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Xenocentrism and ethnocentrism on travel destination's purchase intentions in South Africa: Consumer behavior post-pandemic

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Abstract: This study explored the role of xenocentrism (XEN) and ethnocentrism (ETH) theories in the decision-making process for travel destinations for South African tourist consumers. This study aimed to investigate the impact of XEN and ETH on attitude towards the product (ATP) and perceived purchase intention (PPI) and the role of motivation (MOT) and information (INF) in those relationships. An online survey was used to collect the data for this study, and it was analyzed using CFA and SEM. Findings indicate that XEN impacts ATP for foreign products, resulting in a preference for imported goods. In contrast, ETH significantly impacts PPI, encouraging people to prioritize domestic products. Also, MOT influenced PPI and mediated the relationship between INF and PPI, and INF influenced MOT, ATO, and ETH. Managers should use cultural sensitivity in marketing strategies to target foreign and local consumers with unique tastes and beliefs and enhance perceived value through high-quality products and local sourcing. Emphasizing foreign characteristics in xenocentric markets and local sourcing in ethnocentric markets can enhance perceived value.

Keywords: Consumer behavior, destination management organization, ethnocentrism, perceived purchase intention, xenocentrism

1. Introduction

Touristic attractions are supported by Destination management organizations (DMOs), which are teams of professionals that lead and coordinate all stakeholders, particularly tourism businesses. DMOs collaborate with various industry players to establish a desirable image for a destination for investment and development purposes or enhancing tourism. According to Morrison (2013), effective destination management involves strategic planning and continual monitoring and evaluation of progress regarding strategies and tactics. Today, DMOs should lead in marketing and be strategic leaders in destination development. This role requires driving and coordinating destination management activities within the framework of a coherent strategy (Fyall & Garrod, 2020).

Consumer information and the effects of XEN and ETH are indispensable for strategic management. Furthermore, XEN and ETH are essential to consumer decision-making since they directly affect consumers' attitudes and perceptions toward a particular destination. Therefore, it can be argued that the concepts of XEN and ETH can play an essential role in studying consumer behavior at different levels of the consumption process (Camacho et al., 2020, 2022a). Moreover, acquiring information and knowledge of consumers' attitudes toward products, perceptions, and motivation will assist destination management organizations in formulating well-defined strategies. DMOs, as explained by Morrison (2013), should not only lead in marketing but must also be strategic leaders in destination development. This role requires them to drive and coordinate destination management activities within the framework of a coherent strategy.

This study aims to analyze the effects of XEN and ETH on consumers' decision-making processes when evaluating travel destinations. In addition, the research analyzed the relations of these two constructs, establishing a research model that integrates motivation (MOT), information (INF), and attitude towards the product (ATP) to explain their influence on consumers' purchase intention of touristic packages. Consumer xenocentrism and ethnocentrism are increasingly essential to understand from a sociological, psychological, and marketing perspective since they directly affect consumer attitudes toward products, perception, motivation, how they acquire information, and, ultimately, their purchasing choice. The research questions formulated for the study:

- Do xenocentrism or ethnocentrism positively influence South African tourists' purchase intention?
- Do xenocentrism or ethnocentrism positively influence consumers' motivation, attitude, and information-gathering about purchasing a travel destination?

Although there is limited research on how the two variables could be used for strategic management, this research has been undertaken to understand the effects of XEN and ETH on consumers and how DMOs in South Africa could plan in response to new challenges within the context of a pandemic such as COVID-19, as this necessitates developing sustainable strategies for industry performance.

2. Literature Review

Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) serve as coordinators and facilitators of a shared strategy, functioning as a "coalition of diverse interests working towards a common goal, ensuring the sustainability and unity of their destination both presently and in the future," as proposed by Romao et al. (2021, p. 81). South African Tourism (2022) recommended that DMOs shift from purely a destination marketing focus to a destination management focus, requiring a strategic management approach to be more resilient to potential disruptions, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, effective destination management will facilitate coordinating many stakeholders' efforts to achieve a destination's vision and goals (Morrison, 2013). Nevertheless, both nations and individuals are not immune to the impacts of global transformations, as seen by the repercussions of the COVID-19 epidemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in numerous adverse ramifications on a global scale, as highlighted by Mensah and Boakye in 2021. In addition to the health issues affecting the population, the pandemic has resulted in various consequences, such as a decline in economic activities, a global economic crisis, movement restrictions, economic shutdowns, quarantine measures, the collapse of numerous companies, and bankruptcy of well-known brands, as well as a significant loss of jobs for many individuals (Mahmoud et al., 2021). Zwanka and Buff (2020) documented changes in consumer behavior during a pandemic, including an increase in snobbish attitudes, a rise in internet shopping, a shift towards remote employment, a preference for cooking at home, a greater emphasis on environmental responsibility or seeking out new experiences, and a heightened pursuit of pleasure. According to Lau et al. (2020), travel has been recognized as a significant contributor to the worldwide dissemination of infectious diseases. Therefore, numerous researchers have focused their attention on the alterations in travel patterns resulting from COVID-19 and other such epidemics, as Paul et al. (2021) noted.

2.1 Effects of Xenocentrism on Consumer Behavior

Xenocentrism (XEN) originated in sociology literature and was first regarded as a complement to ethnocentrism. It defines individuals who appreciate a civilization distinct from their own and judge everything using that society as a reference point (Diamantopoulos et al., 2019). XEN, in the context of consumption, refers to the inclination of customers to select items or services from a society different from their own. Hence, consumer xenocentrism denotes the inclination of consumers toward foreign products and their dismissal of home alternatives (Cucato et al., 2022). According to Camacho et al. (2022a), the phenomenon of local purchasers choosing imported products over local ones, even if the local products are of comparable quality and usefulness, is referred to as xenocentrism (XEN).

XEN's study focuses on global identity, which refers to consumers' beliefs about the effects of globalization, the variations and commonalities among individuals, and the diversity of Earth's functions, as described by Rojas-Méndez and Chapa (2019). Conversely, Camacho et al. (2022a) highlighted that individuals with a global identity are intensely interested in matters about communities, groups, and global communities. XEN is the phenomenon where individuals prioritize purchasing international things over local products, associating their global identity with this choice. The justification for XEN arises when the global identity is related to the preference for foreign items, which has a detrimental impact on local products, as elucidated by Camacho et al. (2022a).

H1a. XEN directly influences ATP
H1b. XEN directly influences PPI
H1c. XEN mediates the relationship between INF and PPI
H1d. XEN mediates the relationship between INF and ATP

2.2 Effects of Ethnocentrism on Consumer Behavior

ETH, or ethnocentrism, is a widely observed sociopsychological characteristic characterized by the inclination to evaluate other cultures according to the criteria of one's own culture and the assumption that one's ethnic and cultural group is superior to others (Alsughayir, 2013). Consumer ethnocentrism, as defined by Camacho et al. (2022b), refers to the belief held by specific consumers that buying products made in foreign countries is detrimental to the domestic economy, leading to job losses and being unpatriotic. This perception is particularly prevalent in emerging economies like South Africa (Boukamba, Oi, & Sano 2021). According to researchers, customers in emerging economies are strongly inclined toward foreign items, even when they are more expensive and of lesser quality (Akbarov & Cafarova, 2021; Diamantopoulos et al., 2019). According to Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2016), customer XEN prefers buying pricey imported products while ignoring locally made goods that are either identical, of greater quality, and cheaper. Evaluating Consumer XEN and ETN is crucial for developing and executing efficient management plans and investing in the local economy.

H2a. ETH directly influences ATP
H2b. ETH directly influences PPI
H2c. ETH mediates the relationship between INF and PPI
H2d. ETH mediates the relationship between INF and ATP

2.3 Influence of psychological factors on consumer behavior

Psychological variables greatly influence the behavior of tourists. These elements explore the underlying intentions, mindsets, viewpoints, and feelings that influence people's travel and tourism decisions, as Santos et al. (2022) explained. According to Shareef et al. (2023), to comprehend the psychological aspects of tourism post-COVID-19, one must consider the challenges and changes in consumer behavior brought about by the epidemic. These are some of the psychological variables that influence consumer behavior in the tourism sector:

2.3.1 Information

Searching for information is one of the first stages of purchasing. Traditionally, information search has been considered essential to consumers' decisions. Solomon (2019) defines information search as the deliberate process of obtaining information from one's surroundings, suggesting that underlying factors drive this urge to search. Consumers who search for information are driven by anticipated values or benefits, which aid them in making more informed purchasing decisions (Gvili et al., 2020). Furthermore, studies indicate that the value of information favors customers' behavior and the effort they are willing to invest in searching for information (Kol et al., 2021). Consumers make significant efforts to search for information to reduce the uncertainty of purchasing a tourist package (Garcia-Milon et al., 2020). Therefore, DMOS must understand methods consumers use to search for information as this will inform the communication strategies for the tourism sector and, more importantly, have communication strategies that will address the needs of consumers during the pandemic.

H3a. INF directly influences XEN
H3b. INF directly influences ETH
H3c. INF directly influences ATP
H3d. INF directly influences MOT
H3e. INF directly influences PPI

2.3.2 Motivation

Motivations have been a significant subject of study in tourism and consumer behavior due to their ability to stimulate and direct human actions (Caber & Albayrak, 2016). Existing literature on tourism suggests that travel motivations play a crucial role in influencing travelers' decision-making processes and are significant factors in determining their spending behaviors (Hsu et al., 2016).

The motivation variable significantly influences post-COVID-19 travel package buying intentions. Motivation describes the underlying causes or forces that propel consumers to carry out actions, such as buying a travel package, as Reeve (2016) described. For DMOs to effectively design offerings, communicate value propositions, address health and safety concerns, and create memorable and meaningful experiences that meet consumers' expectations, they must have a thorough understanding of the post-COVID-19 motivations of consumers (Majeed & Ramkisson, 2022).

In addition to motivation, the consumer's decision-making process is influenced by various additional elements (Svatosová, 2013). Hence, marketing professionals must comprehend these consequences and their significance to devise impactful marketing tactics. Social conditions, wants, supply, habits, selling strategies, and technology influence this point. The role of a marketing specialist is to identify the cognitive process that

customers go through, from considering a purchase to making a final choice, known as the stimulation process. Furthermore, the determinants that impact consumer behavior can be categorized into external and internal components. External elements encompass cultural, socioeconomic, and demographic aspects, while interior factors encompass subjective and psychosomatic factors. Nevertheless, each person's buying is influenced by four psychosomatic factors: learning, motivation, perception, and attitude. Customer motivation is a crucial component that heavily influences their final purchasing decision. Nevertheless, it is a prime component influencing consumer purchasing behavior (Orji et al., 2017).

H4a. MOT directly influences PPI.
H4b: MOT mediates the relationship between INF and PPI

2.3.3 Attitude towards product

An attitude can be defined as a comprehensive evaluation of a psychological item based on many characteristics such as positive-negative, detrimental-beneficial, enjoyable-unpleasant, and preference-dislike (Ajzen, 2001). Prior studies have investigated consumer ATP. For instance, Grohmann et al (2007) examined the emotional and pleasure-related components of consumer ATP, whereas Liu et al. (2017) evaluated the cognitive and practical elements. In addition, Luangrath et al. (2022) focused on the behavioral intents and evaluative aspects of product attitudes. The attitude variable impacts customer behavior and intentions to acquire trip packages, specifically in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A person's total assessment, sentiments, and convictions regarding a good or service, considering factors like satisfaction, quality, value, and advantages, are referred to as their attitude (Shareef et al., 2023). According to Camacho et al. (2022a), an individual's attitude toward behavior relates to their subjective evaluations about adopting a specific behavior, which can be either negative or positive. In the post-COVID-19 era, consumers' perceptions regarding safety protocols, experience quality, value for money, brand reputation, customer service, digital experience, and emotional appeal (Shareef et al., 2023) substantially influence their buying intentions of tourism packages.

H5a. ATP directly influences PPI
H5b. ATP mediates the relationship between XEN and PPI
H5c. ATP mediates the relationship between ETH and PPI
H5d. ATP mediates the relationship between INF and PPI

2.3.4 Purchase intention

Purchase intention refers to the probability that consumers will intend or be inclined to buy a specific product or service in the future (Wu, Yeh, & Hsiao, 2011). Previous studies have shown that a higher purchase intention indicates a higher likelihood of purchasing. Favorable brand engagement positively influences consumers' purchase intention, leading to an increased likelihood of purchase. When discussing smartphones, it is essential to consider the concept of purchase intention, which refers to the inclination of customers to buy anything via a mobile application (Chen et al., 2010).

Empirical scientific studies on purchase intentions have provided insights into the customer behavior process and identified factors influencing consumer purchase intentions, such as experience, educational attainment, social class, and social acceptance and involvement (Camacho et al., 2022a). According to the study conducted by Camacho et al. (2020), consuming a travel package can either enhance or decrease purchase intentions due to the direct influence of interpersonal relationships. The consumer's intention to buy is also high when the quality is excellent. DMOS must comprehend the psychological factors influencing consumer behavior after the COVID-19 pandemic. This understanding will enable DMOs to adjust their strategies to accommodate tourists' changing needs and preferences. By developing a well-informed strategy, DMOs can contribute to the sustainable growth of the tourism sector in South Africa.

3. Methods

3.1 Sample and procedure

An online structured computer-administered survey was used to collect the data for this study. The target population was traveling consumers aged 21 years and above residing in South Africa who have traveled in or outside South Africa since 2017. The study had a sample size of 400, and the quantitative method employed a non-probability convenient sampling approach. It is a technique that depends on gathering data from a readily accessible population to conduct a study (Gobo & Mauceri, 2014). Non-probability sampling involves a sampling technique where the probability of selecting a participant from the population is unknown. Convenience sampling was utilized in this research, applying specific inclusion criteria mentioned in the above section. The study received ethical approval from the Economics and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMS-REC) of the North-West University, and the ethics number (NWU-00647-23-A4). The foundation theories for

this study are XEN and ETH, and respondents provided information about the two constructs from a tourism perspective. Participants also provided information on how XEN and ETH influenced their decision-making to purchase a travel destination.

3.2 Measures

The constructs of xenocentrism (Rojas-Méndez & Chapa, 2019) and ethnocentrism (Shimp & Sharma, 1987) contained scales from previously validated research. Information and Motivation were determined using the scales retrieved from Sanz de Acedo Lizarraga et al. (2009), which was a vital departure point to determine the motivation levels in purchasing a tourist package among South African consumers. The ATP of purchasing a tourist package was measured by adapting the scale from Kim (2000). Lastly, the "purchase intention" was determined by adjusting the scale from Chaudary et al. (2014). All these items were measured on a 6-point Likert-type scale, where 1=strongly disagree; 6 =strongly agree.

The researchers received 598 questionnaires, but 198 had to be discarded since they lacked crucial data for this study. Regarding gender, 33 percent of the participants were male, and 67 percent were female. Regarding age, 51.3 percent of participants identified as 21-30 and 36.5 percent as 31-40. Regarding educational attainment, 49 percent reported % a bachelor's degree and 34.8 percent a Postgraduate degree. Additionally, 95.5 percent of participants live in urban areas, and 4.5 percent live in rural areas.

4. Results

A preliminary analysis was conducted to explore the research subjects utilizing all the variables included in the study. The analysis was performed via descriptive statistics and correlation analysis, employing IBM's SPSS software. Subsequently, the internal consistency of the measurements was assessed by computing Cronbach's alpha coefficients. The threshold for acceptable internal consistency of the items was determined to be a Cronbach's alpha value greater than 0.7, as outlined by Kline (2015). The validation of the measurement devices was performed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) in AMOS version 28. Multiple model fit indicators were utilized to assess the suitability of the measurement model. The model was enhanced by using modification indices recommended by AMOS. Convergent and discriminant validity assessment used composite reliability, average variance extracted, maximum shared variance, and maximal reliability.

Table 1 displays the computed values for means (M), standard deviations (SD), dependability coefficient (CA) (expressed by Cronbach's alpha), and correlations among the variables investigated in the study. ATP has the highest reliability of 0.81, followed closely by MOT, with a reliability value of 0.79. On the other hand, XEN has the lowest reliability value of 0.709. Furthermore, the variable MOT has the highest average value of 5.15 in the dataset, while ETH has the lowest mean value of 3.69. The SD measures the degree of dispersion of the scores from the mean. XEN and ETH display the highest standard deviation values (1.21 and 1.20, respectively), indicating that their responses have more significant variability than the other variables.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

	XEN	ETH	INF	MOT	ATP	PPI
M	3.76	3.69	4.85	5.15	4.74	5.10
SD	1.21	1.20	.93	.72	.81	.85
CA	.709	.748	.729	.799	. 815	. 762
			Correlations			
XEN	1	.939**	.180**	0.049	0.094	.157**
ETH	.939**	1	.140**	0.004	0.032	.144**
INF	.180**	.140**	1	.429**	.357**	.253**
MOT	0.049	0.004	.429**	1	.407**	.398**
ATP	0.094	0.032	.357**	.407**	1	.328**
PPI	.157**	.144**	.253**	.398**	.328**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 1 shows that the highest positive correlation in the data was between XEN and ETH ($r = .939$, $p < 0.01$), indicating the importance of xenocentric and ethnocentric attitudes on the South African consumer's decision process when purchasing travel destinations. The lowest positive correlation was between INF and ETH ($r = .140$, $p < 0.01$). The correlations were used as a first means of assessing the previously anticipated links' magnitude and direction, and they were not construed as proof of causation.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is a widely acknowledged and necessary technique in structural equation modeling (SEM) for validating measurement models in both route and structural studies (MacCallum et al., 2010). Table 2 displays the evaluation of the construct's reliability. Construct reliability is considered high when

composite and maximum reliability ratings are over 0.7. Convergent validity is established when the composite reliability exceeds 0.7, and the average variance retrieved surpasses 0.5, as Malhotra and Dash (2011) stated. According to Gaskin and Lim (2016), the model should have an average variance extracted that exceeds 0.5 and a MaxR(H) (Maximal Reliability) that exceeds 0.7. Therefore, Table 3 clearly illustrates the dependability and accuracy of the model.

The measurement model was tested using AMOS through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Within the framework of the CFA, factor loadings were evaluated for each item. The items XEN3, XEN4, ETH1, ETH2, ETH3, and ATP8 were excluded since they exhibited low factor loadings (<.50). The model-fit metrics, including CMIN/df, GFI, CFI, TLI, SRMR, and RMSEA, were utilized to evaluate the model's overall goodness of fit. All of these values were found to be within the predicted acceptance thresholds as defined by Ullman (2007). Table 2 presents the results of the six-factor model, which includes Xenocentrism, Ethnocentrism, Information, Motivation, Attitude Toward Product, and Perceived Purchase Intention. The model demonstrated a solid fit for the data, as indicated by the following statistics: CMIN/df = 2.113, GFI = .934, CFI = .944, TLI = .928, SRMR = .053, and RMSEA = .053.

Table 2. Model fit measures

Factor/Item	FL	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)
Xenocentrism		0.714	0.557	0.139	0.727
XEN5	0.69				
XEN6	0.799				
Ethnocentrism		0.751	0.504	0.052	0.763
ETH4	0.765				
ETH5	0.619				
ETH6	0.736				
Information		0.729	0.574	0.321	0.729
INF3	0.756				
INF4	0.76				
Motivation		0.804	0.51	0.321	0.83
MOT1	0.655				
MOT2	0.844				
MOT3	0.622				
MOT4	0.715				
Attitude Toward Product		0.83	0.551	0.23	0.849
ATP1	0.711				
ATP3	0.699				
ATP4	0.692				
ATP5	0.856				
Perceived Purchase Intention		0.764	0.52	0.262	0.772
PPI2	0.646				
PPI4	0.745				
PPI6	0.766				

Notes: FL: Factor Loading; CR: Composite reliability; AVE: Average Variance extracted; MSV: Maximum shared variance; MaxR(H): Maximal Reliability

The study evaluated discriminant validity by employing the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio, a method that is becoming more common. When assessed using the HTMT ratio, all ratios were below the specified threshold of .85 (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015). Thus, discriminant validity was established. Table 3 displays the findings of discriminant validity.

Table 3. HTMT analysis

	XEN	ETH	INF	MOT	ATP	PPI
XEN						
ETH	0.142					
INF	0.072	0.146				
MOT	0.033	0.012	0.428			
ATP	0.307	0.038	0.357	0.407		
PPI	0.104	0.148	0.253	0.398	0.328	

4.1. Structural model assessment

We incorporated all the control variables into our analyses to mitigate the potential endogeneity in the structural equation model. The independent variables consist of age, gender, education, and income. A structural equation model created using AMOS was employed to examine the link. A fitting model is considered excellent if the CMIN/df value is less than 5 and if the goodness-of-fit indices (GFI) (Hair et al., 2017), the Trucker and Lewis (1973) index (TLI), and the confirmatory fit index (CFI) (Ullman, 2007) are more significant than 0.90 (Hair et al., 2017). Furthermore, a model was considered suitable if the estimated value of the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) in AMOS was less than 0.05 and the root mean square error approximation (RMSEA) fell between the range of 0.05 to 0.08 (Hair et al., 2017). All structural equation modeling (SEM) indices meet the required criteria: CMIN/df = 2.312; GFI = .925; TLI = .915; CFI = .932; SRMR = .065; and RMSEA = .057.

The investigation evaluated the effect of XEN on ATP, which was shown to be positive but not statistically significant (b= .043, t = 5.59, p <.001). As a result, H1a was confirmed. The effect of XEN on PPI was positive but statistically insignificant (b= .044, t = 1.13, p = .257). Therefore, H1b was not supported. The effect of ETH on ATP was positive but not statistically significant (b = 0.035, t = -1.78, p = 0.074). Therefore, H2a was not substantiated. ETH's effect on PPI was positive and statistically significant (b= .038, t = 2.76, p = .006). This supports hypothesis H2b. The influence of INF on XEN was positive but statistically negligible (b= .087, t = 1.28, p < = .198). Therefore, H3a, which hypothesized a considerable impact, was not supported. The influence of INF on ETH had a positive and statistically significant effect (b= .095, t = 2.07, p < = .038). This supports hypothesis H3b. The influence of INF on ATP had a favorable and substantial effect (b = .062, t = 7.11, p < .001); H3c was corroborated. The influence of INF on MOT was positive and statistically significant (b= .058, t = 7.96, p < .001). Thus, H3d was confirmed. The influence of INF on PPI was positive but statistically negligible (b= .089, t = -.369, p = .712). As a result, H3e was not supported. The effect of MOT on PPI was positive and statistically significant (b= .104, t = 4.85, p < .001). Thus, H4a was confirmed. The effect of ATP on PPI was shown to be positive and statistically significant (b= .076, t = 2.73, p = .006). Therefore, this supports hypothesis H5a. Table 4 displays the model fit indices and the hypotheses' findings.

Figure 1 and Table 4 depict the mediation analysis. The study assessed the mediating role of Xenocentrism (XEN) on the relationship between Information (INF) and Perceived Purchase Intention (PPI) (b=.006, t=.54, p = .238) and the relationship between Information and Attitude Toward Product (b=.027, t= 1.03, p = .182). The results revealed no mediation effects for either relationship. Therefore, hypotheses H1c and H1d were not supported. The mediating role of ETH on the relationship of INF and PPI (b=.021, t= 1.31, p = .062) and INF and ATP were (b= -.012, t= -1, p = .09) measured; the results revealed no mediation effect for both relationships. Therefore, hypotheses H2c and H2d were not supported.

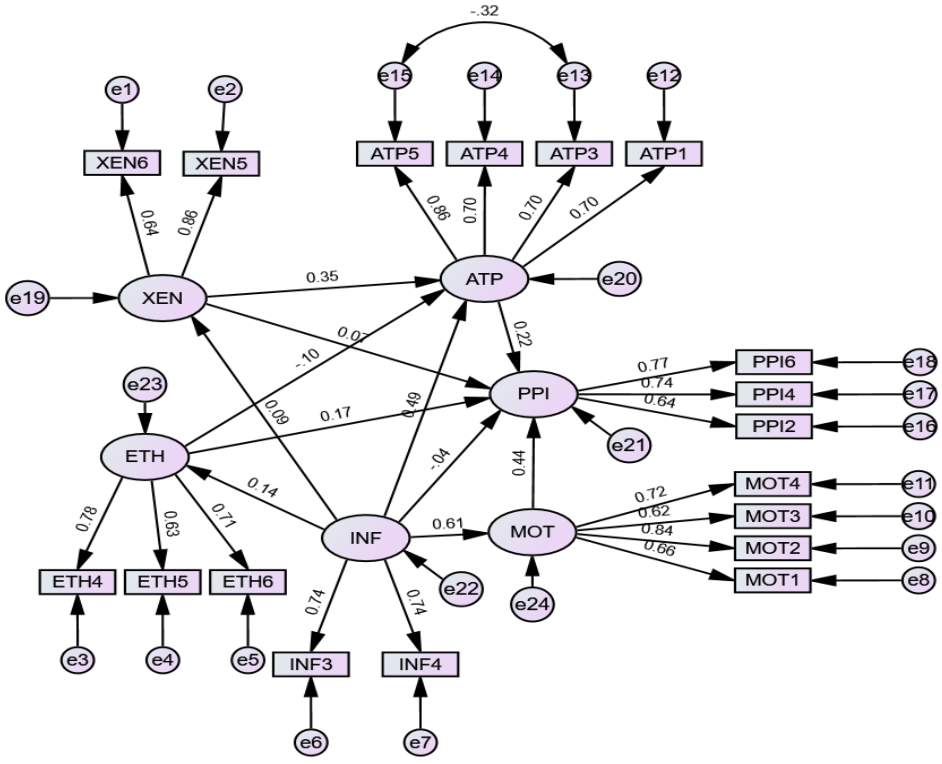

Figure 1. Structural Equation Model

Table 4. Hypotheses validation

	Hypothesis	Standardized Estimate	p-Value	Decision
H1a	ATP ←-XEN	0.043	***	Supported
H1b	PPI ←-XEN	0.044	0.257	Not supported
H2a	ATP ←-ETH	0.035	0.074	Not supported
H2b	PPI ←-ETH	0.038	0.006	Supported
H3a	XEN ←-INF	0.087	0.198	Not supported
H3b	ETH ←-INF	0.095	0.038	Supported
H3c	ATP ←-INF	0.062	***	Supported
H3d	MOT ←-INF	0.058	***	Supported
H3e	PPI ←-INF	0.089	0.712	Not supported
H4a	PPI ←-MOT	0.104	***	Supported
H5a	PPI ←-ATP	0.076	0.006	Supported

	Mediation Analysis						
	Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence Interval		P-Value	Decision
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
H1c	INF → XEN → PPI	0.089	0.006	-0.003	0.041	0.238	No Mediation
H1d	INF → XEN → ATP	0.062	0.027	-0.005	0.08	0.182	No Mediation
H2c	INF → ETH → PPI	0.089	0.021	0.002	0.053	0.062	No Mediation
H2d	INF → ETH → ATP	0.062	-0.012	-0.045	0	0.091	No Mediation
H4b	INF → MOT → PPI	0.089	0.233	0.137	0.385	0.001	Mediation
H5b	XEN → ATP → PPI	0.044	0.051	0.001	0.125	0.084	No Mediation
H5c	ETH → ATP → PPI	0.038	-0.013	0.003	0.206	0.084	No Mediation
H5d	INF → ATP → PPI	0.089	0.092	0.003	0.206	0.084	No Mediation

The mediating role of ATP on the relationship of XEN and PPI (b=.051, t= 1.37, p = .084), ETH and PPI (b= -.013, t= -1, p = .084), and INF and PPI (b= .092, t= -1.48, p = .084) measured; the results revealed no mediation effect for any relationship. Therefore, hypotheses H5b, H5c, and H5d were not supported. Finally, the mediating effect of MOT on the relationship of INF and PPI (b= .233, t= 3.06, p = .001) was supported. Hypothesis H4b is supported. This result is significant for decision-makers in the tourist industry because as customers receive more information about the tourist destinations, purchase intention increases and is favorable.

5. Discussion

5.1 Theoretical implications

The study reviewed the effects of XEN and ETH on consumers' decision-making processes when evaluating travel destinations integrating MOT, INF, and ATP in a research model to explain their influence on consumers' purchase intention of touristic packages. Evaluating XEN in travel destinations is a novelty, although the other variables of the model have been tested in different studies.

This study makes the following contributions to the literature. First, XEN and ETH profoundly and uniquely impact consumer behavior. The validation of Hypothesis H1a demonstrates a direct correlation between ATP and XEN, implying that customers who prefer foreign products are more likely to judge them positively. These findings are aligned with Diamantopoulos et al. (2019) and Camacho et al. (2022a). Nevertheless, there was no backing for H1b, suggesting that XEN does not considerably influence PPI. The difference in consumer preferences for foreign products does not necessarily result in higher purchasing levels, potentially due to price sensitivity or perceived value.

Second, while ETH has a limited effect on ATP (H2a was not supported), it does have a notable influence on PPI when affordability is emphasized (H2b confirmed). These findings are aligned with Alsughayir (2013). This implies that ethnocentric customers may not automatically hold unfavorable opinions towards foreign

Products but instead actively purchase local products when they regard them as economically beneficial or patriotic.

Third, the endorsement of hypotheses H3b, H3c, and H3d emphasizes the significance of INF in influencing consumer behavior. Consumers who are firmly inclined to acquire INF are more inclined to generate positive opinions about products and exhibit greater engagement in purchasing. These findings highlight the need to make well-informed decisions when consumers make purchases, especially in industries like tourism, where perceptions of safety and value after the pandemic have a crucial impact on customer behavior. These findings are aligned with Gvili et al. (2020) and Solomon (2019).

Fourth, the mediation analysis revealed a noteworthy relationship between INF, MOT, and PPI, highlighting the indirect impact of motivational factors on purchase intentions through information acquisition. This pathway demonstrates that implementing communication and marketing methods that effectively address consumers' motivational demands and informational requirements can significantly increase their intention to purchase. Strategically, the findings indicate that DMOs and marketers should prioritize effectively and precisely disseminating information aligned with consumer motives and attitudes. Moreover, acknowledging the combined impacts of XEN and ETH on consumer behavior might assist marketers in customizing their strategies based on their target markets' cultural and psychological characteristics.

5.2 Managerial implications

The study's findings on the impact of XEN, ETH, and psychological aspects on customer behavior have significant strategic implications for managers in various industries, especially those operating in global marketplaces and the tourism sector. Gaining insight into these processes can assist in formulating more efficient marketing strategies and product positioning to synchronize with consumer preferences and cultural orientations.

Managers ought to integrate cultural sensitivity into their marketing tactics. When addressing consumers focused on foreign cultures, highlight the foreign characteristics and perceived high-quality items. On the other hand, when targeting ethnocentric consumers, marketing techniques should focus on promoting national pride, highlighting the advantages of local products, and encouraging support for the domestic economy. Customizing marketing messaging to correspond with these cultural inclinations can amplify consumer involvement and allegiance.

The various behaviors influenced by XEN and ETH indicate the necessity for precise market segmentation and focused marketing campaigns. Managers should utilize these cultural factors to divide their audiences more efficiently and create focused tactics that attract each segment's distinct tastes and beliefs. Managers should consider these cultural effects when engaging in product development and innovation. In xenocentric marketplaces, incorporating or emphasizing foreign characteristics in products or services can be a significant distinguishing factor. In ethnocentric markets, emphasizing local sourcing and showcasing local advantages can enhance the perceived value.

To improve information accessibility, managers must guarantee that comprehensive and easily accessible information about products and services is readily available to consumers. This is crucial because information search greatly influences consumer decision-making. This entails enhancing digital platforms to facilitate easy access to information and guaranteeing transparency in marketing communications.

Comprehending the motivations in consumer behavior is essential to identify the driving forces behind consumer purchases. Managers should strive to understand the driving forces behind consumer motivation, such as sustainability, quality, cost, or cultural aspects, and adapt their marketing and operational strategies accordingly.

In the epidemic's aftermath, strategic digital marketing utilization is paramount. Managers should use digital tools to meet consumer safety, convenience, and value demands. Social media, focused advertising, and digital customer service can effectively cultivate trust and benefit consumer behavior.

On the other hand, it is crucial to ensure that marketing and sales personnel possess a deep understanding of cultural dynamics and consumer psychology. Training programs that augment comprehension of XEN, ETH, and other consumer behavior theories can boost team efficacy in managing different client bases.

Managers should prioritize establishing enduring consumer relationships by actively addressing their changing needs and expectations. This entails ongoing market research to monitor consumer trends and habits and adjust strategy accordingly.

6. Conclusions

This study has explored the complex dynamics of consumer behavior, emphasizing the critical roles of XEN and ETH and key psychological factors. By thoroughly analyzing empirical data and incorporating theoretical perspectives from writers like Diamantopoulos et al. (2019), Camacho et al. (2020), and Gvili et al. (2020), we have comprehensively learned the determinants influencing consumer preferences and buying choices in a globalized marketplace.

The results of our study emphasize that XEN has a considerable impact on consumer attitudes towards foreign items, often resulting in a preference for imported goods regardless of their resemblance in quality and functionality to local products. This phenomenon is mainly fueled by customers' fascination with foreign cultures and a strong preference for foreign products as indicators of superior quality or social standing. In contrast, ETH encourages people to prioritize domestic products driven by a feeling of patriotism or economic allegiance. This inclination is magnified in developing economies because buying native products is frequently interwoven with patriotic sentiments and concerns for local job opportunities, especially in times of crisis.

Psychological factors, such as motivation and information seeking, have significantly influenced consumer actions. Motivations are intricately connected to individual and societal variables that compel consumers to make particular buying choices. Furthermore, searching for information has transformed into a crucial stage in consumers' decision-making process, allowing them to match their buying habits with their values and perceived advantages.

Mediation analysis yielded further insights, demonstrating that MOT and INF considerably influence customer purchasing intentions through intricate pathways. These findings indicate that consumer behavior is influenced not just by cultural predispositions but also by how these predispositions interact with psychological drivers.

The research highlights the significance of marketing tactics, considering cultural and psychological factors. Marketers and DMOs, especially in the tourism industry, can enhance their marketing tactics by comprehending these behavioral motivators. This understanding enables them better to address the varied consumer requirements in a world recovering from the epidemic.

7. Limitations and future research

This study was conducted in South Africa, and future research should apply and test this study's model with more representative samples and countries with different backgrounds. Also, longitudinal studies are recommended for future research to monitor and analyze changes in consumer behavior over an extended period. This methodology would facilitate comprehension of the enduring effects of such occurrences on consumer inclinations and conduct. Expanding research to encompass a wide range of cultural and economic situations can boost the generalizability of the findings. Research that explicitly examines places not well-represented or compares consumer habits across major cultural divisions might provide valuable insights into how culture influences consumer behavior globally.

Given the growing impact of digital technology on consumer behavior, future studies must investigate the effects of digital platforms and social media on individuals' views of foreign and domestic products. This entails examining the impact of internet evaluations, social influence, and digital marketing on changing customer attitudes towards xenocentrism and ethnocentrism.

Exploring the impact of global identity on consumer behavior beyond the XEN and ETH dichotomy could offer valuable insights into how consumers view themselves and others in a worldwide economy. A potential area of research might explore the impact of global citizenship on consumer behavior and brand loyalty in international markets.

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