

# Consumer xenocentrism and foreign goods purchase intention in an emerging economy

Consumer  
xenocentrism  
and foreign  
goods

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – The purpose of this study is to test consumer xenocentric tendencies on foreign goods purchase intention and to examine the mediating role of cultural openness on the relationship.

**Design/methodology/approach** – A total number of 204 respondents participated in the study. Web-based sampling technique was employed to select a cross-section of consumers. Structural equation modelling technique of AMOS 21 version was used to test the nature of relationships in the research hypotheses.

**Findings** – The results suggest that except country image and interpersonal influence, all other constructs had a positive significant relationship with the intention to purchase. Country of origin, self-confidence and self-esteem had impact on consumer intention to purchase foreign products, though exposure of consumers to other cultures did not endear them to the products of those foreign markets.

**Practical implications** – From a managerial perspective, management awareness of xenocentrism tendencies is the surest way to make prudent decisions with respect to stocking and distributing foreign and local products or services.

**Originality/value** – The current study brings newness to the phenomenon as it tests consumer xenocentric (C-XEN) constructs in an emerging economy, and cultural openness as a mediating variable.

**Keywords** Consumer xenocentrism, Purchase intention, Foreign goods, Emerging economy

**Paper type** Research paper

## Introduction

Consumers have been exposed to several products and services around the world due to globalisation. This exposure, through traditional media, books, internet-based social media platforms and other channels have increased consumers' penchants for products manufactured abroad, has stirred consumers in emerging markets to seek quality goods found in other parts of the globe (Akbarov, 2021; Diamantopoulos *et al.*, 2019; Konfidants, 2017; Okoe *et al.*, 2016; Opoku and Akorli, 2009). Researchers argue that consumers in emerging markets largely have the predisposition towards foreign products even if those products have higher prices and sometimes lower quality (Akbarov, 2021; Diamantopoulos *et al.*, 2019; Kumar and Paul, 2018; Balabanis and Diamantopoulos, 2016). As stated in All Africa (2004, p. 3). "If what is available locally is far better, our people preference for foreign products is confusing." This assertion and phenomenon of craving for foreign goods and services from developed economies have attracted the attention of marketers and scholars



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(Akbarov, 2021; Kumar and Paul, 2018; Okoe *et al.*, 2016). For instance, Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2016) stated that consumers have preference for purchasing expensive foreign products neglecting similar or better locally produced goods that are even cheaper.

Imperatively, the noted tendency of perceived readiness to choose foreign products is not limited to a specific class, but goes beyond those that are consumed conspicuously. Certainly, Mueller *et al.* (2010, p. 8) revealed that “the preference for a range of foreign goods are preferred over qualitatively similar or better domestic goods that are often less expensive such as processed food formula, cereals, soaps, toothpaste, building materials, pharmaceutical, and clothing”. Sometimes strong hostility to a country may not hamper consumers’ appetite for its goods. This leads to what is termed as consumer xenocentrism.

Consumer xenocentrism deals with consumers’ belief, normative and ethical acceptability of acquiring products made from outside their countries (Shimp and Sharma, 1987), which makes it “a pro-ingroup and anti-outgroup constructs” (Zeugner-Roth *et al.*, 2015). Diamantopoulos *et al.* (2018) noted that literature has produced significant insights into the reasons underlying the preference for products of foreign origin. For Kent and Burnight (1951, p. 256), xenocentrism describes a group’s view of things other than one’s own which is central in everything, and seeing all other groups as the reference point, including one’s own. Likewise, Cleveland and Laroche (2012) refer to xenocentrism (XEN) as “the admiration or preference of a specific cultural outgroup or outgroups over the cultural in-group to which one belongs”.

Literature has shown that three different orientations to cultural diversity can be realised and fall in a continuum. Ethnocentrism represents the least supportive view towards diversity, cosmopolitanism described by Merton (1957) as “a personal tendency to orient oneself beyond the boundaries of the community one belongs to” is viewed as the most supportive regarding diversity. Cosmopolitanism (COS) refers to an openness to cultural diversity coupled with the ability to navigate through intercultural environments (Cleveland *et al.*, 2009; Sharma, 2011; Winit *et al.*, 2014; Feurer *et al.*, 2016). Xenocentrism is the preference of a specific cultural outgroup or outgroups over the cultural in-group to which one belongs (Cleveland and Laroche, 2012).

Balabanis *et al.* (2019) argue that a theoretical explanation has not been provided as to why consumers have preference for foreign products even though domestic made products may have similar quality or even better. Some researchers have comprehensively considered the issue but have largely used the consumer hostility construct as the major explanatory factor (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos, 2016). According to Mueller *et al.* (2010), Lawrence (2012) and Prince *et al.* (2016), research geared towards xenocentrism (XEN) which indicates a person tendency to see their own culture to be inferior, and to see other cultures as superior has been very minimal. For instance, a search on xenocentrism scholarly works in international journal of emerging market has produced no study on the subject (Carril-Caccia, 2020; Alonso Dos Santos *et al.*, 2020; Azungah *et al.*, 2020; Lee, 2019; Olaleye *et al.*, 2019; Agoba *et al.*, 2019; Kriese *et al.*, 2019; Amoah and Aziakpono, 2018; Tjandra *et al.*, 2015). This indicates that a contemporary investigation into the phenomenon in an emerging market context is in the right direction. Hence, one of the reasons for the current investigation. In addition, Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2016) indicated that the lack of research for consumer xenocentrism has been the main reason for the lack of understanding of the phenomenon. They empirically developed and tested C-XENSCALE and suggested that it should be replicated in other economies, especially emerging economies. Also, Jin *et al.* (2015) looked at how cosmopolitan tendencies affect preference of foreign product in a study of 11 countries, but found no different effects between countries that are developed and those that are developing.

Age and gender could perhaps explain why consumers prefer foreign products to their domestic products. Research encompassing age has presented significant results, with younger consumers receptive to foreign products (Guina and Giraldi, 2012; Good and Huddleston, 1995). There have also been inconsistent results on gender concerning the

purchase of foreign products (Johansson *et al.*, 1985). For instance, Balabanis *et al.* (2002) explain that females are prejudice when purchasing foreign products but approve of domestic ones. On the other hand, Good and Huddleston (1995) indicate that women tend to evaluate foreign products in a more favourable manner. Therefore, one can observe that despite the consensus on the fact that consumer gender influences evaluations of the country-of-origin and image, the results are indeed conflicting.

Interestingly, studies on age and gender show that they influence xenocentrism but with contradicting conclusions, Shimp and Sharma (1987). Good and Huddleston (1995) mentioned age groups have reported significant results for younger consumers, who seem to be more receptive to foreign products. Whereas, Wall and DeLancey (1991) found men relying on technological development and political orientation to form their opinions about the quality of the products made in another country, women on the other hand used different criteria, such as locational proximity and specificity of the product (e.g. shoes, clothes) as evaluative tools for countries. In addition to gender, Ahmed and d'Astous (1996) showed that young consumers and individuals belonging to higher-income classes have more positive beliefs about foreign products.

In addition to the lack of studies on xenocentrism in the emerging market context, this study will validate the existing scales on xenocentrism. The study will also contribute not only to the empirical literature but also in managerial terms to the knowledge of the xenocentrism concept. In relation to the theoretical contribution, the study extends the empirical literature on xenocentrism, enhancing the understanding of this behaviour to the products, and offering evidence of scale validity in a different context from which it was originally created. As this will increase the knowledge on different cultural settings. On the basis of the ongoing discussions, the objective of this current study primarily is in two-fold. To test xenocentric tendency among consumers and its effect on intention to purchase foreign goods in an emerging economy context. To investigate the role of cultural openness on the relationship between xenocentrism and the intention to purchase foreign products among consumers in an emerging economy.

### **Conceptual framework and hypotheses**

Different theories have been used to explain consumer behaviour in relation to preference for locally made products which described as ethnocentrism against foreign products (xenocentrism) including the social identity theory (Lee *et al.*, 2014; Siamagka and Balabanis, 2015; Cheah and Phau, 2015). For the purposes of this study, that is consumer xenocentrism, the System Justification Theory (SJT), Jost *et al.* (1994) and Jost and Andrews (2011), is proposed.

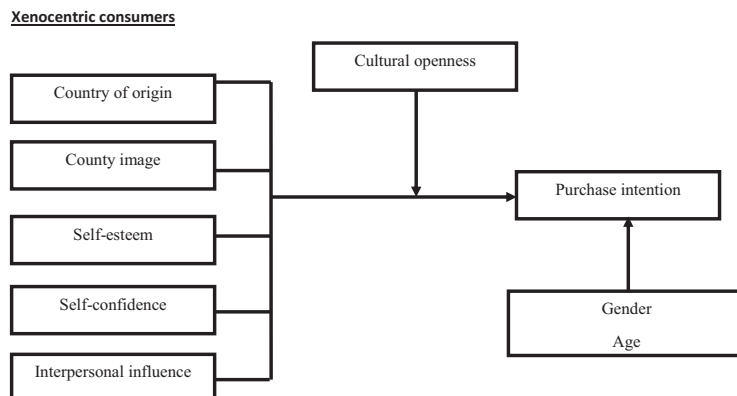
The system justification theory is a social psychological theory which explains the support for existing social order and stability as well as society's tendency resist social change. It also explains why some groups especially the disadvantaged ones have an inferiority complex (Jost and Banaji, 1994). The theory accordingly postulates that the wish of people is to hold attitudes that are favourable that are not just about their actions and themselves or about the groups they belong to and are committed members, but also the social system and any action taken in order to sustain it. The theory argues that in every society where there are social arrangements, it is largely accepted by members while maintaining the status quo (i.e. preserve the way things are) even if it means an acceptance of inferiority of the in-group as against to the out-group. System justification is seen when consumers accept and internalise differences (example in terms of development in social, economic and technology) between countries to the extent that they perceive other countries to be superior while their own is inferior (Balabanis *et al.*, 2019). In such cases, the former becomes more "desirable" to the in-groups, where it is

felt that the consumption of products or association with such foreign countries is a sign of a better status. The features of the SJT are captured directly by the dimensions of the C-XEN measurement construct, namely country of origin, country image, self-esteem, self-confidence, personal influence cultural openness. Thus, the hypotheses that follow and the conceptual framework are based on the SJT. [Figure 1](#) summarises the conceptual model.

### Country of origin

Country of origin is an outgroup construct ([Carril-Caccia, 2020](#); [Alonso Dos Santos et al., 2020](#); [Nijssen, and Douglas, 2004](#); [Saran and Kanelly, 2012](#); [Balabanis et al., 2001](#); [Levin et al., 1996](#); [Han and Terpstra, 1988](#)) and consumers are tempted to have an affinity for foreign products depending on the country of origin. An extensive degree of research on country of origin research conducted shows that research has concentrated on the density and uncertainty of the signals of country of origin ([Levin et al., 1996](#)). And these have led to different components of country of origin effect which are country of manufacture, country of assembly and country of design ([Han and Terpstra, 1988](#)). Similarly, studies have suggested that some consumers are misled to purchase foreign products because of the misleading descriptions of the country of origin ([Balabanis et al., 2001](#)). This confusion in consumers' minds regarding country of origin has shown that consumers are frequently being misled or misinformed about country of origin ([Nijssen and Douglas, 2004](#)).

The conclusion therefore has been that majority of the ambiguities as well as the conflicting findings in relation to country of origin effect on consumers may be as a result of misinformation. Furthermore, consumers from both emerging and developing economies have always considered the country from which the product is manufactured before purchasing. [Diamantopoulos et al. \(2018\)](#) assert that an individual's decision to purchase a foreign product is influenced by the country of origin. [Al-Sulaiti and Baker \(1998\)](#), [Usumier \(2006\)](#) and [Verlegh and Steenkamp \(1999\)](#) all suggests the notoriety and influence of country of origin when it comes to consumer buying behaviour especially in international buying. However, [Lim and O'Casey \(2001\)](#) postulate that country of origin information is becoming less relevant of multiplicity of country information, i.e. head office, design, manufactures and assembly, make it difficult for consumers to understand. Consumer's preference has shifted to the culture of brand origin instead of country of origin, which is usually available because of the consumer exposure to marketing activities of the brand. [Xu et al. \(2020\)](#) found consumers in China to prefer US dairy



**Figure 1.**  
Conceptual framework

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products to that of China because they were seen as safer with high nutrition and quality though lower in value. Therefore, the research proposes that:

*H1.* The country of origin influences consumers' purchases intention of foreign products.

### Country image

Consumer evaluation of products can be influenced by a product's country image. Many researchers have sought to deepen the understanding of consumer's intention towards the purchase of foreign products and have conducted series of research on country image (Azungah *et al.*, 2020; Lee, 2019; Pharr, 2005; Usunier, 2006). Again, several studies have mentioned that a country's image affects governments' decisions to partner other countries for joint developmental projects and investments (Pappu *et al.*, 2007; Roth and Diamantopoulos, 2009; Roth and Romeo, 1992). Papadopoulos (1993) postulates that in spite of globalisation and the growing economics in several nations, research on country image has been analysed differently in various regions of the world. It is argued that when consumers do not know the quality standards of imported products than they resort the image of the country (Phillips *et al.*, 2013).

Extant literature reveals that the definition for country image is not exhaustive as several scholars have tried to define the concept. However, Nagashima (1970) was the first author to define the concept of country image in terms of origin of products, that is, of country image as being the picture, reputation and stereotype that businessmen and consumers associate with the products of a country. Kotler *et al.* (1993) explain country image as "the sum of beliefs and impressions people hold about places". Therefore, an individual intention to purchase a product or use a product from a particular country may induce some emotions, pride, identity and memories associated with the image of the country of manufacture. According to Yeh *et al.* (2010) and Thøgersen *et al.* (2019) country image can have either a negative or positive effect on consumer evaluation of the product, purchase intention and purchase attitude. A country's image is related to whether consumer perceives the origin of the product as inferior or not. Xenocentric buyers accept that items and brands delivered by the in-group (home nation) are not better as compared to those in higher-status outgroups ("predominant" outside nations). Buyers view specific nation image through the nation's creation and development as well as their advertising qualities. Wang *et al.* (2012) argued that country image has a strong influence on perceptions of consumers' and their selection of foreign products especially when information about the conditions of the product is limited.

Akarsu *et al.* (2020) found the formation of country image as a tool to enhance consumers the experience. Diamantopoulos *et al.* (2017) postulate that country image has a relationship with purchasers of foreign goods and argue that country image of a nation of origin negative frames of mind towards brands. Xin and Seo (2019) also found a positive relationship between country image and purchase behaviour of consumers. Therefore, the study hypothesised that:

*H2.* The country image influences consumers purchase intention of foreign products.

### Self-esteem

Self-esteem has been defined as, "the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to him-self: it expresses an attitude of approval and indicates the extent to which an individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful and worthy (Coopersmith, 1967). Tajfel (1981) also defined it as the "aspect of the individual's self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership in a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership". Self-esteem is not

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only influenced by ourselves but also by others; it emphasises how you feel about all that you know about yourselves (Chen and Chang, 2019; Huitt, 2004) and the degree to which you like or accept yourself. Self-esteem is the personal and overall attitude to one's self-concept Heatherton *et al.* (2003). Consumer xenocentrism can lead to self-esteem and gives the individual a sense of belonging and/or identity pertaining to a certain country, therefore, provides an understanding of an acceptable purchasing behaviour for the group they belong to (Fernández-Ferrín *et al.*, 2015). According to Mueller *et al.* (2015), Chinese consumers prefer foreign products to their domestic ones, as they are able to serve as markers for social status. Thus, for many Chinese, domestic products do not convey the same social meanings as the foreign products. Self-esteem was seen to be negatively correlated with consumer xenocentrism (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos, 2016). Conversely, Molix and Nichols (2013) found self-esteem to be linked positively with the need for relatedness. That is, the study postulates that:

*H3.* Self-esteem influences consumers purchase intention of foreign products.

### **Self confidence**

Self-confidence is seen to be very vital in the selection of products considering product characteristics or attributes (Fiske *et al.*, 1994; Raju *et al.*, 1995). According to Aertsens *et al.* (2011), consumers subjective knowledge gives them more confidence and affects their choice to purchase and behaviour, leading to a positive purchase attitude. Self-confidence is argued to be the "extent to which an individual feels capable and assured with respect to his or her marketplace decisions and behaviours" (Bearden *et al.*, 2001). Butcher *et al.* (2017) indicated that Generation Y (Gen Y) are a group of people usually described as confident, opulent, educated and status-driven. Which shows that such group of individuals are self-confident and that can affect their purchase intentions and behaviour (Jain, 2020). Based on the social identity theory (SIT), national identity is described as an aggregate character that ties a together people of a country (Zeugner-Roth *et al.*, 2015). Customer self-confidence is part of national belonging. National identity has been found to have a positive relationship with self-confidence, consumer attitude and purchase intention (Knight, 1999; Huddy and Khatib, 2007). Literature on self-confidence its influence on consumer xenocentrism tendency is very limited especially in emerging economies. Therefore hypothesis 4 of this study indicates that:

*H4.* Self-confidence influences consumers purchase intention of foreign products.

### **Interpersonal influence**

Interpersonal influence, which is also being described as group pressure, largely is a critical in the determination of consumer behaviour because most people will always make purchase decision looking at significant others. Interpersonal influence according to Bearden *et al.* (1989) is "the need to identify or enhance one's image with significant others through the acquisition and use of products and brands". Personal influence compels consumers to purchase because of their desire to have worldwide or outgroup ties. Bearden *et al.* (1989) describes it as how a person's conformity needs with their significant others and influences the person's self-esteem (McGuire, 1968). Sharma and Klein (2020) assert that individuals with high interpersonal influence susceptibility come with low self-esteem, and the vice versa. These people are seen to be identifying with group buying decisions instead of only depending on information from the group about the product. Usually, in order to avoid the disapproval from the group they would rather seek approval from the group. There are two types of interpersonal influences: including informational and normative influences.

Most studies that have analysed consumption by individuals have largely indicated that interpersonal influence exists among consumers within different cultures. [Mourali et al. \(2005\)](#) for example, in studying Canadians with different cultures indicated that French Canadians scored lower regarding individualism as against English Canadians and are susceptible to value expressive and utilitarian influence than their English counterparts. [Shukla \(2011\)](#) similarly, observed that when it comes to normative influence Indian luxury consumers were more susceptible than British luxury consumers. [Chen and Wu \(2010\)](#) in studying online line group buying found that there is a relationship between informative and normative conformity. [Pi et al. \(2011\)](#) also found a relationship between social influence to conformity and Online Group Buying intentions. [Balabanis and Diamantopoulos \(2016\)](#) exhibited that people with xenocentric propensities are bound to be helpless to the relational impact of others without such tendencies. Besides, a few people may move towards becoming xenocentric in light of the fact that they sense that they are periphery individuals from their societal in-group. [Balabanis and Diamantopoulos \(2016\)](#) found personal influence to be related positively to the purchase of foreign products. Therefore, the study postulates that:

*H5.* The interpersonal influence impacts on consumers purchase intention of foreign products.

### **Cultural openness**

Cultural openness is “the experience with an openness towards the people, values, and artefacts of other cultures” ([Sharma et al., 1994](#)). According to [Oberecker et al. \(2008\)](#), the values and traditions of a country may spark of the sentiments of affinity towards a country, and people’s beliefs can influence the feeling of cultural closeness of about other nations. Cultural openness refers to mindfulness and status to speak with individuals from different societies and experience a portion of their relics ([Shankarmahesh, 2006](#)). One of the important factors in marketing today is consumer’s openness to foreign cultures. There is a belief among some social group that foreign cultures are superior to their own cultures, and this has been internalised by [Altıntaş and Tokol \(2007\)](#) as psychological perception. Existing studies have sought to explain consumers’ attitudes towards the purchase foreign products from the perspective of cultural ([Yoo and Donthu, 2005](#); [Sharma, 2010](#)). Previous research has indicated that individuals make different decision regarding consumptions because of different cultural values ([Yang et al., 2018](#); [Prince et al., 2019](#)). [Bartsch et al. \(2016\)](#) found cultural openness to have positive correlations with consumer attitude towards foreign products. [Ma et al. \(2020\)](#) also found cultural openness to have influence on consumer purchase intention of foreign products. In the literature, the mediating role of cultural openness to consumer purchase intention of foreign products. Hence the current hypothesis that:

*H6.* Cultural openness plays a mediating role between consumer’s xenocentrism and purchase intention of foreign products.

### **Purchase of foreign products**

In most developing countries, consumers to some extent prefer foreign products as they seem to see them from an angle of higher status, there are others who exhibit the preferences for products that are locally made and they develop a negative attitude for foreign products. Reasons for those negative attitudes could come for the fact that consumers thought of inferior product quality from some countries ([Han, 1988](#)), a sentiment of animosity for some countries ([Klein et al., 1998](#)), or think that it is immoral to purchase foreign made products that is a sense of nationalism ([Shimp and Sharma, 1987](#)).

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Literature on consumer behaviour has showed that customer willingness to pay, credibility and intention to purchase found the consumer experience regarding domestic products as against foreign products (Loureiro and Umberger, 2003; De Nisco *et al.*, 2016; Yildiz *et al.*, 2018). Studies have found a positive association between consumer xenocentrism and purchase of foreign products with orientation of social dominance and materialism variables and associated negatively with consumer ethnocentrism and self-esteem (Prince *et al.*, 2016; Balabanis and Diamantopoulos, 2016). Casado-Aranda *et al.* (2020) found a strong relationship between consumer ethnocentrism and foreign products purchase. Due to the perception of inferiority of locally made products and the cultural relativity consumers who desire to enhance their social status will have the potential to purchase foreign products without necessarily looking at the country of origin or the country image.

### **Demographic characteristics**

Demographic features of consumers' influence how they evaluate, perceive, develop attitude towards purchase of foreign goods. Several studies show that consumer demographic factors play a vital role in shaping the effect of country of origin (Kala and Chaubey, 2016). Han and Won (2017) revealed that young consumers in Chinese were more ethnocentric than their counterparts in Korea. Huddleston *et al.* (2001) found that gender has no relationship with ethnocentric tendencies. This current study seeks to close the gap in research relating to xenocentrism and also to add to the scant literature regarding C-XEN by helping to develop and test a conceptual model which links C-XEN to purchase intentions of foreign products.

The study, therefore, controls for gender and age. The control variables are introduced to assist with misspecification of the model because of variables that are omitted and to ensure that there is no inflation of empirical results or overestimation of the effects of C-XEN on the purchase intention. Perhaps, this may be the first study to use gender and age as controlling variables in a xenocentric study.

### **Methodology**

#### *Design*

Wilson (2006) describes primary data as research often collected for the evaluation of customer purchase intention, their attitudes as well as behaviour. This study adopted a quantitative survey design in order to examine the attitude and purchase intention of consumers towards foreign products. This was chosen because of the widespread of foreign goods in Ghana. Ghana imports more than it exports and most of the products we find in the Ghanaian market are of foreign origin. It is a very common phenomenon to find foreign goods. Konfidants (2017) concluded that with 23 different categories of products sold in supermarkets in Ghana, only 18% are locally produced.

#### *Sampling*

The sample was drawn from the Greater Accra Region in Ghana, specifically, Accra. Accra is the capital city of Ghana and its inhabitants are drawn from every part of the country and some are expatriates. Accra is selected for this research for the fact it is the gateway to most imported products into the country. It hosts the only used international airport, closer to Tema harbour and other land borders to the country. Accra is also chosen because more than half of the largest supermarkets are located there (Konfidants, 2017). This study uses purposive sampling method to select respondents drawn from different areas, including supermarkets, students and the open markets with varied age brackets between 18 and above 60 years of age. The sample size for the study is 204. The sample size was deemed appropriate since a similar study by Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2016) successfully employed a

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sample size of 209 in their study. Also, scholars such as [Anderson and Gerbing \(1988\)](#), [Ding et al. \(1995\)](#) and [Tabachnick and Fidell \(2001\)](#) argue that a minimum sample size of 100–150 can be considered for conducting SEM.

#### *Data collection procedure and instrumentation*

This study used questionnaire as an instrument to collect data. This was adapted from previous researches on xenocentrism and purchase intention. The scales are presented in [Table 1](#). The scales for xenocentrism were measured using [Balabanis and Diamantopoulos \(2016\)](#) and [Pedersen et al. \(2018\)](#) measures. The constructs for cultural openness were based on [Sharma et al. \(1994\)](#). Whilst intention to purchase foreign products was adapted from [Lawrence \(2012\)](#). Each construct and their respective measurement items are presented in [Table 1](#). All the items used in this study were measured on a five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). In order to eliminate possible problems of interpretation a pilot test to pre-test the questionnaire (response error) as well as reliability test of the scales was conducted. The feedback was then used to edit the questionnaire. In all 25 items from 7 constructs were used for the analysis. A total of 250 responses were received. However, the sample was reduced to 204 after excluding all the questionnaires that were not properly answered. Thus 204 cleaned data were finally used for the analysis. The data thus received was systematically arranged, tabulated and analysed using AMOS Version 21.

## **Results**

### *Demographic profile*

Of the 204 respondents, 45.4% were made up of males and 54.6% females. The dominant age group of the respondents was 41–50 years (37.6%), while the 60+ age group were the least represented. The highest level of education for majority of the respondents (74.1%) was tertiary, while only 3.4% of respondents had SHS/A-LEVEL. Majority of the respondents (34.1%) also earned between GH¢ 3001 – GH¢ 5000 per month. Follow by those who earned above GH¢ 5000 per month.

### *Model fitness*

An initial test was carried out before the loading was estimated. In order to determine the model fitness, the following fit values were obtained a chi squared value of = 1.854; GFI = 0.793; NFI = 0.801; IFI = 0.897; TLI = 0.884; CFI = 0.896 and RMSEA = 0.065. Some items were then deleted (COO4, COO5 COI4, INFL1, SES4, CO5, CO1 and INFL4) to improve as well as to meet the minimum threshold for the factor loading.

### *Common method bias*

This study conducted two tests to demonstrate that common method bias (CMB) was not an issue for this study ([Lu et al., 2010](#)). First, the authors performed a [Lindell and Whitney's \(2001\)](#) test through a marker variable approach. The results showed no significant correlation between the marker variable item and consumers purchase intention of foreign goods ( $r = 0.014, p > 0.05$ ). The results also showed no significant correlations between the marker variable item and other constructs, ranging between 0.014 and 0.067, which suggests that CMB does not affect this study. Next, a Harman's one-factor test in confirmatory factor analysis was run; the results show that no single factor accounted for more than 30% of the variance, this was lesser than the 50% threshold suggested by [Podsakoff and Organ \(1986\)](#), indicating that CMB was not an issue in this current study.

Variable	Factor loadings	T-value	CR	AVE	Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ )
<i>Self-confidence</i>					
SEC1 "I appreciate quality regardless of where it is coming from"	0.87	Fixed	0.91	0.67	0.88
SEC2 "I often need to buy products made outside of Ghana in order to better suit my needs"	0.85	15.82			
SEC3 "Buying foreign products makes me trendier"	0.84	15.50			
SEC4 "I get a better feeling from buying foreign made products than from buying one that is made in Ghana"	0.72	12.17			
SEC5 "I feel better about buying most foreign products than buying Ghanaian made products"	0.92	14.97			
<i>Country image</i>					
CO11 "In most product categories, foreign brands outperform domestic ones"	0.65	Fixed	0.77	0.53	0.91
CO12 "I cannot think of any domestic brands that are as good as the foreign ones I purchase"	0.67	8.33			
CO13 "Compared to Ghana there are many other countries I prefer to buy from"	0.73	8.37			
CO15 "Having access to products coming from many different countries is valuable to me"	0.67	7.42			
<i>Purchase intention</i>					
PI1 "I am very interested in trying other products from different countries"	0.71	Fixed	0.92	0.71	0.92
PI2 "I enjoy being offered a wide range of products coming from various countries"	0.78	14.94			
PI3 "I purchase more foreign goods than local goods"	0.92	15.20			
PI4 "I intend to purchase more foreign goods in the coming years"	0.93	13.44			
PI5 "Always buying the same local products becomes boring over time"	0.85	12.53			
<i>Cultural openness</i>					
CO2 "Even when consuming a particular foreign product which does not fit the norms and values of my own culture, I still try it"	0.71	Fixed	0.82	0.61	0.77
CO3 "Even if I do not know how well a specific foreign brand will perform beforehand, I try it"	0.66	0.8.90			
CO4 "When a foreign friend recommends a product from his/her own culture that is unknown to me, I am prepared to try it without any prejudice"	0.94	9.61			
<i>Interpersonal influence</i>					
INFL2 "I like to buy products that are not typically available in Ghana"	0.39	Fixed	0.94	0.92	0.70
INFL3 "I enjoy trying products that are popular in other countries"	0.78	12.43			
<i>Country of origin</i>					
COO1 "There are very few domestic products that are of equal quality to foreign products"	0.60	16.62	0.74	0.55	0.88

**Table 1.**  
Factor loadings

(continued)

Variable	Factor loadings	T-value	CR	AVE	Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ )
COO2 "I trust more foreign than domestic companies, because they are more experienced and have more resources"	0.76	7.55			
COO3 "I trust foreign products more than the domestic ones"	0.93	7.43			
<i>Self-esteem (SES)</i>			0.92	0.75	0.71
SES1 "I prefer to buy foreign made products"	0.85	Fixed			
SES2 "Using foreign products enhances my self-esteem"	0.86	15.65			
SES3 "People that buy domestic products are less regarded by others"	0.89	16.62			
CFI = 0.95, $\chi^2/df = 1.57$					

Table 1.

### Measurement model

To ascertain the validity and reliability of the constructs together with the scales used, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted. In order to undertake this, an estimated measurement model was used which consisted of seven latent factors as shown in Table 1. To evaluate the Model fitness we used  $\chi^2/df = 1.57$  ( $p \geq 0.001$ ), Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) = 0.94; a comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.95; an incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.95, and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA = 0.05). These estimates show a good fit model, as all indices indicated above are within limits that are acceptable (Schreiber, 2008). Each factor loading is greater than 0.5, which satisfies the requirements for acceptability (Hair et al., 2006; Marticotte and Arcand, 2017). Composite reliabilities (CR) of the seven constructs were also extracted to determine their reliability. According to Bagozzi and Yi (2012) the criterion for accepting CR should be 0.6 and above and the range from 0.74 to 0.94 exceeds the prescribed threshold. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  values that range from 0.70 to 0.92 showed a good test of the reliability of the items. Regarding the evaluation of construct validity, a discriminant validity test based on the argument of (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) was examined. Also, to test the convergent validity for all seven constructs an average variance extracted (AVE) was examined. All the constructs were found to be above 0.5 (Khan et al., 2016) as indicated in (Table 2). Regarding the discriminant validity, a comparison between the values of the AVE for each of the construct and the squared correlations of the inter-construct, as shown in Table 2 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). It showed that the AVE values were greater than the squares of the inter-construct correlation; therefore, the criteria for the discriminant validity are satisfied.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(1) Self confidence	<i>0.82</i>						
(2) Country image	0.64	<i>0.73</i>					
(3) Purchase of goods	0.66	0.49	<i>0.84</i>				
(4) Cultural openness	-0.04	-0.05	-0.17	<i>0.78</i>			
(5) Interpersonal Influence	-0.06	-0.01	0.02	-0.19	<i>0.96</i>		
(6) Country of origin	0.39	0.69	0.51	-0.18	-0.01	<i>0.70</i>	
(7) Self-esteem	0.76	0.66	0.77	0.00	0.02	0.58	<i>0.87</i>

**Note(s):** Diagonal shown in italics is the square root of AVE; for discriminant validity the square root of AVE should be higher than off-diagonal variables

Table 2.  
Discriminant validity

### Hypotheses testing

The hypotheses of the study were tested using a Structural Equation Model (SEM) for both the direct and mediating relationships. The estimates and the values for the direct relationships are shown in Table 3. Table 3 captures the findings of hypothesis H1 to H5. All the fit indices showed good fit as seen in the table with  $R^2 = 0.58$  (58%). As observed from Table 3, the findings supported three of the hypotheses using the  $\beta$  values and the  $p$ -values, with the exception of country image and interpersonal influence. Self-confidence was found to have a significant positive influence on purchase intention ( $\beta = 0.25$ ;  $t$ -value = 3.73;  $p \leq 0.001$ ) which supported hypothesis 4. Interpersonal influence had a positive nonsignificant influence on purchase intention ( $\beta = 0.00$ ,  $t$ -value = 0.01  $p \leq 0.99$ ) which did not support hypothesis 5. Both self-esteem and country of origin had a positive significant influence on the purchase of goods with ( $\beta = 0.12$ , and 0.53;  $t$ -values = 2.09 and 7.69 respectively;  $p \leq 0.001$ ) which supports both hypotheses 1 and 3 while country image had a nonsignificant negative influence on purchase intention with ( $\beta = -0.05$ ;  $t$  value =  $-0.69$ ,  $p \leq 0.049$ ) which did not support hypothesis 2. This negative influence found in country image and purchase intention of foreign goods confirms argument by Diamantopoulos *et al.* (2017). Furthermore, the variables were controlled using gender and age to test the significant influence on the various constructs. The results from the study show that while gender had a negative significant influence of ( $\beta = -0.7$   $p \leq 0.001$ ), age had a positive influence with an estimate of ( $\beta = 0.02$ ;  $p \leq 0.001$ ) (see Table 4).

### The mediating role of cultural openness

A mediation analysis was conducted to ascertain whether cultural openness could mediate between xenocentrism and purchase intention. Table 5 highlights the outcome, indicating the presence of both direct without a mediator and direct with a mediator. It also shows indirect relationships. As can be seen, it is observed from the table that cultural openness has no direct

**Table 3.**  
Individual paths

	$\beta$ -Estimate	$T$ -value	$p$ -value
<i>Structural relationships</i>			
Self-Confidence→Purchase intention	0.25	3.73	***
Country image→Purchase intention	-0.05	-0.69	0.49
Interpersonal influence→Purchase intention	0.00	0.01	0.99
Country of origin→Purchase intention	0.12	2.09	0.04*
Self-Esteem→Purchase intention	0.53	7.69	***
<i>Controls</i>			
Gender→Purchase intention	-0.7	-1.51	0.13
Age→Purchase intention	0.02	0.39	0.69
$R^2 = 0.58$ (58%), RMSEA = 0.09, GFI = 0.98, TLI = 0.94	NFI = 0.96	CFI = 0.98	$\chi^2/df = 2.18$
<b>Note(s):</b> * $p \leq 0.05$ is significant at 5%; *** $p \leq 0.001$			

**Table 4.**  
Xenocentrism and purchase intention

Structural Path + O6K4:P6K4K4:N6	$\beta$ -Estimate	$T$ -value	$p$ -value
Xenocentrism→Purchase intention	0.80	11.71	***
<i>Controls</i>			
Age→purchase intention	0.03	0.55	0.55
Gender→Purchase intention	-0.07	1.55	0.12
$R^2 = 0.64$ (64%), RMSEA = 0.059, GFI = 0.95, TLI = 0.94	NFI = 0.94	CFI = 0.97	$\chi^2/df = 1.71$
<b>Note(s):</b> *** $p \leq 0.001$ is significant at 1%			

Mediating path	$\beta$	Direct without mediator	Direct with mediator	Indirect	Outcome
Xenocentrism → Cultural openness → Purchase intention $R^2 = 0.65$ , GFI = 0.903, NFI = 0.952, IFI = 0.912, TLI = 0.934, GFI = 0.52, $\chi^2/df = 2.54$	-794 (***)	0.794 (***)	0.794 (***)	0.003 (0.628)	No mediation

**Note(s):** \*\*\* $p \leq 0.001$  is significant at 1%

**Table 5.**  
Mediation path

significant effect on purchase intention; therefore, demonstrating that cultural openness does not serve a mediator in the relationship between xenocentrism and purchase intention which does not support Hypothesis 6. All the fit values showed a good fit;  $R^2 = 0.65$ , GFI = 0.903, NFI = 0.952, IFI = 0.912, TLI = 0.934, GFI = 0.52,  $\chi^2/df = 2.54$ . These findings are not consistent with Bartsch *et al.* (2016) who found cultural openness to have positive correlations with consumer attitude towards foreign made goods. In the context such as Ghana, cultural openness could not be seen as a mediator between xenocentrism and intention to purchase foreign goods. This could be that because this study is one of the earliest in Ghana that could be a reason for such findings.

## Discussions

The current study observed that out of the five constructs investigated, three of the constructs were found to have a significant relationship with consumer intention to purchase foreign goods. The three constructs are self-confidence, self-esteem and country of origin had positive significant relationship with intention to purchase. Country image and interpersonal influence were not significant as shown in Table 3. These finding supported literature and thus the positive significant relationship between country of origin and purchase of foreign goods was not surprising as Diamantopoulos *et al.* (2017) found a positive relationship and this replicated in the context of developing economy such as Ghana. The relationship between self-esteem was observed to have a significantly positive relationship supporting Molix and Nichols (2013) but did not support the findings by Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2016). Self-confidence was observed to be significant in its positive relationship supporting Knight (1999) and Huddy and Khatib (2007) but did not also support the study by Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2016). In respect of self-esteem and self-confidence as constructs, space and location might have played a major role in its determination. For interpersonal influence it was observed to be positively nonsignificant which was in contradiction to the findings of Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2016). Country image had a nonsignificant negative relationship which did not come as a surprise because literature reviewed had already indicated such as in Diamantopoulos *et al.* (2017). Regarding the mediating role of cultural openness, it was clearly indicated by the outcome that there was no mediating role of cultural openness on the relationship between xenocentrism and purchase intention. Which means that even though all the selected constructs of xenocentrism have a relationship either positive or negative with intention to purchase foreign goods, cultural openness does not serve as a determinant or as a mediator especially within the Ghanaian context.

## Theoretical implications

Even though the point has been made in previous literature that “mere foreignness” could come as “a reason for preferences” (Agbonifoh and Elimimian, 1999), there has been

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somewhat neglect in the international marketing consumer studies literature to the effect that “there has been little attention given to consumers who have outgroup orientations (foreign preferences) and in-group derogation” (Mueller *et al.*, 2016) and consumer intention to purchase foreign goods (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos, 2016; and Prince *et al.*, 2016). In this study, we sought to address gap by testing the conceptualisation of the C-XEN constructs and their relationships with consumer intention to purchase and also finding out if cultural openness could serve as mediator for consumer purchase intention for foreign goods. Using the SJT, the study conceptually looked at the constructs drawn from Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2016) and Pedersen *et al.* (2018) who found C-XEN to be a higher-order construct.

### **Managerial implications**

Given the fact that Ghanaian consumers and for that matter consumers in emerging markets prefer foreign brands to locally branded products one of the major implications of this study for managers could be that there is the need to promote their brands well and position them in such a way that it will be more attractive to the consumers. They could label their products using the “made in”, so as to serve as a means to get more customers if not, it might have an effect on the real origin of the brands and promote other countries better than their own. There is a concerted effort by governments to promote made in Ghana goods due to this trend of the Ghanaian appetite for foreign goods which is having an impact on the economy. Management should also beware that branding everything into foreign will not necessarily help due to government efforts to change the attitude of Ghanaians towards locally made products and for that matter there should be a blend. Researchers could expand the literature on xenocentrism by testing the same variables to ascertain the validity of the research in other areas especially in emerging economies.

### **Conclusion, limitations and direction for future research**

The present study considers the relationship between country image, country of origin, self-esteem, self-confidence and purchase intentions and finally the meditation effect of cultural openness and purchase intention with the goal of providing deeper insight, as to how these important constructs interact with the xenocentric consumers. One of the areas of neglect in the literature of international marketing is consumer xenocentrism (Bartsch *et al.*, 2016), and for that matter consumers with outgroup orientations. However, the findings supported all the hypothesis using the *t*-values except for country image. Self-confidence and interpersonal influence were found as having a positive influence on purchase intention. Again, the results from the study show that while gender had a negative significant influence, age, on the other hand, had a positive influence as control variables. From a managerial perspective, the implication could focus on continuous development of self-confidence and personal influence on xenocentric consumers.

A major limitation of study is that of using purchase intentions as the main outcome variable. Even though it can be viewed as an accepted a widely used dependent variable in studies to international marketing, considering its impact on C-XEN and other behavioural orientations such as willingness to pay, product choice, the price of product and brand attitude could be used to see the outcome results. This study did not also use all the constructs by the authors from which this empirical study has been conducted. A selected few was taken out and further research can be conducted to test the others such as materialism, vanity and social dominance orientation. For future research purposes, it must be noted that this empirical analysis was only undertaken in one specific emerging country and the model used was generalised to foreign goods ranging from household items to appliances. Researchers could consider choosing a specific product line for further studies. The findings of this current

paper should not be considered as conclusive but rather a suggestive one and can be replicated in other emerging countries using stimuli such as brand origins and brands. Similarly, the model of mediation which has been used to test on Ghanaian consumers could be tested on other consumers in other countries, to verify the results of the mediation. Since in the context of Ghana there was no mediation.

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