Original Article

How xenocentrism shapes online consumer behavior: psychographic drivers of foreign brand preference

Como o xenocentrismo molda o comportamento do consumidor online: aspectos psicográficos da preferência por marcas estrangeiras

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Xenocentrism, the tendency to opt for foreign brands over domestic ones, is prevalent in emerging markets such as Brazil and China. However, few studies have examined its determinants and impact on e-commerce. This study investigates the influence of xenocentrism on online purchase intentions, analyzing how product quality perception, country-of-origin image, purchasing power, status consumption, and social mobility aspirations shape this behavior.
Design/methodology: A survey of 311 e-commerce consumers was conducted, and linear regression analysis was carried out.
Findings: The analysis confirmed that higher xenocentrism is associated with greater purchase intentions for foreign brands. Psychographic characteristics such as status consumption, perceived inferiority, and brand image significantly contribute to this phenomenon.
Research implications: The findings expand the literature on digital consumer behavior, providing strategic insights for global brands and e-commerce platforms.
Originality/value: The study highlights the importance of brand positioning, global identity construction, and leveraging psychographic attributes to attract xenocentric consumers.

Keywords: Consumer behavior; E-commerce; Xenocentrism; Status consumption; Country-of-origin image

RESUMO

Propósito: O xenocentrismo, tendência de preferir marcas estrangeiras em detrimento das nacionais, é prevalente em mercados emergentes como Brasil e China. No entanto, poucos estudos analisaram seus determinantes e impacto no comércio eletrônico. Este estudo investiga a influência do xenocentrismo nas intenções de compra online, analisando como a percepção da qualidade do produto, a imagem do país de origem, o poder de compra, o consumo orientado pelo status e as aspirações de mobilidade social moldam esse comportamento.

Desenho/metodologia: Foi realizada uma pesquisa com 311 consumidores de comércio eletrônico, seguida de uma análise de regressão linear.

Resultados: A análise confirmou que níveis mais elevados de xenocentrismo estão associados a maiores intenções de compra de marcas estrangeiras. Características psicográficas, como consumo orientado pelo *status*, percepção de inferioridade e imagem da marca, contribuem significativamente para esse fenômeno.

Implicações para pesquisa: Os achados expandem a literatura sobre o comportamento do consumidor digital, fornecendo orientações estratégicas para marcas globais e plataformas de comércio eletrônico.

Originalidade/valor: O estudo destaca a importância do posicionamento de marca, da construção de uma identidade global e do aproveitamento de atributos psicográficos para atrair consumidores xenocêntricos.

Palavras-chave: Comportamento do consumidor; Comércio eletrônico; Xenocentrismo; Consumo orientado pelo status; Imagem do país de origem

1 INTRODUCTION

Globalization and technological advancements have significantly transformed consumer behavior, enabling individuals to access products and services from foreign markets with unprecedented ease. The rapid expansion of e-commerce platforms has intensified global competition, facilitating cross-border transactions and altering the traditional dynamics of consumer preference (Camacho et al., 2020). In this landscape, multinational corporations (MNCs) exert significant pressure on local manufacturers (Narang, 2016a), while liberal trade policies have further expanded consumer access to foreign brands (Mishra et al., 2023).

While some studies highlight a prevailing tendency for consumers to favor domestically produced goods — a phenomenon known as consumer ethnocentrism (Areiza-Padilla et al., 2020; Durço et al., 2021; He & Wang, 2015; Liang et al., 2024; Ma et al., 2020; Miguel et al., 2023; Mishra et al., 2023; Nguyen et al., 2023; Rašković et al., 2020) — there is an increasingly documented countertrend in which consumers, particularly

in emerging markets, actively seek foreign brands due to perceived superior quality, prestige, and status (Hahn et al., 2019). This behavioral pattern, termed xenocentrism, describes a psychological disposition where individuals prefer foreign goods and services over local alternatives, often associating them with higher status, innovation, or exclusivity (Cleveland & McCutcheon, 2022; Lohan et al., 2020).

Xenocentric tendencies have been particularly evident in developing economies, where foreign products are often perceived as a means of social differentiation and upward mobility (Mueller et al., 2016). However, studies suggest that xenocentrism is not exclusive to emerging markets, as it has also been observed among consumers in developed economies (Diamantopoulos et al., 2019). This challenges traditional assumptions in consumer research, indicating a more complex interplay between global identity, digital consumer engagement, and brand perceptions. Also, xenocentric tendencies are particularly visible in online environments, where global brands benefit from the symbolic association with cosmopolitan lifestyles and modernity (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2016; Diamantopoulos et al., 2025).

In this context, recent Latin American studies have emphasized that xenocentrism should be understood not only as a psychographic trait, but also as a culturally embedded disposition linked to historical asymmetries and global cultural flows (Gaur et al., 2015; Santino Bizarrias et al., 2024). These contributions highlight that, in the Brazilian context, foreign brand preferences may be rooted in aspirations for social mobility and symbolic belonging to a transnational consumer culture. In this sense, the digital marketplace becomes a symbolic arena where consumers negotiate identity and status, often guided by internalized ideals of foreignness and modernity.

Although consumer ethnocentrism has been extensively examined in the marketing literature, research on xenocentrism remains limited, particularly in the context of e-commerce. Existing studies have largely explored the country-of-origin effect and brand origin perceptions (Gidakovic et al., 2022; Magnusson et al., 2011), yet little attention has been given to how psychographic traits influence xenocentric

purchase decisions in online environments. Furthermore, while prior studies have investigated the role of social capital and networked relationships in shaping consumer preferences (Bizarrias et al., 2024), there is a lack of empirical evidence linking these factors to digital consumer behavior and e-commerce platforms.

So, this study aims to advance the literature by bridging the gap between xenocentrism and e-commerce, providing a nuanced understanding of how digital marketplaces facilitate and reinforce xenocentric tendencies; as well as, expanding the psychographic perspective on xenocentric consumption by examining the roles of status-seeking behavior, global brand attachment, and digital trust.

Despite the growing recognition of xenocentrism as a key factor in international consumer behavior, the existing literature remains fragmented, particularly regarding its implications for e-commerce. Most studies have focused on the country-of-origin effect and brand perceptions (Gidakovic et al., 2022; Magnusson, Westjohn & Zdravkovic, 2011), while the psychographic determinants of xenocentric preferences in online shopping remain underexplored. Furthermore, limited empirical research has examined how digital trust and global brand attachment interact with xenocentrism in influencing purchase intentions.

To address these gaps, this study investigates the psychographic drivers of xenocentric consumption in e-commerce, with a particular focus on status-seeking behavior, product quality perceptions, and brand engagement in digital environments. By integrating theoretical perspectives from Social Comparison Theory (Festinger, 1954) and Consumer Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 2004), this study seeks to deepen the understanding of how consumers' self-concept, social aspirations, and global brand affiliations shape xenocentric purchasing decisions in online marketplaces.

By employing a quantitative approach, the study examines how psychographic traits interact with xenocentric consumption, using regression analysis to assess the predictive relationships between variables. The findings offer practical implications

for global marketers, brand managers, and e-commerce platforms, guiding strategic decisions in targeting xenocentric consumers.

2 CONCEPTUALIZING XENOCENTRISM AND ITS INFLUENCE ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR BASED ON SOCIAL COMPARISON AND CONSUMER IDENTITY THEORIES

Xenocentrism has been widely discussed in sociological literature since the 1950s, initially described by Kent and Burnight as the tendency to overvalue foreign cultures and products at the expense of one's own national identity (Camacho et al., 2020). In contrast to ethnocentrism, which describes consumers who prefer domestic products and perceive foreign goods as inferior (Areiza-Padilla et al., 2020; Camacho et al., 2020), consumer xenocentrism reflects a systematic bias toward associating foreign brands with superior quality, prestige, and social status (Cleveland & McCutcheon, 2022; Lohan et al., 2020).

Xenocentric consumption behavior is particularly pronounced in emerging markets, where consumers often compare themselves with developed economies and perceive foreign brands as symbols of modernity and sophistication (Mueller et al., 2016; Salomão et al., 2020). However, recent studies indicate that xenocentrism is not exclusive to developing countries, as it has also been observed in economically advanced nations, where consumers associate foreign goods with higher status and differentiation (Diamantopoulos et al., 2019).

To better understand xenocentric consumption, it is crucial to explore Social Comparison Theory (Festinger, 1954) and Consumer Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 2004). The Social Comparison Theory suggests that individuals evaluate their abilities, values, and status by comparing themselves to others (Festinger, 1954; Wood, 1989). Upward social comparisons — where individuals compare themselves to those perceived as superior — drive aspirational consumption patterns, influencing purchasing decisions in favor of foreign brands (Caliskan et al.,

2024). In e-commerce, social media amplifies these comparisons, reinforcing the idea that foreign brands represent success and desirability (Kim et al., 2024).

Consumer Identity Theory posits that purchasing behavior is deeply tied to self-concept and social identity (Saint Clair, 2023; Tajfel & Turner, 2004). Consumers often select brands that align with their desired identity or group affiliation (Saint Clair, 2023). In the context of xenocentrism, individuals may favor foreign brands to signal cosmopolitanism, social mobility, or alignment with global consumer culture.

These theoretical perspectives help explain why xenocentric consumers willingly pay premium prices for foreign products, even when similar domestic alternatives are available (Venugopal et al., 2022).

In Latin American societies, the preference for foreign brands is not merely a reflection of individual consumer traits, but is deeply embedded in broader cultural and symbolic dynamics shaped by historical processes of globalization and postcolonial identity formation (Gaur et al., 2015). García Canclini conceptualizes consumption as a symbolic act that intertwines aspirations for modernity with hybrid cultural identities, particularly in peripheral contexts where foreign goods are often perceived as markers of global inclusion (García Canclini, 2010) . Similarly, Ortiz (1994) emphasizes the role of "cultural globalization" in fostering cosmopolitan sensibilities that reconfigure national identity through consumption.

Building on this, Sinclair and Pertierra (2012) highlight that consumer culture in Latin America is historically situated within asymmetrical global flows, where imported goods and mediated imaginaries (e.g., fashion, technology, luxury) operate as mechanisms of distinction and social mobility. In this context, the online preference for foreign brands may reflect not only psychographic variables such as status consumption or social comparison, but also collective negotiations of identity and belonging in a globalized consumer order. As Perez (2024) argue, cultural consumption in Latin America often entails a reinterpretation of global signs within local imaginaries, suggesting that xenocentric attitudes in digital consumption are shaped by both individual predispositions and historically situated cultural codes.

2.1 Psychographic characteristics and xenocentrism

Previous studies have identified key psychographic traits that influence xenocentric consumption (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2016; Diamantopoulos et al., 2025; Eroglu et al., 2025; Santino Bizarrias et al., 2024). According to (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2016), xenocentric consumers perceive domestic products as inferior and foreign products as aspirational. Their research led to the development of C-XENSCALE, a psychometric tool for measuring xenocentric tendencies.

Psychographic drivers of xenocentric behavior include:

• Perceived inferiority of domestic products – consumers believe foreign goods are technologically superior and offer better design or reliability (Lohan et al., 2020).

• Social mobility aspirations – consumers use foreign brands as status symbols to signal affluence and global identity (Mueller et al., 2016).

• Digital engagement and brand exposure – e-commerce and digital marketing strategies reinforce xenocentric perceptions by associating foreign brands with innovation and prestige (Kim et al., 2024).

H1: Psychographic characteristics significantly influence xenocentric consumption in e-commerce.

2.2 Status Consumption and Xenocentrism

Xenocentrism and status consumption are closely interconnected. Status consumption refers to acquiring goods and services to enhance social standing or align with elite consumer groups (Veblen, 2009). In developing markets, foreign brands often serve as status markers, as they are perceived to represent exclusivity and modernity (Camacho et al., 2020; Hahn et al., 2019; Narang, 2016).

In the digital commerce environment, luxury foreign brands leverage social media marketing and influencer endorsements to reinforce the association between foreignness and prestige, further driving xenocentric purchase intentions (Bastrygina et al., 2024).

H2: Higher predisposition to status consumption increases xenocentric consumption in e-commerce.

2.3 Perception of Inferiority and Xenocentrism

Xenocentrism is often linked to perceived national inferiority, where individuals undervalue their own culture and overestimate the superiority of foreign goods. This phenomenon is influenced by: (a) historical and economic disparities – Post-colonial and developing economies often associate Western brands with higher quality (Nguyen et al., 2023); (b) media representation – global advertising and branding strategies reinforce stereotypes that foreign brands are trendsetters and innovators (Salomão et al., 2020); (c) cultural influences – educational systems and government policies may also contribute to the perception that domestic industries lack competitiveness (Diamantopoulos et al., 2019).

H3: The greater the perception of national inferiority, the stronger the xenocentric consumption tendency in e-commerce.

2.4 Desire for Social Aggrandizement and Xenocentrism

Social aggrandizement refers to consumer behavior driven by the pursuit of social elevation through brand affiliation (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2016). In many emerging markets, consumers actively seek symbolic value in foreign products as a means of differentiating themselves from the masses.

Drivers of social aggrandizement through foreign brand preference include: (a) oppositional consumption – Rejection of local brands as a way of distancing oneself from the mainstream (Mueller; Broderick; Kipnis, 2009 apud (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2016); (b) association with exclusivity – consumers perceive foreign luxury brands as a gateway to elite social circles; and, cultural capital accumulation – knowledge of and access to foreign products signal sophistication and higher status.

H4: The stronger the desire for social aggrandizement, the higher the xenocentric consumption tendency.

2.5 Country-of-Origin Effect and Xenocentrism

The Country-of-Origin (COO) effect plays a crucial role in shaping xenocentric consumption patterns. Consumers often rely on country stereotypes to evaluate brand quality and authenticity (Magnusson et al., 2011). According to (Diamantopoulos et al., 2019) xenocentric consumers actively disregard their own national identity in favor of idealized foreign country images.

So, there is an authenticity bias, once xenocentric consumers reject domestic brands perceived as imitations of foreign products (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2016), and there is a global brand loyalty issue, once stronger attachment to international brands due to perceived superior craftsmanship and innovation (Gidakovic et al., 2022).

H5: The stronger the positive perception of the country of origin, the greater the xenocentric consumption tendency.

2.6 Xenocentrism and Consumer Purchase Intentions in E-Commerce

According to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 2004), consumers align their purchasing behavior with aspirational reference groups. Xenocentric individuals exhibit higher purchase intentions toward foreign brands because they perceive them as a mechanism for upward social mobility (Salomão et al., 2020). In e-commerce, these tendencies are amplified by social media validation, where online reviews and influencer endorsements shape xenocentric brand perceptions; digital trust – once consumers perceive foreign brands as more reliable and innovative in online transactions (Kim et al., 2024); and E-WOM (Electronic Word-of-Mouth), because peer recommendations reinforce xenocentric purchase decisions (Venugopal et al., 2022).

H6: The stronger the xenocentric consumer orientation, the higher the purchase intention for foreign brands in e-commerce.

Collectively, the psychographic drivers examined in this study can be interpreted as interrelated dimensions of a broader sociocultural construct shaped by globalization and symbolic asymmetries. In emerging economies, consumption choices are often embedded in processes of identity negotiation, where foreign brands are imbued with symbolic capital and aspirational value (García Canclini, 2010; Ortiz, 2007). Status consumption and social comparison reflect not only individual orientations toward prestige, but also social anxieties related to visibility and differentiation in stratified consumer environments. Similarly, the perceived inferiority of domestic products and social aspirations indicate internalized narratives of subalternity and the desire for upward affiliation with globalized imaginaries (Sinclair & Pertierra, 2012). This perspective positions xenocentrism not merely as a set of isolated preferences, but as a manifestation of culturally embedded dispositions that are shaped by the historical and structural conditions of consumption in peripheral societies. Such a framework underscores the importance of integrating psychographic and cultural-theoretical lenses when analyzing consumer behavior in digital markets.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design and Sample Justification

Given the nature of the relationships to be tested, this study adopts an explanatory research design, employing a cross-sectional survey methodology. Quantitative research is particularly appropriate for examining causal relationships between constructs, as it allows for hypothesis testing based on statistical inference.

The target population consists of Brazilian consumers aged 18 and older who actively engage in e-commerce transactions. Data collection was conducted via an online questionnaire, and a total of 311 valid responses were obtained.

To determine the adequacy of the sample size, a power analysis was conducted. Following (Cohen, 1988) recommendations, assuming a medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.15$), a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$, and a statistical power of 0.80, the minimum required sample size for multiple regression with five to six predictors is approximately 150 respondents. The final sample of 311 respondents exceeds this threshold, ensuring statistical robustness in hypothesis testing.

A non-probabilistic convenience sampling method was employed, where participants were recruited voluntarily via digital platforms. While convenience sampling is common in consumer behavior studies, it introduces potential selection biases, which must be acknowledged. To mitigate these biases the demographic diversity of respondents was assessed, ensuring variation in terms of age, gender, education, and income levels; geographical distribution was considered, including both urban and rural areas; and self-selection bias is acknowledged as a limitation, given that more frequent e-commerce users may be overrepresented. A detailed profile of the respondents is presented in Table 1, summarizing their demographic and socioeconomic characteristics.

In summary, the sample has quite diverse characteristics. Predominantly, it was found that the respondents were women, single, belonging to the white ethnicity, with incomplete higher education, a family income between 6 and 10 minimum wages, and residents of medium-sized and rural towns in the state.

Table 1 – Sample Profile

Age	Average 31 years (between 18 years and 69 years)	
Sex	Male	35%
	Female	65%
Marital status	Single	60.1%
	Married / Common-law Marriage	37.3%
	Divorced / Widow/Widower	2.6%
Education level	Elementary School (up to 8th grade)	0.9%
	High School	18.3%
	Higher Education (Undergraduate)	49.8%
	Graduate (Specialization or MBA level)	22.2%
	Graduate (Master's or Doctorate level)	8.7%
Income levels	Up to 2 minimum wages	16.4%
	From 2 to 6 minimum wages	6.8%
	From 6 to 10 minimum wages	48.6%
	From 10 to 14 minimum wages	20.6%
	More than 14 minimum wages	7.7%
Race*	Yellow	1.3%
	White	78.8%
	Black	2.6%
	Multiracial	17.4%
Population of the city where the respondent lives	up to 49,000 inhabitants	12.9%
	between 50,000 and 99,000 inhabitants	64%
	between 100,000 and 499,000 inhabitants	8.7%
	above 500,000 inhabitants	14.5%
Region	Capital	9.3%
	Countryside	74.6%
	Metropolitan Region	16.1%

Source: Research Data / * based on Brazilian standarts

3.2 Measurement Approach and Scale Validation

This study employs validated psychometric scales to measure the key constructs. All variables were measured using five-point Likert scales, ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). The following explains how the dependent and independent variables of the model were measured.

•**Independent variables**: (a) Status Consumption: Measured using the (Rojas-Méndez & Chapa, 2020) scale, which assesses the extent to which individuals engage in

consumption as a means of enhancing their social status; (b) Perceived Inferiority and Social Aggrandizement: Measured using the (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2016a), xenocentrism subscales, which assess consumer perceptions of domestic product inferiority and their aspirations for upward social mobility; (c) Country-of-Origin Effect: Measured through a single-item scale, where participants indicate how much the country of origin of a product influences their purchase decision.

•**Dependent variables**: Consumer Purchase Intention: Measured using the purchase intention scale developed by (MacKenzie et al., 1986), which is widely employed in marketing studies. Xenocentrism: Assessed using the XSCALE developed by (Rojas-Méndez & Chapa, 2020), designed specifically to measure xenocentric attitudes toward foreign brands.

•**Control variables**: Brand Knowledge was measured through a self-reported question regarding participants' familiarity with the brand in question; E-commerce Familiarity was assessed via two questions, one measuring consumers' comfort level with online shopping and another evaluating their frequency of online purchases; and Generational Cohort was Measured based on respondents' self-reported age.

To ensure construct validity, the study employed Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) to assess the factor structure of the measurement model. Also, Reliability analysis, ensuring Cronbach's alpha (α) values exceed 0.80, indicating internal consistency. The results confirm the validity and reliability of the measurement model, ensuring the robustness of the survey instrument.

3.3 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 20, following a structured three-step approach: (1) Descriptive Analysis – where frequency distributions, means, and standard deviations were computed for all variables. Data normality was assessed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test; (2) Bivariate Analysis: Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine initial relationships between independent and dependent

variables; Multicollinearity diagnostics were performed using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance levels to ensure that predictor variables were not highly correlated.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Consumer perceptions, xenocentric tendencies, and key psychographic characteristics influencing purchasing behavior in e-commerce

This section presents the univariate analysis of the dimensions, including descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution for the key constructs under investigation.

Table 2 – Univariate Analysis of Dimensions

	Average	SD	Reliability
Familiarity with e-commerce	3.91	1.06	0.834
Psychographic Characteristics	3.11	0.59	0.861
Purchase Intent	2.66	1.26	1,000
Knowledge of Foreign Brands	2.38	1.2	1,000
Country-of-Origin Effect	2.79	1.38	1,000
Social Enhancement	1.92	0.89	0.817
Status Consumption	1.74	1.01	0.907
Xenocentrism	2.73	1.02	0.844
Perception of Inferiority	2.53	0.92	0.814

Source: Research Data / Note: Reliability verified through Cronbach's Alpha / SD: Standard Deviation

The respondents' **perception of inferiority of domestic products** relative to foreign brands registered a mean score of 2.53 (SD = 0.92), suggesting that, on average, consumers do not strongly perceive local products as inferior. Regarding the perceived quality of foreign products, the data indicate that only 21.9% of respondents believe that foreign products are superior to domestic ones, with an overall mean score of 2.66 (SD = 1.26).

These findings suggest that consumers recognize the existence of high-quality domestic alternatives, reducing the likelihood of an automatic preference for foreign brands.

However, 39.3% of respondents acknowledged that, across various product categories, foreign brands tend to outperform domestic ones. This variability in perceptions indicates that product category-specific factors may play a role in shaping consumer preferences, rather than a generalized belief in foreign product superiority.

When analyzing the role of **social enhancement** in the consumption of foreign products, only 21.2% of respondents indicated that purchasing foreign products enhanced their self-esteem, with an overall mean score of 1.92 (*SD* = 0.89). This suggests that, for the majority of consumers in the sample, the symbolic value of foreign products is not a primary motivation for consumption.

Similarly, the analysis of status consumption reveals low prevalence among respondents. 63% of the sample stated that they would not be willing to pay a premium price solely for the status associated with foreign brands, with a mean score of 1.74 (*SD* = 1.01). These findings indicate that while foreign brands may be perceived favorably, their consumption is not necessarily driven by a need for social distinction in this sample.

Xenocentrism, operationalized as a preference for foreign products over domestic alternatives, exhibited moderate levels within the sample, with a mean score of 2.73 (*SD* = 1.02). Despite the overall low xenocentric tendencies, certain behavioral indicators suggest a selective inclination toward foreign brands:

• 46.7% of respondents expressed admiration for foreign products.

• 20.9% explicitly valued foreign brands over domestic alternatives.

• 27.4% reported recommending foreign products to friends and family.

These findings suggest that while outright xenocentrism is not dominant, foreign brands continue to hold a level of aspirational appeal among consumers, particularly in specific product categories.

Despite the relatively low **willingness to pay a premium for foreign brands**, 40% of respondents indicated an intention to purchase foreign products in the coming months, reinforcing the idea that purchase behavior is influenced by factors beyond status-seeking tendencies. Additionally, 31% of the sample considered themselves knowledgeable about foreign brands, a factor that appears to positively correlate with purchase intention.

Consumers' perceptions of the importance of **country-of-origin (COO)** in purchasing decisions registered a mean score of 2.79, with 31.5% of respondents considering it a relevant factor. The perceived importance of **brand image** had a mean score of 3.68, with approximately 55% of respondents considering it a critical factor in their purchasing decisions. **Product Specifications and Quality:** 87.1% of respondents indicated that product specifications and quality were important factors, with a mean score of 4.54, suggesting that objective product attributes play a dominant role in purchase decisions. The relevance of **brand identity** in consumer decision-making was low for 77% of respondents, indicating that consumers prioritize functional attributes over brand loyalty.

To assess consumers' **familiarity with e-commerce**, respondents were asked about their frequency and comfort levels in online shopping: 60.7% of respondents reported shopping online very frequently; 72.7% of respondents expressed a high level of comfort with online purchases. The overall familiarity with e-commerce scored a mean of 3.91 *(SD* = 1.06), with high reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.834). These results confirm that the majority of the sample is well-acquainted with digital commerce.

4.2 Hypothesis Testing and Regression Analysis

To assess the relationships between the key constructs, a correlation analysis was initially conducted using Pearson's correlation coefficient, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3 – Correlation Results between Dimensions (Pearson Correlation)

	IC	CME	COO	PI	ES	XE	CS	FEC	CP
Purchase Intent (IC)	1								
Knowledge of Foreign Brands (CME)	.322**	1							
Country of Origin Effect (COO)	.150**	.181**	1						
Perception of Inferiority (PI)	.222**	.08	.164**	1					
Social Enhancement (ES)	.280**	.127**	.171**	.451**	1				
Xenocentrism (XE)	.506**	.260**	.187**	.555**		1			
Status Consumption (CS)	.335**	.171**	.149**	.251**	.572**	.453**	1		
Familiarity with e-commerce (FEC)	.252**	.269**	-.097	.138**	.075	.253**	0.09	1	
Psychographic Characteristics (CP)	.265**	.245**	.276**	.319**	.466**	.410**	.436**	.121*	1

Source: Research Data

** Significant correlation at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) / * Significant correlation at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The results revealed 30 significant correlations, demonstrating that strong associations exist primarily between dimensions that belong to the same constructs. These findings indicate internal consistency within the conceptual model but suggest that further investigation is needed to determine the direct and indirect effects between variables. To examine the explanatory power of the independent variables on the dependent variable, a linear regression analysis was conducted, as detailed in Table 4.

Table 4 – Linear Regression (Hypotheses Testing)

	R^2	R^2-ajus	Durbin-Watson	SD Residual	F Statistic (1, 306)	t	B	Sig.	Status of the Hypotheses
H1 – Psychographic characteristics determine xenocentric consumption in the e-commerce environment.	0.45	0.203	2.155	2.73	.000	8.848	0.451	.000	Supported
H2 – The greater the predisposition to status consumption, the higher the xenocentric consumption in the e-commerce environment.	0.453	0.203	2.149	2.6	.000	8.944	0.459	.000	Supported
H3 – The higher the perception of inferiority, the greater the xenocentric consumption in the e-commerce environment.	0.555	0.306	2.088	2.47	.000	11.728	0.619	.000	Supported
H4 – The greater the desire for social enhancement, the higher the xenocentric consumption in the e-commerce environment.	0.536	0.285	2.06	2.83	.000	11.148	0.613	.000	Supported
H5 – The higher the perception of the quality of the country of origin, the greater the xenocentric consumption in the e-commerce environment.	0.187	0.035	2.144	2.48	.001	3.341	0.138	.001	Supported
H6 – The higher the consumer's xenocentrism, the greater the intention to purchase foreign brands in the e-commerce environment.	0.506	0.253	1.922	3	.000	10.289	0.754	.000	Supported

Source: Research Data

R²: Coefficient of determination, a measure of how well the linear statistical model fits the data. R² varies between 0 and 1, sometimes expressed as a percentage. The closer it is to 1, the better the fit.

R²-ajus: Adjusted R-squared determines the extent of the variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variable.

Durbin-Watson: Tests for the presence of autocorrelation in the errors of a regression model. If errors are correlated, ordinary least squares regression can underestimate the standard error of the coefficients. Reference value: close to 2 (acceptable range between 1.5 and 2.5).

SD Residual: The residual standard error is used to measure how well a regression model fits a dataset. Reference value: between -3 and +3.

T and F: The F-test compares the fits of different linear models. Unlike the t-test, which evaluates only one regression coefficient at a time, the F-test can evaluate multiple coefficients simultaneously. The F-test compares a model with no predictors to the specified model in the regression.

Sig.: P-value indicates the probability of observing a difference as large as or larger than what was observed under the null hypothesis. The hypothesis is accepted if $p \leq 0.05$.

This regression model provides insights into the extent to which xenocentrism and its psychographic drivers influence consumer purchase intention in the e-commerce environment.

The results indicate that all six research hypotheses were supported, confirming that xenocentric tendencies and associated psychographic factors significantly impact consumer behavior in online shopping contexts. Specifically:

• H1: Psychographic characteristics significantly influence xenocentric consumption (R^2=0.45, $p < .001$).

• H2: Status consumption positively affects xenocentric behavior (R^2=0.453, $p < .001$).

• H3: Perception of inferiority contributes to increased xenocentric consumption (R^2=0.555, $p < .001$).

• H4: The desire for social enhancement positively correlates with xenocentric behavior (R^2=0.536, $p < .001$).

• H5: The perception of country-of-origin quality influences xenocentric consumption, although with a weaker explanatory power (R^2=0.187, $p = .001$).

• H6: Higher levels of xenocentrism lead to greater purchase intention for foreign brands in e-commerce (R^2=0.506, $p < .001$).

The adjusted R² values indicate that the independent variables explain a substantial proportion of the variance in xenocentric consumption and purchase

intention. Furthermore, the Durbin-Watson statistic (values between 1.92 and 2.15) confirms that there is no significant autocorrelation among residuals, reinforcing the reliability of the regression estimates.

These findings have both theoretical and managerial implications, emphasizing the role of consumer psychographics, status motivation, and perceptions of product origin in shaping online purchase behavior. The next section explores the broader significance of these results within the context of e-commerce and international marketing strategy.

5 THEORETICAL AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

This study aimed to provide an in-depth analysis of xenocentrism in purchase intentions within the e-commerce environment, focusing on how psychographic characteristics influence consumer preferences for foreign brands. The findings underscore the complex and multifaceted nature of xenocentric consumption, which is shaped by cultural perceptions, social identity, brand image, perceived quality, and purchasing power.

The results contribute significantly to the theory of consumer behavior and international marketing by expanding our understanding of how xenocentrism interacts with psychographic drivers in the digital commerce space.

Several key theoretical advancements emerge from this research. First, building upon Consumer Identity Theory (Saint Clair, 2023) and Social Comparison Theory (Festinger, 1954), this study reaffirms that consumers align their purchasing decisions with aspirational reference groups, particularly in multicultural consumption contexts. The findings suggest that xenocentric consumers seek to differentiate themselves through foreign product adoption, reinforcing previous research indicating that social identity is a strong determinant of consumption choices (Lohan et al., 2020).

The results also highlight the critical role of Country-of-Origin (COO) perceptions in shaping purchase intentions for foreign brands. Consistent with prior studies (Magnusson et al., 2011), COO-related stereotypes influence consumer attitudes toward international brands, even when domestic alternatives offer comparable

quality. However, our findings indicate that while COO effects play a role, they are not the primary drivers of xenocentric behavior, suggesting that brand image and product quality perceptions carry greater weight in purchasing decisions.

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This study further validates the interplay between status consumption and xenocentric behavior. Consistent with Veblen's Theory of Conspicuous Consumption (1899) and findings from (Nunes et al., 2011), our results confirm that some consumers use foreign brands as status symbols to gain social prestige (Nunes et al., 2011). However, status consumption alone does not fully explain xenocentric purchase behavior, as many consumers exhibit xenocentric tendencies even when status considerations are low. This suggests that cultural affinity and perceived quality play equally, if not more, significant roles in driving xenocentric consumption.

The study's focus on e-commerce consumer behavior contributes to the emerging literature on digital trust and online shopping engagement. Research by (Kim et al., 2024) emphasizes that digital marketplaces amplify consumer exposure to foreign brands, reinforcing trust in international sellers through online reviews and social media endorsements. Our results align with these findings, demonstrating that xenocentric consumers exhibit a higher willingness to engage with foreign brands in digital shopping environments due to perceptions of innovation, superior quality, and global market leadership.

From a **practical perspective**, the study provides valuable insights for global marketers, brand managers, and e-commerce platforms seeking to optimize

their international branding and segmentation strategies. First, understanding the psychographic characteristics of xenocentric consumers allows brands to develop targeted marketing strategies that appeal to these aspiration-driven buyers. Rather than solely emphasizing COO, companies should focus on positioning their brand as aspirational and innovative; emphasizing superior quality, craftsmanship, and exclusivity; and leveraging cultural narratives that resonate with consumers' desired social identity.

Given that **xenocentric consumers actively seek foreign brands in digital marketplaces**, international brands should capitalize on e-commerce platforms by strengthening digital trust through verified online reviews, influencer endorsements, and transparent return policies; utilizing AI-driven recommendations to enhance personalization and reinforce foreign brand desirability; and investing in social media and influencer marketing, leveraging global trends and digital communities to strengthen brand positioning.

While status consumption is a relevant factor, our findings indicate that price sensitivity remains a key consideration for xenocentric consumers. Marketers should adopt tiered pricing strategies to offer premium product lines for high-status consumers seeking exclusivity and introduce affordable international alternatives for aspirational buyers who desire foreign brands but are price-conscious.

For domestic brands competing against international firms, the study highlights key areas for repositioning strategies: (a) enhancing local brand storytelling, emphasizing heritage, authenticity, and sustainability; (b) innovating product offerings to challenge the perception that foreign brands are inherently superior; (c) leveraging digital engagement strategies, such as cross-border collaborations and strategic influencer partnerships.

6 CONCLUSION

This study contributes to a deeper understanding of how xenocentrism shapes online consumer behavior by empirically examining the influence of four psychographic

drivers—status consumption, social comparison orientation, perceived inferiority of domestic products, and mobility aspirations—on the intention to purchase foreign brands. The results confirm that these drivers are not only individually relevant but also interconnected dimensions of a broader sociocultural construct. Xenocentrism emerges as a multidimensional phenomenon rooted in symbolic hierarchies, identity negotiations, and aspirations for global inclusion, particularly salient in emerging markets where local products are often perceived as culturally and economically inferior.

7 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

While this study has provided valuable insights into xenocentrism and its influence on consumer behavior in e-commerce, it is essential to acknowledge its inherent limitations and areas for future exploration. A primary limitation concerns the sampling method, which was non-probabilistic and based on convenience sampling. Although the study successfully reached 311 participants, the lack of randomization limits the generalizability of the findings beyond the studied sample. Future studies should consider employing probabilistic sampling techniques or larger cross-cultural datasets to enhance external validity.

Another critical limitation of this study concerns the demographic profile of the sample, which predominantly consisted of white, middle-income women residing in small and medium-sized towns in the countryside. Although the use of non-probabilistic convenience sampling is common in behavioral studies, it inherently limits the external validity of the findings. The sociodemographic concentration observed in the sample may not adequately represent the broader heterogeneity of the Brazilian consumer population, particularly in terms of race, gender, income strata, and regional disparities. This limitation raises concerns regarding the generalizability of the results to other consumer segments — such as those living in metropolitan regions, lower-income groups, or ethnically diverse populations — whose consumption behaviors and exposure to

global brands may differ significantly. As highlighted by (Bethlehem, 2010), convenience samples are especially prone to selection bias, which can result in overrepresentation of more digitally connected or education-accessible individuals. Thus, caution should be exercised when extrapolating the findings to the general Brazilian market.

Additionally, this study focused exclusively on e-commerce transactions, without systematically comparing consumer preferences between online and offline retail environments. Given that perceptions of product quality, trust, and status signaling may vary between digital and physical purchasing contexts, further research should examine how xenocentric tendencies manifest in traditional retail settings.

Another limitation pertains to the use of self-reported measures, which may be susceptible to social desirability bias. Despite the reliability and validity checks conducted, future research could complement self-reported data with behavioral experiments, implicit association tests, or longitudinal studies to validate the robustness of the findings. Finally, while this study examined direct relationships between xenocentrism, psychographic characteristics, and purchase intentions, it did not explore potential moderating or mediating variables that might influence these associations. Constructs such as cultural openness, digital trust, and brand attachment could be tested as moderators, providing a more nuanced understanding of xenocentric consumer behavior.

Future investigations in this domain should seek to extend and refine the understanding of xenocentric consumption by addressing the following areas:

• Exploring Cross-Cultural Differences: Given that xenocentrism is context-dependent, future studies should conduct comparative analyses across different countries and cultural groups to assess whether xenocentric tendencies vary by economic development, cultural exposure, or digital market maturity.

• Investigating Moderating and Mediating Variables: Future research should test the role of mediators and moderators in the relationship between xenocentrism and consumer behavior. Potential moderating variables include global identity,

digital trust, and brand familiarity, which could help explain variability in xenocentric purchase decisions. Potential mediating variables such as social influence, perceived innovativeness of foreign brands, and product category effects could deepen the theoretical understanding of xenocentric consumer psychology.

• Evaluating Marketing Strategies and Managerial Applications: While this study provides theoretical contributions, future research should empirically assess the effectiveness of marketing strategies targeting xenocentric consumers. Experimental studies could test whether advertising appeals emphasizing foreign brand prestige, authenticity, or exclusivity enhance purchase intentions. The impact of celebrity endorsements, country-of-origin labeling, and influencer marketing on xenocentric consumer engagement warrants further investigation.

• Bridging Online and Offline Consumer Behavior: Future research should analyze how xenocentrism influences purchasing behavior in physical retail stores versus e-commerce platforms. Understanding whether sensory interactions with products in offline settings reduce xenocentric biases could provide valuable insights for marketing and branding strategies.

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2. Development of hypotheses or research questions (empirical studies)	√		
3. Development of theoretical propositions (theoretical work)	√		
4. Theoretical foundation / Literature review	√		
5. Definition of methodological procedures	√		
6. Data collection	√		
7. Statistical analysis			
8. Analysis and interpretation of data	√		
9. Critical revision of the manuscript		√	√
10. Manuscript writing	√	√	√
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