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## Article

Consumer attitudinal dispositions: A missing link between socio-cultural phenomenon and purchase intention of foreign products. An empirical research on young Vietnamese consumers

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## MARKETING | RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Consumer attitudinal dispositions: A missing link between socio-cultural phenomenon and purchase intention of foreign products: An empirical research on young Vietnamese consumers

Nhu-Ty Nguyen<sup>1,2</sup> and Thai-Ngoc Pham<sup>1,2,3\*</sup>

**Abstract:** The purpose of this research is to examine the influence of consumer attitudinal dispositions on purchase intention toward foreign products and to determine which socio-cultural phenomenon are responsible for the formation of those attitudes. In this study, we employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) version 20 to validate the research model using data collected from 400 young Vietnamese consumers. The results reveal that cosmopolitanism and xenocentrism attitudes have positive effect on consumer preference for foreign products. Furthermore, patriotism, wordmindedness, and materialism are indicated as antecedents of consumer ethnocentrism, cosmopolitanism, and xenocentrism, respectively. The roles of consumer attitudinal dispositions are highlighted to explain the relationship between socio-cultural phenomenon and young consumers' purchase

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Nhu-Ty Nguyen is working and teaching at International University - VNU HCMC, Vietnam. He received a Master degree in 2012 and a PhD degree after 2.5 years later in the major of Industrial Engineering and Management from National Kaohsiung University of Applied Sciences, Taiwan. He has got experience in working as an assistant editor for Golf & Life Magazine. He is currently working and teaching in the areas of business management and operations with many invitations to review papers from international journals. He has published many papers in the research fields of operations management, evaluation, and motivation, and so on in high ranking journals (ISI and Scopus indices).

Thai-Ngoc Pham has been working at Ton Duc Thang University since 2017. She is currently a lecturer of Faculty of Business Administration. After received a MBA degree, she has continued to study on Ph.D. program on Business Administration of International University - VNU HCMC. Her interests on research are consumer behaviors, international marketing, and brand management.

## PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

Marketing gurus believe that companies in the era of globalization should focus their efforts on customer characteristics rather than country differences. Consumer attitudinal dispositions, which endure attitudes one might develop toward a nation have been considered as a powerful international segmentation tool. Given the fact that the number of MNCs operating in Vietnam is steadily increasing, empirical research uncovering foreign consumption is extremely limited. This study fills the gap by estimating the influence of consumer ethnocentrism, cosmopolitanism, and xenocentrism on non-local purchase intention in the perspective of socio-cultural human phenomenon. The results have provided significant findings about young Vietnamese consumer behaviors. We highlight the mediating role of consumer attitudes in explaining the relationship between patriotism, worldmindedness, and materialism, and foreign buying intention. Implications have been recommended for not only academics in terms of theoretical contributions but also marketers in terms of practical strategies.

intention. Theoretical and managerial implications for academics and practitioner addressing on consumer attitudes in Vietnamese market are also discussed.

**Subjects:** Consumer Psychology; Cognition & Emotion; Counseling Psychology

**Keywords:** socio-cultural phenomenon; consumer cosmopolitanism; consumer ethnocentrism; consumer xenocentrism; purchase intention

## 1. Introduction

Although globalization is widespread across industries and nations, it does not guarantee that consumers worldwide are globalizing at the same pace (Cleveland et al., 2009). Apparently, differences exist among consumers' groups in different markets and that will impact firms' operations and marketing strategies accordingly. As firms are more and more dependent on overseas markets, identifying global consumer segments and subsequently targeting those segments are challenging tasks, but it is a "must" for international marketers (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2019). Marketing wisdom recommends that companies should prioritize their international segmentation approaches on consumer characteristics rather than country characteristics because successful strategy lies in effectively matching product attributes to consumer attitudes, values, and lifestyles (Keillor et al., 2001), (Riefler et al., 2012). Although exploring consumer purchase intention is not new to global academics, the topic still receives considerable attention from multinational corporations operating in Vietnamese market (N. T. Nguyen, 2019). This phenomenon is even more prominent in the young consumer segment because of the improved purchasing power makes it a very promising market for companies looking for growth beyond their boundaries (Plecher, 2020), (Zafer Erdogan & Uz Kurt, 2010).

Consumer attitudinal dispositions, which describe tendencies a consumer might hold toward out-group anchoring from ethnocentrism (favoring domestic products), cosmopolitanism (favoring products on merit), and xenocentrism (favoring foreign products), have been proposed as powerful tools for firms to implement global positioning strategies (Cannon & Yaprak, 2002), (Riefler et al., 2012). Motivated by the aims to gain greater insight into how consumers develop attitudes toward foreign consumption, current scholars have put extensive effort into exploring attitudinal antecedents (Prince et al., 2016). Literature postulates that socio-cultural factors play central roles in establishing consumer attitudes, beliefs, and other related behaviors (Ramya & Ali, 2016), (Thompson & Prendergast, 2015). Regarding many socio-cultural factors have been indicated, this study focuses on patriotism, wordmindedness, and materialism as significant antecedents of consumer attitudinal dispositions (Cleveland et al., 2009).

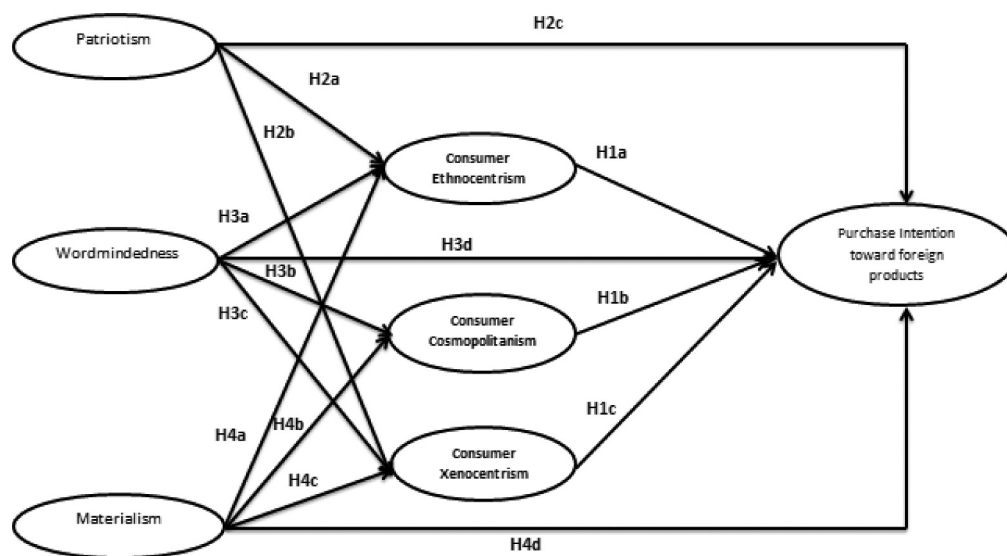
Despite the fact that there are numerous researchers conducting empirical studies on predicting consumer behaviors in Vietnamese market, there is still a limited number of studies addressing consumer attitudinal dispositions from socio-cultural perspective (Nguyen & Tran, 2015). Therefore, this study fills the gap by adopting an integrated research model to examine the influence of socio-cultural factors and consumer attitudinal dispositions on purchase intention. The findings of this study will enrich the international marketing literature on the consumer evaluation of foreign products in developing country as Vietnam as well as assist practitioners to build a more appropriate marketing strategy in targeting young consumers.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. A. Research model

In this study, the conceptual model derives from the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) as well as the work of (Nguyen & Tran, 2018) and (Riefler, 2017) on antecedents of consumer attitudinal dispositions toward a nation. Given that TPB is well known for explaining and predicting human behavior, (Ajzen, 2011) suggested that additional variables should be proposed and added with caution, after careful deliberation to fully draw picture on consumer behaviors' determinants.

**Figure 1. Conceptual research model.**



(Vabø & Hansen, 2016) noted there is a lack of studies accounting for consumer-related factors (e.g.: personality traits, socio-cultural, and psychological factors) in the TPB model. Based on the aforementioned, in Figure 1, the study's conceptual model proposes the consumer attitudinal dispositions (e.g., consumer ethnocentrism, consumer cosmopolitanism, and consumer xenocentrism) as the pivotal point in the relationship between socio-cultural phenomenon (e.g., patriotism, world-mindedness, and materialism) and purchase intention toward foreign products.

## 2.2. B. Theoretical background and Hypothesis development

### Consumer behavior

**Purchase Intention:** (Ajzen, 2008) defines intention as the willingness stored in human memory that will lead to an action in perfect time. Intention is considered as a form of motivation that consistently predicts human behavior toward a certain activity. Marketing scholars have put great consideration to explore factors standing behind intention because a higher intention would reflect a higher chance of performing. However, the level of relationship would decrease if there is a longer time between intention and action.

### Consumer Attitudinal Dispositions

**Consumer Ethnocentrism:** was first introduced by (Shimp & Sharma, 1987) as a “unique economic form of ethnocentrism that captures consumers’ beliefs about the appropriateness and morality of purchasing foreign-made products.” Specific characteristics of an ethnocentric consumer are: (1) a love and concern for his/her own country and a fear of losing control of the economic interest; (2) an intention or willingness not to purchase foreign products. Hence, highly ethnocentric consumers feel that the purchase of foreign products is a nationalistic issue, which comprises both economic threats and moral issues (Nguyen & Tran, 2018), (Sharma et al., 1994) and that causes the proclivity for consumers to select domestic products over foreign ones (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2016), (Cleveland et al., 2009), (Nguyen & Tran, 2018), (Nguyen & Tran, 2019). Empirical studies have confirmed consumer ethnocentrism as a consistent determinant of purchase intention across markets, such as Vietnam (N. T. Nguyen, 2019), Croatia (Maksan et al., 2019), Malaysia (Tabassi et al., 2012), etc. As a result, in this study, we propose that:

***H1a: Consumer Ethnocentrism negatively influences Purchase Intention toward foreign products.***

**Consumer Cosmopolitanism:** (Kent & Burnight, 1951) first noted that a cosmopolitan consumer could be neither biased toward their own group, nor biased toward another (foreign) group, but instead, will evaluate all groups based on their merits. According to (Riefler et al., 2012), a cosmopolitan attitude is characterized by multiple (local and foreign) loyalties rather than just a single loyalty as ethnocentric orientation or xenocentric orientation. Given the fact that cosmopolitans evaluate products based on its values rather than its origin, they tend to perceive themselves as global citizens rather than national ones, and so they are likely to respond more favorably to foreign consumption (Cleveland et al., 2009). Cosmopolitan attitude is even more prominent in developing countries since imported products are assessed as more qualified than domestic ones (Cannon & Yaprak, 2002), (Riefler, 2017) and this conclusion has been empirically supported in various studies (Parts, 2013), (Sousa et al., 2018), (Nguyen et al., 2015). As a result, in emerging markets like Vietnam, we propose:

***H1b: Consumer Cosmopolitanism positively influences Purchase Intention toward foreign products.***

**Consumer Xenocentrism:** is also mentioned by (Kent & Burnight, 1951), which implies a biased view when the out-group is evaluated better and higher. (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2016) define consumer xenocentrism as a “consumer’s internalized belief of the inferiority of domestic products and a corresponding propensity to prefer foreign products for social aggrandizement purposes”. Xenocentric consumers are those who take out-group as their central reference in judging products and often react more favorably to foreign products rather than domestic ones (N. T Nguyen, 2019), (Riefler, 2017). Consumer xenocentrism is suggested indeed capable of explaining negative preferences for domestic products (in case of in-group derogation) as well as positive preferences for foreign products (in case of out-group favoritism) (Diamantopoulos et al., 2019), (Mueller et al., 2015). As a result, we propose:

***H1c: Consumer Xenocentrism positively influences Purchase Intention toward foreign products.***

**Consumer Socio-cultural phenomenon**

**Patriotism:** represents love and devotion to one’s country (Sharma et al., 1994). Later, one characteristic of patriotism has been contributed by (Balabanis et al., 2001) as without corresponding hostility towards other nations. Because patriotic people do care about their countries, they will act to favor their countries (Kosterman & Feshbach, 1989; Gurova, 2019). Patriotic consumers tend to purchase domestic products rather than foreign ones to be consistent with their positive preference for country-land (Cleveland et al., 2009), (Nguyen & Tran, 2018). Literature has confirmed that patriotism is one of among socio-cultural phenomenon that accounts for positive sentiments in consumer toward their nations and has been empirically proven in multiple contexts such as: Czech Republic and Turkey markets (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2016); French consumers (Javalgi et al., 2005); American students (Vassella & Fountain, 2010); Indian consumers (Jain & Jain, 2013); South Africa consumers (Pentz et al., 2017). As a result, we propose:

***H2a: Patriotism positively influences Consumer Ethnocentrism.***

As such, consumer with a high level of patriotism will tend to avoid purchasing foreign products when possible (Cleveland et al., 2009) while the adverse actions are expressed by xenocentric ones (Riefler, 2017). Well-known researchers on this field have suggested that there is a negative relationship between patriotism and consumer xenocentrism (N.T Nguyen, 2019), (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2016), (Riefler, 2017). As a result, we propose:

***H2b: Patriotism negatively influences Consumer Xenocentrism.***

It has been suggested that patriotism directly influences consumer purchase intention and actual purchase behavior in terms of domestic products. The relationship has been confirmed in cross-country studies involving consumers in Saudi Arabia (Alekm et al., 2013), Malaysia (Nik-Mat et al., 2015), (Wel et al., 2015), and India (Campbell & Khanna, 2017). On the contrary, patriotism has a negative influence on purchase intention and actual purchase of foreign products (Riefler, 2017). This has also been found to be true with Hong Kong consumers (IAN, 2012) and American consumers (Erkaya, 2019). As a result, we propose:

***H2c: Patriotism negatively influences Purchase Intention toward foreign products.***

**World-mindedness:** as a “world-view of the problems of humanity” (Nguyen & Tran, 2018). More specifically, if cultural openness describes the chance of one benefiting from exposure and interaction with other “out-groups,” world-mindedness is a “state of mind” where “consumer uses humankind as his/her fundamental reference group instead of their own nationalities” (Rawwas et al., 1996). Thus, one might exhibit world-mindedness even if he or she had not been in touch with foreigners or traveled abroad. Consumers with high worldmindedness would explicit higher chance of purchasing foreign products followed their worldview orientations (Crawford & Lamb, 1982).

World-minded has been considered as among key determinants for the formation of consumer attitude toward a nation (N.T Nguyen, 2019), but its impact on certain disposition would be differently depending on the degree of development of the consumer’s nation (Nguyen & Tran, 2018). A great deal of research has confirmed that there is a positive relationship between world-mindedness and consumer cosmopolitanism (Cleveland et al., 2009), (Nijssen & Douglas, 2011), (Riefler et al., 2012), (Tillery et al., 2013) because this phenomenon generates a mankind reference regardless of one’s own nationality. In developing and emerging countries, consumers with a higher level of world-mindedness would probably express higher consumer xenocentrism and lower consumer ethnocentrism (Nijssen & Douglas, 2011). The negative relationship between world-mindedness and consumer ethnocentrism was empirically verified in Jordanian consumers (Al Ganideh et al., 2012), and other research found a positive relationship between world-mindedness and xenocentrism (Douglas et al., 2000). As a result, we propose:

***H3a: World-mindedness negatively influences Consumer Ethnocentrism.***

***H3b: World-mindedness positively influences Consumer Cosmopolitanism.***

***H3c: World-mindedness positively influences Consumer Xenocentrism.***

***H3d: Worldminded-ness positively influences Purchase Intention toward foreign products.***

**Materialism:** is considered as another socio-cultural phenomenon that regards possessions as symbols of success, where possessions occupy a central part of life (Chan & Prendergast, 2007). As such, people who constitute materialism also mean holding the belief that more possessions lead to more happiness. Materialistic people believe that the centrality part in one’s life is possessiveness, and even in the most extent, they use possessions as ways to infer success toward others (Cleveland et al., 2009).

For long, the research of materialism is prominent to explain consumer attitudinal dispositions toward globalization (Cleveland et al., 2009) and empirically, many theorists have attached global culture to materialism (Cleveland et al., 2016), (Gonzalez-Fuentes, 2019). Materialism is associated with possessions achievements as life’s satisfaction and happiness, and hence this socio-cultural factor is solely depended on individual’s belief about which possession is life’s achievement. There is still inconsistent among studies regarding relationship between materialism and consumer



attitudes in different contexts. (Nguyen & Tran, 2018) suggests materialism is positively influenced consumer ethnocentrism, which is compatible with (Clarke et al., 2000) studying on four developed countries, included: the U.S., Mexico, France, and Australia. (Nguyen & Tran, 2018) relies on three dimensions (e.g.: possessiveness, non-generosity, and envy) suggested in (Belk, 1984) to argue for the association between materialism and consumer ethnocentrism. However, on the other hand, the positive relationship between global culture and materialism in the context of developing countries has been found in various studies (Pilgrimienė & Kazakauskienė, 2016) as well as negative or insignificant relationship between materialism and local or national consumer culture (Bevan-Dye et al., 2012). It is argued that the correlation between materialism and consumer attitudes depended on which cultures (global or local) have been attached with status on consumers' perception in examined markets (Riefler, 2017). As a result, in this study, we propose:

***H4a: Materialism negatively influences Consumer Ethnocentrism.***

***H4b: Materialism positively influences Consumer Cosmopolitanism.***

***H4c: Materialism positively influences Consumer Xenocentrism.***

Materialism has been believed as a socio-cultural factor that attached to value and status purchase (Duan & Dholakia, 2018). Previous empirical researches have been confirmed for the significant relationship between materialism and material buying, such as: foreign apparel products (Ahmed et al., 2014), (Xu, 2008); splurge consumption (Fitzmaurice, 2008); luxury items purchase (Kamal et al., 2013), (Sun et al., 2014); conspicuous consumption (Podoshen et al., 2011); online fashion consumption (Mainolfi, 2019); and counterfeit products (Kozar & Marcketti, 2011), (Singh & Sahni, 2019). Thus, we propose:

***H4d: Materialism positively influences Purchase Intention toward foreign products.***

### **3. Methodology of research**

This study has been approached by quantitative research methodology. After hypotheses have been developed from literature review, questionnaire is designed to collect data for analysis. Reflective measurement scales are adapted to conceptualize constructs in the study. Adapted scales are filtered to get the most appropriate version for Vietnam context. Each variable is measured by Likert scale, anchor from 1 classified as strongly disagree to 5 classified as strongly agree. The questionnaire is originally in English, translated into Vietnamese, then back-translated into English by two native researchers Vietnamese to ensure the validity between two versions (Sinaiko & Brislin, 1973). Other demographic questions (e.g.: age, gender, education level, etc.,) also included in the survey. Demographic results are assessed by descriptive statistics by SPSS 20 software. Pilot study with 20 respondents is conducted to minimize any error or misunderstanding may occur before widely contributed. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is performed followed two-stage process suggested by (Wang et al., 2015) using AMOS 20 software. At first, the research model is assessed to ensure the reliability and validity test through Exploratory Factoring Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factoring Analysis (CFA) tests. Then, model fit criteria recommended by (Hu & Bentler, 1999) were applied for both measurement and structural model in SEM test. After the model fit has achieved, causal relationship among constructs will be tested with  $p < 0.001$  for concluding the proposed hypotheses and standardized regression weight for estimating the level of influence.

### **4. Results and discussions**

#### **4.1. Description of research sample**

Data were collected by convenience sampling method (as a type of non-probability sampling), but respondent must be satisfied three criteria, included: (1) students in colleges/universities; (2) having experience in buying foreign products before; and (3) living and working in Ho Chi Minh



**Table 1. Sample description**

<b>N = 400</b>		<b>N</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Sex orientation</b>	Male	129	32.2
	Female	264	66
	NO-BINARY	7	1.8
<b>Age</b>	From 18 to 30	400	100
<b>Marital status</b>	Single	380	95
	Married	20	5
<b>Education level</b>	Vocational training	8	2
	College/University	392	98
<b>Income</b>	Dependent	339	84.8
	Independent	61	15.2

City. There were 700 surveys distributed, but the usable ones were only 400, achieved the response rate at 57%. Description of the research sample has been shown in [Table 1](#).

Initially, Cronbach's Alpha has been assessed to examine the internal consistency of items in measurement scales. The recommended cut-off value is 0.7 but larger 0.6 is still accepted (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Given a large sample has been collected, it is possible to conduct both EFA and CFA tests (Wang et al., 2015). The data set has been split into two equal data sets ( $n_1 = 200$  and  $n_2 = 200$ ) used for each test as suggested by (Wang et al., 2015) to examine the validity. An EFA is conducted to determine the underlying structure among the variables in the analysis. The research results have been achieved, accepted and recommended criteria: (1) KMO = 0.795 ( $>0.5$ ); (2) Total variance explained = 50.529 ( $>50$ ); (3) Variables that cross-load or load less than 0.3 have been excluded.

A CFA has been conducted to examine measurement model with six constructs identified by the EFA. Two items from Worldminded-ness and Consumer Cosmopolitanism have been excluded for unsatisfying standardized regression weight (Wang et al., 2015). The CFA result has received accepted model fit with:  $\chi^2[413] = 785.568$  ( $p < .001$ ),  $\chi^2/df = 1.902$  (good), CFI = 0.872 (permissible), GFI = 0.808, AGFI = 0.77, RMSEA = 0.067 (moderate) (Wang et al., 2015). All factor loadings were sufficient ( $>0.5$ ) and significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of constructs have been higher than 0.5 but still accepted less than 0.5 if Composite Reliability (CR) has been higher than 0.6 for the test of convergent validity (P. Nguyen & Nguyen, 2020). Discriminate validity of all the constructs has been supported. Detail construct measurements have been shown in [Table 2](#).

After reliability and validity have been examined, SEM has been performed to test the causal relationship among constructs in the research model. The recommended fit indicated that the structural model in SEM test has been accepted (Wang et al., 2015) with:  $\chi^2[420] = 904.691$  ( $p < .001$ ),  $\chi^2/df = 2.154$  (good), CFI = 0.907 (traditional), GFI = 0.872, AGFI = 0.849 (accepted), RMSEA = 0.054 (moderate), SRMR = 0.06 (accepted).

## 5. B. The results of the test hypotheses

The study has developed and validated a research model delineating the relationship among patriotism, worldmindedness, and materialism as socio-cultural phenomenon and consumer attitudes on purchase intention. The research provides empirical evidence for understanding the roles of socio-cultural phenomenon and consumer attitudinal dispositions on purchase intention in

**Table 2. Summary construct measurements**

Latent variables and Observed Indicators	Standardized Factor loading
<b>Patriotism (<math>\alpha = .903</math>, CR = .911, AVE = .632)</b>	
I love my country.	.782
I am proud to be my country citizen	.839
I feel a great pride in that land.	.807
It is not that important for me to serve my country.	.770
When I see my country's flag flying I feel great.	.783
When I hear anthem singing I feel great.	.786
<b>Worldminded-ness (<math>\alpha = .644</math>, CR = .65, AVE = .4)</b>	
There should be replaced by one central government.	.689
Should be global citizen than one.	.762
Immigration should be controlled by an international organization	.379
<b>Materialism (<math>\alpha = .739</math>, CR = .759, AVE = .354)</b>	
I like a lot of luxury in my life.	.531
Buying things gives me lots of pleasure.	.633
Life would be better if I owned certain things I don't have.	.645
I admire people who own expensive possession.	.639
I'd be happier if I could afford more things.	.713
I like to impress people	.334
<b>Consumer Ethnocentrism (<math>\alpha = .813</math>, CR = .831, AVE = .502)</b>	
Should buy Vietnamese products to promote local economy	.710
Should only import products that can not produce in Vietnam	.545
Buying local products contributes to maintain local employment	.636
Should place priority on buying Vietnamese products	.901
It is better to buy Vietnamese products	.702
<b>Consumer Cosmopolitanism (<math>\alpha = .756</math>, CR = .513)</b>	
I satisfy my curiosity by purchasing products from that culture.	.815
I like to buy products that not typically available in Vietnam.	.564
I enjoy getting a taste of other cultures by purchasing foreign	.747
<b>Consumer Xenocentrism (<math>\alpha = .726</math>, CR = .856, AVE = .599)</b>	
I prefer to buy foreign made products.	.783
All other things being equal, I prefer to buy foreign products.	.686
I find that I enjoy using foreign made products more than local.	.807
I get a better feeling from buying a foreign made product than local.	.812
<b>Purchase Intention toward foreign products (<math>\alpha = .879</math>, CR = .889, AVE = .669)</b>	
I would feel guilty if I bought a Vietnamese product.	.660
I would never buy a Vietnamese product.	.833
Whenever available, I would prefer to buy products made in Vietnam.	.907
I do not like the idea of owning Vietnamese products.	.851

**Table 3. The results of the test hypotheses**

Relationship	Standardized Coefficient	p-value
H1b: Consumer Cosmopolitanism positively → Purchase intention	.249	***
H1c: Consumer Xenocentrism positively → Purchase intention	.423	***
H2a: Patriotism positively → Consumer Ethnocentrism	.55	***
H2b: Patriotism negatively → Consumer Xenocentrism	-.187	***
H3b: Worldminded-ness positively → Consumer Cosmopolitanism	.277	***
H4c: Materialism positively → Consumer Xenocentrism	.46	***

\*\*\*:  $p < 0.001$

a developing market. The study reveals which attitudes are accounts for foreign consumption as well as indicates socio-cultural antecedents of those attitudes. The results of the test hypotheses have been shown in Table 3.

While most of the studies on this field are mainly conducted in developed contexts, findings of this study shed the light on consumer behavior in the widespread of globalization. Cosmopolitan as well as xenocentric attitude are found to positively influence on consumer purchase intention toward foreign products and xenocentrism puts a greater impact than cosmopolitanism (0.423 versus 0.249). Explanations have been employed by favorable out-group preferences that one holds in consumption situations. Cosmopolitans are perceived to be more international and likely to attach to global values. Thus, cosmopolitans are favorably responsive to global consumer positioning strategies and tend to express higher intention in purchasing foreign products. Moreover, consumers who constitute out-group reference like xenocentric ones will definitely show favorable evaluation toward purchase non-local products, and this proclivity is observed more intensely in developing or emerging market. Nonetheless, the research has not found any significant effect of consumer ethnocentrism on purchase intention toward foreign products. High consumer ethnocentrism does not cause low purchase intention of foreign products and the study empirically supports the conclusion that ethnocentrism attitude might be a main determinant for the acceptance of local products but not a consistent predictor for the rejection of foreign ones. The same findings have also been found in the study of (Nguyen & Tran, 2019), (Wel et al., 2015) in other markets.

The study recommends for MNCs aiming at increasing foreign consumption in Vietnamese young consumers boosting on cosmopolitan and xenocentric attitude. Regardless of the collectivism culture of Vietnam society, high level of consumer ethnocentrism is not a barrier for foreign products but just an uncompetitive advantage in comparison with domestic ones. Consumer attitude dispositions are proved to be reliable predictor for purchase intention in the era of globalization.

Although previous researches have suggested that socio-cultural phenomenon shape consumer attitudes, no attempt has so far been made to simultaneously identify the antecedent role of specific factor. This study empirically indicates that certain consumer socio-cultural factors are responsible for the formation of positive and negative attitudes toward in-group and out-groups. Patriotism has been found as main driver of consumer ethnocentrism and this finding is

compatible with previous authors (Nguyen & Tran, 2018), (Vassella & Fountain, 2010), and (Nik-Mat et al., 2015). Patriotic consumers do put a great care for their nations and thus would be proud of being their citizens and likely take their country as main preferences when evaluating products. National proclivity has established ethnocentric attitude in consumers. Besides, the authors also find out patriotism has a negative impact on consumer xenocentrism, which means that the lower patriotism in an individual, the more likely he/she will take other nations as their main preference when evaluating products rather than their own society, and it has rarely been researched in previous studies.

Given the relationship between consumer ethnocentrism and foreign purchase intention, international marketers should not put high attention on influencing ethnocentric attitude and as well as its antecedent. However, the interesting point in this study is that patriotism has been found to negatively affect on consumer xenocentrism, which later in turn unfavorably impact on foreign consumption. Higher patriotism could lead to higher consumer ethnocentrism but inverse lower consumer xenocentrism and thus, this phenomenon should be applied carefully by foreign companies because higher one could not support for purchase intention toward foreign products while effort in lowering this characteristic could lead to the opponent of target markets. Leading scholars addressing on patriotism strongly recommend MNCs that the leverage of promotional campaigns supporting the value of national target audiences might be advantageous in specific period when this phenomenon is triggered.

Firstly, worldmindedness positively influences on consumer cosmopolitanism. The same result is supported in other previous studies (Rawwas et al., 1996), (Nijssen & Douglas, 2011), (Tillery et al., 2013). Secondly, the study has not found any relationship between worldmindedness and consumer ethnocentrism as found in (Rawwas et al., 1996) and suggested in (Nguyen & Tran, 2018). It means that worldmindedness does not contribute to the formation of ethnocentrism attitude in Vietnamese consumers and this is compatible with the study of (Balabanis et al., 2001) conducting on Czech and Turkey markets. Thirdly, worldmindedness does not significantly influence consumer xenocentrism, given the fact that xenocentric consumers tend to favor out-group and support for purchasing foreign products. Tracked back into the literature review, (Nguyen & Tran, 2018) argues that a person could be worldminded but does not necessarily interact with other cultures. Worldmindedness is distinct from “cultural openness”, and thus a worldminded consumer uses “mankind” to react to events but does not mean he/she takes foreign-related as reference as xenocentric consumer. The study suggests for foreign firms activating on worldmindedness phenomenon if they would like to increase cosmopolitanism attitude in Vietnamese young consumers. We advise MNCs to strengthen worldmindedness in positioning strategies when launching products in Vietnam market since this phenomenon accounts for the development of cosmopolitanism attitude and subsequently the willingness to try unfamiliar and different products.

In other extent, the research has found the positive relationship between materialism and consumer xenocentrism but not for consumer ethnocentrism and cosmopolitanism. This result appears to be compatible with results from some authors and incompatible with others. Specifically, materialism is confirmed to positively associate with consumer ethnocentrism and cosmopolitanism in (Cleveland et al., 2009), (Nguyen & Tran, 2018) while this research found no relationship. The contrasting results among studies are explained by the different attachment with status across markets. In developing/emerging countries as Vietnam, materialistic consumers have higher tendencies to view their home cultures as inferior and to have positive biases with foreign countries (Bevan-Dye et al., 2012). To those consumers, foreign products possess a higher status and quality. High level of materialism phenomenon helps to constitute higher xenocentric attitude in consumers. The managerial implication for foreign companies is using materialistic promotion and advertisement strategies to increase xenocentrism in target audience.

Last but not least, the non-existence of a direct relationship between patriotism, worldmindedness, and materialism on purchase intention toward foreign products has been confirmed.

Even so, the influences are still established through the mediation effect of consumer attitudes, especially cosmopolitanism, and xenocentrism. Unlike other previous studies' (Cleveland et al., 2009), (Rawwas et al., 1996) findings that socio-cultural factors could have a significant and direct impact on purchase intentions, this study found that consumer attitudinal dispositions play important bridge to link consumers phenomenon and purchase intention.

## 6. Conclusions

This research provides theoretical and managerial implications for marketers, especially those working in MNCs/firms in the Vietnam market, since purchase intention toward foreign products has been explored. From theoretical contribution, this study has developed and tested the research model delineating the relationship between socio-cultural phenomenon and attitudinal dispositions on consumer purchase intention. It suggests that patriotism, world-mindedness, and materialism are prominent antecedents of consumer ethnocentrism, cosmopolitanism, and xenocentrism, respectively. Higher cosmopolitanism and xenocentrism attitudes will lead to higher purchase intention toward foreign products. It is also noted that antecedent socio-cultural phenomenon does not directly influence consumers' purchase intentions but through the mediation role of attitudinal dispositions. From managerial contributions, the research could help managers/practitioners understand which phenomenon could lead to consumer attitudinal dispositions so that strategies could be leveraged to expand their target consumer segments. Therefore, these research findings are beneficial for not only academics on providing additional empirical results in this field and setting up initial groundwork in emerging markets, but also for managers/practitioners operating in the Vietnam market to strategically plan for their positioning products.

## 7. Limitations and future research directions

Regardless of distinctive contributions, this study is not free from limitation and needed to be addressed for future works. Firstly, the sample, given its homogeneity, does not perfectly represent for young consumers in Vietnam since most of respondents are students at colleges or universities. Differences in education level among young consumers still exist and that might lead to differences in their socio-cultural phenomenon and attitudinal dispositions. Our managerial implications are appropriate for young and educated consumer only. Future research should extent findings on other segments across all Vietnamese consumers. Secondly, the research model has only focused on selective consumers' phenomenon, and thus the study could not paint a full image on antecedence in terms of socio-cultural factors. (Nguyen & Tran, 2018) has listed more than nine determinants on these categories such as: openness, conservatism, collectivism, animosity, and salience, etc. As a result, later research could take into account more factors to examine their influences on forming consumer attitudinal dispositions. Finally, the study has not considered any moderators in the research model. Top scholars have suggested that consumer attitudinal dispositions constitute differently in various consumption contexts. For example, product involvement, perceived necessity, and cultural similarity would more or less influence on consumer's purchase intention. Therefore, future research should consider replicating this study by accounting for certain country-of-origin information.

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