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## Article

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Article

# Xenocentrism and Formal Education: Evaluating Its Impact on the Behavior of Chilean Consumers

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**Abstract:** Understanding social behavior and explaining its implications is essential when examining consumer xenocentric behavior. This study evaluated the direct effects of consumer xenocentrism on product attitude and purchase intention of imported products and analyzed the moderating impact of formal education on xenocentric consumer behavior considering groups with higher and low formal education levels. Structural equation modeling technique and multigroup analysis based on samples collected from Chilean consumers were used to analyze the research model. There were 295 effective online questionnaires (42.4% females and 57.6% males). This study's findings suggest that consumer xenocentric effects are directly related to imported products' product attitude (G:  $R^2 = 0.254$ ; L:  $R^2 = 0.121$ ; H:  $R^2 = 0.327$ ) and purchase intention (G:  $R^2 = 0.454$ ; L:  $R^2 = 0.469$ ; H:  $R^2 = 0.365$ ). In addition, findings exhibit that xenocentric consumer behaviors are more significant when associated with formal educational level (G: 0.575; L: 0.640; H: 0.443). Therefore, as education levels increase, the xenocentric effect also increases. An important application of these findings is that education in emerging countries and developing economies should strengthen local production valorization and promote marketing strategies that foster the sustainable consumption of products manufactured in their own countries.

**Keywords:** consumer xenocentrism; emerging countries; formal education; product attitude; purchase intention



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## 1. Introduction

Globalization and worldwide trade expansion have caused consumers to be exposed to goods from countries with economic, cultural, and political orientations that differ from their local markets. This scenario affects all countries, including those that are emerging and developed (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos 2016; Zhou and Hui 2003). As a result, nowadays consumers engage in a more complicated purchase decision process; they must choose between domestic and imported products to satisfy their needs (Dmitrovic et al. 2009). Some emerging consumer behavior patterns may limit sustainable development in this decision: not buying local products. Consistent with the above, research on international marketing has exhibited a remarkable interest in explaining consumer behavior. Particular attention has been drawn to how consumers' customs and mannerisms influence consumption (Sankaran and Demangeot 2011). Additionally, in prior studies, buyer behavior in the purchase preference of domestic or foreign products has been analyzed by evaluating different factors, such as social, personality, groups of reference, and gender, among others (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos 2008; Kang et al. 2019; Prince et al. 2020; Zabkar et al. 2017). In these circumstances, the reason that local buyers select imported products regardless of whether local products may exhibit similar quality and functionality to imported ones is called xenocentrism (XENO).

XENO research is related to global identity. According to [Rojas-Méndez and Chapa \(2019\)](#), global identity describes consumers' mental representations regarding the effects of globalization, the understanding of differences and similarities involving individuals across the planet, and how many people are keen on the Earth's functions. On the other hand, [Addis and Grünhagen \(Addis and Grünhagen 2014\)](#) state that those having a global identity will be worried about neighborhood issues, groups, and worldwide communities. XENO can be explained when global identity is attached to a preference for foreign goods to the prejudice of local products. XENO can be justified when global identity is connected to the choice for foreign goods to the detriment of local products. The consciousness of modern global society can explain the relationship between XENO and consumption that fulfills all consumers' needs, including specific preferences related to environmental protection. Mainly, the acceptance and usage of products and services that improve the quality of life while reducing the negative impact on the environment, such as future generations' needs, will not be compromised. Consumers' preferences for local products benefit in more than one direction. First, they support the local industry and help workers maintain decent labor conditions. They help decrease the adverse environmental effects on consumption and emissions related to imports. At the same time, if Latin American local producers can better comprehend the consequences of bias for foreign products, they could use that knowledge to stimulate a more rationale consumption. Understanding this social behavior and explaining its implications is essential when researching XENO.

This study is centered on three components. The first one revalidates the XSCALE, a scale proposed for developing countries. The second amplifies the study of XENO as a significant variable in consumer behavior. The third evaluates the relationship between XENO, product attitude, and purchase intention of imported products and how formal education can influence XENO in consumers' preferences for foreign products, allowing the design of marketing strategies to access these groups.

The literature provides strong evidence that consumers assess products based on the country where they were manufactured ([Hussein and Hassan 2018](#); [Prince et al. 2020](#); [Shimp and Sharma 1987](#)). Consumers assume their origin to be a quality indicator when combined with other attributes, i.e., the place of manufacturing influences consumers' product evaluation ([Balestrini and Gamble 2006](#); [Verlegh et al. 2005](#)). When customers assimilate a perceived value related to the country of origin, they build a connection of quality that influences the risk linked with the purchase ([Kim 2008](#); [Ozretic-Dosen et al. 2007](#)). Additionally, the origin is crucial in influencing consumers' product evaluations, perceptions, and purchasing behaviors. According to [Oberecker and Diamantopoulos \(2011\)](#), positive understanding attitudes toward foreign countries, products, and services have received scant attention. XENO has appeared as a new theoretical way to rationalize consumer preferences toward imported products. XENO explains the fact that local buyers select imported products regardless of local products exhibiting a similar quality and functionality to those that are international.

Regarding the gaps in the effect of XENO on consumer behavior, [Mueller et al. \(2016\)](#) suggest assessing the moderating effect of demographic variables. Among these variables, the moderating power of the level of formal education is an exciting research opportunity, mainly for two reasons. First, from the literature, an indirect association is derived between the level of formal education and XENO. Even though cosmopolitanism and XENO are separate constructs, they are positively related ([Prince et al. 2016](#)). In particular, in a consumption context, there is confirmation of a positive relationship between consumers' levels of formal education and the purchase of goods from outside their local purchasing area ([Addis and Grünhagen 2014](#)).

Since XENO is more common in developing nations than ethnocentrism, and a high level of formal education is related to a high level of cosmopolitanism ([Rojas-Méndez and Chapa 2019](#)), Chile is an excellent case study on which to focus the empirical analysis. Chileans' purchasing behavior related to imported products is based on the country's foreign trade activity. Chile's multilateral international trade cooperation is supported by

29 trade agreements impacting 65 markets. The scope of these actions reaches 67% of the world population and 88% of the global GDP (Banco Central de Chile 2019). According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MINREL 2019), Chile's foreign trade showed a positive evolution in 2018, attaining a total exchange of US \$149,671, with an annual growth of 11.5%. The components that support this result are the yearly increase of 9% in exports and 14% in imports. These statistics indicate the preference of Chilean consumers for foreign products, to the point that the trade surplus decreased to US \$ 5378 million in 2018 as a result of the increase in imported products (MINREL 2019). Another relevant element in the Chilean consumer analysis is the growth in preference for sustainable products. According to the Sustainable Consumption Study (Fundación Chile 2017), carried out by Fundación Chile and the National Consumer Service, 3 out of 10 consumers consider sustainability the essential criterion in their purchase decision, after price and quality. However, 37% of respondents declare that there is little information available to choose this type of product.

On the other hand, Nielsen (Nielsen 2016) indicated that 8 out of 10 Chileans are totally or partially willing to pay for premium products with high-quality standards. These data are supported by the fact that Chilean consumers perceive financial improvement, higher purchasing power, and greater access to a more significant number of products, mainly imported ones. Although Chilean consumers lead the purchase of imported technological products in Latin America, this is just the tip of the iceberg. Thanks to the almost zero tariff rates, Chileans consume a wide variety of imported goods, from meat to clothing and cars.

Given previous ideas, we propose that the formal educational level of Chileans may moderate the effect of XENO on their purchasing behavior for imported products. That is, the effect of XENO will be more significant for a Chilean consumer with a higher formal education level. Specifically, this research aims to evaluate the moderating effects of formal education level on xenocentric consumer behavior. We analyze Chilean consumer data through a structural equation modeling technique to achieve the purpose of this study, which is based on a behavior model rooted in social identity theory.

A conceptual framework and model research are presented in the subsequent section. Next, the empirical methodology is introduced. The following section shows the results. Then, the final section presents a discussion that includes the study's contributions, implications, and limitations.

## 2. Conceptual Framework and Research Model

### 2.1. Xenocentrism

Different theories have been exploring in-group and out-group attitudes and behavior, particularly the national identity phenomenon. Tajfel and Turner (Tajfel and Turner 2019) developed the social identity theory that explains the favoritism, positive evaluations, and preferences that people perceive when they are members of the same in-group. According to Tajfel and Turner (2019), the need for positive distinctiveness promotes social categorization and social identification processes that result in in-group favoritism.

The concept of consumer ethnocentrism was developed by reference (Shimp and Sharma 1987) when they applied the social identity theory, evaluating local versus non-local consumption. The research demonstrated a positive relationship between attitudes toward domestic products and a negative relationship toward foreign products. The authors state that there is less intensity of consumer ethnocentrism for foreign products manufactured in similar countries (Watson and Wright 2000). Consumers' propensity to become ethnocentric is based on the beliefs of their own country's superiority and the necessity of buying local products when the country is under threat from imports (Shimp and Sharma 1987; Camacho et al. 2022). However, local consumers sometimes differ from their national group. Although little research addresses XENO in the marketing literature, it is a construct that analyzes out-group preference and in-group rejection. Therefore, we hypothesized:

**Hypothesis (H1).** *There is a significant and positive relationship between xenocentrism and attitude toward purchase of imported products.*

Lawrence (2012) stated that XENO is an individual tendency to assimilate their culture as inferior and yearn for foreign cultures. Eshleman et al. (1993) defined XENO as the belief that what is foreign is best and that our lifestyle, products, or ideas are inferior to others. Mueller et al. (2016) understand XENO to be a robust construct for consumer research purposes, and a xenocentric person is a person who prefers products from a country (or region) other than their own and who rates and scales products in reference to the foreign country and not their own.

Venugopal et al. (2002), tested the XSCALE developed by reference (Rojas-Méndez and Chapa 2019), analyzing the effect of xenocentrism on perceived product quality, purchase intention, and product attitudes. These authors found a positive direct impact on purchase intention of xenocentrism all constructs measured and validated XSCALE.

It is necessary to research the concept of XENO in the marketing field in order to study attitudes toward sustainable products, specifically, changes in consumer behavior and purchase intention that can be identified over the years. The relationship between XENO and formal education could be considered an exemplification of social identity nationwide, especially in Latin America. That relationship explains consumer behavior based on the positive appreciation of those individuals toward foreign products competing in local markets (Camacho et al. 2020). Thus, we hypothesized:

**Hypothesis 2 (H2).** *There is a significant and positive relationship between xenocentrism and intention to purchase imported product.*

## 2.2. Product Attitude

An attitude toward behavior refers to the individual's evaluations that could be unfavorable or favorable in order to assume a specific behavior. A person will be more apt to undertake a specific behavior if the individual has the right attitude toward adopting it (Fishbein and Ajzen 2009). Diverse researchers and disciplines have often researched the association between consumers' attitudes and behavioral intentions. In general, scholars have found that this relationship is positive, including between different cultures and countries (Tarkiainen and Sundqvist 2005). However, according to Hepler and Albarrancin (2014), attitudes could be generalized and related to different disciplines, whether positive or negative.

Erdogan and Uzku (Hung et al. 2015) understand product attitude as consumers' overall evaluative judgment of a product's attributes, such as style, brand, and quality. In that sense, XENO is a critical concept in marketing, especially when analyzing consumer behavior, because individuals perceive a close relationship between imported products and quality, exhibiting high expectations related to durability, environmental protection, and price (Camacho et al. 2020). Researchers have demonstrated that product attitude influences consumer purchase intention because it complements vital factors important to consumers when they get involved in the decision-making process (Babin and Babin 2001). A better attitude toward a product is a more positive behavior to consider purchasing it. On the other hand, sociodemographic can influence consumers' attitudes toward some product categories (Irianto 2015).

## 2.3. Purchase Intention

Empirical scientific studies on purchase intentions have helped to understand the customer behavior process. Earlier studies have determined influences impacting consumer purchase intentions, including experience, level of education, social class (Brakus et al. 2009), and social acceptance and involvement (Summer et al. 2006). Mothersbaugh et al. (2020) define intention as backgrounds that stimulate and lead consumers to buy products and services. The study of consumers' intentions is a popular method implemented by researchers to understand consumer behavior (Blackwell et al. 2001; Ghalandari and Norouzi 2012). Based on their research findings, Kim and Thorndike (Kim and Pysarchik 2000) have demonstrated a strong association between those two constructs. Consequently, the

authors emphasize that purchase intention can measure consumers' purchase behavior. Therefore, we hypothesized:

**Hypothesis 3 (H3).** *There is a significant and positive relationship between attitude toward purchase of imported products and the intention to purchase an imported product.*

#### 2.4. Xenocentrism and Formal Education

Formal education is an essential component in satisfying the basic needs of human development and abolishing poverty (Sivakumar and Sarvalingam 2015). Therefore, the formal educational level in society is a crucial element in improving the social and economic environment (Brennan and Teichler 2008). Formal education enhances the individual's potential to determine, find, and absorb relevant information (Kulviwat et al. 2004). Formal education has a practical impact on customer behavior. Marketers can identify new opportunities in the market depending on the level of formal education in some areas. Advanced schooling provides entry to the professions, cultural aspirations, and being part of a global community (Solomon 2017). As individuals in modern society become more knowledgeable, they also become more advanced in their buying behaviors.

According to Creusen (2010), research reveals that individuals with advanced schooling are less bonded to symbolic factors and assign more importance to quality. There is a reliable connection between culture and formal education. Global society lives in a "globally plural" and "culturally emergent" context. Marketers need to cultivate an in-depth understanding of how individuals engage in new consumption practices so that the demand for products and services can change. Therefore, studying how culture and formal education influence those buying patterns and how business practices and strategies should focus on meaningful processes while inherently malleable and unmanageable regarding educated consumers.

Redfield et al. (1936) understand that acculturation is a phenomenon that results when groups of individuals with different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups. On the other hand, Berry (1997) states that acculturation can be referred to as individuals who interact within two cultures with the prerogative to integrate or not integrate elements of both cultures into their buying patterns. Finally, Peñaloza and Venkatesh (2006) extended the acculturation concept to consumer behavior when they stated that it is a general process of movement and adaptation to the consumer cultural environment in one country by people from another country. Nevertheless, this concept is affected by local contexts and extremely standardized products (Askegaard et al. 2009).

In Latin America, xenocentric behavior can be seen when individuals try to build an optimistic self-image in order to improve their self-esteem. The undervaluation of their society compared to others is reasonable, and the differences between social layers, educational levels, and global interconnection will influence product or service selection (Kinra 2006).

Mueller et al. (2016) state that xenocentric attitudes can be found among consumers who are trying to acquire products and services that can provide the opportunity to create individuals' uniqueness. The level of formal education might lead to a greater appreciation of those opportunities and can be emphasized in the openness to other cultures. In that sense, the United Nations (2015) presented the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, in which Goal 4 is based on inclusive and equitable quality formal education opportunities for all. Numeral 4.7 states: "By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through formal education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity, and culture's contribution to sustainable development" (United Nations 2015). Additionally, according to previous ideas, we propose the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 4 (H4).** *Highly educated consumers will show a different behavior concerning the model than those with a low formal education.*

2.5. Research Model

Figure 1 shows the research model of the study. Considering the elements presented and as exhibited in Figure 1:

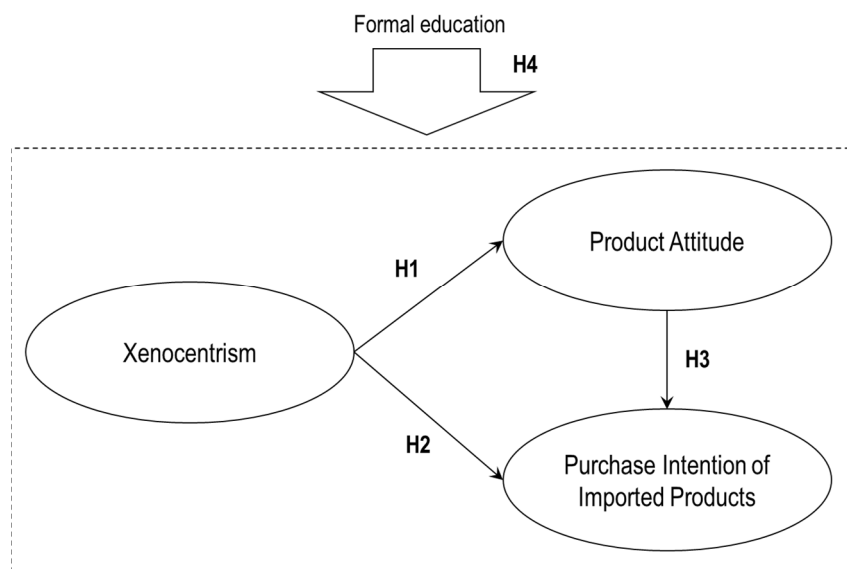


Figure 1. Research model.

3. Materials and Methods

A combination of different scales has been adopted to design the questionnaire. Four sections were used to structure the survey, xenocentrism, product attitude, purchase intention, and demographics. First, 5-point Likert-type scales were used to evaluate the measurement indicators. XENO was measured based on the XSCALE proposed by reference (Rojas-Méndez and Chapa 2019). Then, the following scales were adopted to measure the other constructs, product attitude (PA) from reference (Kim and Pysarchik 2000) and purchase intention (PI) from reference (MacKenzie et al. 1986). XEN consisted of ten items, such as “I like buying products of foreign origin”. To assess PI, five items were utilized, such as “I will buy imported products this year”. Finally, PA was measured with five items, such as “I like the idea of buying imported products”. A pilot test with 75 respondents was carried out to remove mistakes and validate the translation from English to Spanish.

Consumers from Chile were invited to participate in collecting the data. The survey was distributed through email blasting and social media after scattering the population and using Survey Monkey services. The email and social media interactions explained the scope of the research and invited participation in an anonymous study. Reminders through email blasts and social media were sent to all potential participants every other week. The data collection process lasted for 20 weeks. The researchers received 375 questionnaires. Due to a lack of essential information, 84 were eliminated. Finally, a total of 295 responses were accepted, meaning a response rate of 78.66%. Table 1 exhibits the participants’ demographics. An age range of 21 to 49 years old or older represents 75.9% of the sample population. A total of 31.5% reported being in the range of 21–29, 22.4% between 30–39, and 20% between 40–49 years old. Regarding gender, 42.4% were female, and 57.6% were male. Regarding the participant’s education level, 30.5% reported some college attendance but no degree, 23.4% an associate degree, 12.9% a bachelor’s degree, and 21.7% a graduate degree.

**Table 1.** Demographics.

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percent	Chile <sup>1</sup>
<i>Gender</i>			
Female	125	42.4%	51.1%
Male	170	57.6%	48.9%
<i>Age</i>			
18–20	47	15.9%	4.2%
21–29	93	31.5%	14.7%
30–39	72	24.4%	14.3%
40–49	59	20.0%	13.4%
50–59	18	6.1%	12.6%
60+	6	2.0%	
<i>Level of formal education</i>			
Less than a high school degree	9	3.1%	33.3%
High School degree or equivalent	25	8.5%	26.1%
Some college attendance but no degree	90	30.5%	15.6%
Associate degree	69	23.4%	8.0%
Bachelor's degree	38	12.9%	15.4%
Graduate degree	64	21.7%	1.5%

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Statistics Institute of Chile.

For the measurement and structural model, Partial Least Squares (PLS) was used as the statistical tool. In addition, a multigroup analysis (MGA) was implemented to test proposition 1, and the software SmartPLS 3.3.2 was used.

#### 4. Analysis and Results

Before the MGA, we divided the entire sample into 2 groups, one with 170 consumers with higher formal education levels (values above the mean). The second group included 125 consumers who showed a low formal educational level (values equal to or below the mean). Specifically, each respondent's years of formal education were considered, from which the average was calculated. Respondents with values below and in the mean were supposed to have a low level of formal education, and those above the mean were considered to have a high level of formal education. Appendix A shows the means for all items by formal education groups.

As a first step of the PLS analysis, we verify the global fit of the model. Table 2 presents some indicators for checking the consistency of the overall model. Before evaluating the structural model, the measures associated with the model are analyzed. The evaluation of the measurement model included analyzing that the individual and construct reliability complied with the values proposed by the literature (Hair et al. 2017). Additionally, the convergent validity of each construct and the discriminant validity of the set of model constructs were analyzed.

**Table 2.** Fit Summary.

Index	Saturated	Estimated
NFI	0.814	0.814
Chi-square	281.616	281.616
SRMR	0.078	0.078

Notes: NFI: Normed Fit Index. SRMR: Standardized Root-Mean-Square Residual.

According to XSCALE, XENO was designed as a hierarchical factor with two sub-dimensions. The subdimensions and XENO were considered reflective. Standard recommendations were followed for its computation (Hair et al. 2017). Tables 3 and 4 show the cross-loadings for both the higher-order and lower-order models, respectively.



**Table 3.** Cross-loadings of higher-order model.

Items	PA	PI	XENO
PA1	<b>0.555</b>	0.308	0.210
PA2	<b>0.776</b>	0.467	0.407
PA3	<b>0.811</b>	0.526	0.377
PA4	<b>0.819</b>	0.554	0.447
PA5	<b>0.831</b>	0.606	0.434
PI1	0.622	<b>0.796</b>	0.396
PI2	0.481	<b>0.761</b>	0.346
PI3	0.319	<b>0.604</b>	0.221
PI4	0.561	<b>0.866</b>	0.415
PI5	0.513	<b>0.838</b>	0.353
XENDR	0.331	0.252	<b>0.759</b>
XENFA	0.494	0.476	<b>0.919</b>

Notes: Bold values are loads for each construct.

**Table 4.** Cross-loadings of lower-order model.

Items	XENFA	XENDR
XEN1	<b>0.632</b>	0.244
XEN2	<b>0.701</b>	0.453
XEN3	<b>0.812</b>	0.348
XEN4	<b>0.821</b>	0.340
XEN5	<b>0.806</b>	0.404
XEN6	0.513	<b>0.588</b>
XEN7	0.417	<b>0.814</b>
XEN8	0.249	<b>0.675</b>
XEN9	0.352	<b>0.902</b>
XEN10	0.336	<b>0.896</b>

Notes: bold values are loads for each subdimension.

The model measurement properties are presented in Table 5, and the results indicate high performance in both construct reliability and convergent validity.

**Table 5.** Construct Reliability and Validity.

Construct	rho_A	CR	AVE
PA	0.848	0.874	0.586
PI	0.860	0.883	0.606
XENO	0.718	0.830	0.711

Notes: rho\_A: Dijkstra’s reliability. CR: composite reliability. AVE: Average Variance Extracted.

The Fornell–Larcker test confirmed the model’s discriminant validity (Table 6). Furthermore, the Heterotrait–Monotrait test shows appropriate values, all cases under 0.77 (Table 7).

**Table 6.** Discriminant Validity—Fornell-Larcker Criterion.

Construct	PA	PI	XENO
PA	0.765		
PI	0.659	0.778	
XENO	0.504	0.455	0.843

Notes: Diagonal shows the square roots of AVE.

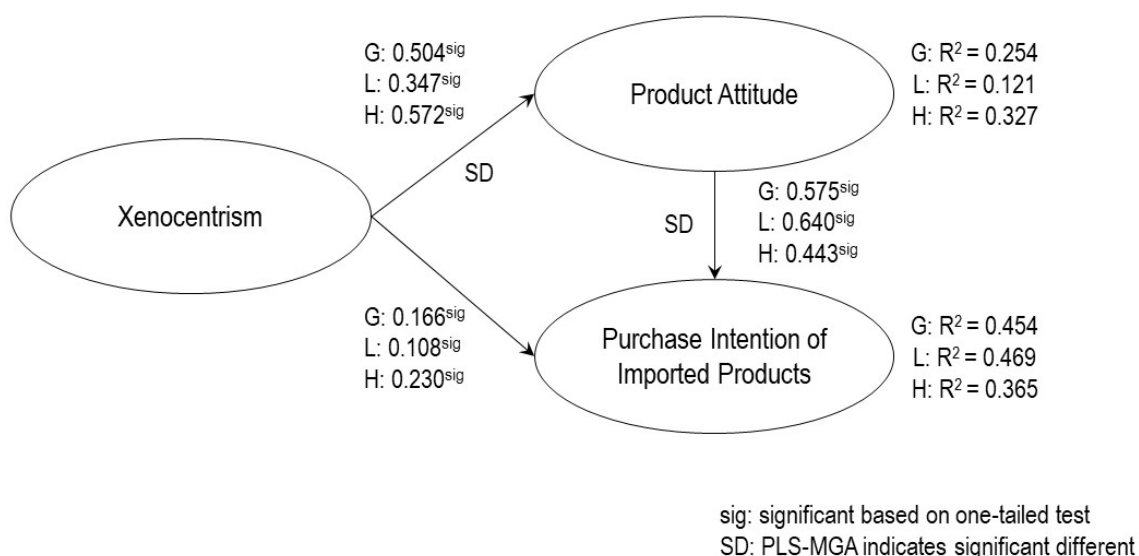
Table 7 indicates the MGA results obtained from SmartPLS. From Table 5 and Figure 2, we can establish that H4 is partially supported. So, highly formal educated consumers will show a partially different behavior concerning the model than those with a low formal

education. In summary, in relation to the hypotheses proposed in this study, the findings support H1, H2, H3, and partially H4.

**Table 7.** Discriminant validity—Heterotrait–Monotrait ratio (HTMT).

Construct	PA	PI
PI	0.762	
XENO	0.669	0.584

Figure 2 shows the PLS results associated with the structural model, including the MGA. All the relationships are supported in all the models. The coefficient of determination (R-square) of purchase intention is higher than 0.36 in all 3 models. However, it is more significant in the model associated with consumers with a low formal educational level.



**Figure 2.** PLS results.

Table 8 indicates the MGA results obtained from SmartPLS. From Table 6 and Figure 2, we can establish that proposition one is supported. So, highly formal educated consumers will show different behaviors concerning the model than those with low formal education.

**Table 8.** MGA results.

Relationships	PLS–MGA	Parametric Test	Welch–Satterthwaite Test
PA -> PI	0.009	0.014	0.010
XENO -> PA	0.008	0.007	0.008
XENO -> PI	0.127	0.140	0.126

### 5. Discussion and Conclusions

Sustainable consumption and production demand markets are made up of producers and consumers who embrace attitudes related to the purchasing behaviors that should be linked to social changes, lifestyle, and quality standards (Lakatos et al. 2018). Therefore, corporations need to consider consciousness and customers to make modifications, particularly all those associated with values and globalized trends. Simultaneously, they have to inform how products and services are manufactured to satisfy customers’ particular interests (Barber 2007; Lorek and Fuchs 2013).

The present study revalidated the XSCALE as a scale to measure XENO in developing countries and the impact on consumer behavior. Furthermore, the XSCALE demonstrated

its effectiveness in investigating the relationships between xenocentrism, product attitude, purchase intention of imported products, and how formal education can influence consumers' preferences for foreign products.

The findings suggest that xenocentric effects are strongly associated with the level of formal education. Therefore, as formal education levels increase, the xenocentric effect increases. Additionally, results indicate that XENO is directly related to product attitude and the relationship between the purchase intention of imported products and xenocentrism, as described by [Camacho et al. \(2020\)](#) and [Mueller et al. \(2016\)](#).

We wish to focus the discussion of the results on three relevant elements. First, the favorability for foreign products and the global identity concept ([Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002](#)) in the Chilean population could be explained in how it is structured. The sum of generations X (13.4%), Y (14.3%), and Z (14.7%) represents 42.4% of the entire population. Contemporary youth is referred to as individuals who consider that they cannot depend on anything at all ([Tarkiainen and Sundqvist 2005](#)). These segments of the global population have had the opportunity to travel and use information and communication technologies to understand global trends related to product quality, sustainable products, and integrated into their daily lives. Our findings go in the same direction as those of ([Ghalandari and Norouzi 2012](#); [United Nations 2015](#); [Verlegh et al. 2005](#)) that there are links between generations X, Y and Z related to sustainable consumption and product quality that make them visualize foreign products as a first option; therefore, this is xenocentric behavior. Statistical analyzes of the standardized scores of the latent variables of the model provide us with elements in favor of these ideas. In the 3 variables PA, PI and XENO, the younger generations have higher mean standardized scores than the older generations, 0.111 versus  $-0.098$ , 0.167 versus  $-0.147$ , and 0.007 versus  $-0.006$ , respectively. In the case of PI, an ANOVA test indicates that this difference is statistically significant ( $F = 7.36$ ; sig. 0.007).

Our findings go in the same direction as those of [Tajfel and Turner \(2019\)](#), [Panzone et al. \(2016\)](#), and [Budac \(2014\)](#) when they state that there are links between generations X, Y, and Z related to sustainable consumption and product quality that make them visualize foreign products as the first option; therefore, this is xenocentric behavior.

Second, despite the countless possible advantages of e-commerce, the embrace of this commercial channel is not homogeneous, and the adoption disparity between large, small, and medium-sized enterprises. In Chile, the most prominent companies employ e-commerce. Yet, 37 out of 100 small and medium-sized firms have adopted this channel ([Grandón and Ramírez-Correa 2018](#)). This reality implies that many local products cannot be purchased through the Internet, so some educated consumers who find e-commerce more comfortable may acquire the products they need through foreign sites and, therefore, purchase foreign products. Consequently, Chilean companies may be co-responsible for increasing the xenocentric effect on the behavior of educated consumers. An increase in the supply of local products through electronic channels could change this scenario. In this line, recent investigations have proposed different resources that impact the social innovation that e-commerce enables achieving ([Cui et al. 2017](#)) and how its sustainable adoption in the environmental, social, and economic dimensions can be guaranteed ([Oláh et al. 2018](#)). Finally, formal and informal education in emerging countries should reinforce the value of local production and promote strategies that promote the consumption of products manufactured in their own countries. In this sense, the consumer formal education provided to students should be transversal and incorporate information and activities in classes that allow them to develop skills to generate behavioral changes toward consumption and become more responsible and critical consumers when choosing a product. Positioning the consumption and promotion of national products to satisfy the demand for new market niches in emerging countries is a challenge to local industries. These industries should consider that these new markets have an increased selectivity due to higher levels of formal education and greater purchasing power; educated consumers request more quality, not necessarily a cost reduction. Our results imply challenges for countries and their industries to position the consumption of their products over that of foreign products among

consumers with higher formal educational levels who may be willing to buy higher quality, value-added, and sustainable products when making purchasing decisions.

This research does not seek to present consumer xenocentrism as negative behavior in our populations. On the contrary, its understanding and acceptance must be seen as an opportunity for Latin American producers. Therefore, xenocentrism is a sociological variable that arises through generational changes and exposure to other cultures, forms, and lifestyles. Local producers must assimilate Xenocentrism as a trend among consumers who increasingly assume the concept of culture and global citizenship as their own. Therefore, this social trend must lead to revising self-referential forms of production to global trends where comprehensive knowledge of product categories prevails. Not only is a need satisfied, but the interests of our consumers are also met.

This research makes significant contributions to marketing theory, specifically consumer behavior and sustainable consumption. Researching XENO is a novelty in international marketing, as suggested by (Camacho et al. 2020), and this is another contribution. XENO does not have enough theoretical and empirical research in developing countries and could be an innovation. Undoubtedly, this is the beginning of xenocentrism, and new studies and theories should be evaluated to offer new solutions and opportunities to the industry and marketing practitioners. Local producers should consider the importance of the formal educational level related to xenocentrism, product attitude, and the purchase intention of imported products, understanding this relationship as a possible clue to adjusting local products to the international standards of sustainable consumption and foreign products. The managerial implications related to this research are to recognize and understand the importance of XENO in consumer behavior and the consumer purchase intention model. Another implication is that formal education level is essential when designing market segmentation strategies for products participating in sustainable consumption. Future marketing plans for local and international corporations should consider analyzing this new phenomenon if they wish to identify profitable market segments (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos 2016). Domestic and foreign competitors should adjust their products to reflect the global quality perspective that consumers consider before completing a purchase decision. In the case of this research, conducted in a developing country, product quality and the increasing xenocentric population should be analyzed in detail. Orchestrating marketing plans that enhance well-educated local consumers' understanding of international product quality is fundamental to be successful. Local products with a sustainable global appeal could be an option to counter this market trend.

This investigation has some limitations. First, the study was conducted in a single country. So, to generalize the findings is inappropriate. Second, product categories and industries were not considered. Implementing the same research model across industries and products could offer marketing practitioners a different perspective and more accurate information. Third, the study population is limited.

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## Appendix A

**Table A1.** Item means for all items by formal education groups.

Items	Low	High
PA1	2.4	2.7
PA2	2.3	2.7
PA3	2.3	2.8
PA4	2.6	3.1
PA5	2.4	2.7
PI1	2.6	3.1
PI2	2.6	3.2
PI3	2.2	2.5
PI4	2.3	2.9
PI5	2.4	3.1
XENDR	−248,040.0	126,094.1
XENFA	−165,632.0	187,282.4

**Table A2.** Mean and standard deviation of items.

Items	Mean	SD
PA1	2.600	0.806
PA2	2.502	0.751
PA3	2.607	0.792
PA4	2.881	0.801
PA5	2.580	0.773
PI1	2.854	0.767
PI2	2.980	0.922
PI3	2.393	0.870
PI4	2.685	0.824
PI5	2.814	0.874
XEN1	2.620	0.906
XEN2	3.014	0.922
XEN3	2.797	0.865
XEN4	2.729	0.821
XEN5	2.922	0.856
XEN6	3.263	0.775
XEN7	3.471	0.975
XEN8	3.210	1.038
XEN9	3.814	0.905
XEN10	3.824	0.878

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