanian Islamic garments is perceived negatively by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets.

**H0c:** Store attributes (image, location and size) of Jordanian Islamic garments are perceived negatively by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets.

**H0d:** Promotion factor of Jordanian Islamic garments is perceived negatively by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets.

**H02:** The perception of the quality of Jordanian Islamic garments by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets does not significantly differ between these consumers according to their demographic characteristics (age, education, income level, marital status and nationality).

### **Theoretical Framework & Previous Studies**

Clothing is a code, a language that allows a message to be created and understood. (Noesjirwan Corneo and Jeanne (1994) found that people communicate through fashion, while imitation and differentiation are strong elements of it. Fashion products reflect self-image while fashion apparel reflects self-concept, self-image and identity, which assures personal importance and status (Forney et al., 2005). According to Anholt (2000)

apparel is a viable product for international retailing for two reasons. First, clothing meets a basic human need, thus, creates continuous demand. Second, brand names can create 'unique' products and company images that depict lifestyles that appeal worldwide.

Apparel is a fashion product that is influenced by social trends and global economic environments. Current apparel products were classified as follows: designer brands, new major brands, bridge products, contemporary products, better products, moderate products, and budget products. Internationally famous fashion designers create original products using inspiration from various historical and contemporary sources.

A fundamental component of comprehensive theories of consumer behavior is product valuation where consumers assess the attributes of various product offerings, evaluate them for importance to their own decision-making, and make purchase decisions. In this stage of consumer behavior, products are assessed on various attributes, in relation to what consumers consider most important, and so product's attitudes that influence purchase intentions are formed.

Some empirical research has examined the importance that Chinese consumers place on various apparel products attributes. Findings suggest a variety of intrinsic criteria including: fit, comfort, style, color, workmanship, and either fabric, fiber content, or fabric comfort was rated as the most important (Forsythe et al., 1999). Although the extrinsic criteria of price and brand were rated as somewhat less important as compared to other attributes in two studies, Forsythe et al., (1999) found that price, along with design and quality, significantly influenced purchase intentions regarding a jacket.

### **Important factors that affect apparel choice**

#### **1-Branding**

Branded apparel tends to acquire more favorable

evaluations by the consumers and appears to provide value by enhancing their confidence in forming purchasing decisions. Brands can provide assurance to consumers, particularly when they evaluate products of which the product features are not easily compared among alternatives (Bristow and Mowen, 1998). Branding in the fashion sector is very significant for the retailer, since if brand loyalty is developed, he may achieve a significant increase in sales and profit. For this reason, brand loyalty is an important indicator of success especially for fashion retailers (Birtwistle et al., 1998).

#### **2- Country of Origin**

The change in the international marketplace has received a rising interest from both academics and practitioners, in investigating the effect of the product's country of origin on consumers' attitudes, preferences, and behavior (Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999). Country of origin image has been defined as "the overall perception consumers form of products from a particular country, based on their prior perceptions of the country's production and marketing strengths and weaknesses" Johansson et al., (1985). Many studies have acknowledged that consumers have significantly different perceptions about products made in different countries, and that these general perceptions have important effects on consumers' evaluation of the products manufactured in a particular country. Studies on the country of origin effect have identified different processes that explain how country of origin influences product evaluations. For example, product's attributes precede and influence the formation of an attitude towards the product. According to this view, when consumers engage in product evaluation, they base their evaluation on various descriptive, inferential or informational cues. Such cues can be intrinsic (such as color, design, specifications, etc.) or extrinsic such as price. Research has shown that intangible, extrinsic cues

are often used by consumers as surrogate indicators when there are missing and/or difficult intrinsic cues. For example, price may be used to evaluate the quality of a product when other information is lacking (Gerstner, 1985). Other extrinsic cues include those that are controlled by the firm, such as guarantees, warranties, brand reputation, seller reputation, promotional messages, and those that are controlled by third parties, such as product rating services and government standard-setting agencies (Cordell, 1988).

Country of origin can serve as an extrinsic cue in the sense that sourcing and location decisions are made by the firm, which is widely used by consumers, especially when they have only limited familiarity with products of foreign origin (Hanne, 1996). This is because, in the absence of information about tangible traits of products, consumers tend to rely on extrinsic cues as indirect indicators of quality and risk (Maheswaran, 1994).

Apart from affective aspects, country-of-origin also has normative connotations, in the sense that the consumer's decision to purchase or avoid buying a country's products can be regarded as a vote in favor of or against the policies, practices, or actions of a country (Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999). Country-of-origin leads to a greater cognitive elaboration about tangible product attributes, thus shaping consumer attitude and intention to purchase (Verlegh and Steenkamp, 1999). Country-of-origin has a risk element, this being measured in terms of performance, financial, or social risk associated with the purchase and use of the foreign product by the consumer in the foreign country (Amine and Shin, 2002).

The effects of country-of-origin on consumer behavior tend to vary from country to country, due to differences in economic, socio-cultural, political-legal, and other factors. Within a specific country, they also tend to vary by time, because of changes in marketing sophistication, degree of industrialization, and lifestyle

patterns. Consumers also have different attitudes toward various product categories from a given country, this being the result of the existence of associations/previous experience with the foreign country, beliefs about its manufacturing system, knowledge about specific brands, and so on (Roth and Romeo, 1992).

Consumer demographics also have a moderating impact on country-of-origin responses. The relationship of gender with country-of-origin evaluations showed relatively consistent results, with female consumers generally evaluating foreign products more favorably compared to male ones age was found to be strongly correlated with country-of-origin perceptions, with older persons inclining to evaluate foreign products more positively compared to younger persons (Smith, 1993). With regard to education, most studies have established that the higher the level of education reached by consumers, the more positive their attitude toward imported products. Income level was also shown to be associated with consumer attitudes toward foreign products, with the better-off more positively predisposed to foreign products, as opposed to lower-income groups.

Finally, the psychographic characteristics of consumers were found to influence country-of-origin evaluations. For instance, people who are very dogmatic tend to have a less favorable attitude toward foreign products. Conservatism is also inversely associated with a positive foreign product evaluation.

### **3-Physical Quality**

Physical quality refers to "measurable and verifiable superiority on some predetermined ideal standard". Research evidence suggests that objective quality rather than extrinsic cues such as price and brand name have the largest effect on the perception of quality (Zeithaml, 1988). Given that brand and country-of-origin are extrinsic cues, it is anticipated that their effects will also be influenced by quality differences in a multi-cue context. A crucial issue in

country-of-origin research has to do with the extent to which consumers are willing to make sacrifices and accept inferior quality for patriotic reasons. In this regard, the most acceptable position is that when a physical or objective quality is hard to assess or when the product is based on fashion or style, at then extrinsic cues, such as country-of-origin, become more important (Han, 1989). The critical issue therefore concerns consumer expertise in the evaluation of quality differences. The response to country-of-origin as a cue will depend on the extent to which consumers are able to evaluate quality and are willing to make sacrifices for their country.

### **Previous Studies**

Many previous studies have been carried out regarding the topic, but unfortunately most of which are dealing with part of this research topic . Therefore, all relevant studies has been taken and arranged according to their dates as follows:

C. Min Han (1988) aimed at examining the role of consumer's patriotic emotions in their choice of domestic versus foreign products. The findings suggest that patriotic responses appeared to play a significant role in the choice, whereas the cognitive attitude toward products made in different countries (country image) played a limited role. In addition, the patriotic responses had a tentative influence on consumer's favorable evaluation of quality and serviceability for domestic products. Finally, the study found that patriotic consumers tend to be older, white, female, and from blue-collar occupations. The findings suggest that television advertising that aims at arousing consumer's patriotic emotions may be successful in producing behavioral response in favor of domestic products. Specifically, effective advertisements should perhaps emphasize on consumers' patriotic obligation to buy domestic products and evoke their fears about the

decline of the U.S industry and the loss of domestic jobs as a consequence of not patronizing domestic products. However, the findings suggest that advertisements that aimed at arousing consumers' guilt about not buying the U.S products may on be effective. In addition, the findings suggest that patriotic advertisements should not be targeted to older, white, female, and blue-collar consumers. Finally, the findings suggest that the choice of domestic versus foreign products may be influenced by highly emotional factors such as consumer patriotism.

Patterson et al. (1991) study aimed at examining consumer attitudes towards the quality of Australian-made products in general and clothing apparel in particular. Country-of-origin ("Made in...") effects were analyzed for apparel products from Australia plus four other countries or regions, namely: New Zealand, the United Kingdom, China and other Southeast Asian countries. Results indicate that country of origin effects are not as strong as might be expected, and vary with age and migrant status of consumers.

Agarwal and Sikri (1996) study aimed at investigating the transferability of country images from well-known products to new product categories and whether, which, and to what extent the various dimensions of country image for a well-known product category transfer to influence perceptions of new products. Data for this study were collected by using a sample identified through systematic sampling, 800 questionnaires were mailed, 198 were returned. Results of the study indicated that consumers' perceptions of new products from a given country are related to the image they hold for well-known products for that country. It was also found that transference of beliefs to the new products was greater when the perceived similarity between the well-known product and the new product was higher.

Ahmed et al. (1997) study aimed at manipulating

country-of-origin information along two dimensions, namely country-of-design and country-of-assembly. The study was based on a survey of 219 US and 175 Canadian consumers. The results show that Canadian consumers have more reference toward products made in Mexico than American consumers have, on the other hand, they seem more nationalistic than the Canadians are. While country-of-origin cues have a much greater impact on consumer reactions in comparison to other cues, including brand names, their impact is significantly attenuated when other pieces of information are present.

Manrai et al. (1998) study aimed at examining the effects of country-of-origin and product category on product evaluations for 21 countries and 18 products. Also, to assess if different product categories are evaluated differently depending on the group of countries they are sourced in. The sample comprised 63 juniors and seniors enrolled in the business school of an East Coast US university. There were 42 females and 21 males in the sample. The subjects were asked to evaluate 18 products based on their knowledge, assuming that the products described were made in each of 21 given countries, the results revealed that product evaluations were highest for the highly-developed countries, followed by newly-industrialized, newly-marketizing, and developing-countries groups. Further, the product-category and country-of-origin effects interacted, showing that, depending on the country group, different product categories received more, equal, or less favorable evaluations compared with other product categories.

Grete et al. (1998) study aimed at examining the way consumers choose where to purchase menswear fashion clothing based on their perception and trade four off; they depended on attributes: price, quality, selection and staff. The study was based on the responses of customers of Next for Men, a UK multiple fashion retailer, with six outlets in the Glasgow area. The retailer targets the 20-45

year old consumer within the A, B, C1 social groups. This survey was administered to 150 customers from each of the five retailers contributing by 750 responses in total. Results from the multi-attribute analysis indicated that the four most important attributes were price, product selection, service provided by staff and product quality.

Al-Dmour and Al-Zubi (2000) study aimed at measuring the relative importance of some indicators of the perceived quality goods in the Jordanian market. The study was conducted over a sample amounting to 500 persons selected randomly from the governorate of Amman. Furthermore, some demographic variables were chosen to determine their impact on perceived quality. The study's results indicated that characteristics of the producing company, sales services, product characteristics and market outlets were the four highly positive indicators of perceived quality. On the other hand, price and advertising had a negative influence on perceived quality. The results also showed that male consumers were more aware of products characteristics and market outlets as positive indicators of perceived quality than female consumers were. Older customers were more aware of product characteristics, while younger consumers considered market outlets to be more important as an indicator of product quality. With respect to education and income, product characteristics were more important to those with higher education, while price was more important to those with lower income.

Maria (2000), found that the attitudes of Palestinian housewives were negative toward homemade clothes in comparison to their imported counterparts. She also found that the perceived quality, advertising tools, and reference groups affect the three components of attitudes which are: the cognitive, affective, and conative components.

Chao (2001) study aimed at examining the extent to which the country of origin for parts, assembly, and design may moderate country-of-origin effects on

attitudes and purchase intentions. The results showed that respondents' attitudes were more positive when the product is assembled in the United States if U.S. parts are also used than if Mexican parts are used. Similarly, purchase intention is higher when the product is assembled in the United States and U.S. parts are used than if Mexican parts are used. Televisions and stereos are used as the products in this study. The results lend partial support to the congruity principle.

Jovey et al. (2002) Study aimed at studying the behavior of Xers in Hong Kong when they buy fashionable clothing, and to analyze the factors that lead to clothing purchasing decisions. The survey of Xers was carried out in Hong Kong. The population targeted was in the age range 19-39 years. The study concluded that Xers considered fitting, personal preferences and design to be the three most important factors when buying fashionable clothing.

Noel & Hon (2002) study aimed at investigating the impact of product-related factors on perceived product safety. The factors examined include price, brand name, country-of-origin, store name, source credibility, product testing, promotions channels, discount offered and packaging. The sample frame was the female consumers. 200 questionnaires were distributed, 213 were collected, from which 200 were usable for analysis. The study concluded that perceived product safety is affected by a number of extrinsic cues, they are namely; price, discounts offered, reputation of the brand, country of origin, familiarity of the store, promotion channels, personalities featured in advertising, packaging and product testing

Zhiming et al. (2002) study aimed at investigating the importance of product attributes of casual wear for Chinese consumers. Data were gathered from a questionnaire survey conducted in six cities of China. A total of 15 attributes were identified, and it was found

that fit comfort, style, color and workmanship were the most important attributes for Chinese consumers. It was also found that geographic and demographic factors had impacts on the importance of these attributes. These 15 attributes could be grouped into four factors, which may indicate a simplified process in information processing on the attributes by Chinese consumers. Marketing implication of the results was also discussed.

Al Sarabi, (2004) indicated that the influence of demographic factors on the selection of women's perfume trademark, with the exception of education level, housing type and number of households. It was also found that the marketing mix elements influence the selection of women's perfume trade mark. It indicated also the influence of factors relevant to the product itself (brand name, reputation, country of origin) on the decisions for selecting women's perfume. The study confirmed that quality is the most effective factor on selection decision, followed by reputation, price and country of origin.

Kwan et al. (2004) study aimed at exploring young Chinese consumers' decision – making behavior towards casual wear purchase in Mainland China. The study used a questionnaire survey as a tool to collect primary data and the research instrument was administered to 161 university students in three main cities. The study results showed that six decision making styles (recreational and hedonistic consciousness, perfectionism consciousness, confused by over choice, habitual and brand loyalty, price and value consciousness, and brand and fashion consciousness were found in the Mainland.

Sadrudin and Alain (2004) study presented the results of a survey of 209 Mainland Chinese male consumers carried out in the late 1990s. In this study, consumer judgments of products made in both highly and newly industrialized countries were obtained in a multi-attribute and multi-dimensional context. The results showed that

Chinese consumers' perceptions of country of design and country of assembly were much more positive for products made in highly industrialized countries than for those made in newly industrialized countries. However, some exceptions to this are addressed. A multi-attribute analysis with country-of-origin variables indicates that the perception of a T-shirt quality was strongly related to price and product satisfaction assurance, whereas the perception of a T-shirt purchase value was mainly linked to satisfaction assurance. It is therefore concluded that Chinese consumers, having recently emerged from a totalitarian state-controlled market condition, are in the process of forming enduring attitudes towards products made in foreign countries. This provides excellent opportunities for countries/brands that wish to build an image of fashion leadership in the Chinese market to gain a first-mover advantage.

Marsha et al. (2004) study aimed at obtaining knowledge on market segments of Chinese consumers with the potential to buy foreign apparel. A consumer survey of a probability sample of 1,628 married adult consumers residing in Beijing, Guangzhou, and Shanghai, China was used. The study used conjoint analysis to identify the product attributes salient to consumers' apparel purchase intentions. Six market segments prioritizing similar product attributes were identified and profiled. The six market segments were then described by their demographic and geographic characteristics, apparel expenditures and perception of US-made pants. Price and quality are essential attributes influencing Chinese consumer purchasing.

Karen et al. (2005) study aimed at examining consumers' store patronage and apparel purchase behavior, acceptance of US apparel brands, perceptions of retailers' products and services, and perceptions of the impact of foreign retailers on local communities. Data were collected from 375 consumers in Barcelona, Madrid

and Valencia. The influence of retailer characteristics on consumers' store patronage varied by age and income. Product characteristics that influenced apparel purchases varied by gender, income and age, while acceptance of US brands differed by gender and age. The perceptions of Spanish, European and US retailers differed regarding quality, fashionability, product assortment, extent and quality of customer service, convenience of location, payment options, national brands and store layout. Consumers' acceptance of US apparel brands was a function of age, household income, apparel product country of manufacture and price.

Perceptions of US retailers were a function of household income, selected apparel characteristics and consumer acceptance of US apparel brands. Differences among perceptions of the impact of retail development were found by city. The findings provide insights into the opportunities and challenges for US apparel specialty retailers as they contemplate entry into the Spanish market. The affinity for US apparel among young Spanish consumers, particularly males, suggests optimism regarding opportunities in this market.

Judith et al. (2005) study aimed at identifying dimension of evaluative criteria when purchasing casual apparel and casual home furnishing, and to determine which evaluative criteria served as predictors of brand extension purchase behavior of these products. This study was limited to female consumers living in urban areas in one state in the USA and to casual apparel and home furnishing fashion product categories. A mailed self-administered survey was sent to a randomized sample of 739 female consumers residing in three metropolitan areas in a southwest state in the USA, and it resulted in a response rate of 32.7 percent. Purchase frequency of 15 brands extended across apparel and home furnishing and the importance of 17 evaluative criteria were measured using 7-point Likert-type scales.

The study concluded that image, quality color/style, and design/beauty of fashion products are important criteria when purchasing extended brands of casual apparel and home furnishing. Image of fashion products was the strongest predictor when brands were extended from apparel to home furnishing products.

Anthony and Steven (2007) study aimed at evaluating the decision-making processes of experts and novices with respect to international brand names, and intrinsic quality differences. Results of a series of experiments with personal computers as a product with strong country of origin effects supported this argument. Experts or highly knowledgeable consumers were found to use country of origin in a circumspect manner or as a limited summary construct, only when such information was consistent with a linked brand name or a particular level of physical quality. Novices, for both products used country of origin as a halo regardless of brand name and physical quality.

Irene (2007) aimed at examining the reasons that Greek consumers purchase imported high fashion apparel over Greek designer's high fashion apparel and to detect the underlying factors that affect their purchasing behavior. Qualitative research was conducted through discussions with consumer-focus groups, all are purchasers of imported high fashion apparel. Quantitative research was undertaken by means of a questionnaire with 28 items referring to the reasons for purchasing imported high fashion apparel. The sample consisted of 200 high fashion consumers from the city of Larissa, Greece.

Results indicated that the consumers perceive that the imported high fashion apparel have better aesthetics, a better line and are produced from quality textiles, compared to the domestic high fashion apparel. Four factors derived underpinned the purchasing reasons of imported high fashion apparel: "status and image", "quality of the product", "marketing reasons" and "in fashion".

Haung & Tan (2007) study aimed at characterizing various key factors affecting apparel design and product quality. Delphi method and a survey questionnaire were used to collect related materials. A total number of 600 questionnaires were delivered, 568 of which were collected; 544 of these were valid. The main targets for the study included female consumers who had purchasing power and were able to share their opinions, between the ages of 20 and 35. The study concluded that the factors affecting the quality of apparel design were fashion sensitivity, ability of material application, color sensitivity, fashion trend, fashion market positioning, and management. Fashion style, cloth quality, cutting quality, discount, and personal favorites were the key factors affecting consumers when choosing apparel.

Leonidas et al. (2007) study aimed at identifying differences in consumers' evaluations of goods made in either the USA or China at different levels of analysis; to trace variations in consumers' evaluations with regard to various cues characterizing US or Chinese goods; and to provide a comparison of consumers' evaluations between US and Chinese goods at different levels of analysis and across different product cues. Information was received through personal interviews from a sample of 404 British consumers, aged 18 years and above. Respondents were randomly selected at central locations using a systematic stratified procedure. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire, with questions focusing separately on the USA and China, at five different levels of analysis, and in six different categories of product cues. The results revealed that there are significant differences in consumer evaluations across the various levels of analysis, caused mainly by the brand, which overshadows country-of-origin effects in the case of the USA.

Based on reviewing the previous studies, this study is different from such studies because of the following:

1- Previous research concentrated on various subjects regarding the factors that affect consumer behavior for purchasing fashion clothes. Some studies handled the impact of country of origin and country image, other studies handled the way of choosing clothes in terms of prices, quality and selection. Other studies handled product factor that influence perceived quality and the importance of product attributes of casual wear.

2- The second group of studies handled the influence of demographic factors on the selection of products, and the reasons of purchasing fashion apparel.

3- Most of the studies were carried out in foreign countries.

4- None of the studies handled the Islamic garments as the present study.

5- Our study's sample consists different Muslim females who live outside the Arab & Islamic world, this means that the sample is composed of various nationalities and so there is the ability to generalize results.

6- This study aims to investigate the foreign consumer's perceived quality of Jordanian goods, the questionnaire was sent abroad for this purpose.

### Study Population and Sample Design

The study's sample consists of consumers of Islamic women garments in the UK and Canada<sup>1</sup>. The questionnaire was sent to 150 Islamic women clothes

retail shops in the UK, where data gathering took two months. While in Canada, the questionnaire data were gathered in Islamic products exhibitions, the process took a period of two weeks.

**Table (1) Study Population and Sample Design**

<b>POPULATION</b>	Consumers of Islamic ladies garments in UK and Canada
<b>SAMPLE</b>	150 Consumers

For what concerns the decision about determining the sample size, it was decided to follow one of the rules of thumb proposed by Roscoe (1975), according to which, in multivariate research the sample size should be several times (preferably 10 times or more) as large as the number of variables in the study. Given the number of variables in the present study, the sample size was determined to be 150 and since it was difficult to draw a random representative sample, a convenience sample was used to collect the required data.

### The Demographic Profile of The Sample

The analysis of the data gathered through the self-administrated questionnaire returned from the responding sample revealed the following results in terms of sample, gender, age, educational level, marital status and country of citizenship:

<sup>1</sup> UK Population was 60,609,153 (July 2006 est.) of which 2.7% are Muslim, while Canada Population was 33,098,932 (July 2006 est.) of which 1.9% are Muslim<sup>26</sup>.

**Table (2) Sample's Demographic Profile**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Less than 20 years	10	6.7%
21-30 years	46	30.7%
31-40 years	31	20.7%
41-50 years	33	22%
56 +	30	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Educational level</b>		
Less than Secondary	11	7.3%
Secondary	30	20%
Bachelor	52	34.7%
Graduate studies	57	38%
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Income level / monthly</b>		
Less than 250\$	2	1.3%
751-1000\$	7	4.7%
1000 \$ +	141	94%
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	44	29.3%
Married	82	54.7%
Divorced	20	13.3%
Widowed	4	2.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Country of Citizenship</b>		
United Kingdom	122	81.3%
Canada	28	18.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Data collection**

The study used a self-administered questionnaire to measure the study variables. The questionnaires were pre-tested by academics who are experts in the marketing field of specialization. The respondents were asked to critically evaluate the questionnaire with regards to its objective, contents, clarity and ease of completion. They also assisted in translating and

validating the English version of the survey.

**Results of instrument reliability testing**

Cronbach's Alpha was used to test the stability of the scale, which indicated how well the items measuring a concept hang well together as a set. It was computed in terms of the average intercorrelations among the items measuring the concept. (Sekaran, 1992), It was found

that ( $\alpha = 0.766$ ) for the whole questionnaire. This is good because it is greater than the accepted average (0.70), (Sekaran, 1992).

**Means and the Relative Importance of Quality Indicators**

This part is related to the importance of indicators of perceived manufactured Islamic Ladies Garments quality. Mean for each indicator was found to give the impression of the sample regarding each indicator; table (4) shows the obtained results. The results show that product, price, and store attributes are perceived positively by Non- Jordanian

consumers in foreign markets, while promotion attributes are perceived negatively since their mean are less than that of the scale which is 3. This might be attributed either to inefficient promotional activities carried by Jordanian companies abroad or to the fact that Moslem people in foreign countries are less concerned with or unconvinced by formal promotional tools.

In addition, the relative importance average for all the indicators is found to be .669; which indicates moderate importance. The product attributes were ranked to be the most important ones.

**Table (3) Means and Relative Importance of Quality Indicators**

No.	Indicators	Mean	Relative importance	Ranking
1	Product attributes	3.51	0.702	1
2	Price (value)	3.32	0.664	2
3	Store attributes	3.14	0.628	3
4	Promotion	2.91	0.582	4
	<b>All indicators</b>	<b>3.11</b>	<b>0.669</b>	

**Hypothesis Tests:**

**(H1)** All of quality indicators of Jordanian Islamic garments are perceived negatively by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets.

**Table(4) T- Test results of hypothesis no .1**

Mean	T calculated	T- tabulated	Sig
3.13	7.717	1.984	0.000

Table (4) above indicates that value of T-calculated is more than T- tabulated , and Sig –t is less than (0.05), therefore we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative one. This means that quality indicators of Jordanian Islamic garments are perceived positively by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets.

**H0a:** Product attributes (appearance, design, textile

and sizing, brand name and country of origin) of Jordanian Islamic garments is perceived negatively by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets.

**Table (5) T- Test results of hypothesis no .1a**

Mean	T calculated	T- tabulated	Sag
3.14	18.664	1.984	0.000

Table (5) above indicates that value of T-calculated is more than T- tabulated, and Sig –t is less than (0.05), therefore we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative one. This means that product attributes of Jordanian–Manufactured Islamic garments are perceived positively by Non-Jordanian consumers in foreign markets.

**H0b)** Price (value) of Jordanian Islamic garments is perceived negatively by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets.

**Table (6) T- Test results of hypothesis no .1b**

Mean	T calculated	T- tabulated	Sig
3.08	16.39	1.984	0.000

Table (6) above indicates that value of T-calculated is more than T- tabulated, and Sig –t is less than (0.05), therefore we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative one. This means that price attribute of Jordanian–Manufactured Islamic garments is perceived positively by Non-Jordanian consumers in foreign markets.

**H0c)** Store attributes (location image, size, store name and refund service) factor of Jordanian Islamic garments is perceived negatively by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets.

**Table (7) T- Test results of hypothesis no .1c**

Mean	T calculated	T- tabulated	Sig
3.147	19.844	1.984	0.000

Table (7) above indicates that value of T-calculated is more than T- tabulated , and Sig –t is less than (0.05), therefore we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative one . This means that store location image factor of Jordanian–Manufactured Islamic garments is

perceived positively by Non-Jordanian consumers in foreign markets.

**H0d)** Promotion attribute of Jordanian Islamic garments is perceived negatively by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets.

**Table (8) T- Test results of hypothesis no .1d**

Mean	T calculated	T- tabulated	Sig
3.209	18.202	1.984	0.000

Table (8) above indicates that value of T-calculated is more than T- tabulated , and Sig –t is less than (0.05), therefore we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative one . This means that promotion attribute of Jordanian–Manufactured Islamic garments is perceived positively by Non-Jordanian consumers in foreign markets.

**Hypothesis No .2:** The perception of the Jordanian Islamic garments by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets does not significantly differ by their demographic characteristics (age, education, income level, marital status and nationality).

This hypothesis is divided into the following sub-hypotheses according to the demographic characteristics.

**Ho2a:** The perception of the Jordanian Islamic garments by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets does not significantly differ by their age.

**Table (9) The differences on perception of Jordanian Islamic garments by non-Jordanian consumers in foreign markets due to their age**

Indicators		Sum of Squares	Df	F	Sig
Product attributes	Between groups	1.541	4	2.275	0.064
	Within groups	24.556	145		
	Total	26.097	149		

Indicators		Sum of Squares	Df	F	Sig
Price (value)	Between groups	0.337	4	0.438	0.781
	Within groups	27.871	145		
	Total	28.208	149		
Store attributes	Between groups	0.739	4	1.165	0.329
	Within groups	22.994	145		
	Total	23.733	149		
	Total	33.648	149		
Promotion attributes	Between groups	0.782	4	0.856	0.492
	Within groups	33.117	145		
	Total	33.899	149		

Table (9) above indicates that value of Sig –F is more than (0.05) with respect to all quality indicators, therefore we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative one. This mean that the perception of all quality indicators of Jordanian Islamic garments by Non-Jordanian consumers in foreign markets does not

significantly differ by their age.

**Ho2b:** The perception of the Jordanian Islamic garments by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets does not significantly differ by their education level.

**Table (10) The differences of perception of Jordanian Islamic garments by non-Jordanian consumers in foreign markets due to their education level**

Indicators		Sum of Squares	Df	F	Sig
Product attributes	Between groups	0.295	3	0.557	0.644
	Within groups	25.802	146		
	Total	26.097	149		
	Within groups	20.664	146		
	Total	22.380	149		
Price (value)	Between groups	1.746	3	3.211	0.025
	Within groups	26.462	146		
	Total	28.208	149		
Store attributes	Between groups	0.207	3	0.428	0.733
	Within groups	23.526	146		
	Total	23.733	149		
Promotion	Between groups	1.471	3	2.208	0.090
	Within groups	32.428	146		
	Total	33.899	149		

Table (10) above indicates that value of Sig –F is less than (0.05) with respect to the price indicator only, while Sig –F is more than (0.05) with respect to the remaining indicators. This means that there are differences with respect to price value that is attributed to the education

level while there are no differences regarding the remaining factors.

**Ho2c:** The perception of the Jordanian Islamic garments by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets does not significantly differ by their income level.

**Table (11) The differences of perception of Jordanian Islamic garments by non-Jordanian consumers in foreign markets due to their income level**

Indicators		Sum of Squares	Df	F	Sig
Product attributes	Between groups	0.336	2	0.958	0.386
	Within groups	25.761	147		
	Total	26.097	149		
Price (value)	Between groups	2.722	2	7.851	0.001
	Within groups	25.486	147		
	Total	28.208	149		
	Total	15.474	149		
Store attributes	Between groups	0.743	2	2.375	0.097
	Within groups	22.990	147		
	Total	23.733	149		
	Total	33.648	149		
Promotion	Between groups	0.129	2	0.280	0.756
	Within groups	33.771	147		
	Total	33.899	149		

Table (11) above indicates that value of Sig –F is less than (0.05) with respect price factor, while Sig –F is more than (0.05) with respect to the remaining factors. This means that there are differences with respect to price that are related to the income level while there are

no differences regarding the remaining factors.

**Ho2d:** The perception of the Jordanian Islamic garments by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets does not significantly differ by their Marital Status.

**Table (12)The differences of perception of Jordanian Islamic garments by non Jordanian consumers in foreign markets due to their Marital Status**

Variable		Sum of Squares	Df	F	Sig
Product attributes	Between groups	0.088	3	0.166	0.919
	Within groups	26.009	146		
	Total	26.097	149		

Variable		Sum of Squares	Df	F	Sig
Price (value)	Between groups	0.694	3	1.228	0.302
	Within groups	27.514	146		
	Total	28.208	149		
Store attributes	Between groups	0.615	3	1.296	0.278
	Within groups	23.118	146		
	Total	23.733	149		
Promotion	Between groups	0.806	3	1.185	0.318
	Within groups	33.094	146		
	Total	33.899	149		

Table (12) indicates that the value of Sig –F is more than (0.05) with respect to all quality indicators, therefore we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative one. This means that the perception of all quality indicators of the Jordanian Islamic garments by

Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets does not significantly differ by their marital status.

**Ho2e:** The perception of the Jordanian Islamic garments by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets is not significantly differed by their nationality.

**Table (13) T- Test results regarding the differences on perception of Jordanian Islamic garments by non-Jordanian consumers in foreign markets due to their nationality**

Variable	Citizenship	Mean	T	Sig
Product attributes	UK	3.17	1.8563	0.064
	Canada	3.01		
Price (value)	UK	3.13	2.948	0.004
	Canada	3.29		
Store attributes	UK	3.20	-0.212	0.832
	Canada	3.23		
Promotion attributes	UK	2.75	2.408	0.017
	Canada	2.51		

Table (13) above indicates that value of Sig –t is less than (0.05) with respect to price and promotional attributes, while Sig –t is more than (0.05) and with respect to the remaining factors. This means that there are differences between consumers in relation to price and promotional attributes that are due to their citizenship while there are no differences regarding the

remaining factors.

### Study Results

The main conclusion that can be drawn from the findings of the study is as follows:

**First:** It was found that all quality indicators (product attributes, price, store attributes) of Jordanian Islamic

garments were positively perceived by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets except for the promotional attributes which were perceived negatively by them. The results agree with (Al-Dmour & Zoubie 2000) study, that the product attributes (design, textile and sizing) are of the highest indicators among perceived quality.

**Second:** All the perceived indicators of quality of the Jordanian Islamic garments by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets were found to be not differed by their age and marital status.

**Third:** All the perceived indicators of quality of the Jordanian Islamic garments by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets were not found to differ by their level of education and income except for the indicator of the price. This finding is supported previous study results (Aaker and Keller, 1990) and (Wheatley and Chiu, 1977).

**Fourth:** The perceived importance of price and promotional attributes of Jordanian Islamic garments by Non- Jordanian consumers in foreign markets was found to differ between them due to their citizenship while there are no differences regarding the remaining factors. The result agrees with (Motes, 1987 and Riesy, 1978) studies that there is a positive relationship between the price and the perceived quality, but disagrees with the relative strength of the price relatively compared to other quality indicators.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the relative importance of the quality indicators as studied in this research, we recommend that

Islamic ladies clothes manufacturers should raise their product quality characteristics (design, textile and sizing), especially in designing special products Muslim women might wear in their foreign communities, and that fits their tastes and are durable as those are the most important indicators of quality for the Muslim women consumers of Islamic garments in foreign countries. The appropriate chose of textile, and the standardized sizing that is suitable for the Muslim women would highly increase the share of Jordanian manufactured ladies Islamic products in other Non-Jordanian countries.

1- Jordanian manufactures also need to concentrate more and have well-structured marketing campaigns and product promotion for their production in other countries.

2- The Jordanian manufacturers need to pay attention to the store attributes (age, size and location) of their products, and to realize where their products are being sold in order to maintain a high image of their products

3- The price value was considered more important as a quality indicator for those who have a low income and are less educated, it is an important factor in the supply and demand equilibrium. Yet, for the consumers of the Islamic ladies garments, it is perceived different in terms of their income and level of education, so Jordanian manufacturers should concentrate on reducing the cost of their product in order to have higher sales, which will lead to lower product characteristics and standards.

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