



The Influence of Country of Manufacture on Consumer Purchase Behaviour of Skincare Cosmetic Products in Iringa Municipality, Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of country of manufacture on consumer purchase behaviour of skincare cosmetic products in Iringa Municipality, Tanzania. The study adopted a mixed-methods approach and involved 222 consumers of skincare cosmetic products. Quantitative data were collected using structured questionnaires, while qualitative information was obtained through interviews with respondents familiar with consumers' skincare purchasing behaviour. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson product-moment correlation and regression analysis, while qualitative information was analysed thematically. The findings showed that country of manufacture was an important consideration in consumers' evaluation and purchase of skincare cosmetic products. Regarding perceived quality, 120 respondents (54.1%) strongly agreed and 72 respondents (32.4%) agreed that skincare cosmetic products manufactured in developed countries have better quality. In relation to safety, 112 respondents (50.5%) strongly agreed and 78 respondents (35.1%) agreed that products manufactured in developed countries are safer. Regarding willingness to pay, 98 respondents (44.1%) strongly agreed and 80 respondents (36.0%) agreed that they were willing to pay more for skincare cosmetic products manufactured in countries perceived to have better-quality products. Concerning product availability, 90 respondents (40.5%) strongly agreed and 84 respondents (37.8%) agreed that skincare cosmetic products from developed countries were readily available. Pearson correlation analysis showed a strong positive relationship between country of manufacture and consumer purchase behaviour ($r = 0.701$). The multiple regression model further showed that country of manufacture was positively associated with consumer purchase behaviour, with a regression coefficient of $B = 0.321$ when considered together with country of design and country of brand origin. Qualitative findings supported the quantitative results, with respondents explaining that manufacturing country information helped them assess product quality, safety, reliability and trustworthiness. The study concludes that country of manufacture functions as an important extrinsic cue in consumers' evaluation of skincare cosmetic products and is associated with their purchasing behaviour. Manufacturers, importers and distributors should therefore provide transparent country-of-manufacture information, maintain appropriate quality and safety standards, and strengthen product labelling to support informed consumer decisions.

Keywords: Country of manufacture; consumer purchase behaviour; skincare cosmetics; perceived quality; safety; product availability.

1. Introduction

Country of manufacture refers to the country in which a product is physically manufactured or produced. In international markets, consumers may use information about where a product is manufactured as an external cue when evaluating products whose actual quality cannot be fully determined before purchase. This is particularly relevant for skincare cosmetic products because consumers often consider product quality, safety, reliability and expected effectiveness before making a purchase. Consequently, the manufacturing country may become part of the information consumers use when comparing alternative skincare products.

The relevance of country of manufacture is also linked to differences in consumers' perceptions of manufacturing standards across countries. Consumers may associate some countries with advanced production technology, stronger quality-control systems, regulatory standards and established cosmetic industries. Such perceptions do not necessarily mean that every product manufactured in a particular country is objectively superior; rather, they reflect consumers' cognitive evaluations and expectations based on the country associated with production. Evidence from the cosmetics sector supports this relationship. Sang et al. (2022), using 379 Vietnamese consumers of Japanese cosmetics, found that components associated with country of manufacture positively affected customer purchase intention. Their analysis further showed that perceived brand quality associated with the country of manufacture had the strongest direct positive influence on purchase intention.

Broader evidence also indicates that country-of-origin information can influence consumer evaluations and purchasing behaviour. De Nisco and Oduro (2022), through a meta-analysis of research on partitioned country-of-origin effects, examined country of brand, country of design, country of

manufacture/assembly and country of parts. Their findings showed that country-of-origin sub-components can influence product evaluation, brand evaluation and purchase intentions, although the magnitude of the effect varies according to contextual and methodological factors.

Evidence from Africa provides further support for the relevance of origin-related information to consumer behaviour. Martins et al. (2023), using data from 1,272 consumers in Nigerian hypermarkets and structural equation modelling, found that country-of-origin image had significant positive effects on information search, product evaluation, purchase decision-making and post-purchase behaviour. The study further found that perceived quality played an important role in purchase decision-making and post-purchase behaviour.

Recent evidence also shows that country-of-origin information can operate through perceived quality. Mulyaningsih et al. (2025), using 110 Adidas users in Bandung and structural equation modelling, examined the relationship between country of origin, perceived quality and purchase decisions. The study found a significant positive relationship between country of origin and perceived quality and between country of origin and purchase decisions.

Despite this growing evidence, limited empirical attention has been given to how consumers in Tanzanian municipalities evaluate skincare cosmetics according to their country of manufacture. In particular, there is limited context-specific evidence from Iringa Municipality concerning whether consumers associate country of manufacture with perceived quality, safety, willingness to pay and product availability and whether these perceptions are related to their purchase behaviour. The present study therefore examined the influence of country of manufacture on consumer purchase behaviour of skincare cosmetic products in Iringa Municipality.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Review

This study was guided by The Country-of-Origin Effect Theory is associated with the early work of Schooler (1965), who demonstrated that consumers could evaluate otherwise similar products differently depending on their country of origin. The theory explains that consumers use country-of-origin information as an external cue when assessing product quality, reliability, performance and overall value. Consumers may develop general perceptions or stereotypes about particular countries and these perceptions can subsequently influence their attitudes toward products associated with those countries.

The theory is highly relevant to the current study because it directly explains how country of manufacture is influence consumer purchase behaviour of skincare cosmetic products. consumers may associate skincare products from developed countries with higher quality, stronger safety standards, innovative designs and prestigious brands. These perceptions may consequently influence their product preference, purchase intention, purchase frequency, repeat buying and brand loyalty. Recent evidence also shows that country-of-origin perceptions can influence consumers' evaluation of cosmetic products and their purchasing responses

2.2 Country of Manufacture and Consumer Purchase Behaviour

Country of manufacture represents the location where a product is physically produced. In the context of skincare cosmetics, consumers may use manufacturing-country information as an extrinsic cue when assessing product quality, safety and reliability. Such information may become particularly important when consumers have limited technical knowledge about cosmetic ingredients or cannot directly assess product performance before purchase.

Sang et al. (2022) investigated the influence of country of manufacture on customer purchase intention using 379 Vietnamese consumers of Japanese cosmetics. The researchers used a quantitative design and analysed the data using Cronbach's alpha, structural equation modelling, ANOVA and t-tests. The findings showed that country-of-manufacture components positively influenced customer purchase intention, with perceived brand quality associated with country of manufacture having the strongest direct positive influence. The study concluded that consumers' perceptions of the manufacturing country can influence their intention to purchase cosmetics. The researchers recommended that cosmetic brands strengthen quality and country-related associations when entering foreign markets. The study is particularly relevant to the present research because it directly examined country of manufacture and cosmetics; however, it was conducted in Vietnam and focused on Japanese cosmetics, leaving a contextual gap concerning consumers in Iringa Municipality.

De Nisco and Oduro (2022) conducted a meta-analysis of partitioned country-of-origin research and examined the effects of country of brand, country of design, country of manufacture/assembly and country of parts on consumer responses. The analysis found that partitioned country-of-origin information significantly influences consumer behaviour, including product and brand evaluation and purchase intention. The authors concluded that consumers do not necessarily process country-of-origin information as a single general concept because different origin dimensions can produce different consumer responses. They recommended greater attention to specific origin dimensions when examining consumer behaviour. The study supports the present research by demonstrating the importance of treating country of manufacture separately from country of design and country of brand origin.

Martins et al. (2023) examined country-of-origin image and consumer buying behaviour among 1,272 consumers in Nigerian hypermarkets using an online survey and structural equation modelling. The results showed that country-of-origin image positively affected information search, product evaluation, purchase decision-making and post-purchase behaviour. The study also found that perceived quality played a significant role in purchase decision-making and post-purchase behaviour. The researchers concluded that consumers may use origin-related information as part of their evaluation of products before purchase. They recommended that businesses consider country-of-origin perceptions when developing product and market strategies.

Although the study provides African evidence, it examined country-of-origin image generally rather than focusing specifically on country of manufacture and skincare cosmetics, creating a gap addressed by the present study.

Mulyaningsih et al. (2025) investigated whether country of origin affects purchase decisions through perceived quality among 110 Adidas users in Bandung, Indonesia. The researchers used a quantitative design, structured questionnaires and structural equation modelling using SmartPLS. The findings showed that country of origin positively influenced perceived quality and purchase decisions. The study concluded that consumers' perceptions of a product's origin can contribute to their assessment of product quality and purchasing decisions. The researchers recommended that businesses pay attention to country-of-origin associations as part of their branding and marketing strategies. The study is relevant because it links origin information with perceived quality and purchase decisions, although it focused on sportswear rather than skincare cosmetics and therefore leaves a product-category gap.

3. Methodology

3.1 Area of the Study

The study was conducted in Iringa Municipality, Tanzania. The municipality provides an appropriate setting for examining consumer purchase behaviour because consumers have access to locally manufactured and imported skincare cosmetic products through different retail outlets (Mrisho & Masui, 2025).

3.2 Research Approach and Design

The study adopted a mixed-methods research approach to obtain both numerical evidence and contextual explanations concerning the influence of country of manufacture on consumer purchase behaviour. Quantitative data were collected using structured questionnaires administered to skincare cosmetic consumers, while qualitative information was obtained through interviews. A cross-sectional research design was employed because data were collected from respondents at one point in time.

3.3 Study Population and Sample Size

The study involved 222 consumers of skincare cosmetic products in Iringa Municipality. Since all 222 eligible respondents participated in the study, the sample size was 222 respondents, representing 100% of the study population. The use of all eligible respondents constitutes a census or total-enumeration approach.

3.4 Data Collection and Analysis

Structured questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data concerning country of manufacture and consumer purchase behaviour. The country-of-manufacture construct covered perceived quality, safety trust, willingness to pay and product availability. Consumer purchase behaviour was assessed through indicators including purchase preference, purchase frequency, purchase intention and repeat purchase.

Quantitative data were analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics. Descriptive statistics were used to present frequencies and percentages. Pearson product-moment correlation was used to establish the relationship between country of manufacture and consumer purchase behaviour, while regression analysis was used to examine the contribution of country of manufacture to consumer purchase behaviour. Qualitative interview information was analysed thematically to identify recurring explanations concerning how consumers use manufacturing-country information when evaluating skincare cosmetics. The reliability of the measurement items should be reported using the final Cronbach's alpha obtained from the SPSS reliability analysis. The final alpha value should be inserted here rather than estimated or invented.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the study. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the study before completing the questionnaire or participating in interviews. Participants were assured that their information would be treated confidentially and used only for academic purposes. No personal information that could directly identify respondents was presented in the findings. Participants were also informed of their right to decline participation or withdraw from the study without negative consequences. The researcher maintained academic integrity by reporting the findings accurately and avoiding fabrication, manipulation or misrepresentation of data.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Demographic Information of Respondents

Before presenting the substantive findings, the demographic characteristics of the 222 respondents are summarised in Table 1

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	98	44.1
	Female	124	55.9
	Total	222	100.0
Age Group	18–25 years	60	27.0
	25–35 years	89	40.1
	35–45 years	48	21.6
	Above 45 years	25	11.3
	Total	222	100.0
Education Level	Secondary Level	54	24.3
	Certificate Level	49	22.1
	Diploma Level	63	28.4
	Degree Level	46	20.7
	Master's Level	10	4.5
	Total	222	100.0

Source: Field Data (2026)

The demographic characteristics in Table 4.1 show that the study involved 222 respondents. Female respondents constituted the majority, with 124 (55.9%), while males were 98 (44.1%). Regarding age, most respondents were aged 25–35 years, 89 (40.1%), followed by those aged 35–45 years, 48 (21.6%), 18–25 years, 60 (27.0%), and those above 45 years, 25 (11.3%). In terms of education, respondents with Diploma-level education were the largest group, 63 (28.4%), followed by Secondary-level education 54 (24.3%), Degree-level education 46 (20.7%), Certificate-level education 49 (22.1%), and Master's-level education 10 (4.5%). Overall, the respondents represented different gender, age, and educational backgrounds, providing diverse demographic characteristics for the study.

4.2 Consumers' Perception of Country of Manufacture

The findings demonstrate that country of manufacture is an important consideration in consumers' evaluation of skincare cosmetic products.

Table 2: Perceived Quality of Skincare Cosmetics by Country of Manufacture

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	72	32.4
Strongly Agree	120	54.1
Agree + Strongly Agree	192	86.5
Total respondents	222	100.0

Source: Field Data (2026)

The findings show that 120 respondents (54.1%) strongly agreed, while 72 respondents (32.4%) agreed that skincare cosmetic products manufactured in developed countries have better quality. In total, 192 respondents (86.5%) expressed agreement or strong agreement. The finding demonstrates that perceived quality is an important component through which consumers evaluate the country of manufacture.

The interview findings supported this quantitative result. The responses revealed that consumers commonly associated certain manufacturing countries with better product quality. Respondents explained that they considered manufacturing country because they believed products from countries with established cosmetic industries were more likely to have good ingredients, better production processes and consistent quality. One respondent explained:

"I usually check where the skincare product was manufactured because some countries are known for producing good-quality cosmetics. When I see that the product was manufactured in Korea or France, I feel more confident about its quality." (Respondent #18, May 2026)

These interview responses provide a possible explanation for the high proportion of respondents who associated country of manufacture with product quality. Consumers appear to use manufacturing-country information as an external cue when they cannot directly determine the quality of the skincare product before purchase.

Table 2: Safety Trust and Country of Manufacture

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	78	35.1
Strongly Agree	112	50.5
Agree + Strongly Agree	190	85.6
Total respondents	222	100.0

Source: Field Data (2026)

The findings indicate that 112 respondents (50.5%) strongly agreed and 78 respondents (35.1%) agreed that skincare cosmetic products manufactured in developed countries are safer. Overall, 190 respondents (85.6%) expressed agreement or strong agreement. This suggests that consumers use manufacturing-country information when forming perceptions about the safety of skincare products.

The interview findings supported this quantitative result. one respondent *"associated products manufactured in Korea and France with strict cosmetic standards, while another explained that knowing the manufacturing country helped in deciding whether a skincare product could be trusted"* (Respondent #20, June 2026)

Table 3: Willingness to Pay and Country of Manufacture

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	80	36.0
Strongly Agree	98	44.1
Agree + Strongly Agree	178	80.1
Total respondents	222	100.0

Source: Field Data (2026)

The results show that 98 respondents (44.1%) strongly agreed and 80 respondents (36.0%) agreed that they were willing to pay more for skincare cosmetic products manufactured in countries perceived to produce better-quality products. In total, 178 respondents (80.1%) agreed or strongly agreed. This finding suggests that perceptions of manufacturing country may influence the value consumers attach to skincare products.

The interview findings supported this quantitative result. Respondents explained *"that trusted manufacturing origins could justify paying slightly more for a skincare product"* (Respondent #21, June 2026)

Table 4: Product Availability and Country of Manufacture

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	84	37.8
Strongly Agree	90	40.5
Agree + Strongly Agree	174	78.3
Total respondents	222	100.0

Source: Field Data (2026)

The results show that 90 respondents (40.5%) strongly agreed and 84 respondents (37.8%) agreed that skincare cosmetic products from developed countries were readily available. Overall, 174 respondents (78.3%) agreed or strongly agreed. The result indicates that repeated exposure and availability may contribute to consumers' familiarity with products associated with particular manufacturing countries.

The interview findings supported this quantitative result. Respondents explained that *“repeatedly seeing products from countries such as Korea and France in cosmetic shops made them more familiar and comfortable with purchasing them. Availability was therefore associated with product familiarity, visibility and consumer confidence.”* (Respondent #23, June 2026)

5. Correlation Analysis

Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between country of manufacture and consumer purchase behaviour.

Table 5: Correlation between Country of Manufacture and Consumer Purchase Behaviour

Variables	Country of Manufacture	Consumer Purchase Behaviour
Country of Manufacture	1.000	0.701
Consumer Purchase Behaviour	0.701	1.000

Source: Research Findings (2026)

The results show a strong positive relationship between country of manufacture and consumer purchase behaviour ($r = 0.701$). This means that more favourable consumer perceptions of the manufacturing country were associated with more favourable consumer purchase behaviour. The result is consistent with Sang et al. (2022), who found that country-of-manufacture components positively influenced purchase intention among consumers of Japanese cosmetics in Vietnam. The result also supports Martins et al. (2023), who found a positive relationship between country-of-origin image and consumer purchase-related behaviour in Nigerian hypermarkets.

6. Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was conducted to determine the contribution of country of manufacture to consumer purchase behaviour. Where country of manufacture is examined together with country of design and country of brand origin, the estimated regression equation from the study is:

$$\text{CPB} = 0.845 + 0.321(\text{COM}) + 0.278(\text{COD}) + 0.295(\text{CBO})$$

where:

- **CPB** = Consumer Purchase Behaviour
- **COM** = Country of Manufacture
- **COD** = Country of Design
- **CBO** = Country of Brand Origin

The coefficient for country of manufacture was $B = 0.321$, indicating a positive association between country of manufacture and consumer purchase behaviour when the other country-of-origin dimensions are considered in the model. Thus, an increase of one unit in the country-of-manufacture measure is associated with an estimated 0.321-unit increase in consumer purchase behaviour, holding the other predictors constant.

Table 6: Regression Coefficients

Variable	B
Constant	0.845
Country of Manufacture (COM)	0.321
Country of Design (COD)	0.278
Country of Brand Origin (CBO)	0.295

Source: Research Findings (2026)

The regression result indicates that country of manufacture made a positive contribution to consumer purchase behaviour. However, the exact standard error, standardized beta, t-value and p-value for COM should be taken directly from the final SPSS Coefficients table. These values should not be estimated from the regression equation. Similarly, if the final SPSS Model Summary and ANOVA tables are available, the R, R^2 , Adjusted R^2 , F-value and model significance should be inserted here.

7. Discussion of Findings

The findings demonstrate that country of manufacture is positively associated with consumer purchase behaviour of skincare cosmetic products in Iringa Municipality. The strong positive correlation of $r = 0.701$ indicates that consumers who reported more favourable perceptions of the manufacturing country also tended to report more favourable purchase behaviour. This finding can be understood from the information-processing role of country-of-manufacture cues. When consumers cannot directly verify all product characteristics before purchase, they may use manufacturing-country information as an external signal when evaluating product quality, safety and reliability.

The descriptive results further show that perceived quality was particularly important. A total of 192 respondents (86.5%) either agreed or strongly agreed that skincare cosmetics manufactured in developed countries have better quality. This suggests that consumers in Iringa Municipality associate manufacturing location with expectations about product quality. The result is consistent with Sang et al. (2022), whose study of Japanese cosmetics in Vietnam found that perceived brand quality associated with country of manufacture had the strongest direct positive influence on purchase intention.

Safety perceptions also appear to explain part of the relationship. 190 respondents (85.6%) agreed or strongly agreed that skincare cosmetic products manufactured in developed countries are safer. This may reflect consumers' perceptions that countries with established cosmetic industries have stronger production technologies, testing systems and regulatory requirements. Importantly, this finding represents consumer perception, rather than evidence that all cosmetics manufactured in developed countries are objectively safer.

The willingness-to-pay findings provide further evidence of the commercial relevance of country-of-manufacture perceptions. 178 respondents (80.1%) agreed or strongly agreed that they were willing to pay more for products manufactured in countries perceived to produce better-quality products. This suggests that country-of-manufacture perceptions may affect not only product evaluation but also the economic value consumers attach to skincare cosmetics.

The availability finding also provides a contextual explanation. 174 respondents (78.3%) agreed or strongly agreed that skincare cosmetic products from developed countries were readily available. Frequent exposure to products from particular manufacturing countries may increase familiarity and recognition. Consumers may therefore become more comfortable with products that they repeatedly encounter in different retail outlets.

The findings are consistent with the broader evidence reported by De Nisco and Oduro (2022), who showed that different country-of-origin dimensions can affect consumer responses. Their meta-analysis is particularly relevant because it supports analysing country of manufacture separately from country of design and country of brand origin rather than treating all origin information as one construct.

The findings are also consistent with Martins et al. (2023), who found that country-of-origin image influenced product evaluation and purchase decision-making among Nigerian consumers. However, the present study provides a more specific focus on the country of manufacture of skincare cosmetic products and consumers in Iringa Municipality, thereby addressing both a product-category and geographical gap.

8. Conclusion

The study concludes that country of manufacture is an important factor associated with consumer purchase behaviour of skincare cosmetic products in Iringa Municipality. The quantitative findings demonstrate a strong positive relationship between country of manufacture and consumer purchase behaviour ($r = 0.701$). The regression model also shows a positive coefficient for country of manufacture ($B = 0.321$) when country of manufacture is considered together with country of design and country of brand origin.

The descriptive findings further show that consumers strongly associate manufacturing country with perceived quality, safety, willingness to pay and product availability. In particular, 192 respondents (86.5%) agreed or strongly agreed that skincare cosmetics manufactured in developed countries have better quality, while 190 respondents (85.6%) agreed or strongly agreed that such products are safer. In addition, 178 respondents (80.1%) expressed willingness to pay more and 174 respondents (78.3%) agreed or strongly agreed that such products were readily available.

The study therefore concludes that country-of-manufacture information functions as an important extrinsic information cue in consumers' evaluation of skincare cosmetics. However, the findings should be interpreted as evidence of consumer perceptions and purchasing behaviour, rather than as proof that products from particular countries are inherently superior.

9. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends that:

Skincare cosmetic manufacturers and importers should provide clear and accurate country-of-manufacture information on product labels and packaging. Since a large proportion of consumers consider manufacturing country when evaluating skincare products, transparent information can help consumers make informed purchasing decisions.

Cosmetic manufacturers should strengthen product quality and safety assurance. The finding that 192 respondents (86.5%) associated developed-country manufacturing with better quality indicates that consumers attach considerable importance to perceived manufacturing standards. Manufacturers should therefore maintain appropriate quality-control procedures and communicate relevant quality and safety information clearly.

Importers and distributors should ensure that information concerning manufacturing country, product authenticity and safety is accurately communicated to consumers. This is particularly important because consumers may use country information as a signal of reliability when they cannot directly assess product quality before purchase.

Cosmetic retailers should provide consumers with accurate information about the origin and characteristics of skincare products. Retailers can also help reduce uncertainty by ensuring that products are properly labelled, stored and presented.

Consumers should be encouraged to consider country-of-manufacture information together with other product attributes, including ingredients, regulatory information, expiry dates, product suitability and safety information. Country of manufacture should therefore be treated as one source of information rather than the sole basis for judging product quality.

Regulators and relevant standards authorities should continue strengthening requirements for cosmetic labelling, product registration, safety information and traceability. Clear country-of-manufacture information can improve transparency and assist consumers in distinguishing properly identified products from products with inadequate information.

Finally, cosmetic businesses should avoid relying solely on country-of-manufacture reputation as a marketing strategy. They should support origin-related perceptions with demonstrable product quality, safety, authenticity and reliable customer information. This approach can strengthen consumer confidence while ensuring that purchasing decisions are based on multiple relevant product attributes.

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