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On the Interplay between Consumer Dispositions and Perceived Brand Globalness: Alternative Theoretical Perspectives and Empirical Assessment

ABSTRACT

Although prior research is congested with constructs intended to capture consumers' dispositions toward globalization and global/local products, their effects appear to replicate with difficulty while little is known about the underlying theoretical mechanisms. This investigation revisits the relationship between prominent consumer dispositions (consumer ethnocentrism, cosmopolitanism, global/local identity, globalization attitude) and perceived brand globalness as determinants of consumer responses to global brands. Drawing on selective perception and social identity theories, we consider several theory-based model specifications that reflect alternative mechanisms through which key consumer dispositions relate to brand globalness and impact important brand-related outcomes. By employing a flexible model that simultaneously accounts for moderating, mediating, conditional and direct effects, we empirically test these rival model specifications. A meta-analysis of 264 effect sizes obtained from 13 studies with 23 unique data sets and a total sample of 1,410 consumers raises concerns regarding the (potentially overstated) utility of consumer dispositions for explaining consumer responses to global brands. It also reveals a need for further conceptual contemplation of their function in international consumer research and managerial practice.

Keywords: perceived brand globalness, consumer ethnocentrism, cosmopolitanism, global/local identity, selective perception theory, social identity theory

The globalization of marketplaces has sparked strong academic interest in the factors affecting consumer attitudes, preferences and behavior toward global brands (Chabowski, Samiee, and Hult 2013; Gürhan-Canli, Sarıal-Abi, and Hayran 2018; Steenkamp 2019). A key construct introduced to capture global brand effects is *perceived brand globalness* (PBG), defined as the extent to which "consumers believe that a brand is marketed in multiple countries and is recognized as global in these countries" (Steenkamp, Batra, and Alden 2003, p. 54). Given that PBG is an (extrinsic) *brand-specific* attribute *perceived* by a particular *consumer* (Steenkamp, Batra, and Alden 2003), several researchers have also sought to identify how *person-specific* characteristics (e.g., a consumer's level of ethnocentrism, CET) influence and/or interact with PBG in the formation of responses toward global brands. Extant research shows that consumer dispositions, such as consumer ethnocentrism or consumers' global/local identities can also influence consumer response towards global/local brands (e.g., Alden, Steenkamp, and Batra 2006; Alden et. al. 2013; Steenkamp and de Jong 2010) thus making them potentially attractive segmentation variables (Bartsch, Riefler, and Diamantopoulos 2016).

Despite the contribution of this stream of research, relevant literature suffers from four important gaps reflecting the absence of a systematic investigation explicating the *specific* role consumer dispositions play in explaining global brand preference. First, extant research is characterized by a focus on quantity over function, as illustrated by the multitude of constructs that have been proposed, at various times, to explain consumer heterogeneity in responses to global/local brands. Despite differences in terms of their valence (positive vs. negative), scope (general vs. consumption-related), or focus (identity vs. attitude), many of these constructs suffer from (extensive) conceptual overlap (Bartsch, Riefler, and Diamantopoulos 2016). In essence, prior research has focused more on populating the list of constructs rather than deepening our understanding of their substantive functioning.

Second, prior research has used almost exclusively theoretical arguments of "fit" to reason for the effects of consumer dispositions on global/local brand responses. In this sense, most studies suggest that consumers with positive (negative) views on globalization will prefer global (local) brands. Although such arguments appear valid under certain theoretical perspectives (e.g., social identity theory), they have not been confronted by other theories which can lead to alternative or even contradicting predictions.

Third, previous studies on consumer dispositions have not provided unequivocal support for the predictive power of constructs such as global/local identities, cosmopolitanism and ethnocentrism on global/local brand preference, leading to conflicting – and thus inconclusive – empirical findings. Although some studies have documented effects in the expected direction (e.g., Strizhakova and Coulter 2015; Zhang and Khare 2009), others have found only limited impact or even failed to replicate such effects altogether (Davvetas, Sichtmann, and Diamantopoulos 2015).

Finally, past literature has neglected to empirically test and explicitly compare different, yet theoretically plausible models linking consumer dispositions, PBG, and consumer responses to global brands. This is an important omission, since the results of alternative empirical models unveil the mechanisms underlying the tested effects, thus guiding theory development and managerial practice more effectively. Failure to consider all such mechanisms can thus lead to an incomplete picture of the role and relevance of consumer dispositions for both research and practice.

In an effort to address the above gaps, our research revisits the way in which prior literature has linked consumer dispositions to PBG, proposes an additional theoretical lens to explain this link and offers a comparative empirical test of different model specifications based on these alternative theoretical perspectives. In this context, literature provides two strong theoretical bases for the relationship between consumer dispositions, PBG, and

outcome variables: selective perception theory (Gray et. al. 2004; McGuire 1976) and social identity theory (Tajfel 1974; Tajfel and Turner 1986). Based on selective perception theory, consumer dispositions should drive perceptions of globalness, emphasizing the differential interpretation of (global) brand stimuli as a function of individual attentional relevance. In other words, according to selective perception theory, consumer characteristics (e.g., CET) should be modeled as *antecedents* of PBG. Under social identity theory, on the other hand, consumer dispositions should directly impact consumers' brand-related responses and/or condition the general impact of brand attributes (e.g., PBG) on outcome variables, as a function of congruency with consumers' in-group identity. Thus, according to social identity theory, consumer characteristics (e.g., CET) should be modeled either as *moderators* of the relationship between PBG and specific outcomes (e.g., attitudes towards global brands) or simply as additional *predictors* of brand preference (over and above any influence of PBG). Distinguishing between these theoretical possibilities is critical because each alternative implies a *different* conceptual specification and associated formal model (Aneshensel 2013). Consequently, if the true relationship between PBG and consumer dispositions is *not* captured in the chosen specification, the theoretical utility and managerial relevance of the empirical results would inevitably be questionable.

Against this background, the present investigation (a) offers theoretical arguments in support of alternative conceptual specifications capturing the potential interplay between consumer dispositions and PBG in the formation of brand-related responses, and (b) assesses the empirical validity of these specifications using data from 13 studies (combined N = 1,410) conducted in both developed and emerging markets, involving both real and fictitious brands, and covering 11 different product categories. By employing a meta-analytical approach on 264 effect sizes generated by these studies, we reveal the way in which key consumer dispositions (namely consumer ethnocentrism, (consumer) cosmopolitanism, global/local identity, and

globalization attitude) are (a) linked to PBG, and (b) impact important brand-related outcomes (namely perceptions of quality, prestige, and trust, as well as brand evaluations, attitudes, purchase and word of mouth intentions). Furthermore, by meta-analyzing the patterns of results across different study contexts, we identify the conditions that govern the applicability of the alternative model specifications in empirical global branding research.

Our findings contribute to global branding literature by revealing the precise nature of the linkages between different consumer dispositions and PBG (a) in different product categories, (b) for different outcomes of interest, (c) in different country settings, and (d) for both well-known and fictitious brands. More specifically, we reveal that (1) consumer dispositions affect global brand responses through *multiple* theoretical mechanisms which go beyond their established regulatory effects (as captured through moderator specifications), and (2) the sizes of the effects attributed to consumer dispositions are, on the whole, rather small. The implications of these findings are that future theory-building efforts in the field should (1) rigorously test rival models to rule out neglected theoretical arguments regarding how consumer characteristics plausibly function, (2) develop studies with greater statistical power and "cleaner" research designs to capture their potential effects, and (3) bear in mind that the explanatory power of such constructs may be more limited than what previous research would suggest. From a practitioner's standpoint, our study suggests that managers should use consumer dispositions for guidance when designing (re)positioning strategies aimed at building a global or a local brand image and seek to maximize consumer attentiveness to global or local brand cues. At the same time, managers should not (over) rely on consumer dispositions as segmentation variables, particularly at the expense of other consumer characteristics (e.g., personality dimensions) which could prove to be more diagnostic of consumer brand preferences and choices.

CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

The Global Brand Construct

The global brand construct has been conceptually approached both from a supply-side (strategy) and a demand-side (consumer) perspective. The former perspective defines global brands as "brands whose positioning, advertising strategy, personality, look and feel are in most respects the same from one country to another" (Aaker and Joachimsthaler 1999, p. 137), as a result of standardized marketing activities (Özsomer and Altaras 2008). Importantly, "global brands are successfully positioned as such, when consumers *recognize* their communicated cues in terms of globalness associations" (Kolbl, Arslanagic-Kalajdzic, and Diamantopoulos 2018, p. 2, added emphasis). Such cues comprise, for example, brand names and ad copies in English since "English has come to signal modernism and internationalism to many consumers" (Alden, Steenkamp, and Batra 1999, p. 77), and other indications of global availability and acceptance such as visual/aesthetic elements that link a brand to global consumer culture (Alden, Steenkamp, and Batra 1999). Importantly, preference for global (or local) brands emerges as a consequence of consumers' individual perceptions and beliefs that ultimately drive their purchase intentions and behaviors. Thus, from a consumer perspective, global brands are brands *perceived* as being available and demanded worldwide, irrespective of whether or not they follow a standardized marketing strategy across cultures or have a pronounced country of origin (Steenkamp, Batra, and Alden 2003; Winit et al. 2014). It is this conceptualization of brand globalness (i.e., PBG) that we adopt for purposes of the current investigation.

International branding literature shows that PBG increases consumer preference through boosting perceptions of functional, symbolic and identity-strengthening value (e.g., Swoboda and Hirschmann 2016). Specifically, PBG has been found to positively impact consumers' perceptions of brand quality, prestige, social approval, excitement and modernity

(Özsomer 2012; Steenkamp, Batra, and Alden 2003), and has been proposed to act as signal of brand credibility reducing consumers' risk perceptions (Özsomer and Altaras 2008). Furthermore, consumers often view global brands as vehicles for expressing a modern self-image, promoting themselves as global citizens, signaling a world-minded identity to their reference groups, and demonstrating belongingness to a global consumer culture (Alden, Steenkamp, and Batra 2006; Strizhakova and Coulter 2015; Xie, Batra, and Peng 2015). Ultimately, PBG leads to positive consumer responses, such as more favorable brand attitudes (Batra et. al. 2000), increased purchase intentions (Steenkamp, Batra, and Alden 2003), greater tolerance toward brand price premiums (Davvetas, Sichtmann, and Diamantopoulos 2015), and higher levels of brand equity (Steenkamp 2019).

Linking Consumer Dispositions and Global Brand Preference

Prior efforts to explain consumer preference for global brands have highlighted that such preference is related to consumer-specific dispositions. Specifically, global brand preference has been linked to several consumer dispositions toward in-groups and out-groups (e.g., consumer ethnocentrism; Shimp and Sharma 1987), toward foreign countries (e.g., consumer cosmopolitanism; Riefler, Diamantopoulos, and Siguaw 2012) and toward globalization (e.g., global identity, globalization attitudes; Riefler 2012; Zhang and Khare 2009; for an overview of these constructs see Bartsch, Riefler, and Diamantopoulos 2016).

With regards to in-group and out-group dispositions, *consumer ethnocentrism* holds a central role. Ethnocentric consumers exhibit domestic country bias in their purchases (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos 2004) because they perceive foreign products as a threat to the national economy and local employment structures (Shimp and Sharma 1987). As a result of these moral motives to support local products, ethnocentric consumers pay particular attention to brand origin information, often cognitively distort product information in favor of

in-group brands and attach stronger emotional value to domestic options (Sharma 2015; Siamagka and Balabanis 2015). Although the major source of aversion for ethnocentrists is the foreign origin (rather than worldwide availability or global brand recognition), several studies have documented that ethnocentric tendencies relate negatively to global brand attitudes. For instance, Steenkamp, Batra, and Alden (2003) find evidence that favorable global brand associations of quality and prestige are attenuated for ethnocentric consumers; Strizhakova and Coulter (2015) show that ethnocentrists exhibit lower preference for global (relative to local) products; while Guo (2013) and Alden, Steenkamp, and Batra (2006) report that consumer ethnocentrism reduces attitudes toward global brands from developed markets. In short, the negative association of consumer ethnocentrism with world-mindedness, cultural openness and global consumption orientation (Alden, Steenkamp, and Batra 2006; Shankarmahesh 2006) appears to trigger aversion toward global products as symbols of a global community which is perceived as a threatening out-group.

Unlike consumer ethnocentrism, *consumer cosmopolitanism* welcomes purchase experiences that originate from foreign countries. Because of their open-mindedness, diversity appreciation and preference for consumption offerings that transcend borders, cosmopolitan consumers like exploring consumption options from different countries and experience different cultures by being in contact with their products (Riefler, Diamantopoulos, and Siguaw 2012). Even though conceptual work on cosmopolitanism mainly emphasizes its receptivity to foreign rather than global product offerings, recent research has provided empirical evidence for a (positive) link between cosmopolitanism and global brand preference. For instance, Cleveland and colleagues (Cleveland, Laroche, and Papadopoulos 2009; Cleveland, Papadopoulos, and Laroche 2011) use cosmopolitanism as a predictor of global product consumption and argue that even though, conceptually, cosmopolitanism does not necessarily correspond to global consumption orientation, a

cosmopolitan disposition should be understood as an out-group disposition favorably targeted toward other cultures and people (Bartikowski and Cleveland 2017). Similarly, Alden et al. (2013, p. 22) argue that "[c]osmopolitan consumers do not eschew global consumer culture or global products but appreciate their availability as one of many diverse options". This underlines Yoon, Cannon, and Yaprak's (1996) early argument that cosmopolitan consumers can be globally-oriented and/or locally-oriented. Consequently, even though cosmopolitan consumers appreciate diversity – which stands in contrast to the convergence thesis associated with globalization – they also embrace the modernity (Alden, Steenkamp, and Batra 1999; Holton 2000), innovativeness (Dimofte, Johansson, and Ronkainen 2008), and worldly appeal (Alden, Steenkamp, and Batra 1999; Steenkamp, Batra, and Alden 2003) embodied in global brands. Importantly, though, such preference does not exclude the possibility that cosmopolitan consumers will also show interest in local products, thus appreciating local, foreign and global offerings simultaneously (e.g., Riefler, Diamantopoulos, and Siguaw 2012; Zeugner-Roth, Zabkar, and Diamantopoulos 2015).

Finally, two other prominent consumer traits linked to global brand preference are *global/local consumer identity* and *globalization attitude*. Consumers with strong global identities focus on the similarities among people around the world, appreciate an international lifestyle, and exhibit interest in global events. On the other hand, consumers with strong local identities are more concentrated on their local communities and identify value in the distinctiveness of their local ways of life (Tu, Khare, and Zhang 2012). As a consequence, chronic global/local identities − or even situational priming of these identities − impact consumers' attitudes toward global and local brands (Zhang and Khare 2009). Similarly, consumers with a strong globalization attitude or global consumption orientation tend to perceive the consequences of globalization more positively and thus respond to global brands

more favorably (Alden, Steenkamp, and Batra 2006; Riefler 2012; Spears, Parker, and McDonald 2004).

In summary, as a result of the aforementioned research findings, consumer ethnocentrism, cosmopolitanism, global/local identity, and globalization attitude have all been proposed as key theoretical constructs inextricably linked to the study of global/local brands as well as relevant segmentation variables calling for direct managerial attention when managing brands that compete in international consumer markets (Bartsch, Riefler, and Diamantopoulos 2016).

Alternative Conceptual Specifications of the Effects of Consumer Dispositions on Global Brand Preference

Conceptually, consumer dispositions can affect consumer responses to global brands in several different ways. While some of these ways have been proposed and tested in prior research, others have been neglected, despite the presence of compelling theoretical arguments to support them. Essentially, three alternative conceptual specifications are plausible (see Table 1).

[Insert Table 1 about here]

A Selective Perception Perspective

The first specification (see Model A in Figure 1) suggests that consumers' dispositions to globalization, foreign countries, and/or their local communities not only affect consumers' propensity to prefer global, local or foreign products but directly influence *how* global different brand stimuli are perceived to be. For instance, ethnocentric tendencies, cosmopolitan orientation, and/or global/local identities are usually expected to influence how consumers *respond* to global brands but not to impact how global a brand will be perceived *before* it is (positively or negatively) evaluated. The latter possibility has been largely ignored

in previous literature, which has so far (implicitly) assumed independence between consumer dispositions and perceptions of brand globalness (e.g., Steenkamp, Batra, and Alden 2003).

Despite not being widespread in international marketing literature, the notion that consumer dispositions could differentially *drive* brand perceptions is conceptually underpinned by theories of selective perception and processing (Driver 2001). Psychological research has long established that how people perceive, attend to, and even distort objects, stimuli or events is selective. These selective perception mechanisms are largely driven by personal values (e.g., Postman, Bruner, and McGinnies 1948) and individual differences (e.g., need for consistency; Russo, Meloy, and Medvec 1998) indicating that "…even when stimuli are equated in terms of physical properties, information related to personal concerns and values is more likely to receive attentional resources" (Gray et al. 2004, p. 216). Drawing from this stream of research, one would expect that even for the *same* brand (as a marketplace object), interpretation of brand attributes (such as PBG) could vary according to consumers dispositions toward global/local consumption (Bartsch, Riefler, and Diamantopoulos 2016; Gray et al. 2004).

Similar predictions can be made on the grounds of identity-based consumer behavior research, a key premise of which is that consumers are more likely to process information in an identity-consistent manner (Reed et. al. 2012). Thus a consumer with a highly accessible global/local identity is more likely to attend to brand attributes that are consistent with his/her identity (e.g., worldwide vs. local availability) and, on the basis of this selective perception, form and/or update brand assessments accordingly. In support of this view, research on cognitive biases indicates that consumers often distort objective information according to their pre-existing beliefs or preferences (Russo, Meloy, and Medvec 1998). Similarly, research on consumers' organization of brand knowledge suggests that consumers with different self-views (independent vs. interdependent) tend to store brand associations in

different forms (global beliefs vs. product exemplars) and eventually rely on different evaluative strategies to form brand assessments (Ng and Houston 2006).

In a global branding context, the above findings support the conceptual argument that consumer dispositions contribute in *forming* PBG assessments regardless of whether/how much the same dispositions subsequently affect brand evaluations. For example, research on consumer ethnocentrism has shown that, beyond exhibiting bias in favor of local brands, ethnocentric consumers process product information differently from non-ethnocentric ones. Shimp and Sharma (1987) show that ethnocentric consumers pay more attention to product origin information than people without ethnocentric tendencies while more recent research identifies distorted cognition as a key dimension of consumer ethnocentrism reflecting these consumers' tendencies to interpret the world from their ethnic standpoint (Siamagka and Balabanis 2015). Similar stimulus processing characterizes consumers with pronounced local/global identities in that they can be expected to perceive products in line with such identities (Bartsch et. al. 2016).

In summary, consumer dispositions could potentially influence perceptions of brand globalness by (a) directing/diverting attention to/from globalness cues, and/or (b) enhancing/attenuating the salience of such cues in the decision-making process (Russo, Meloy, and Medvec 1998). For example, a highly ethnocentric consumer may either ignore information indicating that a brand is global and/or downplay the relevance of such information when assessing a brand. Under this scenario, consumer ethnocentrism would act as an *antecedent* of PBG which, in turn, would be operating as a (full/partial) mediator in the relationship between ethnocentrism and the outcome variable of interest (see Model A in Figure 1).

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

A Social Identity perspective

The second conceptual specification (see Model B in Figure 1), argues for a *moderating* influence of consumer dispositions whereby the latter impose boundary conditions on the effects of PBG on outcome variables. Conceptually, such arguments are consistent with social identity theory (Tajfel 1974; Tajfel and Turner 1986). Social identity theory suggests that people will favorably respond to stimuli congruent with their desired social identities which are derived from "membership of [in] a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel 1974, p. 69). This implies that – beyond the general relationship between brand attributes and outcome variables – group belonging may *condition* the relation based on in-group relevance.

Despite its theoretical appeal, the literature reveals mixed results concerning the empirical validity of this specification. On the one hand, there is supporting evidence that, for example, consumer ethnocentrism decreases the positive effects of PBG on purchase intentions through brand quality and prestige both in developed (Steenkamp, Batra, and Alden 2003) and in developing markets (Akram, Merunka, and Akram 2011; Batra et al. 2000). There is also evidence indicating that consumers with a strong global identity are more likely to choose global retailers than consumers with local or hybrid identities (Swoboda, Pennemann, and Taube 2012). On the other hand, and despite using similar construct operationalization and measurement instruments, experimental research has failed to provide convincing empirical support that any of these consumer dispositions actually moderate the relationship between PBG and brand attitudes or consumers' willingness to pay (Davvetas, Sichtmann, and Diamantopoulos 2015).

From a formal modeling perspective, this specification suggests that a consumer characteristic (e.g., CET) would influence outcome variables by moderating the impact of PBG on the latter (see Model B in Figure 1). In many global branding studies employing this

specification, the effects of brand attributes such as PBG are measured as brand associations and then modeled as antecedents (either directly or through some mediators) of consumer responses to brand outcomes elicited by real brand stimuli (e.g., Halkias, Davvetas, and Diamantopoulos 2016; Xie, Batra, and Peng 2015). In other words, a set of respondents are exposed to *Brand X*, their perceptions of globalness with regards to the brand are measured and then modeled as drivers of brand responses (e.g., brand attitudes, purchase intentions, etc.). A similar rationale also characterizes experimental studies in which, instead of real brands, respondents are exposed to fictitious brand stimuli to avoid potential confounds such as brand strength, familiarity, reputation, etc. (e.g., Davvetas, Sichtmann, and Diamantopoulos 2015; Dimofte, Johansson, and Ronkainen 2008). In the context of such brand-specific studies – whether based on real/actual or hypothetical/fictitious brands – consumer dispositions are typically used as moderators of the effects of PBG on brand responses (e.g., Steenkamp, Batra, and Alden 2003; Swoboda, Pennemann, and Taube 2012).

Finally, a third conceptually plausible specification (see Model C in Figure 1) assumes independence of the roles of consumer dispositions and PBG in impacting outcome variables. Here, consumer dispositions act simply as direct *predictors* of consumer responses to global brands, influencing the latter *in addition* to any impact of PBG. Conceptually, similar to Model B, the link between consumer dispositions and outcome variables is also grounded in social identity theory (Tajfel 1974). Consumer dispositions may predict brand related responses as a function of identity strengthening mechanism (Zeugner-Roth, Zabkar, and Diamantopoulos 2015) by affecting consumer reliance on *other* aspects of the brand image coexisting with brand globalness (De Meulenaer, Dens, and De Pelsmacker 2015). For example, consumer ethnocentrism can be expected to impact brand responses not only by attaching valence to worldwide brand availability but also by considering whether the brand originates from the domestic market and whether it imposes a threat to the local economy

(Siamagka and Balabanis 2015; Shimp and Sharma 1987). Both would be relevant stimuli for ethnocentric consumers beyond their potential consideration of PBG. Similarly, consumer cosmopolitanism might affect brand preferences by directing consumers' focus on brand aspects like authenticity, originality, ethnicity, exoticness and cultural distinctiveness (Riefler, Diamantopoulos, and Siguaw 2012; Holt 1997, 1998) which have been connected to both globally-demanded and locally-available brands. Given that such aspects of brand image often correlate positively or negatively with brand globalness (e.g., global brands are often perceived as exclusively foreign in many developing markets (Batra et al. 2000) or as often lacking originality and distinctiveness (Dimofte, Johansson, and Ronkainen 2008; Steenkamp and de Jong 2010)), the "true" effects of consumer dispositions on global brand responses may not be fully captured unless they are considered side by side with the default role that PBG plays. In other words, a direct predictor specification enables the examination of the effects of consumer dispositions at a given/constant level of PBG and controls for other influences covarying with globalness perceptions.

The aforementioned conceptual specifications can be brought together in a flexible model that accounts *simultaneously* for all the roles potentially played by consumer dispositions and PBG (Model D Figure 1). According to this model, consumer dispositions can have effects on brand responses via *three* complementary routes, namely, (a) through shaping perceptions of brand globalness, (b) through moderating the effects of globalness perceptions, and (c) through directly impacting brand outcomes. As noted previously, these three routes are anchored in distinct theoretical mechanisms (i.e., as a function of selective perception or social identity), which may or may not simultaneously be at play. The integrative Model D in Figure 1 allows for the estimation of *all* potential relationships among the constructs of interest thus comprehensively capturing the interplay between consumer dispositions and brand globalness perceptions (the rationale for employing Model D in Figure

1 together with relevant statistical details will be further elaborated in the Analytical Strategy section).

METHODOLOGY

To test the flexible Model D in Figure 1, we used data from 13 studies, offering diverse research settings in terms of (a) use of real vs. fictitious brands as stimuli, (b) product categories examined, (c) consumer dispositions considered, (d) outcome variables studied, and (e) countries of investigation (see Web Appendix W1).

To balance both internal and external validity concerns, we employed nine fictitious brands (Studies 1-9 in Web Appendix W1) and 16 real brands (Studies 10-13 in Web Appendix W1) as stimuli. The vast majority of prior relevant studies uses real, highly familiar, and usually strong brands to investigate how consumer dispositions impact global brand preference (e.g., Özsomer 2012; Steenkamp, Batra, and Alden 2003). Despite the ecological validity advantages of this approach, it suffers from potential confounds due to other sources of response variance that covary with – but are distinct from – brand globalness. Specifically, PBG's effects are not only contingent on brand's global (vs. local) nature but also on the brand's strength, size, corporate reputation, familiarity or domestic/foreign origin, all of which are strong covariates of brand globalness and could thus confound its influences. Indeed, it has been empirically shown that the effects of brand globalness may even disappear after accounting for brand strength (Dimofte, Johansson, and Ronkainen 2008), a finding that has triggered a research stream investigating global branding phenomena with the use of experimental methods (e.g., Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016; De Meulenaer, Dens, and De Pelsmacker 2015).

Given that we seek to test alternative model specifications of the effects of consumer dispositions on global brand responses, we need to "isolate" brand globalness as the source of

brand preference. This can only be achieved by experimental designs employing hypothetical brands because such brands (by definition) do not carry any pre-existing associations of brand strength, corporate reputation, or country-of-origin to mask any brand globalness effect.[1] Having said that, external validity and generalizability are equally important, especially for generating realistic and actionable implications for managers. We, therefore, complement our fictitious brand studies with several real brand studies. By using such a mix of studies, we safeguard both internal and external validity hence enhancing confidence in our findings (Zellmer-Bruhn, Caligiuri, and Thomas 2016).

Our studies span across 11 different product categories which cover food products (coffee, chocolate), household goods (shower gel), fashion and accessories (clothes, laptop bags, shoes, ski equipment), technical products (cars, motorcycles, tablet PCs), and services (airlines). In each study, we have explicitly measured perceived category involvement (Mittal and Lee 1989) and established that the set of product categories used vary sufficiently to allow cross-category generalization. Using multiple product categories also helps minimize the possibility that a particular conceptual specification (see Models A through C in Figure 1) is supported exclusively due to category-specificity in terms of global/local brand preference (Davvetas and Diamantopoulos 2016).

Alongside PBG, we consider six key consumer dispositions that have been previously linked to consumers' preferences for local and global offerings. These include constructs which capture both in-group orientations such as consumer ethnocentrism (Shimp and Sharma 1987) and local identity (Zhang and Khare 2009) as well as out-group orientations such as general cosmopolitanism (Cleveland, Laroche, and Papadopoulos 2009), consumer cosmopolitanism (Riefler, Diamantopoulos, and Siguaw 2012), global identity (Zhang and

[1] The use of fictitious brands also provides insights regarding the role of globalness cues for newly introduced brands with which consumers have limited experience or prior knowledge.

Khare 2009) and globalization attitude (Spears, Parker, and McDonald 2004). The use of both in-group and out-group-oriented constructs allows us to identify whether a particular conceptual specification (and its associated effect structure – see Figure 1) is contingent upon the nature of the consumer disposition involved (i.e., in- vs. out-group oriented).

Regarding outcome variables, we employ a large set of managerially relevant outcomes capturing both attribute/brand evaluations (quality, prestige, trust, and attitude) and behavioral intentions (purchase and word of mouth intentions). Using a range of outcome variables enables us to assess the extent to which a given conceptual specification (see Figure 1) involving a particular consumer disposition is stable, irrespective of the specific outcome variable involved.

Moreover, given diverging functions and perceptions of global brands in emerging versus developed markets (Batra et al. 2000), our studies cover five different countries (Austria, Germany, Russia, Slovakia, and South Korea) ensuring that our results do not suffer from country-specificity. To guide our selection of countries, we used the KOF index of globalization (Gygli et. al. 2019), as a measure of a country's extent of globalization (i.e., social, political, and economic globalization), which is the most comprehensive measure of globalization tendencies available and has frequently been used in prior global branding studies (e.g., Alden et al. 2013). Additionally, all selected countries vary in terms of their per capita income, which is a good indicator of purchasing power, and economic development. Across studies, questionnaires were translated into the respective local language by bilingual speakers employing a back-translation procedure until equivalence was established (Behling and Law 2000).

To reduce potential bias due common method variance (CMV), we employed various ex-ante and ex-post procedures (MacKenzie and Podsakoff, 2012; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, and Podsakoff, 2012).Regarding the former, across all studies, we assured respondents of the

anonymity and confidentiality of their responses, and explicitly mentioned that there were no right or wrong answers. In addition, we separated the measures of dependent and independent variables by allocating them to separate sections of the questionnaire. Moreover, all measures were drawn from the literature and had thus gone through a rigorous validation process to ensure that they are neither to complex, ambiguous in their meaning, or double-barreled in nature. Finally, we presented the items in the online studies in randomized order. Regarding statistical (ex-post) remedies, we applied Harman's single factor test. For all studies, the unrotated solution revealed a multi-factor structure with no single dimension accounting for more than 31 percent of variance. We also examined the variance inflation factors (VIFs) to account for potential multicollinearity. The highest VIF value was under 2.3, thus well-below the recommended cutoff point of 4 (Hair et al. 2010).

Studies 1-9: Fictitious brands

Data collection was conducted either online (Studies 1, 2 and 5-9) or with paper and pencil questionnaires administered to participants by several trained research assistants in cafés, malls, universities, etc. (Studies 3 and 4) thus reducing the possibility of experimenter-bias. For Studies 1-4 (conducted in Austria; combined N = 384, mean age (SD) = 34.7 (13.9), % female respondents = 53.1; see Web Appendix W1 for details), three versions of the same print ad (global, local, neutral) were developed. The three versions were identical in all aspects except for brand globalness. Consistent with prior research (e.g., Davvetas, Sichtmann, and Diamantopoulos 2015), we manipulated the level of brand globalness through verbal cues signifying the brand's availability (global: "Available worldwide", local: "Available only in [country]", neutral [control]: "Now available"). For Studies 5-9 (conducted in Slovakia; combined N = 370, age (SD) = 32.3 (10.6), % female = 38.4; see Web Appendix W1 for details), ads were developed with the help of professional designers

and shown to the visitors of a photography website. All ads were pre-tested using pilot samples of the target population, and manipulation checks in the main studies further confirmed that the manipulation of brand globalness was successful (see Web Appendix W2).

To reduce potential demand effects, respondents' allocation to the experimental conditions was random using a between-subjects design whereby each respondent evaluated a single (randomly assigned) ad and was not allowed to switch to other versions. Dependent and independent variables were allocated to different sections of the questionnaire and the true purpose of the experiment was only revealed to participants after data collection. Following exposure to the brand stimulus, respondents were asked to complete scales measuring PBG, the consumer dispositions of interest, and the relevant outcome variables. All constructs were measured with established scales with satisfactory reliability (see Web Appendix W3).

Studies 10-13: Real brands

We conducted four studies in Germany (N = 124, mean age (SD) = 23.3 (3.4), % female respondents = 33.3), South Korea (N = 155, age (SD) = 24.6 (3.4), % female = 41.3), Austria (N = 280, age (SD) = 37.9 (16.0), % female = 52.5), and Russia (N = 97, age (SD) = 29.1 (6.1), % female = 66.0) respectively, covering 16 brands across six distinct product categories that vary in terms of tangibility (product vs. service) and level of involvement (high vs. low), thus accounting for the extent to which product characteristics are evaluated before the purchase (e.g., search vs. experience good). Additionally, brands belonging to the respective product category needed to enjoy sufficient levels of brand awareness. Following this set of criteria, we selected cars, airlines, sports clothing, chocolate bars, motorcycles, and shoes as suitable categories.

In each category, we selected brand(s) originating from different countries, following previous global branding literature (e.g., Özsomer 2012; Riefler 2012). For the German and South Korean studies, we used Volkswagen (domestic brand in Germany/foreign brand in South Korea), Hyundai (domestic brand in South Korea/foreign brand in Germany), and Peugeot (foreign brand in both markets). Regarding airlines, we used Lufthansa (domestic/foreign), Korean Air (domestic/foreign), and Emirates (foreign/foreign). For the Austrian study, we used a mixture of brands that vary in globalness as well as their perceptions of brand origin. Finally, for the Russian study, we used Baldinini, a global (Italian) shoe brand, as stimulus.

Prior to data collection, we validated the suitability of the real brand stimuli either through brief interviews with 15 consumers (German/South Korean study) or through pre-tests respectively involving 95 consumers (Austrian study) and 32 consumers (Russian study); the selected brands scored high on brand awareness suggesting appropriateness for further use in the main studies. To further account for potential interpersonal variations, we included brand familiarity as a control variable in all model estimations. In Study 12, we further controlled for differences in age, gender, and category involvement due to the heterogeneity of the sample.

For the German and South Korean studies, we employed a within-subjects design in which each respondent was randomly assigned to one of two questionnaires relating to either car or airline brands and was asked to rate all three brands in terms of PBG and outcome variables (and also respond to scales relating to the relevant consumer dispositions – see Web Appendix W3). The remaining studies employed a between-subjects design in which each respondent was only asked to rate one brand. In all studies, the order of the brands was randomized to counterbalance order effects.

ANALYTICAL STRATEGY

Individual study analyses

The three conceptual specifications (mediation, moderation, direct predictor) previously shown in Figure 1 can be translated into three distinct statistical models shown as Models A-C in Table 2. Note that, estimating each model in isolation does *not* test its empirical validity in the presence of alternative specifications, which might or might not co-occur. For example, if we estimate a model where CET is a moderator of PBG's effect on, say, brand attitude (i.e., Model B), we fail to simultaneously capture CET's potential direct influence on PBG. Similarly, if we estimate a model in which CET acts as a direct predictor of brand attitude alongside PBG (i.e., Model C), we cannot capture any potential moderating influence of CET. To allow estimation of all alternative models and determine which attracts most empirical support, the flexible model previously introduced in Figure 1D is needed. This model formally corresponds to Model D in Table 2 and enables the simultaneous investigation of *all* three potential functions of consumer dispositions. Specifically, Model D (a) allows for all relevant paths to be estimated, and (b) can be readily reduced to the Models A-C depending on which parameters are found to be insignificant. To estimate Model D, we used conditional process analysis (Hayes 2013) which allows the estimation of complex relationships whereby certain variables within a model can operate simultaneously as independent variables, mediators and/or moderators of particular effects (see Web Appendix W4 and W5 for detailed results).

Note that similar flexible model specifications have been employed by researchers in several fields of study when testing complex effect structures in which variables may simultaneously function as independent variables, mediators and moderators or when multiple mechanisms may underlie the effects of some constructs (as is the case for consumer

dispositions in our context). Some examples of such research include work in health psychology (Wiedemann, Schüz, Sniehotta, Scholz, and Schwarzer 2009), cognitive behavioral therapy and self-regulation (D'Lima, Pearson, and Kelly 2012), obesity (Godin, Belanger-Gravel, and Nolin 2008), addictive behaviors (Moneta 2011), social withdrawal (Peréz-Edgar et al. 2010), and neurobiology (Oei, Tollenaar, Elzinga, and Spinhoven 2010).

[Insert Table 2 about here]

Estimation is undertaken at the brand-level, that is, we split our samples according to each (real or fictitious) brand, resulting in a total of 31 distinct sub-samples (with N ranging from 30 to 102). Our main interest lies in the sign and statistical significance of the following parameters in Table 2:

- *Mediation (indirect path; $b_0 \times b_2$; Model A):* if significant, this path establishes that a consumer disposition influences an outcome variable *indirectly* through affecting how global a brand is perceived to be by the consumer.
- *Moderation (interaction between PBG and Consumer Disposition; b_3; Model B):* if significant, this term establishes that a consumer disposition *conditions* the effect of PBG on an outcome variable by changing its size or direction (sign).
- *Direct influence (direct path; b_1; Model C):* if significant, this path establishes that a consumer disposition influences an outcome variable *directly* while controlling for the direct effect of PBG.
- *Moderated mediation (index of moderated mediation – IMM: Model A + B):* if significant, this index establishes that a consumer disposition not only impacts PBG perceptions but also moderates their subsequent effect on outcome variables (i.e., a significant IMM would imply that both mediation and moderation are simultaneously present and thus both the indirect parameter ($b_0 \times b_2$) and the interaction parameter (b_3) should be found significant; Hayes 2015).

Across all model estimations, variables are mean-centered to facilitate meaningful interpretation of effects at mean levels rather than at arbitrary zero values which do not hold conceptual meaning when 1-7 rating scale response formats are used (Hayes 2013). For the individual studies, we record empirical support for the mediating effect if the 95% bootstrap confidence interval of the $b_0 \times b_2$ *parameter* does not include zero. Nevertheless, normal theory-based Sobel tests (used in the following meta-analysis) also appear consistent with the bootstrap-based estimates.

Meta-analysis

To evaluate the empirical evidence in support of each of the three alternative specifications in Figure 1, we apply a meta-analysis to the results provided by all individual studies. Although 31 sub-samples were used for the brand-level analysis discussed above, some of these sub-samples contain dependent observations due to the within-subjects design of the relevant studies (notably the German and South-Korean studies – see Methodology section). As meta-analysis works with independent samples/data sets, consumers that evaluated more than one brand constitute a single data set. Thus, the meta-analysis is conducted on 23 unique data sets drawn from the 13 studies.

We proceed as follows. First, we compute a common effect size for the three specifications. We use the Sobel test results to measure the mediation effect (Model A), the regression coefficient of the interaction effect to measure the moderation effect (Model B), and the regression coefficient of the direct effect to measure the effect of the direct predictor (Model C). We convert the unstandardized coefficients and standard errors to correlation coefficients following common guidelines for meta-analysis (Lipsey and Wilson 2001). Then, we integrate the correlation-based effect sizes for each model, that is, we compute an average estimate. Since the data sets (i.e., independent samples) report multiple (and thus dependent)

effect sizes, we account for the dependencies of correlation estimates and the nested structure of the meta-analytic data by using multilevel modeling (Raudenbush and Bryk 2002). By specifying correlation estimates as being clustered under the higher-level unit of a data set, multilevel modeling is able to address the dependence problem. Specifically, we estimate the following model:

$$r_{ij} = \rho + \mu_j + \mu_{ij} + e_{ij}, \quad (1)$$

where i represents correlation estimates and j represents data sets. Equation (1) estimates the average correlation ρ, the deviation of the average correlation of a data set from the grand mean (μ_j), and the deviation of each correlation in the j-th data set from the grand mean (μ_{ij}). The two latter terms have a variance of σ_j^2 and σ_{ij}^2, respectively. The error term e_{ij} is the known sampling error for each effect size and is supplied as a data input.

We compute fail-safe Ns to address publication bias (Rosenthal 1979). For any relationship of interest, fail-safe N represents the number of additional non-significant correlations needed to render the results for that relationship non-significant at $p = .05$. We calculated the fail-safe Ns for all integrated correlations that turn out to be significant ($p < .05$). As a parsimonious test for publication bias, we further correlated the effect size with the sample size. If publication bias exists, the sample size should negatively relate to the effect size because small effects from small samples are typically non-significant (and would have been excluded in the presence of such bias).

We next conduct a homogeneity test as an aid in deciding whether observed correlations are more variable than would be expected from sampling error alone. If the homogeneity test indicates heterogeneity and the variation in correlations cannot be explained by sampling error alone, we attempt to explain the variation by several variables that express differences between the studies and samples. In simple terms, we seek to examine whether

the pattern of the findings can be attributed to research design differences and/or the type of consumer disposition involved (e.g., moderation works only for in-group constructs while direct effects apply more to out-group constructs). Specifically, we focus on eight factors that could conceptually be expected to influence the results, namely (1) the type of consumer disposition (CD; in-group vs. out-group), (2) the outcome type serving as the dependent variable (evaluations vs. behavioral intentions), (3) the brand type involved (real vs. fictitious), (4) the product category involvement (high vs. low), (5) the data collection procedure (online vs. paper and pencil), (6) the mean age of the participants in each study, (7) gender (captured through the percentage of female respondents in each study), and (8) the country's globalization status at the year of data collection drawn from historic information from the KOF index of globalization (Gygli et. al. 2019).

We assess the influence of these variables on the correlation-based effect sizes through a multivariate analysis that uses a conditional model in HLM, that is, predictor variables are added to the "intercept-only" model earlier shown in equation (1). The conditional model is a mixed-effects model since fixed effects for the influencing variables are considered in addition to random components. The estimated model – which is the same for each conceptual specification – can be expressed in the following manner:

$$r_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j}*\text{CD orientation}_{1ij} + \beta_{2j}*\text{Outcome type}_{2ij} + u_{ij} \text{ and} \quad (2)$$

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}*\text{Brand type}_{1j} + \gamma_{02}*\text{Product category}_{2j} + \gamma_{03}*\text{Data collection}_{3j} + \quad (3)$$

$$\gamma_{04}*\text{Age}_{4j} + \gamma_{05}*\text{Gender}_{5j} + \gamma_{06}*\text{Globalization}_{6j} + v_{0j}$$

$$\beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10} \quad (4)$$

$$\beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20} \quad (5)$$

where r_{ij} denotes the i-th correlation reported within the j-th data set. Equation (2) is the level 1 equation that describes the effect of variables that vary *within* data sets. Equation (3) describes the effects of the variables that vary *between* data sets on the intercept β_{0j}, where v_{0j}

is the study-level residual error term. All continuous variables (Age, % Female, and Globalization) are mean-centered. Before estimating the model, we conducted several checks to ensure its robustness, particularly to assess collinearity as a major issue in meta-regression. We examined the bivariate correlations among the predictor variables (see correlation matrix in Web Appendix W6) and also computed variance inflation factors (VIF). All VIF values were acceptable (below 2.3) revealing no multicollinearity concerns.

RESULTS

Individual study results

The results of the conditional process analyses are summarized in Tables 3 and 4. Overall, more than two-thirds (68.9 percent) of all models estimated were not significant, suggesting the absence of effects for both consumer dispositions and PBG (a detailed overview of the results is provided in Appendices A and B). More specifically, only 9.1 percent of cases support the role of consumer dispositions as antecedents of PBG, offering even weaker support for the mediating role of PBG (6.4 percent) on the consumer disposition–outcome relationship (*the indirect $b_0 \times b_2$ path)*; 8.7 percent of cases support the moderation specification *(the b_3 interaction term)*; 17.4 percent of cases support the direct predictor specification *(the direct b_1 path)*; and 4.2 percent of cases support the moderated mediation specification (significant *MMI,* $b_0 \times b_2$, and b_3 terms). Overall, these figures indicate rather limited empirical support for all model specifications, thus casting doubt on the stability of effects established in the literature (i.e., PBG as a driver of positive brand responses – empirically supported in only one out of four model estimations) or enjoying a conceptual consensus in the field (e.g., consumer characteristics moderate global brand responses – empirically supported in less than one in ten model estimations).

[Insert Tables 3 and 4 about here]

Meta-analysis results

Note that, taken one at a time, the study design characteristics (e.g., type of brand or country of study) are not able to consistently explain differences in the empirical support for the alternative model specifications (see bold figures in Tables 3 and 4). We thus next sought to assess the empirical evidence for the alternative specifications using the meta-analytical approach previously outlined.

Based on the integration of the relevant correlation-based effect sizes (see Table 5), the mediation model (Model A) and direct predictor model (Model C) both show a significant main effect, while the moderation model (Model B) does not. The corresponding confidence intervals show that the direct predictor model effect is significantly different from (i.e., stronger than) both other models, meaning that it receives significantly more empirical support than the mediation and moderation specifications. Mediation and moderation effects (Model A and C) do not differ, as indicated by the confidence interval overlap. The homogeneity test indicates that the integrated correlations are heterogeneous and that the effects are conditional and can be further explained by differences between data sets and effect sizes. Finally, the fail-safe N indicates that the direct predictor model results in a higher value than Rosenthal's (1979) rule of thumb (5 times the number of effect sizes plus 10), indicating that the finding does not suffer from publication bias. However, the findings for the mediation model are below this threshold. The correlation between effect size and sample size shows a significant relationship for the mediation model ($r = .141$, $p = .022$). However, the sign is positive and thus the opposite from what would be expected if a publication bias existed.

[Insert Tables 5 about here]

Table 6 provides the results of the meta-regression models. All three models significantly explain variance, as indicated by the significant model fit. This implies that context effects do matter for the type of model specification that receives more empirical support.

[Insert Table 6 about here]

Consumer disposition orientation shows a significant influence in all three models and the effect becomes more positive (or less negative) for outgroup orientations ($\beta_{\text{Model A}} = .074$, $p < .001$; $\beta_{\text{Model B}} = .060$, $p < .001$; $\beta_{\text{Model C}} = .036$, $p < .01$). This means that out-group orientations (e.g., global identity) are better at capturing responses to global brands than in-group orientations (e.g., consumer ethnocentrism) across all model specifications. Effect sizes of models predicting brand intention measures are lower for mediation and direct predictor specifications, but not significantly lower for moderation specifications ($\beta_{\text{Model A}} = -.056$, $p < .01$; $\beta_{\text{Model B}} = .011$, *ns*; $\beta_{\text{Model C}} = -.060$, $p < .01$). Also, fictitious brand stimuli lead to smaller effects in the mediation model ($\beta_{\text{Model A}} = -.059$, $p < .01$). Product category involvement does not lead to any differences, meaning that the results generalize across product categories. Data collection affects all three models ($\beta_{\text{Model A}} = -.055$, $p < .01$; $\beta_{\text{Model B}} = .091$, $p < .001$; $\beta_{\text{Model C}} = -.103$, $p < .01$): paper and pencil interview data lead to smaller (positive and negative) effects than online interview data. Age increases the effect in the mediation model ($\beta_{\text{Model A}} = .005$, $p < .01$), while the percentage of female participants makes the negative effect in the moderation model smaller ($\beta_{\text{Model B}} = .003$, $p < .01$). The study country's globalization weakens the effects in the mediation and moderation models ($\beta_{\text{Model A}} = -.004$, $p < .01$). To account for the presence of many Austrian samples in our studies, we added a relevant dummy variable in all meta-regression models which distinguishes between Austrian and non-Austrian datasets; the influence of this variable was non-significant, leaving most of the other effects in the meta-regression models unchanged.

The intercept indicates a significant effect of all three models after controlling for the predictor variables. The intercept in the direct predictor model shows the strongest effect of all three models and is significantly different from the moderation model and the mediation model (at $p < .05$).

The homogeneity test indicates that the remaining variance in the mediation model is not significant. That is, by adding the predictors listed in Table 6, the model explains the heterogeneity described in Table 5. In contrast, the remaining variance in both the moderation and direct predictor models still indicates significant heterogeneity; hence, further factors that could potentially explain the variation in effect sizes should be considered.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

A long-standing premise of international consumer behavior research is the notion that consumers respond favorably to brands they perceive as being worldwide available and demanded (e.g., Gürhan-Canli, Sarıal-Abi, and Hayran 2018; Steenkamp, Batra, and Alden 2003). After replicating this baseline effect across multiple empirical settings, researchers moved toward investigating whether all consumers respond uniformly towards global brands and proposed a set of consumer dispositions, such as consumer ethnocentrism or global/local consumer identities that ostensibly condition the global brand effect. However, the exact structure of the influence of such dispositions on consumer responses to global brands has not been the subject of thorough conceptual scrutiny and systematic empirical testing. This has left researchers without guidance on how to best specify models including such variables in global branding studies and practitioners short of insights regarding how they can employ consumer dispositions for segmentation, targeting, and positioning purposes. To the best of our knowledge, the present study is the first that explicitly attempts to shed light on the

interplay between consumer dispositions and PBG as drivers of brand preference using a study setup involving multiple country samples, a wide range of brand stimuli and a diversity of empirical settings.

Theoretical Implications

The first implication of our investigation relates to the surprisingly low incidence of significant effects of consumer dispositions on global brand preference (about 31 percent). The results of our studies fail to identify a conceptual specification that dominates the empirical results strongly enough to warrant its adoption in future research with sufficient confidence. Particularly surprising is that roughly only one out of ten model estimations supports a moderation specification despite the latter being one of the most intuitively appealing and thus empirically popular approaches for modeling the effects of consumer dispositions (e.g., Akram, Merunka, and Akram 2011; Steenkamp, Batra, and Alden 2003; Swoboda, Pennemann, and Taube 2012).

Regardless of the particular conceptual specification considered, it appears that consumer dispositions like consumer ethnocentrism, cosmopolitanism, and global/local identities – whose effects have been repeatedly advocated by prior research as being highly relevant in the context of global/local brand consumption (e.g., Strizhakova and Coulter 2015; Steenkamp, Batra, and Alden 2003; Steenkamp and de Jong 2010) – do not consistently contribute when seeking to explain consumer responses to global brands. Importantly, however, this is *not* to say that the effects of these variables are not present or irrelevant, or that prior research using them is of no value. The meta-analytic results indicate that the effects of such variables can be *statistically* significant. However, in absolute terms, their effect sizes (ranging from -.012 to .092) are rather low, casting doubt on their *substantive* (practical) significance (Combs 2010). This surprising finding inevitably raises

concerns regarding the (potentially overstated) relevance of such variables in theoretical models trying to explicate how consumers deal with global and local brands.

The second contribution of our investigation relates to the theoretical specifications researchers should consider when dealing with consumer dispositions. Prior research has prioritized a moderating role for these constructs, naturally expecting that when consumer dispositions match the brand character, positive brand responses emerge (e.g., Akram, Merunka, and Akram 2011; Swoboda, Pennemann, and Taube 2012). Our results question this assumption by showing that (1) such moderating effects were found to be significant in less than one out of ten model estimations, and (2) the average effect size obtained in a meta-analytic manner fails to reach statistical significance, implying potential absence of a "true" moderator effect in the population. In a nutshell, our findings suggest that employing the "default" approach of modeling these constructs as moderators is not necessarily a well-advised research strategy.

An additional theoretical contribution of our work is drawing attention to alternative theoretical explanations regarding how consumer dispositions tap into global brand effects and how researchers should capture their influence. Here, we contribute to global branding research by showing that there is a promising yet neglected theoretical perspective, namely selective perception. The presence of a small, yet significant effect size for the mediation specification implies that (at least some) consumers attend to the global and local brand attribute of encountered brand stimuli depending on their dispositions toward local and global consumption. Consumers seem to perceive brands in consonance with their dispositions and likely even ignore brands' local or global image when they do not (positively or negatively) tie their consumption to their own country or the global community. Importantly, this is an effect that we found to suffer the least from heterogeneity in comparison to the effects of the other specifications, suggesting that it should be explicitly considered (at least as a rival

model or an alternative explanation to be ruled out) when modeling global brand responses using consumer data. We thus enhance international branding literature by evidencing a new theoretical mechanism which partly explains why some consumers chronically displaying specific dispositions toward marketplace globalization tend to care more about global/local brand cues and ultimately weight them more strongly in their purchase decisions.

Finally, our results contribute to relevant literature by highlighting the complexity of the consumer-brand interaction when it comes to brand responses and the importance of context regarding how consumer dispositions may affect responses to global brands. The results of the meta-analysis reveal significant heterogeneity in effect sizes, implying that multiple study designs, countries, samples and brand types are necessary to generate confidence in obtained results. Any unique model specification based on a single consumer dataset and without a rigorous test of alternative models will likely not suffice to generate robust and generalizable conclusions.

Managerial Implications

From a managerial perspective, our findings cast doubt on the practical importance of ethnocentrism, cosmopolitanism, global/local identity and globalization attitude as critical factors impacting global brand success. This should not be interpreted as implying that such constructs are irrelevant for informing managerial decision making *in general*. Findings of prior research clearly show that the considered consumer dispositions *do* indeed impact consumer responses to brands originating from foreign countries (in general) or countries with particular country images (e.g., Riefler, Diamantopoulos, and Siguaw 2012; Zeugner-Roth, Zabkar, and Diamantopoulos 2015). Therefore, these dispositions may remain helpful for international marketers to identify, profile and target groups of consumers who prefer

foreign over domestic brands (and vice versa), irrespective of their perceived brand globalness.

Our findings also suggest that global/local managers should not rely exclusively on consumer segments characterized by polarized scores on consumer dispositions. Although prior literature seemingly urges local brand managers to focus on ethnocentric and locally-identified consumer segments and global brand managers to concentrate on cosmopolitan and globally-aspiring consumer niches, our investigation suggests that both global and local brands can be competitive across the board without having to focus only on market microsegments reflecting specific consumer dispositions. Although such dispositions might have been particularly relevant in the past, the distinction between brand globality and locality seems to have become fuzzier than a simple dichotomy, leading to an inability of consumer dispositions to provide clear-cut directives in terms of segmenting and targeting consumer segments. These concepts can still remain relevant for understanding how international consumers process and perceive brand stimuli but not necessarily for accurately predicting their ensuing purchase choices.

Notwithstanding the above, our findings suggest that consumer dispositions with out-group orientations (global identity, globalization attitude or cosmopolitanism) should be favored by practitioners over those with in-group orientations (consumer ethnocentrism or local identity) because the former are better at capturing responses to global brands in all observed cases. Additionally, the support for a selective perception perspective suggests that tracking consumers' dispositions to global or local consumption might be useful in deciding whether a global or a local consumer culture positioning (e.g., Alden, Steenkamp, and Batra 1999) should be sought. International marketers should be aware that when their consumer base for a particular brand scores high in these dispositions, they are more likely to attend to global or local brand cues (e.g., De Meulenaer, Dens, and De Pelsmacker 2015). According

to our findings, this information is particularly relevant for international marketing managers who (intend to) operate in emerging countries (e.g., Russia). Due to the strong support to the mediation model as a conceptual specification (50%), it seems that emerging countries' consumers will only appreciate brands whose global (local) image is in consonance with their dispositions. In such cases, communication efforts or product packaging should indeed stress a brand's global or local nature. In contrast, when these variables score low in the target market, alternative positioning strategies should be sought as consumers are likely to attend more to other attributes, such as value for money, taste or functionality.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

From a future research perspective, our findings raise questions related to the conceptualization of prominent consumer dispositions relevant to the field of international marketing (Bartsch, Riefler, and Diamantopoulos 2016). These constructs have all been originally introduced as general psychological traits outside the context of consumer research, which may explain their limited ability to predict consumption behavior. Although interesting approaches to re-conceptualize consumer ethnocentrism (Sharma 2015; Siamagka and Balabanis 2015) and cosmopolitanism (Riefler, Diamantopoulos, and Siguaw 2012) have recently emerged, knowledge on how these dispositions impact consumer responses to specific *brands* (as opposed to products in general) is still limited.

Another avenue for future research pertains to the measurement of consumer dispositions. Currently, researchers invariably rely on self-reported measures that are arguably easy to administer but bear the risk of capturing the underlying constructs incompletely or even inaccurately. Specifically, given the constructs' complex latent nature, respondents may lack the necessary awareness and cognitive ability to access and articulate their dispositions (Dimofte 2010; Fazio and Olsen 2003; Greenwald and Banaji 1995). The

use of implicit measurement techniques, such as Implicit-Association Tests (IAT; Greenwald, McGhee, and Schwartz 1998) could, therefore, yield new insights into the relationships of interest. Similarly, results could be different if an ethnocentric/local or cosmopolitan/global mindset is contextually triggered (e.g., through priming) and its effects on brand responses and/or brand perceptions are subsequently recorded. For example, the effects of global/local identity primes have been supported by prior literature both with regards to product preference and price sensitivity (Gao, Zhang, and Mittal 2017; Zhang and Khare 2009). Thus, future research may have to shift its focus from self-report measures of consumer dispositions to contextual manipulations of global or local consumer mindsets/identities to fully reap their beneficial effects.

Our findings also raise some questions on the conceptualization of global brands and consumers' notion of brand globalness. Prior research has mostly focused on perceived worldwide availability as the central dimension of brand globalness (e.g., Steenkamp, Batra, and Alden 2003), although more recent definitions incorporate additional aspects such as the central coordination of marketing strategies and programs to ensure a consistent brand positioning across markets (Özsomer et al. 2012) or consumers recognition of brands as 'global' due to their associations with a given global consumer culture (Akaka and Alden 2010). Hence, to the extent that consumers associate global brands with more than just multi-market presence (Mandler 2019), the inability to find significant effects of consumer dispositions may be attributable to the rather narrow conceptualization of brand globalness. For example, it is conceivable that the gains due to the "allure" of globalness in terms of global awareness and recognition are offset by perceptions of being highly standardized/mass-produced (Mandler 2019). Revisiting the operationalization of consumer dispositions and conceptualization of the PBG construct as well as its interplay with related

constructs such as (perceived) standardization/adaptation may thus lead to a more nuanced understanding of how consumers perceive and respond to global brands.

On the methodological front, although our meta-analysis tried to account for most potential data issues (publication bias, number of individual sub-samples, country specificities, etc.), the results inevitably reflect the inherent limitations of the original studies. Given that our meta-analysis is based on primary data from studies presented in the same paper (McShane and Böckenholt 2017), future research could benefit from meta-analyses of already published studies in the field of consumer dispositions and related constructs. In a similar sense, meta-analytical approaches could be also useful in testing the effects of brand globalness on brand preference. Given the abundance of published studies using the PBG construct, meta-analytical findings would be most valuable to inform the marketplace globalization debate and guide future research in the field.

Finally, future research should consider moving to the direction of other constructs potentially explaining global and local brand preference. Given the findings of the present study, the focus extant research has put on consumer dispositions seems to largely outweigh their contribution towards understanding the competition between global and local brands. How supply-side variables (e.g., brand collaboration with local stakeholders), demand-side, contextual variables (e.g., buying for self vs. others, purchases under different emotional states) or consumer personality dimensions (e.g., Westjohn, Singh, and Magnusson 2012) and demographics impact preferences for local versus global brands could represent more promising and exciting research questions in a field which has now clearly matured.

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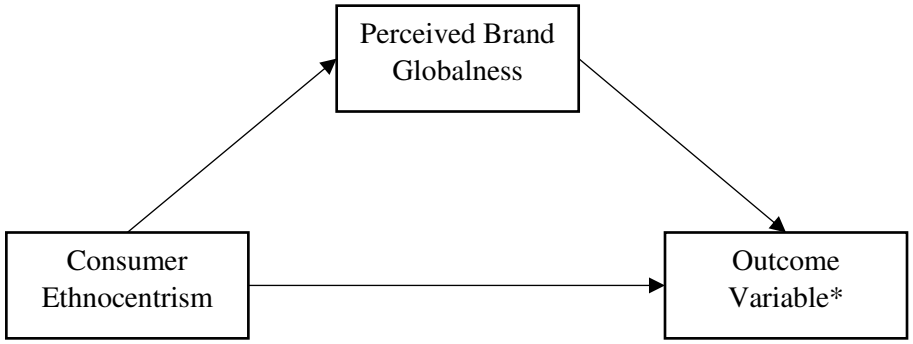
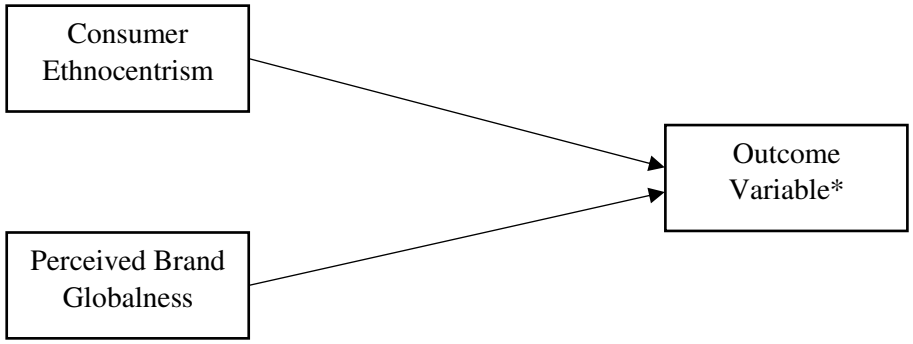
FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1: Models Corresponding to Alternative and Flexible Conceptual Specifications

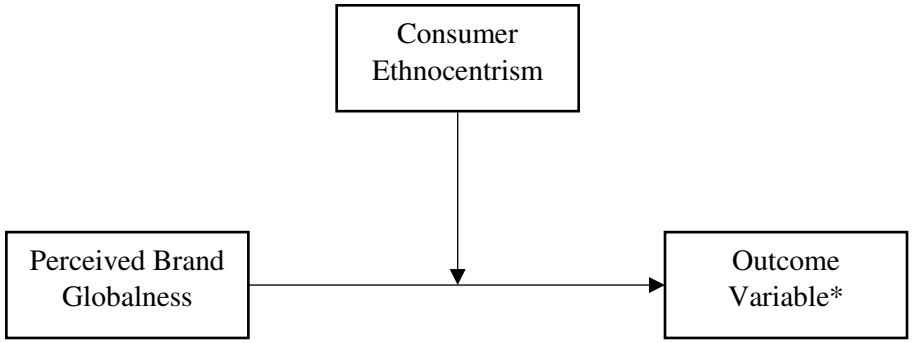
A. Consumer Characteristics as Antecedents



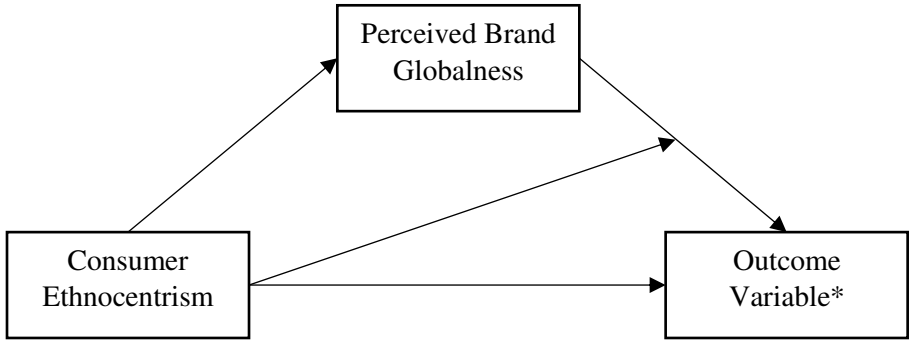
C. Consumer Characteristics as Direct Predictors



B. Consumer Characteristics as Moderators



D. Flexible Specification



Notes: Consumer Ethnocentrism is used for illustration purposes only; * *Outcome Variable* is any brand outcome variable of interest (e.g., brand quality or purchase intentions).

Table 1: Theoretical Grounding for Specified Models and Illustrative International Marketing (IM) Research Applications

Model	Rationale	Theoretical grounding	Applications in IM research (Examples)
Model A: Consumer Dispositions as Antecedents of PBG	*Who you are affects how you perceive marketplace stimuli*	Selective perception theories (e.g., Postman, Bruner, and McGinnies 1948) / Identity-based consumer behavior theories (e.g., Reed et al. 2012)	▪ Consumer dispositions have not yet been empirically considered as *antecedents* of PBG in prior IM research.
Model B: Consumer Dispositions as Moderators of the Relationships between PBG and Brand-Related Outcomes	*Who you are conditions how your perception of marketplace stimuli affects responses toward them*	Social identity theory (Tajfel 1974; Tajfel and Turner 1986)	▪ Global identity *moderate*s the relationship between corporate social responsibility and brand attitude (Magnusson, Westjohn, and Zdravkovic 2015) ▪ Global and local consumer identities *moderate* the relationship between PBG/PBL and functional/psychological value (Swoboda, Pennemann, and Taube 2012) ▪ Cosmopolitanism *moderates* the relationship between ethnic identity and consumption behavior (Cleveland, Papadopoulos, and Laroche 2011) ▪ Consumer ethnocentrism *moderates* the relationship between PBG and perceived brand quality/prestige (Akram, Merunka, and Akram 2011) ▪ Consumer ethnocentrism *moderates* the relationship between PBG/local icon value and brand purchase likelihood (Steenkamp, Batra, and Alden 2003) ▪ Consumer ethnocentrism *moderates* the relationship between economically developed country admiration and brand attitudes (Batra et al. 2000)
Model C: Consumer Dispositions as Direct Predictors of Brand-Related Outcomes	*Who you are directly affects responses toward marketplace stimuli*		▪ Consumer cosmopolitanism, national identity and consumer ethnocentrism as *predictors* of home/foreign product judgments/willingness to buy home/foreign products (Zeugner-Roth, Zabkar, and Diamantopoulos 2015) ▪ Consumer ethnocentrism and global connectedness as *predictors* of local (relative to global) brands quality/identity (Strizhakova and Coulter 2015) ▪ Global identity and national identity as *predictors* of diversity of contact, relativistic appreciation and discomfort with differences (Guo 2013) ▪ Cosmopolitanism, localism, ethnocentrism and materialism are *predictors* of global company animosity and perceived value of global brands (Alden et al. 2013) ▪ Consumer cosmopolitanism as a *predictor* of willingness to buy foreign products (Riefler, Diamantopoulos, and Siguaw 2012) ▪ Global/local identity as *predictors* of preference for global/local products (Tu, Khare, and Zhang 2012) ▪ Global and national identifications as *predictors* of attitude towards global/local consumer culture positioning (Westjohn, Singh, and Magnusson 2012) ▪ Consumer ethnocentrism as a *predictor* of attitudes toward global/local products (Steenkamp and de Jong 2010) ▪ Global/local identity as *predictors* of global/local product attractiveness (Zhang and Khare 2009) ▪ Consumer ethnocentrism and global consumption orientation as *predictors* of global brand attitude (Alden, Steenkamp, and Batra 2006) ▪ Consumer ethnocentrism as a *predictor* of consumer preference for domestic products/products originating from foreign countries (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos 2004)

Table 2: Statistical Models of Alternative Conceptual Specifications

Model A: Consumer Dispositions as Antecedents of PBG (Figure 1A)

$PBG = a_0 + b_0 \times CET + e$

$OUT = a_1 + b_1 \times PBG + b_2 \times CET + e$

Model B: Consumer Dispositions as Moderators (Figure 1B)

$OUT = a_1 + b_1 \times PBG + b_2 \times CET + b_3 \times (PBG \times CET) + e$

Model C: Consumer Dispositions as Direct Predictors (Figure 1C)

$OUT = a_1 + b_1 \times PBG + b_2 \times CET + e$

Model D: Flexible Specification (Figure 1D)

$PBG = a_0 + b_0 \times CET + e$

$OUT = a_1 + b_1 \times PBG + b_2 \times CET + b_3 \times (PBG \times CET) + e$

Notes:
1. CET is used for illustration purposes only; OUT is any brand outcome variable of interest.
2. Model D reduces to (a) Model A if b_3 is set to 0, (b) Model B if b_0 is set to 0, and (c) Model C if both b_0 and b_3 are set to 0.
3. Due to simultaneous path estimation for Model D, minor changes in the estimation results of the common paths across models (parameters b_1 and b_2) can be expected between the full model (Model D) and the models where some of the coefficients are set to 0 (Models A-C).

Table 3: Empirical Support for Alternative Conceptual Specifications across Study Settings

Conceptual specification	Total	Study dimension							
		Brand type		Outcome type		CD orientation		Product category	
		Real	Fictitious	Evaluation	Intentions	In-group	Out-group	Low involvement	High involvement
Mediation (Model A) (Path $b_0 \times b_2$: CD→PBG→OUT)	6.4%	8.0%	3.4%	8.2%	3.2%	5.6%	7.1%	**2.5%**	**9.7%**
Path b_0: CD→PBG	9.1%	10.2%	6.8%	9.4%	8.5%	5.6%	11.5%	8.3%	9.7%
Path b_2: PBG→OUT	24.6%	24.4%	25.0%	**32.9%**	**9.6%**	24.1%	25.0%	**11.7%**	**35.4%**
Moderation (Model B) (Path b_3: CD×PBG→OUT)	8.7%	6.8%	12.5%	7.1%	11.7%	11.1%	7.1%	8.3%	9.0%
Direct predictor (Model C) (Path b_1: CD→OUT)	17.4%	**11.4%**	**29.5%**	15.9%	20.2%	20.4%	15.4%	14.2%	20.1%
Moderated mediation (MMI)	4.2%	**2.3%**	**8.0%**	3.5%	5.3%	5.6%	3.2%	3.3%	4.9%
None supported	68.9%	**75.0%**	**56.8%**	71.2%	64.9%	65.7%	71.2%	73.3%	65.3%

Notes: Reported figures are based on 264 individual model estimations; column frequencies refer to percentile support for the specification; χ^2 difference test is used for statistical comparison; Significant differences in empirical support across study dimension at $p < .05$ highlighted in bold; CD = Consumer Disposition; PBG = Perceived Brand Globalness; OUT = Outcome Variable.

Table 4: Empirical Support for Alternative Conceptual Specifications across Countries

Conceptual specification	Total	Country				
		Austria	Slovakia	Germany	South Korea	Russia
Mediation (Model A) (Path $b_0 \times b_2$: CD→PBG→OUT)	6.4%	**2.5%**	**2.5%**	**8.3%**	**10.4%**	**50.0%**
Path b_0: CD→PBG	9.1%	8.3%	5.0%	8.3%	8.3%	50.0%
Path b_2: PBG→OUT	24.6%	**18.3%**	**10.0%**	**20.8%**	**45.8%**	**87.5%**
Moderation (Model B) (Path b_3: CD×PBG→OUT)	8.7%	10.8%	10.0%	4.2%	8.3%	0%
Direct predictor (Model C) (Path b_1: CD→OUT)	17.4%	**20.0%**	**25.0%**	**4.2%**	**20.8%**	**0%**
Moderated mediation (MMI)	4.2%	3.3%	7.5%	6.3%	2.1%	0%
None supported	68.9%	64.2%	67.5%	85.4%	68.8%	50.0%

Notes: Reported figures are based on 264 individual model estimations; column frequencies refer to percentile support for the specification. χ^2 difference test is used for statistical comparison; Significant differences in empirical support across study dimension at $p < .05$ highlighted in bold. CD = Consumer Dispositions; PBG = Perceived Brand Globalness; OUT = Outcome Variable.

Table 5: Integration of Correlation-based Effect Sizes for each Specification

Model	# positive effects	# negative effects	Mean r	95% CI		Q-statistic (Homogeneity test)	Fail safe N
				Lower bound	Upper bound		
Mediation (Model A)	140	111	.024*	.002	.046	41.438**	382
Moderation (Model B)	118	133	-.012	-.038	.014	60.882***	-
Direct predictor (Model C)	180	78	.092***	.057	.127	98.883***	7,058

Notes: The results for each model are based on 264 effect sizes taken from 23 data sets. N_{total} = 1,410
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Table 6: Explaining the Variation in Effect Sizes for each Specification: Meta-regression Models

	Mediation (Model A)	Moderation (Model B)	Direct predictor (Model C)
	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)
Intercept	.046 (.025)$^{+}$	-.074 (.024)**	.169 (.033)***
Consumer disposition orientation (0 = in-group, 1 = outgroup)	.074 (.016)***	.060 (.016)***	.036 (.016)*
Outcome type (0 = evaluation, 1 = intentions)	-.056 (.023)*	.011 (.023)	-.060 (.023)*
Brand type (0 = real, 1 = fictitious)	-.059 (.022)*	.019 (.021)	-.061 (.036)
Product category (0 = low involvement, 1 = high involvement)	.021 (.023)	-.010 (.022)	-.019 (.039)
Data collection (0 = online, 1 = paper and pencil)	-.055 (.002)*	.091 (.022)***	-.103 (.042)*
Age (mean age of participant)	.005 (.002)*	-.002 (.002)	.007 (.003)$^{+}$
Female (percentage of female participants)	.001 (.001)	.003 (.001)*	-.003 (.002)
Globalization (globalization index)	-.004 (.002)*	.004 (.002)$^{+}$	-.005 (.004)
Model statistics			
Deviance/df	33.933/8***	29.879/8***	18.541/8*
Q-value (Homogeneity test)/df	23.079/16	30.949/16*	70.964***

Notes: The results are based on 264 effect sizes taken from 23 data sets.
$^{+}p < .10$, $*p < .05$, $**p < .01$, $***p < .001$.