

# Consumer Ethnocentrism and Conspicuous Consumption of Domestic and Foreign Consumer Goods in Mozambique, a Less-Developed SADC Country

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## ABSTRACT

The focus of this study is on implications of consumer ethnocentrism and conspicuousness on buyers' behaviour in one of the least researched but rapidly growing economic groups in the world – the Southern African Development Community (SADC). This study examines how ethnocentric tendencies and conspicuousness of foreign products influence consumer preferences in the context of imports from South Africa, the most developed SADC state, into Mozambique, the least developed SADC state. The survey involved 273 representatives of different ethnic groups. Structural equation modelling was employed to test the model and hypotheses (using LISREL 8.8). The paper suggests that the outcome of the consumer dilemma between ethnocentric consumption of domestic products on the one hand, and conspicuous consumption of foreign products on the other, depends upon the consumption mode of products – whether products are publicly or privately consumed.

**Key Words:** Mozambique; South Africa; consumer ethnocentrism; conspicuousness

## INTRODUCTION

The rapid pace of integration in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has revealed new opportunities and challenges for international marketers in the region. A free trade area was established for the twelve member states of the SADC in January 2008, resulting in a significant reduction of tariff barriers (Free Trade Area, 2008; Southern African Development Community, 2009). However, new non-tariff and intangible barriers have been re-enforced by national governments. One such barrier is consumer ethnocentrism.

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A factor of domestic product bias, consumer ethnocentrism is used by the least developed SADC states as a powerful tool in 'buy local' campaigns aimed at supporting national industry while competing with intra-regional imports. However, the effects of consumer ethnocentrism in the least developed SADC states may be mitigated by the conspicuousness of products imported from the more developed SADC states.

This study examines how ethnocentric tendencies and conspicuousness of foreign products influence consumer preferences in the context of imports from South Africa, the most developed SADC state, to Mozambique, the least developed SADC state (Free Trade Area, 2008). Although the primary focus of the study is on the variables of consumer ethnocentrism and conspicuous consumption (CC), an additional variable of susceptibility to interpersonal influence is embedded into our analysis to trace the origin of conspicuous consumption of foreign products in the Mozambican context.

The choice of the countries is justified for three major reasons. First, the two countries have geographic proximity and thus are closely related to each other economically. Second, the countries exemplify two extremes of economic development in the SADC region: South Africa is the most developed state and Mozambique is the least developed state (Free Trade Area, 2008). This may influence the impact of ethnocentrism and conspicuousness on attitudes of Mozambican buyers towards products imported from South Africa. Finally, the two countries have strong trade bonds. South Africa is the largest importer into Mozambique, with 33 per cent of Mozambican imports. Additionally, Mozambique is a key market for South African produce as it accounts for 20 per cent of South African exports to the SADC (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2007a; Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2007b; Department of Trade and Industry of South Africa, 2010).

The objective of the study is twofold: (1) to show the validity of a proposed model of consumer ethnocentrism and conspicuousness effects in the Mozambican context, and (2) to show that consumer goods with personal and public modes of consumption differ in their susceptibility to the effects of consumer ethnocentrism and conspicuousness of South African products in Mozambique.

The paper is organised into six sections. First, we discuss the background of the study and then, in the second section, review prior research into major issues of the study. The third section presents hypotheses and a model. The fourth section describes the methodological framework. The fifth section is devoted to results of the study. Finally, we discuss the implications of our study and suggest directions for further research in the area.

#### BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Mozambique is a former Portuguese colony, located in the south-eastern part of the African continent. It is a member of the Southern African Development Community, which includes such economies as South Africa, Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The SADC classifies Mozambique as the least developed member state and one of the fastest growing economies in the region. Upon establishment of the SADC Free Trade Area in 2008, Mozambique reduced its tariff barriers to imports from other

member states (Free Trade Area, 2008). Reduction of tariffs coupled with rapid economic growth transformed Mozambique into a highly attractive market for the SADC exporters (Free Trade Area, 2008; Department of Trade and Industry of South Africa, 2010).

Although most academics and practitioners agree that the Free Trade Area might strengthen the Mozambican industrial goods sector, opinions diverge concerning potential benefits of trade liberalisation for the national producers of consumer goods (Notícias, 2007; Langa, 2009). Some practitioners believe that national producers of agricultural and processed consumer goods are threatened by imports from more developed neighbouring countries whose advanced infrastructures allow production of better quality goods at lower cost (Notícias, 2007; Langa, 2009). South Africa is the largest importer into Mozambique (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2007b).

To date, national production of consumer goods in Mozambique has been dominated by consumables, e.g. food. Consumer durables, e.g. household items and clothing articles, account for a small share of the national consumer goods supply (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2007a). By and large, very few product categories are branded. Branding plays a role in marketing of non-perishable food, e.g. sugar, biscuits, beer, rice, oil and juice. However, it is rare in the case of highly perishable food items and consumer durables. For example, branding remains unpopular for such categories as meat, fish, vegetables, fruit, kitchen utensils, furniture and clothing. The rare use of branding contributes to the low semiotic value and prestige of Mozambican products.

Branded products are actively marketed in Mozambique. However, some marketing tools, which are efficient in advanced countries, are less efficient in the Mozambican context. For example, print advertising in publications may have low reach because most of the population cannot afford newspapers or journals. Further, television and internet advertising may also have low reach, especially in peri-urban and rural areas, where most of the population do not have access to television and the internet.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of existing literature starts with the presentation of key concepts of the study, namely, consumer ethnocentrism, conspicuous consumption of products and its predictor, susceptibility to interpersonal influence. It further discusses previously studied main and moderating effects of the three phenomena. The review ends with a discussion of prior research into consumer ethnocentrism, conspicuousness and interpersonal influence in the African context.

##### Consumer Ethnocentrism

The term 'consumer ethnocentrism' has its origin in the concept of ethnocentrism that initially was purely sociological but transformed into a psychosocial construct with relevance to both individual-level personality systems and socio-cultural frameworks (Campbell and LeVine, 1961; Shimp and Sharma, 1987; Sumner, 2002). Ethnocentrism was first defined in 1907 as 'the view of things in which one's own group is the centre of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it' (Sumner, 2002: 13). It was

further specified as 'a tendency in the individual to be "ethnically centered", to be rigid in his acceptance of the culturally "alike" and his rejection of the "unlike"' (Adorno et al., 1982: 102). In other words, ethnocentrism presumes seeing one's own ethnic group as virtuous and superior, one's own standards of value as universal and out-groups (those who do not belong to the group) as contemptible and inferior (Hammond and Axelrod, 2006). Consequently, ethnocentrism is associated with favouritism of in-groups (one's own group) and discriminatory attitudes toward out-groups (Hammond and Axelrod, 2006).

The term 'consumer ethnocentrism' was first formally introduced by Shimp and Sharma (1987) as an economic form of ethnocentrism in order to understand what purchase behaviour is acceptable or unacceptable to the in-group and, more importantly, to explain why some consumers have negative orientations toward products manufactured outside their native country (Shimp, 1984). Consumer ethnocentrism was further defined as a set of beliefs held by consumers about the appropriateness, indeed morality, of purchasing foreign-made products (Shimp and Sharma, 1987).

According to the concept of consumer ethnocentrism, highly ethnocentric consumers feel that purchasing foreign products is wrong because it hurts the national economy, causes unemployment and, above all, is unpatriotic (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). Furthermore, to such consumers products from other countries (out-groups) are 'objects of contempt' (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). Hence, ethnocentric consumers are less likely to purchase imported products (Thelen et al., 2006). By contrast, non-ethnocentric consumers evaluate foreign products more objectively, on the basis of their merits – e.g. price and quality – and without consideration of the country of origin (Shimp and Sharma, 1987; Netemeyer et al., 1991; Thelen et al., 2006). For this reason, non-ethnocentric consumers may evaluate non-domestic products more favourably (Shimp and Sharma, 1987).

Some authors argue that, despite being a relatively stable tendency, consumer ethnocentrism is not absolutely static. It may occasionally rise when the national economy and the socioeconomic welfare of the population are endangered (Sharma et al., 1995; Caruana and Chircop, 2002). Clearly, elevated consumer ethnocentrism does not always directly transform into ethnocentric behaviours of individual consumers in such times. However, it may trigger protectionist measures by national governments, which, in turn, may encourage domestic product favouritism among consumers by appealing to their patriotic feelings via buy local campaigns (John and Brady, 2009).

### **Conspicuous Consumption of Products**

Spanning over three centuries, the research related to conspicuous consumption dates back to 1700 (Mason, 1998). However, a real interest in conspicuous consumption emerged only a few decades ago (Mason, 1995), long after Veblen's landmark 1899 study *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (Veblen, 1994), which formally introduced the concept.

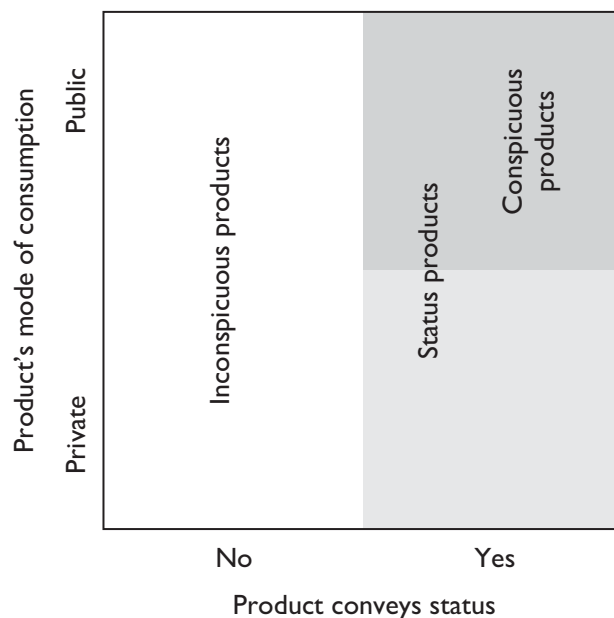
Conspicuous consumption is an overt display of wealth (Veblen, 1994). To be classified as conspicuous products must satisfy two criteria. First, they should convey affluence and the high status of their owner. This function is best performed by products that are unnecessary and expensive because such products, in the terminology of Veblen (1994),

are potential 'conspicuous waste'. Necessary products with unnecessary elements, making them expensive but not proportionately increasing their serviceability, may also convey wealth and status. This implies that product conspicuousness is not limited to luxury products only. It may also be extended to necessity products that are branded because brands may add prestige to products without increasing their serviceability (Piron, 2002). This is significant in the context of low-income societies where consumption is dominated by necessity products, e.g. food.

Second, to be conspicuous products should be consumed in an overt way. In other words, conspicuous products have a public, as opposed to private, mode of consumption. This second criterion draws a clear distinction between owning status-laden possessions and conspicuous consumption (O'Cass and McEwen, 2004). Veblen (1994) notes that sometimes consumption of expensive articles reflecting the social status of their owner is not carried out under the eyes of observers. For instance, the use of expensive kitchen utensils and household apparatus, and the consumption of many food items, is hidden from outsiders (Veblen, 1994). In order for a status product to be conspicuous, one must consume it publicly. A visual conceptualisation of product conspicuousness is given in Figure 1. Note that the category of product conspicuousness is narrower than that of product status.

Research suggests that the status of publicly consumed products is deduced mainly from extrinsic cues such as country of origin (COO) and brand image (Marcoux et al., 1997;

**Figure 1: Definition of Product Conspicuousness**



Source: Based on Veblen (1994) and O'Cass and McEwen (2004)

O'Cass and Frost, 2002; O'Cass and McEwen, 2004; Wang and Chen, 2004). The conspicuousness of a particular product draws mainly from brand image rather than COO when its brand is marketed as global or its COO is a poorer country. However, COO plays a greater role in product conspicuousness if it represents a wealthier country. That is, if the country of origin is relatively more affluent, then its products are considered prestigious and convey status on their owners in a country that is less prosperous (Dichter, 1962; Bilkey and Nes, 1982). Marcoux et al. (1997) found that products from advanced economies such as the United States (US), Canada and Western European countries were considered as conspicuous by consumers from an emerging economy, Poland. Similarly, imports from the same group of countries were perceived as conspicuous in a developing country, China (Wang and Chen, 2004). As this study examines consumer decisions in the context of imports from a more developed country into a less developed one, the study focuses on conspicuousness due to the country of origin effect.

#### **Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence**

Bearden et al. (1989: 473) define susceptibility to interpersonal influence as:

...the need to identify or enhance one's image with significant others through the acquisition and use of products and brands, the willingness to conform to expectations of others regarding purchase decisions, and/or the tendency to learn about products and services by observing others and/or seeking information from others.

Marcoux et al. (1997: 9) offered a working definition for the phenomenon, describing it as 'the sensitivity to others' opinions'.

By and large, susceptibility to interpersonal influence is not a central feature of a consumer profile in individualistic cultures (Childers and Rao, 1992; Mourali et al., 2005). Yet it is an integral part of societies with high levels of collectivism, where the values of interdependence and conformity make consumers more concerned about the opinions of key reference groups – family members, friends and colleagues, etc. (Childers and Rao, 1992; Mourali et al., 2005). The phenomenon is, therefore, more pertinent to studying consumer decisions in collectivistic cultures. Specifically, it may be helpful to a better understanding of consumer preferences for domestic versus foreign products in the context of a collectivistic African society such as Mozambique (Knauder, 2000).

#### **Effects of Consumer Ethnocentrism, Conspicuousness and Interpersonal Influence**

In most studies the effects of consumer ethnocentrism were negative in the case of foreign products and positive in the case of domestic products. That is, consumer ethnocentrism is a factor of domestic product bias and rejection of imports. As regards rejection of imports, ethnocentricity of consumers resulted in negative attitudes toward foreign products in Shimp and Sharma (1987), Bawa (2004) and Kwak et al. (2006). According to Shimp and Sharma (1987), Suh and Kwon (2002) and Yoo and Donthu (2005), consumer ethnocentric tendencies conditioned less favourable beliefs about imports. In addition to this, the



phenomenon was a factor of unwillingness to buy and negative purchasing intentions toward foreign products (Shimp and Sharma, 1987; Nijssen and Douglas, 2004).

Some authors confirmed the impact of consumer ethnocentric tendencies (CET) on domestic product bias. Specifically, Shimp and Sharma (1987) and Jakubanecs et al. (2005) found that consumer ethnocentrism evoked favourable attitudes toward domestic produce. Furthermore, the ethnocentrism of consumers had a positive effect on buyers' beliefs about the quality and characteristics of national products in Shimp and Sharma (1987) and Dmitrovic et al. (2009). Finally, consumer ethnocentrism was found to be an antecedent of intentions to purchase and ownership of local products (Shimp and Sharma, 1987; Wang and Chen, 2004; Nguyen et al., 2008).

The effects of COO-related product conspicuousness were addressed by Marcoux et al. (1997) and Wang and Chen (2004). The overall conspicuousness of products from a foreign country resulted in acceptance of a specific product from that country and rejection of its national alternative. For example, conspicuousness of products from the US, Canada and Western European countries caused negative purchasing intentions toward domestic clothing, electronics and cosmetics in Poland (Marcoux et al., 1997). Likewise, conspicuousness of products from the same group of advanced societies was a factor in the negative beliefs about domestic products in the Chinese context (Wang and Chen, 2004).

Very few studies that focused on status products with public modes of consumption in developing societies examined the effects of consumer ethnocentrism and COO-based product conspicuousness simultaneously. One such study (Wang and Chen, 2004) concluded that in the developing world the effects of the two variables move in opposite directions, pointing to a dilemma in consumer decisions. On the one hand, consumers feel a moral obligation to support national industry and engage in the ethnocentric consumption of domestic products. On the other hand, the prestige of products from a more advanced foreign country may occasionally spur conspicuous consumption of imported products. Clearly, advanced societies are not absolutely exempt from such a dilemma because even there some national products may be less prestigious than their foreign alternatives. Nevertheless, the dilemma seems to be an essential element of consumer decisions in developing economies. This finding of Wang and Chen (2004) should be confirmed in other developing societies.

This consumer dilemma in the context of exports from more advanced countries to less advanced economies seems to be consistent with the reference group and reinforcement theories of ethnocentrism (LeVine and Campbell, 1972). The reference group theory postulates that where there are substantial differences in the wealth of groups, wealthier groups are not only resented but are also admired and emulated by poorer groups. This principle is parallel to that of the reinforcement theory, which states that representatives of poorer groups admire and imitate members of more affluent groups. The theories of reference group and reinforcement provide an additional support to the idea that consumers from less developed countries may feel both resentment towards and admiration for imports from more advanced countries. In line with this, decisions to purchase foreign products in a poorer society are likely to come across two pressures: ethnocentric feelings

and perceived conspicuousness of imports from the wealthier country. These two opposed pressures form the nub of the consumer dilemma.

The effects of susceptibility to interpersonal influence in the context of conspicuous consumption are greater in the case of the more expensive conspicuous durables, weaker in the case of less expensive conspicuous durables, and absent in the case of foreign consumables. For instance, the influence was strong in respect of consumer decisions about such expensive conspicuous durables as automobiles (Grinblatt et al., 2004). By contrast, the phenomenon had a weak impact when less expensive conspicuous durables such as jeans and sport shoes were involved (Marcoux et al., 1997). Finally, the impact was absent in the case of status consumables with private modes of consumption, e.g. deodorant, perfume and aftershave (Marcoux et al., 1997). Such findings suggest that interpersonal influence may have no effect on other types of consumables. Further research is needed to confirm this proposition.

The conceptualisation of susceptibility to interpersonal influence suggests its predictive role in conspicuous consumption. As stated in Bearden et al. (1989), susceptibility to interpersonal influence is construed as the need to enhance one's image in the opinion of significant others. One may improve the opinion of reference groups by gaining higher social status, which, in turn, is signalled through conspicuous consumption of more expensive products (Bagwell and Bernheim, 1996). This implies that susceptibility of buyers to interpersonal influence may trigger conspicuous consumption. Furthermore, susceptibility to interpersonal influence is also designated as a tendency to learn about products and services by observing others (Bearden et al., 1989). This definition of the phenomenon makes it akin to such a factor of conspicuous consumption as Veblen's (1994) 'invidious comparison'. A positive impact of susceptibility to interpersonal influence on conspicuous consumption of products was empirically confirmed by O'Cass and McEwen (2004).

### **Moderating Role of Consumption Mode**

As mentioned earlier, consumer decisions in developing societies often come across the dilemma between ethnocentric consumption and conspicuous consumption. The outcome of this dilemma depends upon a number of factors and product consumption mode is one of them.

By definition, conspicuous consumption takes place when a product from a more advanced country has a public mode of consumption (Veblen, 1994; Marcoux et al., 1997). This definition rules out the possibility of conspicuous consumption in the case of privately consumed products. Given this, the dilemma is more likely to result in conspicuous consumption of imports if a consumer decision involves products with public modes of consumption. By contrast, the dilemma is more likely to cause ethnocentric consumption of domestic produce if the decision refers to privately consumed goods. In parallel with this, Piron (2000) and Essoussi and Merunka (2007) suggest that publicly consumed goods would be more sensitive to product conspicuousness whereas privately consumed products would have greater exposure to ethnocentricity. Also, consumables with private



rather than public modes of consumption were found to be more susceptible to the effects of ethnocentricity in John and Brady (2009).

The moderating role of the product consumption mode in the consumer dilemma remains an under-researched issue. A greater understanding of the role of this moderator may be of interest to both academics and practitioners as it may explain why in some cases consumers choose domestic products whereas in others they opt for their foreign alternatives.

### **Consumer Ethnocentrism, Conspicuousness and Interpersonal Influence in Africa**

To date, little attention has been directed toward exploring consumer ethnocentricity and its effects in the African context (Saffu and Walker, 2006a; Saffu and Walker, 2006b; Ferguson et al., 2008; John and Brady, 2009). Ferguson et al. (2008) examines the impact of ethnocentric tendencies on the market for education services in five west African nations: Burkina Faso, Ghana, the Ivory Coast, Mali and Nigeria. Saffu and Walker (2006a; 2006b) validate the consumer ethnocentric tendencies scale (CET-scale) in Ghana and describe the influence of consumer ethnocentrism on the attitude of the Ghanaians toward buy local campaigns. However, these authors did not address the relationship between ethnocentricity and attitudes toward domestic versus foreign products. John and Brady (2009) research susceptibility of different categories of consumables to the effects of consumer ethnocentrism in Mozambique. They conclude that non-packaged rather than packaged consumables were more affected by buyers' ethnocentricity, and that packaged consumables with personal (or private) rather than public modes of consumption had a higher susceptibility to consumer ethnocentrism.

To the best of our knowledge, the effects of conspicuous consumption and susceptibility to interpersonal influence have not been examined in African societies. Meanwhile, it follows from the above discussion that both phenomena might be highly relevant to African societies, especially those which may be classified as developing economies with high levels of collectivism. By and large, the issues of consumer ethnocentrism, product conspicuousness and susceptibility to interpersonal influence remain under-researched in the African context. To fill this gap in the current literature our paper aims to explore these three phenomena in a collectivistic developing society in Africa – Mozambique.

### **HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT AND MODEL**

The literature suggests that consumer ethnocentrism may lead to domestic product bias and the rejection of imports. The literature also suggests that the conspicuousness of products from a more advanced economy is a factor in preferences for imports from that country. Formally stated, we hypothesise the following:

**H1:** Consumer ethnocentrism will have a positive impact on consumer preferences for domestic versus foreign products.

**H2:** COO-related product conspicuousness will have a negative impact on consumer preferences for domestic versus foreign products in Mozambique.

Earlier studies suggest that interpersonal influence may have a positive effect on the conspicuous consumption of products. We therefore posit:

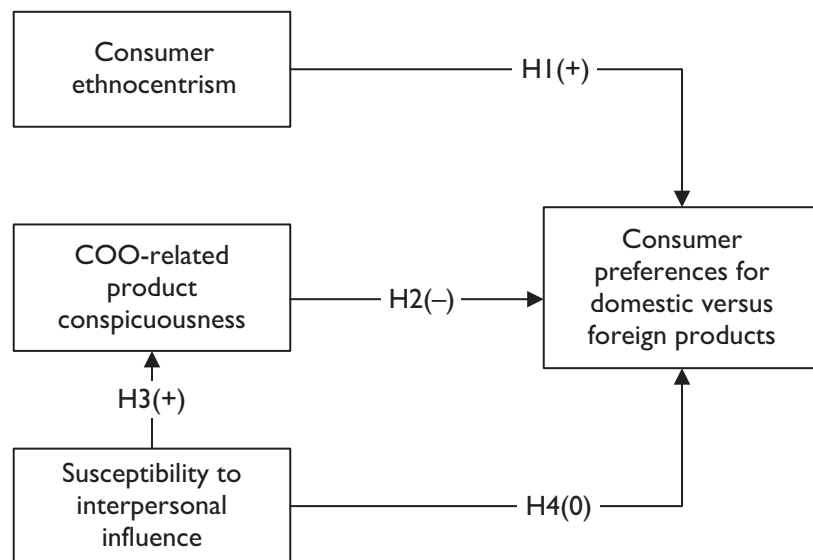
**H3:** Susceptibility to interpersonal influence will have a positive impact on conspicuous consumption of foreign products.

To ensure consumer familiarity with products in Mozambique, a low-income economy, the study excludes highly expensive or luxury products. Given that the role of susceptibility to interpersonal influence is weak or absent in the case of some less expensive durables and consumables, we propose the following:

**H4:** Susceptibility to interpersonal influence will have weak or no impact on consumer preferences for domestic versus foreign products.

The proposed structural relationships among the variables are shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Model of Consumer Ethnocentrism and Conspicuousness Effects**



As stated earlier, the dilemma that consumers find themselves in between ethnocentric tendencies on the one hand and conspicuous consumption of products on the other is moderated by the product's consumption mode. It was suggested that publicly consumed products would be more sensitive to product conspicuousness while personally consumed products would demonstrate greater exposure to the effects of ethnocentricity. Thus, we conjecture the following:

**H5:** Consumer ethnocentrism will have a stronger impact than COO-related product conspicuousness on consumer preferences for domestic products with personal modes of consumption.

**H6:** COO-related product conspicuousness will have a stronger impact than consumer ethnocentrism on consumer preferences for domestic products with public modes of consumption.

#### METHODOLOGY

This section is structured around six methodological elements of the study, namely, product choice, product classification, data collection, the sample, the instrument and data analysis techniques. These are discussed in turn.

##### Product Choice

The study focuses on national products and their South African substitutes in the Mozambican market. Using foreign products from South Africa seems reasonable as they represent SADC imports which are likely to be significantly exposed to both consumer ethnocentrism and conspicuous consumption.

As Mozambique removed tariff barriers for products from SADC members, imports into the country grew, revealing the unpreparedness and poor competitiveness of national producers (Notícias, 2007; Langa, 2009). Although imports are deemed to bring benefits to Mozambican consumers, e.g. a broader range of available alternatives, they often bring about ethnocentric feelings among the population, who see them as a potential threat to national production, employment and the overall socioeconomic prosperity of the country (Notícias, 2007; Langa, 2009). In such a situation, South African products are likely to be a primary target of Mozambican consumer ethnocentrism because they represent the largest share in the overall amount of imports into the country (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2007b).

Despite ethnocentric sentiments towards South Africa, Mozambicans also admire this country for its wealth as well as for its leadership in the African continent and for its active stance in international relations (Notícias, 2007). Therefore, in order to gain greater social status, Mozambicans sometimes overtly display possessions from South Africa, making imports from South Africa conspicuous.

The differences between the economic structures of the two countries imposed some restrictions on the choice of specific product categories. Being a more developed SADC state, South Africa produces both consumables and durables. However, in the least developed SADC state, Mozambique, production facilities and infrastructure for durable goods manufacturing remain underdeveloped and, thus, the production sector is dominated by low-price consumables. As both countries produce consumables, the study focuses only on this product category.

The choice of consumables was guided by five criteria. First, we chose only those imports of South African consumables which would have local alternatives in the Mozambican market. Second, the selected consumables were sold in packages. This criterion was important because packages are a source of information about the country of origin. Third, the list of products included both branded and non-branded categories. Branded categories would be used in testing the susceptibility of these products to the overall conspicuousness

of South African imports. Fourth, the list of products included consumables with both personal and public modes of consumption. Finally, consumers were expected to be familiar with the consumables on the list. This criterion is rather complex. It presumes that the consumables are available in the majority of selling outlets (e.g. stores, supermarkets, marketplaces and stands). Also, this implies that the consumables are sold at reasonable prices so that the local population can afford them. The final list of products included six consumables: chicken meat, potatoes, tea, biscuits, juice and beer.

### **Product Classification**

Typically, the same products can be ascribed to different classes in different societies, suggesting that product classifications vary across countries. Thus, we had to classify the six consumables in the Mozambican context. A pilot study of the instrument was used to define if the consumables are packaged and to classify them into products with personal and public modes of consumption. At the end of the study participants were asked the following questions: (1) 'Is product X normally sold in a package or without a package?' and (2) 'Is product X consumed in public places, gatherings or on the go so that everybody can see its name from the package?' Forty-two participants of the pilot study agreed to answer these questions.

If the majority of participants answered that the product was normally sold in a package, it was classified as a packaged product. All products from the list were classified as packaged consumables. It is worth noting that the role of a package differs across selected consumables, determining their potential conspicuousness. As regards chicken meat and potatoes, packages serve mainly utilitarian purposes such as protecting products and providing some basic information for consumers, e.g. information about weight and origin of products. Packages are not used for branding purposes because chicken meat and potatoes are typically sold as non-branded consumables in Mozambique. As a consequence, packages do not contain any symbols which might make these products prestigious or confer status on their owner. This suggests inconspicuousness for chicken meat and potatoes in our study.

By contrast, packages of such branded consumables as tea, biscuits, juice and beer may contain symbols which increase prestige and, thus, the potential conspicuousness of these products. In the case of South African consumables, prestige is also stressed by the 'Proudly South African' label – a powerful symbolic reference to the wealthy country of origin (Proudly South African, 2010).

If most participants answered the second question positively, the product was assigned to the group of consumables with public modes of consumption; otherwise, it was ascribed to consumables with personal modes of consumption. Chicken meat, potatoes and tea were assigned to the products with personal modes of consumption. This implies that few people see the product package when it is consumed. The remaining three products, specifically biscuits, juice and beer, were classified as consumables with public modes of consumption. The results of the classification are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Classification of the Products

Product Category	Percentage of Participants who Classified the Product as		Classification	Percentage of Participants who Classified the Product as having a		Classification
	Packaged	Non-Packaged		Personal Mode of Consumption	Public Mode of Consumption	
Chicken	95%	5%	Packaged	100%	0%	Personal
Potatoes	71%	29%	Packaged	100%	0%	Personal
Tea	100%	0%	Packaged	95%	5%	Personal
Biscuits	88%	12%	Packaged	31%	69%	Public
Juice	100%	0%	Packaged	28%	72%	Public
Beer	92%	8%	Packaged	16%	84%	Public

### Data Collection

A questionnaire-based survey was used to collect data in Mozambique. The data were gathered from respondents residing in the southern part of Mozambique, specifically, Maputo, the capital of the state, and its adjacent areas. This part of the country was chosen due to its proximity to South Africa and, thus, survey participants were more likely to be familiar with products imported from South Africa. It is worth noting that the southern part of Mozambique has a higher level of socioeconomic development than the central and northern regions of the country.

### Sample

The survey involved 273 respondents. Of these, 120 (44 per cent) were employed in the public and private sectors and 121 (44.3 per cent) were full-time students from engineering and management specialisations. The remaining 32 (11.7 per cent) were unemployed.

Of the 273 participants, 264 reported their highest level of education. A number of respondents had a medium level of education and held a professional training degree (32 per cent). Also, 45 per cent had a *Licenciatura* degree, which in the Mozambican education system follows a bachelor degree but precedes a masters degree. The remainder (23 per cent) graduated from bachelor and masters programmes. It is clear that most participants were educated. This may reflect the situation in the more developed and urbanised parts of the country like Maputo city and its adjacent areas.

The sample was representative in terms of the ethnic structure in southern Mozambique. Two hundred and fifty (250) of the respondents reported their ethnic origin. Of these, 66 per cent were originally from the southern provinces of Maputo, Gaza and Inhambane and belonged to the ethnic groups of Zulu, Swazi, Ronga, Copi (also known as Chopi), Tonga, Xangana and Tswa. Twenty-four (24) per cent of the sample were representatives of the ethnic groups of Shona, Sena, Chwabo (also known as Chuabo) and Lomwe from the central provinces of Sofala, Manica, Tete and Zambezia. The remaining 10 per cent of the participants were from the northern regions, namely Nampula, Cabo Delgado and Niassa. They represented the Makhuwa and Makonde ethnic groups.

Of the 273 respondents, 260 reported their gender. The sample was dominated by male respondents (76 per cent). This disparity can be explained by the fact that the number of men at academic institutions and public and private organisations is higher than the number of women. Of those who reported their age, 164 (66 per cent) identified themselves as being between the ages of 20 and 30, and 83 participants (34 per cent) identified themselves as being between 30 and 50.

Personal earnings provide important information for this study, yet it is considered a private issue in the country and most Mozambicans avoid discussing their financial situation, amount and sources of income with colleagues, friends and members of their extended family. In our sample only 198 participants disclosed their monthly earnings. Of these, 148 participants (74 per cent) had an income below 7,500 Meticaís. The remaining group (26 per cent) reported earnings of between 7,500 and 30,000 Meticaís. At the time of survey 1 Metical was equivalent to 0.03546 US dollars.



## Instrument

### *Questionnaire Development*

The process of the questionnaire design consisted of four stages. First, the instrument was translated from English into Portuguese, which is an official language in Mozambique. The technique of back translation was employed to verify the quality of the Portuguese version. Second, a pilot study was carried out to test comprehension of the questionnaire's items by potential respondents. The results of the study revealed problems of poor understanding of ten items and, thus, the need for further adjustments of style. Third, the modified Portuguese version was translated back into English to compare it with the original. Finally, the Portuguese version was tested in a second pilot study.

### *Measures*

We applied measures that had been used in prior studies. These measures are consumer ethnocentrism, COO-related product conspicuousness, susceptibility to interpersonal influence and attitude toward domestic versus foreign products.

Consumer Ethnocentrism: An original version of the CET-scale was employed to measure ethnocentric tendencies of Mozambican consumers. This version was proposed and validated by Shimp and Sharma (1987). The scale contains seventeen items. It was validated and used in both developed and developing economies (Shimp and Sharma, 1987; Durvasula et al., 1997; Klein et al., 1998; Balabanis et al., 2001; Wang and Chen, 2004). Its reliability coefficients have always exceeded the cut-off value of 0.700, varying from  $\alpha = 0.722$  to  $\alpha = 0.970$ . Saffu and Walker (2006a) validated the CET-scale in Ghana, a country in the western part of Africa. In the Ghanaian sample Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.722. Using a reduced version of the CET-scale, John and Brady (2009) found  $\alpha$  to be 0.722 in Mozambique.

COO-Related Product Conspicuousness: We measured COO-related product conspicuousness using the eighteen items of Marcoux et al. (1997). The reliability coefficients varied from 0.74 to 0.89 in a Polish study (Marcoux et al., 1997). Wang and Chen (2004) validated the scale in China. They reported  $\alpha = 0.95$ . To the best of our knowledge this construct has not been validated in an African country setting.

Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence: Susceptibility to interpersonal influence was measured by the twelve items of Bearden et al. (1989). The scale was used in a number of studies and was validated in the US, Poland, China, Asia and Mexico (Bearden et al., 1989; Marcoux et al., 1997; Ang et al., 2001; Lee et al., 2008; Phau and Teah, 2009). The internal consistency coefficients were in excess of 0.700 in Poland and Asia and in excess of 0.800 in the US and Mexico.

Consumer Preferences for Domestic Products: Consumer preferences for domestic products were measured by consumer attitudes toward domestic products. The attitudinal scale contained three items borrowed from Raju and Hastak (1983) and Hastak and Olson

(1989). The internal consistency of these items was above 0.90. It is worth noting that the original scale was altered to better suit the context and purpose of the study. First, we changed the measurement of the scale. The original scale was based on the semantic differential which might distort perception of the items by Mozambican respondents. For this reason, we transformed the semantic items into a seven-point Likert-type scale. Second, we introduced an element of relativity into measuring attitudes. The original scale, focusing on absolute attitudes toward the product, was transformed into a scale measuring relative attitudes toward domestic versus foreign products. An exemplary item is: 'I like Mozambican tea more than South African tea.' The items of the four above-mentioned constructs were measured on a 7-point Likert scale with 1 = 'strongly disagree' and 7 = 'strongly agree' as anchors.

#### *Psychometric Qualities of the Scales*

Since the scales had not been used in previous studies in Mozambique, their psychometric qualities were tested. The data on reliability of the scales are shown in Table 2. The internal consistency coefficients of the constructs of consumer ethnocentrism, susceptibility to interpersonal influence and attitudinal scales for potatoes, tea, juice and biscuits were in excess of the recommended 0.700 (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). The reliability of the COO-related product conspicuousness scale was above 0.800. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the attitudinal scales for chicken meat and beer were below the cut-off values of 0.700, pointing to the complexity of factors that affect attitudes toward these products and a possible inadequacy of the scale for further research in Mozambique. With this proviso the scales for chicken meat and beer were retained for further analysis in our study.

The reliability tests resulted in a reduction of the number of items in some scales. The final set of items was the following: seven items in the CET-scale, three items in the COO-related product conspicuousness scale, seven items in the susceptibility to interpersonal influence scale and three items in the attitude toward domestic products scale (see Table 2).

#### **Data Analysis**

Structural equation modelling was used to test the model and corresponding hypotheses (Figure 2). The model shows only latent variables. To keep the diagram clear and simple measured variables were not included. Absence of a line connecting latent variables implies lack of a hypothesised direct effect.

The hypothesised structural model examined the predictors of attitude toward domestic products. It was hypothesised that consumer ethnocentrism, COO-related product conspicuousness and susceptibility to interpersonal influence would be direct predictors of attitude toward domestic products. Additionally, it was hypothesised that COO-related product conspicuousness would be predicted by susceptibility to interpersonal influence.

The measurement models for consumer ethnocentrism, COO-related product conspicuousness, susceptibility to interpersonal influence and attitude toward domestic products are not shown in Figure 2 and deserve greater attention. The measurement model of consumer ethnocentrism contained seven indicators represented by items 1, 5, 7, 9, 10,

Table 2: Reliability Coefficients of the Scales

Construct	Items	Reliability
Consumer ethnocentrism (CET) scale (Shimp and Sharma, 1987)	1. Mozambican people should always buy Mozambican-made products instead of imports	$\alpha = 0.710$
	5. Purchasing foreign-made products is un-Mozambican	
	7. A real Mozambican should always buy Mozambican-made products	
	9. It is always best to purchase Mozambican products	
	10. There should be very little trading and purchasing goods from other countries unless out of necessity	
	12. Curbs should be put on all imports	
COO-related product consciousness (Marcoux et al., 1997)	15. Foreign products should be taxed heavily to reduce their entry into Mozambique	$\alpha = 0.833$
	10. South African products are social status symbols	
	11. South African products are symbols of success and prestige	
Susceptibility to interpersonal influence (Bearden et al., 1989)	12. South African products mean wealth	$\alpha = 0.749$
	1. I often consult other people to help me to choose the best alternative available from a product class	
	3. It is important that others like the products and brands I buy	
	6. I often identify with other people by purchasing the same products and brands they purchase	
	7. If I have little experience with a product, I often ask my friends about the product	
	10. I frequently gather information from friends and family about a product before I buy	

(Continued)

Table 2: (Continued)

Construct	Items	Reliability
Attitude toward the domestic product (Raju and Hastak, 1983; Hastak and Olson, 1989)	I 1. If other people can see me using a product, I often purchase the brand they expect me to buy	$\alpha = 0.680$ (chicken) $\alpha = 0.726$ (potatoes) $\alpha = 0.787$ (tea) $\alpha = 0.417$ (beer) $\alpha = 0.765$ (juice) $\alpha = 0.715$ (biscuits)
	I 2. I achieve a sense of belonging by purchasing the same products and brands that others purchase	
	1. I like Mozambican product X more than South African product X 2. South African product X is better than Mozambican product X* 3. Mozambican product X has better quality than South African product X	

\* This item was reverse coded to maintain consistent directionality. Data coding was done such that a high score indicated favourable attitudes toward Mozambican product X.

12 and 15 of Table 2. Similarly, the latent variable of susceptibility to interpersonal influence was measured by seven indicators, namely items 1, 3, 6, 7, 10, 11 and 12 (Table 2). The indicators for the measurement model of COO-related product conspicuousness were three items: 10, 11 and 12 (Table 2). Finally, the measurement model of attitude toward the domestic product had three indicators defined by items 1, 2 and 3 (Table 2).

The assumptions of the structural equation modelling were met. The sample size was sufficient as it exceeded 200 cases (Reisinger and Turner, 1999) and had more than the required ten cases per variable (Reisinger and Turner, 1999; Schreiber, 2008). In addition, the descriptive statistics in the package did not reveal outliers or significant violations of normality in the dataset.

The model was further estimated with maximum likelihood estimation for structural equation modelling in LISREL 8.8. To maintain the initial sample size, missing values in the four constructs were imputed (du Toit et al., 2001). The model was tested six times, as it was tested for all six consumables (Figure 2). Propositions on conspicuousness effects, namely H2, H5 and H6, were not tested in the models for the non-branded consumables – chicken meat and potatoes. However, the causal links between the variables of product conspicuousness and attitudes toward these products were retained to maintain the same degree of freedom across all six models, an important requirement for statistical comparison of the models.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Model Fit

The six models for corresponding products had a good fit and, thus, were supported. The ratio of chi-square ( $X^2$ ) to degrees of freedom (DF) was below the recommended maximum of 2 for all the models (Schreiber, 2008) (Table 3). Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) was in all cases below the recommended maximum of 0.060 (Schreiber, 2008) (Table 3). Furthermore, the upper bound from the 90 per cent confidence interval for RMSEA was less than 0.080 (Schreiber, 2008) (Table 3).

It is worth noting that all the estimates of the measurement models for each of the six products varied significantly from zero, as the t-values were greater than the critical value of 2 (Reisinger and Turner, 1999). The list of the t-values of the measurement models is given in Table 4.

### Analysis of the Model and Hypotheses

The t-statistics from the structural model were used to examine the hypotheses. The findings revealed a positive direct impact of consumer ethnocentrism on attitudes toward domestic chicken meat, tea, juice and potatoes ( $|t| > 2$ ). However, the results showed no direct effect of ethnocentricity on attitudes toward domestic beer, juice and biscuits ( $|t| < 2$ ) (Figure 3). The hypothesis H1 is partially supported.

COO-related product conspicuousness had a negative direct effect on attitudes toward domestic beer, juice and biscuits ( $|t| > 2$ ) but had no significant impact on attitudes toward tea ( $|t| < 2$ ) (Figure 3). The hypothesis H2 is partially supported. This implies that the

Table 3: Model Fit

Product Type	Product	$X^2/DF$	RMSEA	RMSEA 90 % CI	Comparative Fit Index	Goodness of Fit Index
Consumables with personal modes of consumption	Chicken	1.83 < 2	0.055 < 0.06	0.046 - 0.065 < 0.080	0.90	0.90
	Tea	1.88 < 2	0.057 < 0.06	0.047 - 0.067 < 0.080	0.90	0.90
	Potatoes	1.78 < 2	0.054 < 0.06	0.044 - 0.064 < 0.080	0.91	0.90
Consumables with public modes of consumption	Beer	1.84 < 2	0.056 < 0.06	0.046 - 0.065 < 0.080	0.90	0.90
	Juice	1.89 < 2	0.057 < 0.06	0.048 - 0.067 < 0.080	0.90	0.90
	Biscuits	1.70 < 2	0.051 < 0.06	0.041 - 0.061 < 0.080	0.91	0.91

Key:  $X^2/DF$  = ratio of chi-square to degrees of freedom

RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation

RMSEA 90% CI = 90% confidence interval of root mean square error of approximation



Table 4: T-Values of the Measurement Models

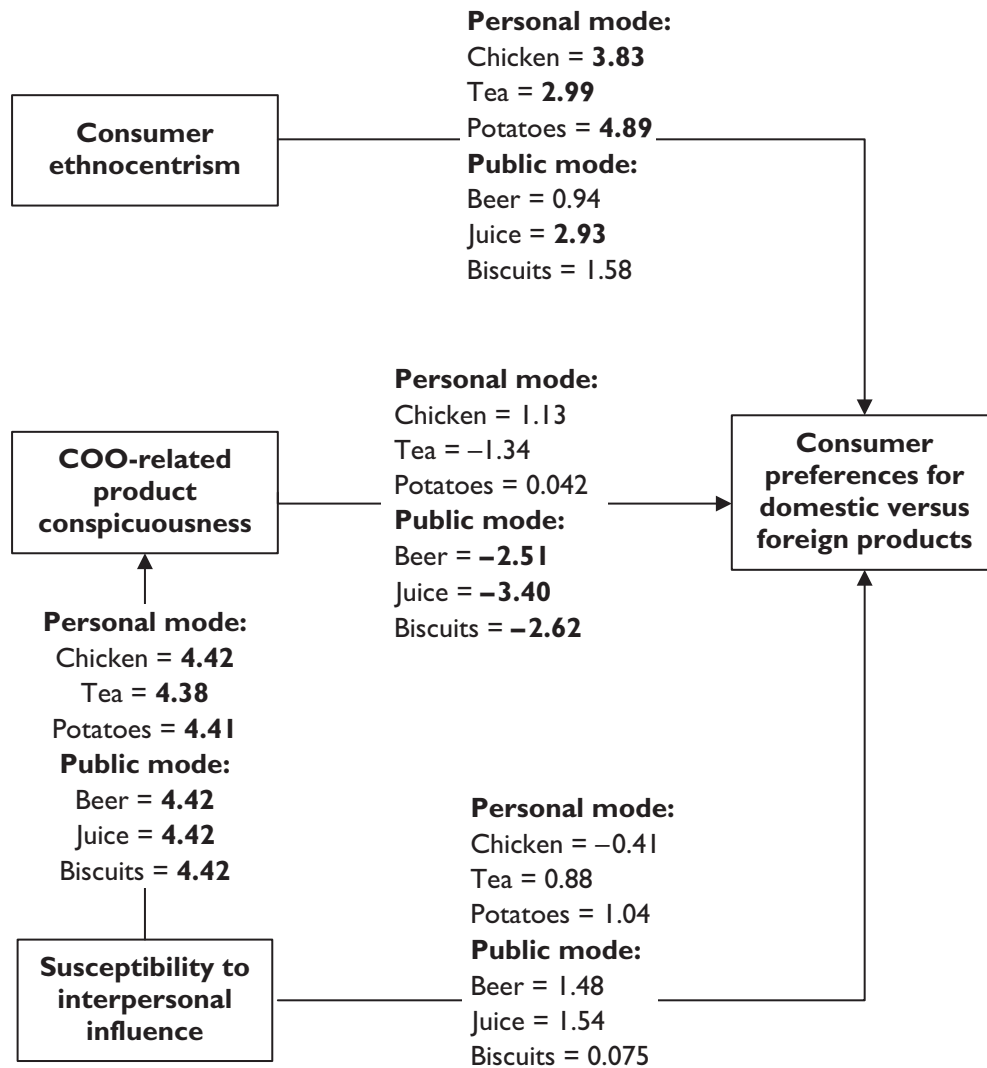
Items	t-Values				
	Chicken	Tea	Potatoes	Beer	Juice
<b>Consumer Ethnocentric Tendencies (CET) Scale</b>					
Mozambican people should always buy Mozambican-made products instead of imports	7.99	8.05	8.04	7.95	8.03
Purchasing foreign-made products is un-Mozambican	8.75	8.70	8.73	8.73	8.62
A real Mozambican should always buy Mozambican-made products	14.48	14.66	14.46	14.53	14.82
It is always best to purchase Mozambican products	11.41	11.17	11.42	11.21	11.21
There should be very little trading and purchasing goods from other countries unless out of necessity	5.63	5.48	5.62	5.53	5.45
Curbs should be put on all imports	3.00	3.05	3.16	2.99	3.03
Foreign products should be taxed heavily to reduce their entry into Mozambique	5.82	5.94	6.00	5.90	5.82
<b>COO-Related Product Conspicuousness</b>					
South African products are social status symbols	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
South African products are symbols of success and prestige	11.99	11.93	11.97	12.14	12.15
South African products mean wealth	11.42	11.37	11.41	11.41	11.46
<b>Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence</b>					
I often consult other people to help to choose the best alternative available from a product class	4.80	4.84	4.89	4.66	4.70
It is important that others like the products and brands I buy	3.61	3.59	3.61	3.59	3.50

(Continued)

Table 4: (Continued)

Items	t-Values				
	Chicken	Tea	Potatoes	Beer	Juice
I often identify with other people by purchasing the same products and brands they purchase	5.91	5.79	5.84	5.95	5.83
If I have little experience with a product, I often ask my friends about the product	4.99	5.13	5.04	4.94	4.79
I frequently gather information from friends and family about a product before I buy	5.87	5.97	5.93	5.82	5.87
If other people can see me using a product, I often purchase the brand they expect me to buy	8.28	8.23	8.30	8.33	8.57
I achieve a sense of belonging by purchasing the same products and brands that others purchase	6.14	6.09	6.06	6.35	6.29
<b>Consumer Preferences for Domestic Products (Attitude toward the Domestic Product)</b>					
I like Mozambican product X more than South African product X	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
South African product X is better than Mozambican product X	6.15	9.46	7.51	3.48	8.39
Mozambican product X has better quality than South African product X	6.36	9.48	7.83	3.41	8.55
					7.30

Figure 3: The Summary of the t-Values for the Model of the Six Consumables



Note: ( $|t| > 2$  are in bold)

overall conspicuousness of South African products will not always influence consumer preferences for branded consumables. Instead, it will play a role only in consumer decisions about consumables with public modes of consumption.

Susceptibility to interpersonal influence had a strong positive effect on consumer perceptions of conspicuousness of South African products ( $|t| > 2$ ) (Figure 3). The hypothesis

Table 5: Summary of the Results for Hypotheses H1-H4

Hypothesis	Tested Relationship		Expected Effect	t-Values	Result
	Antecedent	Criterion Variable			
<b>H1</b>	Consumer ethnocentrism	Consumer preferences for domestic products (Attitude toward domestic products)	Positive effect	Chicken: <b>3.83</b> Tea: <b>2.99</b> Potatoes: <b>4.89</b> Beer: 0.94 Juice: <b>2.93</b> Biscuits: 1.58	Partially supported
<b>H2</b>	COO-related product conspicuousness	Consumer preferences for domestic products (Attitude toward domestic products)	Negative effect	Chicken: 1.13 Tea: -1.34 Potatoes: -0.42 Beer: <b>-2.51</b> Juice: <b>-3.40</b> Biscuits: <b>-2.62</b>	Partially supported
<b>H3</b>	Susceptibility to interpersonal influence	COO-related product conspicuousness	Positive effect	Chicken: <b>4.42</b> Tea: <b>4.38</b> Potatoes: <b>4.41</b> Beer: <b>4.42</b> Juice: <b>4.42</b> Biscuits: <b>4.42</b>	Supported
<b>H4</b>	Susceptibility to interpersonal influence	Consumer preferences for domestic products (Attitude toward domestic products)	No effect	Chicken: -0.41 Tea: 0.88 Potatoes: 1.04 Beer: 1.48 Juice: 1.54 Biscuits: 0.075	Supported

H3 was deemed true, suggesting that our findings replicate the results from O'Cass and McEwen (2004). This implies that buyers prone to interpersonal influence will see greater prestige in South African products and will have a tendency to consume them conspicuously in order to conform to the expectations of key reference groups.

However, susceptibility to interpersonal influence did not have any direct influence on the formation of attitudes toward local consumables ( $|t| < 2$ ), hence the hypothesis H4 was supported (Figure 3). This result is also consistent with findings from prior research which suggests that susceptibility to interpersonal influence has a weak or no effect on consumables.

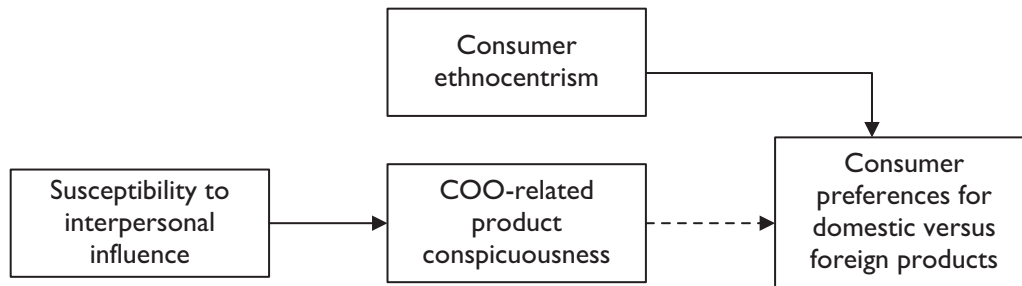
The summary of the results for hypotheses H1 through H4 is shown in Table 5. Since hypotheses H1 and H2 are partially supported, we conclude that the model of the effects of consumer ethnocentrism and conspicuousness is only partially valid in the Mozambican context.

The hypotheses H5 and H6, tested only for branded categories of consumables, predicted that the products' mode of consumption would influence the outcome of the consumer dilemma. Hypothesis H5 proposes that consumer preferences for domestic consumables with personal modes of consumption will be triggered by consumer ethnocentrism. By contrast, hypothesis H6 postulates that consumer preferences for domestic consumables with public modes of consumption will be elicited by conspicuousness of foreign products. The results support H5, as the impact of CET on attitudes toward domestic tea was greater than that of product conspicuousness. Despite a significant link between consumer ethnocentrism and attitudes toward juice, H6 was also supported because the effects of foreign product conspicuousness were relatively larger than the effects of consumer ethnocentrism.

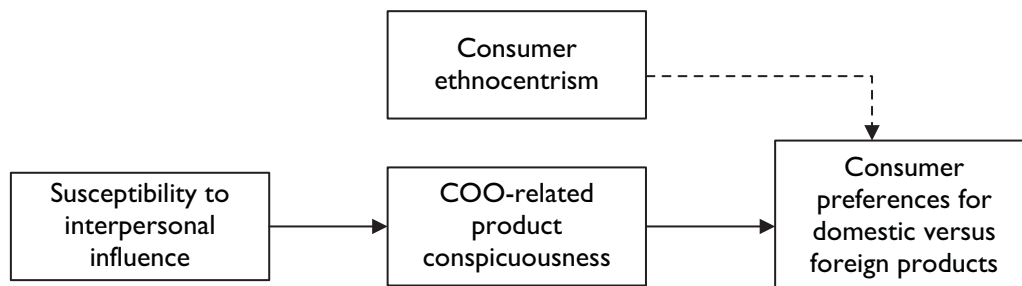
**Table 6: Summary of the Results for Hypotheses H5-H6**

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Tested Effect</b>	<b>t-Values (CET)</b>	<b>t-Values (CC)</b>	<b>Result</b>
<b>H5</b>	Consumer ethnocentrism rather than COO-related product conspicuousness will have a stronger impact on attitudes toward domestic products with personal modes of consumption	Tea: <b>2.99</b>	Tea: -1.34	Supported
<b>H6</b>	COO-related product conspicuousness rather than consumer ethnocentrism will have a stronger impact on attitudes toward domestic products with public modes of consumption	Beer: 0.94 Juice: <b>2.93</b> Biscuits: 1.58	Beer: <b>-2.51</b> Juice: <b>-3.40</b> Biscuits: <b>-2.62</b>	Supported

**Figure 4: Model of Consumer Ethnocentrism and Conspicuousness Effects (Packaged Consumables with Personal Modes of Consumption)**



**Figure 5: Model of Consumer Ethnocentrism and Conspicuousness Effects (Packaged Consumables with Public Modes of Consumption)**



Findings in H5 and H6 are consistent with the suggestions of Piron (2000), Essoussi and Merunka (2007) and John and Brady (2009). A summary of the data is shown in Table 6.

The results of the last two hypotheses add to a better understanding of the consumer dilemma in the context of imports of South African consumables into Mozambique. Ethnocentricity will shape consumer preferences for local packaged consumables which are not consumed publicly. However, the overall prestige of South African products is the factor which leads to negative attitudes toward national branded consumables consumed in public. The revised models of ethnocentrism and conspicuousness effects for consumables with personal and public modes of consumption are shown in Figures 4 and 5. Dotted lines imply effects which were not confirmed. The link between the measures of susceptibility to interpersonal influence and consumer preferences for domestic consumables was removed as there was no relationship between the two variables.

## CONCLUSIONS

Consistent with prior research, this paper confirms that the effects of consumer ethnocentrism and foreign product conspicuousness behave in opposite directions in a developing African country, Mozambique. It is evident that Mozambican consumers face a dilemma



in their consumer decisions. On the one hand, they have ethnocentric feelings towards South African imports. On the other hand, Mozambicans recognise the conspicuousness of imports from South Africa. When the effects of consumer ethnocentrism are stronger, the dilemma results in consumption of domestic products. However, when the effects of South African product conspicuousness are stronger, the dilemma leads to consumption of South African products. The outcome of the consumer dilemma depends upon a number of factors and the consumption mode of products is one of them. The study shows that the dilemma will result in favourable attitudes toward domestic consumables with personal modes of consumption. By contrast, the dilemma is likely to result in favourable attitudes toward South African consumables with public modes of consumption.

Additionally, we confirmed the positive impact of susceptibility to interpersonal influence on conspicuous consumption of foreign products. Consistent with earlier studies, we showed that those who are prone to interpersonal influence will see greater prestige in South African products and will have a tendency to consume them conspicuously in order to conform to expectations of key reference groups, for example, family members, friends and colleagues. Also, the study pointed to the inconsistency of the effect of interpersonal influence on consumer preferences in prior research. Our findings revealed no effect of susceptibility to interpersonal influence on attitudes toward consumables.

The findings suggest implications for producers in Mozambique as well as for South African exporters to Mozambique. Mozambican producers of consumables with personal modes of consumption, e.g. chicken meat, tea and potatoes, may benefit from the ethnocentric sentiments of Mozambicans. It may be advantageous for producers of tea to appeal to the patriotic feelings of Mozambicans by using national symbols and themes during marketing campaigns. Producers of chicken meat and potatoes might consider selling these products under brands incorporating national symbols. Using the label of the national buy local campaign – ‘Orgulho Moçambicano: Made-in-Mozambique’ – may also evoke feelings of national pride and trigger consumption of domestic consumables (Unidade Técnica para Promoção de Produtos Nacionais, 2006).

Mozambican producers of consumables with public modes of consumption, e.g. beer and biscuits, are advised to de-emphasise references to national origin because such references do not add prestige to these products. Instead, they might raise the prestige of brands so as to compete with conspicuous South African products or use low price strategies to target the niche of consumers with lower personal incomes. South African exporters of consumables with public modes of consumption are recommended to incorporate national South African symbols into marketing campaigns in the Mozambican market. ‘Proudly South African’ labels promoting South Africa as a prosperous country might also confer prestige and trigger conspicuous consumption of these products (Proudly South African, 2010). The national South African symbols may not have the same effect on Mozambican consumers in the case of consumables with personal modes of consumption. For example, it may be difficult for exporters of chicken meat, potatoes and tea to fully benefit from ‘Proudly South African’ labels because these products are more susceptible to the effects of consumer ethnocentrism rather than conspicuousness of South African products.

This study has several limitations. For example, we investigated the effects of consumer ethnocentrism and conspicuousness for only six consumables. The choice of products was restricted by the economic structure of Mozambique. A broader range of products could influence the results. Additionally, the sample consisted of educated residents of urban and suburban zones of Maputo city and its province. The results might be different if we included rural populations and residents of the less developed central and northern parts of Mozambique.

The study also indicates new areas for future research. First, prior research has been focusing on only two sources of product conspicuousness – brand and COO. However, product conspicuousness may be inferred by consumers from a number of other cues, e.g. prestige of retail outlet, price and status of users of the product. We suggest exploring the role of these cues in conspicuousness in future research. Second, the consumer dilemma has been suggested for developing economies. Yet, one cannot exclude its possibility in advanced societies. Further research might investigate the consumer dilemma while comparing advanced and developing countries. Third, it might be interesting not only to confirm the moderating role of consumption modes but also to examine the role of other moderators in the consumer dilemma (e.g. product type, involvement level and socio-demographic parameters). Fourth, authors might explore reasons for the inconsistency of effects of susceptibility to interpersonal influence on attitudes toward consumer products. Qualitative research methods are likely to be the best choice in this case as they might help to build conceptual bases.

#### ENDNOTES

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