Consumer dispositions toward global brands

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Abstract

Purpose – Despite the increasing attention on consumers in emerging markets, there is limited research on the emerging market consumers' evaluation of global brands. The purpose of this paper is to address this research gap by examining the role of consumer dispositions – cosmopolitanism, need for uniqueness and materialism in attitude and purchase intentions toward global brands from emerging vs developed markets.

Design/methodology/approach – A mall intercept method was used to collect responses from shoppers in four major cities in India. The intercept method produced a usable sample of 613 respondents. Each respondent was asked to mark his or her response concerning two global brands – one each from developed and emerging markets separately.

Findings – The findings show that cosmopolitanism and need for uniqueness determine emerging market consumers' attitude toward global brands. Specifically, the authors find that while cosmopolitanism has a higher positive impact on global brands from the developed market, need for uniqueness has a negative impact on global brands from emerging market.

Research limitations/implications – The study findings show that need for uniqueness negatively affects attitude toward global brands from emerging markets. This presents a significant challenge for global brands from emerging market when competing with the counterparts from developed markets.

Practical implications – The findings show that managers of global brands in emerging markets should develop unique brand positioning that differentiates from international brands. By carefully managing their marketing mix elements (e.g. price, design, distribution), they can induce counter-conformity among consumers for brands that originate in emerging markets.

Originality/value – While prior studies suggest that emerging market consumers prefer foreign brands than domestic brands, little attention was focused on the antecedents for such preference. This study considers consumer dispositions, which were not examined in prior research in addressing this research gap.

Keywords Materialism, Cosmopolitanism, Global brands, Customer attitudes, Emerging markets, Need for uniqueness

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Marketing literature emphasizes the role of global brands in shaping consumer attitudes and behaviors in emerging markets. Global brands share the same name across multiple countries that use centrally coordinated marketing strategies (Steenkamp et al., 2003). Global brands exert considerable influence on economic, cultural, and psychological fronts (Mitchell, 2000). On the psychological front in particular, they provide consumers with a sense of identity, belongingness, and accomplishment. By transferring their values and ideals to a consumer’s self-concept, global brands can play a key role in shaping consumer identities (Bartsch et al., 2016).

Consumers in emerging markets such as India prefer global brands for their globalness and derive self-expressive and status benefits from consumption (Batra et al., 2000). Globalness perception functions as a distinct brand attribute providing emerging market consumers with the opportunity to show their participation in an aspired-to global consumer culture. This has created significant opportunities for domestic firms to develop global brands. These developments have made it imperative for foreign brands to succeed in emerging markets as well as foreign markets. Thus, consumers in emerging markets face a choice between global brands originating in foreign markets and domestic markets.
While prior studies present mixed findings concerning consumer preference toward foreign vs domestic brands (Moeller et al., 2013), there is general consensus that consumers in emerging markets prefer foreign brands over domestic brands, as they are perceived to provide higher quality and value. However, there is limited research when it comes to the role of consumer dispositions toward global brands from developed and emerging market (Bartsch et al., 2016). Particularly, with the expansion of global brands from developed markets into emerging markets and rise of global brands from emerging markets (Sheth, 2011), brand managers must understand how emerging market consumers evaluate and adopt domestic brands and foreign brands. This study addresses this research gap by examining consumer disposition toward global brands in the developed and emerging market contexts.

Prior research contends that consumers who idealize globalization and global community are more likely to use global brands to reinforce their identification with the global world (Strizhakova et al., 2011). Despite this, studies addressing consumer disposition toward global brands that originate from different markets (e.g. developed vs emerging markets) remain scarce. Researchers have examined the role branding plays in emerging markets, country-of-origin effect on adoption of global brands in emerging markets, and positive consumer dispositions toward domestic products (Kinra, 2006; Omar and Ensor, 2011; Siahtiri and Lee, 2017). Responding to recent calls for research (Riefler and Diamantopoulos, 2009; Wang, He and Barnes, 2017), this study examines differences in consumer dispositions towards global brands from emerging and developed markets.

The present study considered three consumer dispositions – cosmopolitanism, need for uniqueness, and materialism – in examining the attitude toward global brands from developed and emerging markets. These three positive dispositions or personality traits are studied as they are indicative of a perspective beyond provincial consumption boundaries and incorporate diversity, rationality, uniqueness, and material gain (Sharma et al., 2018). While prior studies have individually shown that these three dispositions lead to a positive orientation toward global brands, there is a lack of empirical evidence in the literature regarding the potential differences in their effects on global brands from developed and emerging markets (Bartsch et al., 2016). Moreover, prior studies have demonstrated that focusing on an individual trait may be insufficient to predict consumer behavior (Cleveland et al., 2009), this study simultaneously tests the predictive ability of three main consumer traits in determining consumer attitude toward global brands.

The present study focuses on the Indian market. Emerging markets such as India offer novel perspectives to advance our understanding of various issues related to consumer behavior (Sheth, 2011). In the last two decades, India has witnessed a rapid transformation through changing economic, political, social, cultural, legal, and technological environments. On the consumer front, rising incomes, increased literacy levels, rapid urbanization, and technological developments have transformed Indian consumer choice and decision making (Kumar et al., 2009). Thus, understanding Indian consumers will provide global firms the opportunity to expand their presence in emerging markets such as India. Moreover, prior studies identify examination of global brands as a future research area in emerging markets (Wang, He and Barnes, 2017).

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. We first present relevant literature supporting the effects of consumer personality traits on global brand attitude and purchase intentions. Methods and results are then presented, followed by discussion and implications of the results.

**Theoretical framework and model development**

During the last two decades, researchers have made significant efforts to understand consumer dispositions toward global brands by examining the changes in consumption behaviors due to globalization (Özsomer and Altaras, 2008; Zabkar et al., 2017). Specifically, marketing literature has examined the role of various consumer dispositions toward global brands. In the extant literature, consumer dispositions are conceptualized either as orientations that include...
consumer personality traits, values, or norms toward global brands (Xie et al., 2015) or attitudes that are learned dispositions that motivate consumers to act toward global brands (Akdeniz and Kara, 2014). Orientations are enduring patterns of thoughts, feelings, and assumptions that guide consumers in their evaluation of global brands. Attitudes, on the other hand, are beliefs toward the consequences of global brands such as status and conformity to the global world. The present study considers the role of personality traits or consumer orientations regarding cosmopolitanism, need for uniqueness, and materialism in the global brand evaluation. While prior studies have identified these traits as positive consumer dispositions, this study contends that they have differential effects on consumer attitude and behaviors for global brands from developed and emerging markets.

**Consumer cosmopolitanism and global brand evaluation**

Cosmopolitanism refers to a tendency of individuals to view themselves as world citizens, rather than as citizens of a specific country. They harbor a transnational frame of reference (Merton, 1957). Cosmopolitan individuals have an open mindset toward foreign cultures and are willing to explore and learn from them. Their motivation in understanding and learning from other cultures distinguishes them from individuals who view themselves only as citizens of a specific country or as members of a certain culture (Weij et al., 2015). Consumers with high cosmopolitan orientation seek self-enhancing activities that allow them to express their identity. Additionally, they exhibit a positive disposition to consume products from foreign markets and cultures, as well as appreciate the diversity brought by the products from different national and cultural origins (Riefler and Diamantopoulos, 2009). In this sense, Riefler et al. (2012) conceptualized consumer cosmopolitanism as a higher-order construct, capturing the degree to which a consumer is positively disposed toward foreign countries and cultures; appreciates the diversity brought about by the availability of products from different national and cultural origins; and is positively disposed toward consuming products from foreign countries.

Cosmopolitan consumers from both developed and emerging countries seek to consume products from foreign cultures (Caldwell et al., 2006). For consumers in emerging markets, however, global brands from developed countries appear inherently foreign. They are imbued with cultural elements of a foreign country, which may aid in the process of developing a cosmopolitan identity for the emerging market consumers. Further, these brands present consumers with a rich palette of mythic resources from which emerging market consumers can demonstrate their affiliation to the global cosmopolitan consumer segment and enhance their global identities (Özsomer and Altaras, 2008). Thus, there is likely a positive relationship between cosmopolitan orientations of emerging market consumers and their preference for global brands that originate in developed countries.

Global brands originating in emerging markets see a complex relationship between consumer cosmopolitanism and attitudinal preference. Global brands from emerging markets do not deliver the symbolic benefit of enabling the consumer to experience the diversity of foreign cultures. Hence, one might presume that cosmopolitan consumers might show less preference toward indigenous brands. Nevertheless, cosmopolitan consumers are well connected with local cultures and traditions (Riefler et al., 2012). They show a preference for offerings from foreign cultures to develop their cosmopolitan identity but, at the same time, do not reject the local cultural offerings (Lim and Park, 2013). In this sense, we expect cosmopolitan consumers to have favorable attitudes toward global brands that originate in emerging markets. Further, we anticipate that the strength of the relationship between consumer cosmopolitanism and brand attitudes would be higher for global brands that originate in developed markets than those from emerging markets. Therefore, we posit the following:

**H1a.** Consumer cosmopolitanism is positively related to attitude toward global brands that originate in developed markets.
consumer cosmopolitanism is positively related to attitude toward global brands that originate in emerging markets.

H1c. Consumer cosmopolitanism will have a greater positive impact on attitude toward global brands that originate in developed markets than those in emerging markets.

Need for uniqueness and global brand evaluation
The need for uniqueness is defined as an “individuals’ pursuit of differentness relative to others that is achieved through the acquisition, utilization, and disposition of consumer goods for the purpose of enhancing one’s personal and social identity” (Tian and McKenzie, 2001, p. 172). The need for uniqueness reflects the differences in consumers concerning counter-conformity motivation, which is the drive to pursue differentness relative to others. Consumers constantly use their distinctive possessions to develop, enhance, and showcase their unique self-image (Sharma et al., 2018). Thus, the search for uniqueness is a continual process which drives consumers to exhibit behaviors contrary to the prevailing norms to maintain their distinctiveness over time.

In emerging markets, consumers experience generally favorable inclination toward brands with non-local origins (Batra et al., 2000). In the case of India, its citizens hold strong traditional values and do not welcome westernization. This conservative economic orientation restrained accessibility to foreign brands in local markets. As a result, these brands became scarce and expensive and acquired status among consumers. Such brands are regularly associated with modernity, individuality, and nonconformity (Kumar et al., 2009). For global brands that originate in developed markets, perceptions of non-localness might drive nonconformity motivation and positively influence attitudes toward these brands. Consumer perceptions of the quality and design consistency of global brands from emerging markets have been found to be negative (Kumar and Steenkamp, 2013). Also, these brands have long existed in the domestic markets and are thus highly familiar to local consumers. In such instances, global brands from developed countries are favored over their local counterparts in emerging markets. Hence, consumers with a higher need for uniqueness might show less of a preference for global brands that originate in emerging markets. We thus postulate the following:

H2a. Consumers’ need for uniqueness relates positively to attitude toward global brands that originate in developed markets.

H2b. Consumers’ need for uniqueness relates negatively to attitude toward global brands that originate in emerging markets.

H2c. Consumers’ need for uniqueness will have a greater positive effect on attitude toward global brands that originate in developed markets than those in emerging markets.

Materialism and global brand evaluation
Richins and Dawson (1992) defined materialism as “the importance a person places on possessions and their acquisition as a necessary desirable form of conduct to reach desirable states, including happiness” (p. 307). Materialistic consumers are oriented toward attaining material goods, as the acquisition and possession of material objects are crucial to their self-definition, success, and well-being. They defined and communicated their social identity through their possessions, which provide them with sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Wang, Liu, Jiang and Song, 2017). This perspective complements the social constructionist perspective, which considers possessions as extensions of the self.

Materialistic individuals are self-centered and show a preference for status-enhancing products, as such products are perceived to enhance their social and economic status (Otero-López et al., 2011). Materialistic tendencies are escalating among consumers in
emerging markets. The combination of the global media and the desire of individuals to enhance their materialistic lives compels consumers in emerging markets to mimic western lifestyles (Cleveland et al., 2009; Sheth, 2011). Such consumers place a high social premium on imported products and buy them to enhance their status in the society (Batra et al., 2000). Based on the above discussion, consumers in emerging markets may favor a global brand which originates in a developed market. Due to the perceptions of lower quality and prestige for global brands from emerging markets, they are not favorably evaluated (Han and Terpstra, 1988; Kumar and Steenkamp, 2013). As materialism is linked to the maintenance and enhancement of self-worth, brands that originate in emerging markets would be less preferred than brands that originate in developed markets. Thus, we hypothesize the following:

H3a. Materialism relates positively to attitude toward global brands that originate in developed markets.

H3b. Materialism relates negatively to attitude toward global brands that originate in an emerging market.

H3c. Materialism will have a greater positive effect on attitude toward global brands that originate in developed markets than those in emerging markets.

Mediating role of attitude toward global brands
We were also interested in the indirect effect of consumer personality traits on purchase intentions as related to attitudes toward global brands. The relationship between attitude toward a brand and purchase intentions can be established through the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). The theory holds that cognitive beliefs about an object precede attitude formation, which, in turn, influences behavioral intentions. Hence, we expect that a favorable attitude toward global brands would positively relate to purchase intentions. As attitudes drive behavior, and, hence, it is worthwhile to study the mediating role of global brand attitude in the relationship between individual difference variables and purchase intentions. We thus propose the following:

H4a. Brand attitude will mediate the effects of consumer cosmopolitanism, need for uniqueness, and materialism on purchase intentions toward global brands from developed markets.

H4b. Brand attitude will mediate the effects of consumer cosmopolitanism, need for uniqueness, and materialism on purchase intentions toward global brands from emerging markets.

Methods
Sample
A list of global brands was obtained through the rankings provided by two leading consulting firms, Interbrand and Millward Brown. Ten global brands in five product categories were selected: Automobiles (Honda, Bajaj), Beverages (Heineken, Kingfisher), Cosmetics (L’Oreal, Lakme), Laptops (Dell, HCL), and Telecom (Vodafone, Airtel).

Two pretests were conducted to assess the perceived globalness of the selected brands. In the first pretest, 28 shoppers indicated their perception of each brand to the question, “What do you think is the cultural association of this brand?” (Zhou et al., 2010) where 1 = an Indian (local) brand and 2 = a foreign brand. The findings showed that 95 percent of the respondents reported brands from developed markets as foreign (as opposed to local), while 84 percent rated the brands from emerging markets as local (as opposed to foreign).

Following this, a second pretest with 41 shoppers was carried out to examine the perceived globalness of the selected brands. A three-item seven-point Likert scale adapted
from Steenkamp et al. (2003) (“to me this is a global brand,” “I think consumers overseas buy this brand,” and “this brand is sold all over the world”) revealed that respondents rated both sets of brands from developed ($M = 5.64$) and emerging markets ($M = 5.15$) as global. While respondents rated the selected brands from developed markets as more global than those from emerging markets ($t = 7.41, p < 0.01$), the results of one-sample $t$-test with test value as 5 (somewhat agree) revealed that respondents perceived brands from both developed markets ($t = 15.59, p < 0.01$) and emerging markets ($t = 2.78, p < 0.01$) as global. The results of the two pretests confirm the perceived foreignness (localness) and globalness of the selected brands for the study.

The data for the study were collected via a survey questionnaire administered with the help of a market research agency at prominent shopping malls in four major cities of India. The intercept method used for data collection produced a usable sample of 613 respondents (60 percent male, 58.4 percent between 18 and 25 years, and 58 percent graduates). Each respondent was asked to mark a response to two global brands (one each from developed market and emerging market separately) in one of the product categories selected in this study which respondents had recently purchased and familiar with. Collecting data from the same respondent for two brands rather than a different set of respondents ensures sample equivalence as suggested in prior research. A filler task (opinion and consensus related to seven political issues) was used to separate the responses for two brands to eliminate any short-term memory effect of prior response to the brand. Thus, each respondent evaluated two sets of brands in the questionnaire. Most respondents rated the questionnaire for the telecom service provider (28.2 percent) followed by cosmetics (25.7 percent), automobiles (19.1 percent), beverages (18.6 percent), and laptops (8.4 percent).

**Measures**

For this study, validated scales from earlier studies were used for measurement of constructs and variables. The present study utilizes five constructs and several control variables. All constructs are measured on Likert scales, with scores ranging from 1 – strongly disagree to 7 – strongly agree. Cosmopolitanism was measured with 12 items adopted from Riefler et al.’s (2012) study. Need for uniqueness uses three items adopted from Tian et al. (2001). Materialism was measured with four items adopted from Sharma (2011). Perceived brand attitude scale was adopted from Sengupta and Johar (2002). Purchase intention is measured by four items adopted from Chandran and Morwitz (2005). Table I provides descriptions of all constructs and their measurement items. Brand familiarity and demographic variables such as age, gender, annual family income, and product category were used as control variables.

**Data analysis**

Data analysis was conducted though a two-step procedure recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) using AMOS 21. Confirmatory factor analysis was used to confirm the factor structure of the second-order construct of cosmopolitanism. This measurement model was used to test construct reliability and validity. Structural paths were tested using structural model with 5,000 bootstrap resamples and 90% confidence intervals (CIs). Multigroup analysis was used to test the equivalence of the model across the global brands from developed and emerging markets. Mediation hypothesis was tested following the method suggested by Preacher and Hayes (2008).

**Results**

**Measurement model results**

Consumer cosmopolitanism was modeled as a second-order reflective construct. As seen in Table I, the second-order factor loadings of cosmopolitanism are significant, with
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Item description</th>
<th>Global brands from developed markets</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Loadings</td>
<td>α</td>
<td>CR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>global brands from emerging markets</td>
<td>Loadings</td>
<td>α</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosmopolitanism</td>
<td><em>Open mindedness</em></td>
<td>0.93(^a) 0.92 0.92 0.75</td>
<td>0.94(^a) 0.92 0.93 0.76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When traveling, I make a conscious effort to get in touch with the local culture</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and traditions</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I like having the opportunity to meet people from many different countries</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I like to have contact with people from different cultures</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have a real interest in other cultures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Diversity appreciation</em></td>
<td>0.97(^a) 0.92 0.92 0.75</td>
<td>0.97(^a) 0.92 0.92 0.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Having access to products coming from many different countries is valuable to me</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The availability of foreign products in the domestic market provides valuable</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>diversity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I enjoy being offered a wide range of products coming from various countries</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Always buying the same local products becomes boring over time</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Consumption that transcends borders</em></td>
<td>0.96(^a) 0.88 0.88 0.65</td>
<td>0.96(^a) 0.88 0.89 0.65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I like watching movies from different countries</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I like listening to music of other cultures</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I like trying original dishes from other countries</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I like trying things that are consumed elsewhere in the world</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for uniqueness</td>
<td>When products and brands become extremely popular, I lose interest in them</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materialism</td>
<td>I avoid products or brands that have already been accepted and purchased by the</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>average consumer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When a product I own becomes popular among the general population, I begin using</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>it less</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>I think this brand is very good</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I think this brand is very useful</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My opinion of this brand is very favorable</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase intention</td>
<td>How likely are you to buy this brand in the future?</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How likely are you to buy this brand in your next purchase?</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How probable is it that you will purchase this brand in the future?</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How certain is it that you will purchase this brand in the future?</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: \(^a\)Second-order factor loadings
values ranging from 0.95 to 0.97, which exceed the threshold level of 0.70 proposed by Jarvis et al. (2003). Furthermore, each of the indicators loaded significantly on its designated factor and exceeded the threshold level of 0.70 (ranging from 0.76 to 0.91). This indicates that the operationalization of consumer cosmopolitanism resulted in a reliable higher-order construct with the three reflective first-order dimensions of open mindedness, diversity appreciation, and consumption that transcends borders.

Table I presents the measurement model results for all reflective constructs in this study. As seen in this table, Cronbach’s α for all of the constructs was greater than 0.70, thereby establishing internal consistency of the items (Nunnally, 1978). The values for composite reliability for all constructs exceed the threshold value of 0.70 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Moreover, each indicator loading has significant p-values (p < 0.01), thus exhibiting good convergent validity. The average variance extracted (AVE) for each of the constructs exceeds the value of 0.50, further confirming convergent validity.

For the purpose of examining discriminant validity, AVE is compared with the squared correlation between a pair of constructs as suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981). The squared correlations between pairs of constructs are less than the AVE value, thus confirming discriminant validity (see Table II).

Goodness-of-fit measures are utilized to evaluate the overall model fit (Hair et al., 2010). The measurement model for global brands from developed brands showed a good fit (χ² = 635.71; df = 282; χ²/df = 2.25; CFI = 0.97; TLI = 0.97; NFI = 0.95; RMSEA = 0.045). Similarly, the measurement model for global brands that originate in an emerging market showed a good fit (χ² = 636.41; df = 281; χ²/df = 2.27; CFI = 0.97; TLI = 0.97; NFI = 0.96; RMSEA = 0.045).

Structural model results
Structural equation modeling was used to test each hypothesis. The model fits the data well for both sets of models (global brands from developed markets: χ² = 1,817.38; df = 516; χ²/df = 3.52; CFI = 0.92; TLI = 0.91; NFI = 0.89; RMSEA = 0.064; global brands from emerging markets: χ² = 171.52; df = 516; χ²/df = 3.32; CFI = 0.93; TLI = 0.92; NFI = 0.90; RMSEA = 0.062). The model explains approximately 49 and 43 percent of the variance for perceived brand attitude and purchase intention variables for global brands from developed markets, whereas 41 and 58 percent of the variance was explained for perceived brand attitude and purchase intention for global brands from emerging market. The control variables of age (β = 0.33, p < 0.01) and brand familiarity (β = 0.50, p < 0.01) have a significant effect on purchase intentions for global brands from developed markets. For global brands from emerging market, age (β = 0.45, p < 0.01), gender (β = 0.07, p < 0.05), and brand familiarity (β = 0.51, p < 0.01) had a significant effect on purchase intentions.

As shown in Table III, cosmopolitanism has a positive and significant effect on perceived brand attitude for both global brand models (developed market: β = 0.70, p < 0.01, LCI = 0.62, UCI = 0.78; emerging market: β = 0.53, p < 0.01, LCI = 0.43, UCI = 0.61),

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Cosmopolitanism</th>
<th>Need for uniqueness</th>
<th>Materialism</th>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Purchase intention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cosmopolitanism</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>−0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for uniqueness</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>−0.31</td>
<td>−0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materialism</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>−0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase intention</td>
<td>−0.06</td>
<td>−0.01</td>
<td>−0.04</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Values below diagonal represent correlations between the constructs for global brands from developed markets and values above diagonal represent correlations between the constructs for global brands from emerging markets.

Consumer dispositions toward global brands

Table II. Discriminant validity results
supporting \( H1a \) and \( H1b \). Need for uniqueness has a negative and significant effect on perceived brand attitude for global brands from emerging market (\( \beta = -0.11, p < 0.05, \text{LCI} = -0.18, \text{UCI} = -0.04 \)), whereas this effect was not significant for global brands from developed market (\( \beta = 0.01, p = 0.74, \text{LCI} = -0.05, \text{UCI} = 0.08 \)). Therefore, \( H2a \) was not supported, but \( H2b \) was supported. Materialism was not found to influence perceived brand attitude (developed market: \( \beta = -0.02, p = 0.77, \text{LCI} = -0.11, \text{UCI} = 0.08 \); emerging market: \( \beta = 0.09, p = 0.18, \text{LCI} = -0.02, \text{UCI} = 0.19 \)). Thus, \( H3a \) and \( H3b \) were not supported. Perceived brand attitude had a positive and significant effect on purchase intentions for both global brand models (developed market: \( \beta = 0.24, p < 0.01, \text{LCI} = 0.17, \text{UCI} = 0.32 \); emerging market: \( \beta = 0.34, p < 0.01, \text{LCI} = 0.26, \text{UCI} = 0.39 \)).

To test the differential effects of the three consumer personality traits on attitude (\( H1c-H3c \)), multigroup analysis was carried out (Byrne, 2016). Having determined the baseline models for global brands originating from developed and emerging markets, a test of model fit was assessed across the two groups simultaneously. The unconstrained model which serves as an initial baseline model showed a fairly good fit to the data (\( \chi^2 = 3,541.84; \text{df} = 1,032; \chi^2/\text{df} = 3.43; \text{CFI} = 0.92; \text{TLI} = 0.91; \text{NFI} = 0.89; \text{RMSEA} = 0.045 \)). Subsequently, measurement invariance was assessed by comparing the two brands (developed and emerging markets). A non-significant \( \Delta \chi^2 \) test demonstrates that the measurement was invariant across the two groups (\( \chi^2 = 26.01, \text{df} = 22, p = 0.25 \)). The test of invariant of factor loadings still represented a fairly good fit (\( \chi^2 = 3,567.85; \text{df} = 1,054; \chi^2/\text{df} = 3.43; \text{CFI} = 0.92; \text{TLI} = 0.91; \text{NFI} = 0.89; \text{RMSEA} = 0.044 \)).

Following the measurement invariance, we tested the structural invariance (the relationship between or among latent constructs) (Byrne, 2016), which revealed a statistical significant \( \chi^2 \), at a probability of 0.05 (\( \chi^2 = 41.57, \text{df} = 11, p < 0.01 \)), \( \chi^2 = 3,609.42; \text{df} = 1,065; \chi^2/\text{df} = 3.39; \text{CFI} = 0.92; \text{TLI} = 0.91; \text{NFI} = 0.89; \text{RMSEA} = 0.044 \). This suggests that the structural invariance was not supported. Following this, individual paths were tested for invariance by successively constraining each path to be equal across the two groups (developed and emerging market). The results reveal that consumer cosmopolitanism has a significantly greater positive impact on brand attitude that originates in developed market (\( \beta = 0.70, p < 0.01 \)) than in emerging market (\( \beta = 0.52, p < 0.01 \)), \( \Delta \chi^2 = 4.72, \text{df} = 1, p < 0.05 \), supporting \( H1c \). Similarly, a significant difference in need for uniqueness was observed between the two groups, \( \Delta \chi^2 = 4.48, \text{df} = 1, p < 0.05 \), providing support for \( H2c \). No significant differences were observed in the effect of materialism on brand attitude across developed market and emerging market (\( \Delta \chi^2 = 1.17, \text{df} = 1, p = 0.20 \)). This does not offer support for \( H3c \). Figures 1 and 2 present a summary of the relationships between consumer dispositions and attitude for global brands for developed and emerging market.

### Table III.
Structural model results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structural paths</th>
<th>Developed markets Parameter estimates</th>
<th>Emerging markets Parameter estimates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age → purchase intention</td>
<td>0.33**</td>
<td>0.45**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender → purchase intention</td>
<td>−0.04</td>
<td>0.07*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family income → purchase intention</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product category → Purchase intention</td>
<td>−0.06</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand familiarity → purchase intention</td>
<td>0.50**</td>
<td>0.51**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosmopolitanism → attitude</td>
<td>0.70**</td>
<td>H1b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for uniqueness → Attitude</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>H2b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materialism → attitude</td>
<td>−0.02</td>
<td>H3b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude → purchase intention</td>
<td>0.24**</td>
<td>0.34**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: *\( p < 0.05 \), **\( p < 0.01 \)
Control variables

Gender

Age

AFI

PC

Materialism

Cosmopolitanism

Need for uniqueness

Attitude

Purchase intention

Purchase intention

Age

Gender

AFI

PC

BF

Notes: AFI, annual family income; PC, product category; BF, brand familiarity. Bold lines indicate significant effect. Dotted lines indicate non-significant effect. *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01

Figure 1. Effect of personality traits for global brands from developed markets

Figure 2. Effect of personality traits for global brands from emerging markets
To test the role of perceived brand attitude in the consumer personality traits and purchase intentions relationship, mediation analysis was performed in accordance with Preacher and Hayes (2008) recommendation. The mediation effect is present if the lower and upper CIs do not contain 0. The findings show that perceived brand attitude mediated the relationship between cosmopolitanism and purchase intentions toward global brands from developed markets (indirect effect = 0.15, LCI = 0.08, UCI = 0.22). As the CIs did not contain 0, the results support the mediating role of perceived brand attitude in the relationship between cosmopolitanism and purchase intentions for global brands from developed markets. However, we did not find support for the mediating role of need for uniqueness (indirect effect = 0.00, LCI = −0.02, UCI = 0.02) and materialism (indirect effect = 0.00, LCI = −0.01, UCI = 0.03). Thus, partial support for H4a was obtained.

Regarding H4b, we find that perceived brand attitude mediates the relationship between cosmopolitanism and purchase intentions for global brands from emerging markets (indirect effect = 0.21, LCI = 0.16, UCI = 0.28). This suggests that purchase intention of global brands from emerging market is contingent on consumer attitudes toward the brand. In case of H2c, brand attitude mediates the relationship between need for uniqueness and purchase intentions (indirect effect = −0.04, LCI = −0.04, UCI = −0.01), supporting H2c. Like in the case of global brands from developed markets, we did not find a significant mediating role of materialism for global brands from emerging markets (indirect effect = 0.03, LCI = −0.02, UCI = 0.07). Thus, H4b is partially supported.

Discussion

We have investigated the relationship of three consumer trait variables with perceived brand attitude and purchase intentions toward global brands from the developed market and emerging market. The findings show significant differences in the effects of consumer traits of cosmopolitanism and need for uniqueness on perceived brand attitude and purchase intentions. Specifically, cosmopolitanism had a positive and higher influence on attitude toward global brand from developed market compared to global brands from emerging market. Need for uniqueness had a negative influence on attitude toward the global brands from emerging market but was not significant for global brand from the developed market. Finally, materialism was found to have a non-significant influence on consumer attitudes toward global brands from both developed and emerging markets. The implications of these findings are discussed in the following sections.

Theoretical implications

The study makes significant contributions to the literature. The results show that consumer cosmopolitanism positively influences attitudes toward global brands from the developed market as well as emerging market. The findings suggest that consumers with higher cosmopolitan orientation are more inclined toward consuming products and services from foreign cultures than local cultures. Cosmopolitan consumers may prioritize their consumption choices between foreign and domestic alternatives. The development and enactment of a cosmopolitan identity requires consumption of products from foreign cultures. Interestingly, the relationship between consumer cosmopolitanism and perceived brand attitude for global brands from emerging markets shows that cosmopolitan consumers also are objective in their decision making and would prefer locally produced products if they perceive them as valuable. These consumers are not the opposite of ethnocentric consumers; rather, they have strong local ties and are objective in their product choices (Riefler et al., 2012). These findings concur with the arguments concerning globalization theory which suggest that the effects of globalization on consumer behaviors are very complex (Steenkamp et al., 2010). The results show that brand attitude mediated the relationship between consumer cosmopolitanism and purchase intentions.
This finding highlights the importance of the cultural associations which accompany the products and services from diverse cultures (Ger and Belk, 1996).

The need for uniqueness had a significant negative impact on attitude toward global brands from emerging markets, but this relationship was not significant in the case of global brands from developed markets. Prior research suggests that exclusivity and prestige associations imbued in global brands from developed countries serve as a basis of uniqueness desires in emerging market consumers (Batra et al., 2000). In recent times, emerging markets are witnessing an inflow of global brands from developed countries, and global brands are customizing some elements of their marketing mix (e.g. price, design, distribution) to reach the emerging market consumers. Therefore, these brands might be losing their prestige appeal among emerging market consumers and, hence, the relationship between the need for uniqueness and attitudes toward global brands from developed markets is not significant. For global brands from emerging markets, the relationship between the needs for uniqueness and brand attitude is negative and significant. Prior research reports that brands from emerging markets are often found lacking in quality, aesthetics, and appear as imitations of brands from developed markets (Sharma, 2011; Kumar and Steenkamp, 2013). As such, these brands would not aid in realizing the uniqueness motives of consumers, and this might explain the negative relationship between need for uniqueness and attitude toward brands from emerging markets.

Materialism was not found to influence brand attitudes for global brands that originate in developed or emerging markets. Interestingly, these findings depart from earlier studies on country-of-origin effects that highlighted the significance of materialism in consumer brand choice (Cleveland et al., 2009; Demirbag et al., 2010). This relationship may actually depend on the nature of product categories. Product categories that are high in social signaling value might reflect a positive influence of materialism. Thus, researchers should identify other additional pathways to study the role of materialism in influencing purchase intentions toward global brands.

Managerial implications

The study provides insights for brand managers to carefully manage various consumer dispositions and their significance in influencing purchase intentions toward global brands from developed and emerging market. When addressing consumers with cosmopolitan orientations, managers should focus on developing promotional strategies which highlight the distinct cultural benefits offered by the brands. Companies such as Corona and Harley-Davidson have been successful in associating their brands with cultural connotations. These brands are globally perceived as iconic brands that deliver powerful cultural myths to consumers. These myths aid consumers in developing and communicating their desired identities. Cosmopolitan consumers seek the diversity provided by global brands from developed markets to develop and enable their cosmopolitan identities. For global brands that originate in emerging markets, local aspect of cosmopolitanism would take precedence. Brand managers of domestic brands should consider incorporating appeals which highlight local iconness and cultural embeddedness in their promotional programs. These elements thus influence cosmopolitanism consumers' brand attitude, which, in turn, impacts purchase intentions toward global brands from emerging markets.

Further, managers of global brands originating in emerging markets should focus on developing distinct and unique brand identity that differentiates them from global brands from developed markets. Especially for brands originating in emerging markets, it is crucial to shed negative quality stereotypes and identify sources which build identity value for their brands (Ger and Belk, 1996). In this way, they might address the uniqueness desires of consumers by appearing unique and valuable. Considering brands from developed markets, brand managers should avoid being an insider. This way they can appear being perceived as prestigious and distinct which appeals to the uniqueness motives of consumers. As noted
earlier, brands from developed markets were preferred because of their high quality, price, and limited availability (Batra et al., 2000). These factors suggest that brand managers of international brands should invest resources in improving quality and design, with limiting supply and increasing standardization in their marketing strategies.

Limitations and future research directions
In summary, although this study provides preliminary evidence for the relational link between consumer personality traits and preference toward global brands from developed vs emerging markets, the study has some limitations. First, the results of the present study should be cautiously interpreted for other emerging markets like China, Brazil, and Russia due to inherent differences in macro-environmental and micro-environmental factors that might influence consumer attitudes and preferences toward global brands. Thus, future studies in other emerging markets would offer empirical generalization for the study findings. Second, the present study did not include other customer traits such as ethnocentrism and local identity. The inclusion of these variables in future research on global brand attitude and behaviors should be fruitful. Third, although respondents were screened for prior purchase behavior and familiarity, it is possible that their general impressions might influence the rating of the global brands. Thus, future research should replicate the study findings using other methods such as word association tests or semi-structured interviews to obtain accurate consumer attitudes toward global brands.

Fourth, this study did not consider luxury brands that are high in social signaling value, for which the consumer level of materialism and need for uniqueness might be more relevant. Fifth, data were pooled across product categories to determine the generalized effects of consumer personality traits on attitudinal and behavioral constructs, but category-wise analysis may produce richer insights for managers. Finally, nationally representative sampling would provide more robust findings. Analyzing consumer responses from suburban and rural consumers would produce richer insights. Also, the findings could be corroborated with those from samples of other emerging countries to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the effects of the constructs.

References


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