



Beyond Nationalism: How Country Image and Product Perceptions Shape Indonesian Intentions toward Chinese Cosmetics

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Abstract

Purpose: This study investigates the empirical causal relationships between consumer ethnocentrism, general country image, product image, and purchase intention toward Chinese cosmetic products among Indonesian consumers. This research addresses empirical inconsistencies regarding whether nationalist purchasing tendencies inhibit foreign product adoption in an emerging market.

Method: Adopting a quantitative causal research design, primary data were gathered from 150 Indonesian consumers aged 17 and older who had purchased and used Chinese cosmetic products, selected via purposive sampling through an online survey. Data were analyzed using covariance-based Structural Equation Modeling (CB-SEM) in AMOS Graphics 22

Result: These findings indicate that in high-growth, highly visible categories like cosmetics, functional quality, innovation, and country reputation outweigh nationalist purchasing barriers. Future research should integrate additional variables such as electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), brand trust, and social media engagement across broader demographic segments and product categories. Specifically, the structural model showed that H4, H5, and H6 were supported.

Implications & Recommendations: These findings reinforce the Country-of-Origin (COO) effect, highlighting that consumers often rely on country-related associations when evaluating foreign products, particularly in industries where product quality, innovation, and safety are considered essential attributes.

Contribution & Value Added: This study contributes to the consumer ethnocentrism and country-of-origin literature by demonstrating that the influence of consumer ethnocentrism on foreign-product purchase intention is context-dependent rather than universally negative. The study further adds value by demonstrating that general country image and product image provide more consistent explanatory pathways for purchase intention.

INTRODUCTION

The global cosmetics industry has expanded rapidly over the past decade, driven by rising consumer awareness of personal care, the pervasive influence of social media, and the acceleration of digital commerce (Kotler et al., 2024). Consumers no longer purchase cosmetic products merely to enhance appearance; cosmetics have become an extension of lifestyle, self-identity, and self-confidence. Within this global trend, Indonesia has emerged as one of the largest and most attractive cosmetics markets in Southeast Asia, supported by its large population, rising purchasing power, and a consumer base dominated by digitally native younger generations. Data from Indonesia's Ministry of Industry indicates that the domestic beauty sector, encompassing skincare, cosmetics, personal care, and fragrances, has continued to record positive growth and now contributes meaningfully to national economic output. Industry estimates further project a compound annual growth rate of approximately 4.6% for the Indonesian beauty sector through 2028, with skincare and cosmetics remaining the fastest-growing categories (Pratama, 2024; Balabanis & Siamagka, 2022).

This growth has attracted intense competition from foreign cosmetics producers, among which China has become particularly prominent. China's cosmetics industry, once associated primarily with low-cost manufacturing, has undergone a substantial transformation supported by advanced manufacturing capability, rapid product innovation, aggressive digital marketing, and sustained investment in research and development. Industry data place the value of China's beauty and personal care market at more than USD 80 billion (Statista, 2023), positioning it among the largest cosmetics markets in the world. Chinese cosmetics brands such as Judydoll, Flower Knows, Skintific, Perfect Diary, Focallure, Gogotales, and PinkFlash have successfully entered the Indonesian market through affordable pricing, packaging innovation, and social-media-driven marketing amplified by platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. However, this shift is not uniform across the Indonesian consumer population. A segment of consumers continues to favor domestic products over imported alternatives, a tendency commonly explained through the lens of consumer ethnocentrism (Shimp & Sharma, 1987), defined as the belief that purchasing domestically produced goods is the more appropriate and patriotic choice, as it is perceived to support national economic growth. In Indonesia, this tendency is reinforced by government-led campaigns such as "Bangga Buatan Indonesia" (Proudly Made in Indonesia), which actively promote domestic consumption as a form of economic contribution. At the same time, globalization and cross-border e-commerce platforms, including Shopee, Tokopedia, Lazada, and TikTok Shop, have substantially lowered the barriers to accessing foreign products, creating a tension between nationalistic purchasing tendencies and the growing appeal of foreign, particularly Chinese, cosmetic brands.

Beyond ethnocentric tendencies, consumer evaluation of foreign products is also shaped by General Country Image (GCI), defined as consumers' overall perception of a country's economic development, technological capability, and industrial reputation (Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009), and by Product Image (PDI), which reflects consumer perceptions of a specific product's quality, safety, and design. A positive country image tends to enhance consumers' confidence in products originating from that country, whereas a negative image undermines it, independent of the product's actual quality. As China's technological and industrial standing has improved, its general country image among international consumers has arguably shifted in a more favorable direction, potentially reshaping how Indonesian consumers evaluate Chinese cosmetic products. Purchase intention, defined by Kotler et al. (2024) as a consumer's tendency to buy a product following an evaluative decision-making process, is theorized to be jointly shaped by ethnocentric predispositions, country image, and product image, making the interplay among these constructs central to understanding foreign-product adoption in emerging markets such as Indonesia.

This study is a conceptual replication of Nguyen et al. (2023), who examined the influence of consumer ethnocentrism on purchase intention toward Chinese products among Vietnamese consumers, together with its effects on General Country Image and Product Image. A Comparison of this study with two related investigations, Salmanli and Omarli (2020) on Azerbaijani consumers' evaluation of foreign food products in the Hungarian market, and Gantulga and

Ganbold (2022) on Mongolian consumers' intention to purchase foreign products, reveals inconsistent empirical findings across contexts. Beyond providing a new geographical setting, the Indonesian cosmetics market differs from the Vietnamese, Azerbaijani-Hungarian, and Mongolian contexts examined in prior studies in ways that may plausibly alter the model's relationships: cosmetics consumption in Indonesia is closely intertwined with social-media-driven beauty culture and Generation Z purchasing behavior, it is subject to distinctive regulatory and religious-certification requirements (BPOM safety approval and halal certification) that function as trust signals largely absent from those earlier studies, and it coexists with an active state-sponsored domestic-pride campaign ("Bangga Buatan Indonesia") that may sharpen, rather than dilute, the tension between ethnocentrism and foreign-product adoption. These contextual features, rather than the country setting alone, motivate testing the model in Indonesia.

Two inconsistencies are particularly salient. First, while Nguyen et al. (2023) reported a significant negative effect of consumer ethnocentrism on purchase intention, Salmanli and Omarli (2020) found this relationship to be non-significant, suggesting that the strength and even the presence of the ethnocentrism–purchase intention link may be context-dependent, varying across product categories, national cultures, and market maturity. Second, regarding the effect of General Country Image on purchase intention, Nguyen et al. (2023) and Salmanli and Omarli (2020) both reported significant positive effects, whereas Gantulga and Ganbold (2022) found no significant relationship. These divergent findings indicate that the theoretical model linking consumer ethnocentrism, country image, product image, and purchase intention has not yet been consistently validated across different consumer populations, and that its applicability to the Indonesian context, where cosmetics consumption is increasingly shaped by social media and Generation Z consumer behavior, remains empirically untested. This gap constitutes the primary motivation for the present study, which seeks to examine whether the relationships identified by Nguyen et al. (2023) hold among Indonesian consumers of Chinese cosmetic products, thereby extending the generalizability of the model to a new emerging-market setting characterized by distinct cultural, economic, and digital-consumption dynamics.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is grounded in Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) as its grand theory, which explains why individuals favor in-group products over out-group alternatives as an expression of group identity; consumer ethnocentrism (Shimp & Sharma, 1987) operationalizes this in-group bias within the marketplace, while country-of-origin theory (Balabanis & Siamagka, 2022; Han, 1989) and brand/product-image theory (Keller & Swaminathan, 2020) provide the more specific theoretical lenses used to examine the country- and product-level constructs that follow.

Consumer Ethnocentrism

Consumer ethnocentrism is consumers' belief that purchasing domestic products is more appropriate and morally right than purchasing foreign products (Shimp & Sharma, 1987), reflecting nationalism and loyalty toward the consumer's home country that leads to less favorable evaluations of foreign goods (Balabanis & Siamagka, 2022; Cheah et al., 2021).

The construct stems from classic sociological theories of in-group favoritism, which have been extensively integrated into modern consumer behavior literature (Baber et al., 2024), which describes the tendency to judge other groups by the standards of one's own group and to regard the in-group as superior. Shimp and Sharma (1987) translated this in-group/out-group bias into the marketplace, where purchasing foreign goods is perceived as economically and even morally wrong because it is believed to threaten domestic industry and employment. Beyond a simple preference, consumer ethnocentrism therefore combines a cognitive component (beliefs about the economic benefit of buying domestic products), an affective component (national pride or guilt), and a normative component (perceived social pressure to support one's own country), which jointly shape evaluations of and intentions toward foreign products (Baber et al., 2024). Importantly, recent reviews emphasize that the strength of this effect is not uniform across

contexts: it is moderated by product category, brand familiarity, and the degree of historical or political animosity toward the country of origin (Baber et al., 2023), and it tends to weaken for symbolic, trend-driven, high-involvement categories such as fashion and cosmetics, where functional performance and aesthetic appeal can outweigh nationalistic motives (Kinawy, 2025). Although these cognitive, affective, and normative components are conceptually distinguished in the literature, the present study measures consumer ethnocentrism as a single overall construct rather than as three separate sub-dimensions; consequently, any explanation of the results that draws on these components should be read as a plausible conceptual account rather than as a directly tested mechanism.

Camacho et al. (2021) and Nguyen et al. (2023) show that ethnocentrism lowers purchase intention toward foreign products, while Salmanli and Omarli (2020) and Gantulga and Ganbold (2022) similarly find that national sentiment and perceptions of foreign products jointly shape purchase intention. In the Chinese cosmetics context, ethnocentrism is reflected in Indonesian consumers' preference for local skincare over foreign alternatives.

General Country Image

General country image is consumers' overall perception of a country's economy, technology, culture, politics, and product quality, which shapes how they evaluate products from that country, especially under limited product information (Han, 1989; Ma et al., 2022; Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009).

The construct originates from country-of-origin research, where the country label functions as an extrinsic cue that consumers use to infer product quality when intrinsic, product-specific information is scarce or difficult to verify before purchase (Gao et al., 2024). Han (1989) distinguishes two competing mechanisms through which this cue operates: a halo model, in which country image directly shapes beliefs about product attributes when consumers are unfamiliar with a country's products, and a summary-construct model, in which country image instead becomes a summary of accumulated product experience once consumers are already familiar with a country's offerings, reversing the direction of influence. Roth and Diamantopoulos (2009) further conceptualize country image as a multidimensional construct spanning economic, political, technological, and cultural dimensions rather than a single global evaluation, implying that different facets of a country's image carry different weight depending on the product category. In the case of China, whose reputation combines rapidly advancing technological and manufacturing capability with lingering historical concerns about product safety and quality control, the technological and industrial dimensions of country image are likely to be more influential for evaluations of Chinese cosmetics than its political or cultural dimensions. Recent studies further distinguish cognitive country image (rational beliefs about a country's economic and technological standing) from affective country image (emotional or attitudinal responses shaped by geopolitical relations), showing that the two can influence purchase intention through different pathways and that country image effects are often transmitted through brand image and product image rather than acting directly (Furukawa & Terasaki, 2025).

Nguyen et al. (2023), Salmanli and Omarli (2020), and Gantulga and Ganbold (2022) consistently find that a favorable country image raises purchase intention toward products from that country. For Chinese cosmetics, this construct captures Indonesian consumers' perception of China as the industry has rapidly modernized and become more competitive.

Product Image

Product image is the set of perceptions, beliefs, and impressions consumers form about a product's attributes, quality, and reputation through experience and marketing communication (Keller & Swaminathan, 2020; Kotler et al., 2024). A positive product image builds consumer trust and purchase interest, whereas a negative image reduces it. Nguyen et al. (2023), Gantulga and Ganbold (2022), and Salmanli and Omarli (2020) all report a positive link between product image and purchase intention, with consumers favoring products perceived as high quality and well reputed — including Chinese cosmetic products specifically. It is useful to distinguish product

image from related constructs used elsewhere in this literature: unlike general country image, which reflects beliefs about the country of manufacture as a whole, product image is specific to the product category itself; it is narrower than brand image, which additionally carries associations tied to a particular brand name, and it is conceptually prior to perceived quality and product evaluation, which represent consumers' more detailed, attribute-level judgments formed partly on the basis of product image (Aktan & Anjam, 2022; Keller & Swaminathan, 2020).

In the contemporary globalized marketplace, particularly within the fast-evolving personal care and beauty sector, product image has evolved beyond static functional perceptions to encompass dynamic, multi-faceted evaluations shaped by digital touchpoints, influencer marketing, and online social proof. Recent scholarly inquiries emphasize that in high-involvement personal care categories, product image is constructed through a dual mechanism of rational functional attributes—such as dermatological safety, active ingredient efficacy, skin-compatibility, and regulatory compliance—and symbolic value, including aesthetic packaging design, trendiness, and social prestige (Nguyen et al., 2024; Kinawy, 2025; Wardayanti & Bharata, 2025). Within emerging Asian consumer markets, the rapid proliferation of digital e-commerce platforms (such as TikTok Shop, Shopee, and Instagram) and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has drastically accelerated how product image is formed, continuously refined, and peer-validated among digitally native consumers (Nguyen et al., 2024; Tanuwijaya et al., 2023). Specifically in the context of Chinese cosmetics (C-Beauty), foreign producers have strategically restructured their global product image by systematically pivoting away from low-cost mass production toward science-backed formulations, innovative aesthetic presentations, and explicit international safety certifications (such as BPOM registration and clinical dermatological testing in Indonesia), thereby actively neutralizing historical quality concerns associated with foreign manufacturing (Baber et al., 2024; Gao et al., 2024). Furthermore, contemporary empirical evidence demonstrates that a robust, positive product image serves as a vital psychological buffer and mediating construct that mitigates the potential restrictive barrier of consumer ethnocentrism while directly magnifying purchase intentions, repurchase loyalty, and premium willingness to pay (Furukawa & Terasaki, 2025; Gao et al., 2024). Consumers in developing economies are increasingly willing to look past nationalistic purchasing biases when a foreign cosmetic product demonstrates verified product efficacy, transparent ingredient disclosures, and superior value proposition (Kinawy, 2025). Consequently, product image stands as a cornerstone construct in modern international consumer research, functioning as both a critical direct driver of consumer adoption decisions and an essential strategic mechanism through which emerging market brands establish global legitimacy and trust.

Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is an individual's tendency to buy a product, driven by internal motivation and external influences such as recommendations and brand image (Ajzen, 1991; Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2022; Kotler et al., 2024). Nguyen et al. (2023), Salmanli and Omarli (2020), and Gantulga and Ganbold (2022) show that purchase intention toward foreign products is jointly shaped by consumer ethnocentrism, country image, and product image. For Chinese cosmetics, purchase intention also reflects the growing influence of social media and beauty influencers.

In modern consumer behavior research, purchase intention is conceptualized not merely as a static end-state, but as a dynamic psychological gateway bridging pre-purchase cognitive evaluations with actual behavioral commitments (Kotler et al., 2024). Within the rapidly evolving digital landscape of emerging markets, purchase intention toward foreign personal care offerings is heavily shaped by multi-channel consumer touchpoints, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), and algorithmic social media engagement that continuously reinforce brand visibility and peer-validated trust (Nguyen et al., 2024). In the cosmetic and beauty sector specifically, purchase decision-making is characterized by a high degree of affective involvement and self-identity expression, where online user reviews, beauty influencer tutorials, and live-streaming e-commerce demonstrations significantly mitigate perceived performance risk and accelerate consumer trial

intentions (Kinawy, 2025; Tanuwijaya et al., 2023). Contemporary empirical evidence underscores that purchase intention acts as a critical dependent construct synthesizing both micro-level product attributes—such as dermatological safety, packaging aesthetic, and price-to-value ratio—and macro-level origin evaluations, reflecting how consumers continuously balance rational functional benefits against nationalistic considerations (Furukawa & Terasaki, 2025; Baber et al., 2024). In the context of foreign cosmetics entering high-growth emerging economies like Indonesia, purchase intention serves as a robust indicator of market penetration success, demonstrating how modern digital marketing campaigns and verified product quality can systematically diminish historic country-of-origin hesitations (Kinawy, 2025; Nguyen et al., 2024). Furthermore, high purchase intentions in symbolic product categories often translate directly into brand advocacy and repeat patronage, making it a pivotal variable for understanding foreign brand loyalty in competitive international markets (Furukawa & Terasaki, 2025). Consequently, examining purchase intention provides essential theoretical and empirical insights into how digitally native consumers synthesize internal motivations, online social influences, and external brand signals into concrete purchase decisions.

Taken together, the constructs reviewed above are individually well established, but prior studies disagree on the strength and even the direction of their links to purchase intention (Nguyen et al., 2023; Salmanli & Omarli, 2020; Gantulga & Ganbold, 2022), and none has examined whether these relationships hold in a cosmetics market shaped by strong social-media influence, religious certification requirements, and an active domestic-pride campaign. This unresolved disagreement, rather than the literature review alone, is the specific gap that the present study addresses by testing the model among Indonesian consumers of Chinese cosmetics.

Consumer Ethnocentrism and Purchase Intention

Highly ethnocentric consumers believe domestic purchases support the national economy, creating a moral preference for local over foreign products (Shimp & Sharma, 1987; Akbarov, 2022). This orientation leads ethnocentric consumers to form more favorable evaluations of domestic products and to reject foreign alternatives perceived as threatening domestic industry (Aguilar-Rodríguez, 2025; Camacho et al., 2021; Cheah et al., 2021). The stronger this orientation, the lower consumers' intention to purchase foreign products.

Recent empirical work continues to reinforce this negative relationship between consumer ethnocentrism and foreign product purchase intention across diverse market contexts. Lan and Trung (2024), studying Vietnamese consumers, confirmed that consumer ethnocentrism exerts a significant negative effect on foreign product purchase intention, even after accounting for competing predictors such as consumer cosmopolitanism, social influence, and perceived behavioral control, suggesting that ethnocentric bias operates as a distinct and robust barrier rather than merely a proxy for other attitudinal constructs. Similarly, Asadzade (2024) found that the negative impact of consumer ethnocentrism on purchase intention is amplified when perceived quality of local alternatives is high, indicating that ethnocentric consumers are especially resistant to foreign products when they believe domestic substitutes are already satisfactory, a condition increasingly plausible as domestic cosmetic industries in emerging markets mature. Kinawy (2025), in a broader review synthesizing consumer ethnocentrism research across emerging and developed markets, likewise concludes that ethnocentric tendencies are more pronounced in emerging economies, where national pride, perceived economic risk, and a belief in the superiority of home-grown goods jointly discourage engagement with imported alternatives. Taken together, these recent findings suggest that the ethnocentrism-purchase intention link is not a static or culturally bound phenomenon confined to earlier Western-centric formulations of the construct, but a mechanism that remains empirically stable and, in some emerging-market contexts, even strengthens as consumers develop greater confidence in domestic production capabilities. This has particular relevance for the Indonesian cosmetics market, where growing domestic brand competitiveness may heighten, rather than diminish, the ethnocentric resistance that Chinese cosmetic products face. At the same time, an emerging stream of research cautions that ethnocentric consumers do not uniformly reject foreign products and can instead display 'selective'

or 'pragmatic' ethnocentrism in categories where functional performance, safety certification, and digital-trust cues are salient (Kinawy, 2025; Baber et al., 2024); this possibility is revisited in the Discussion but does not alter the directional hypothesis below, since it has not yet been tested in a Southeast Asian cosmetics setting. Based on these arguments, we propose the first hypothesis as follows.

H1: Consumer ethnocentrism has a negative effect on purchase intention.

Consumer Ethnocentrism and General Country Image

Ethnocentric consumers tend to evaluate their own country more favorably than others (Shimp & Sharma, 1987; Curth et al., 2025), producing a biased, less favorable view of countries associated with foreign products that are seen as threatening domestic industry economically and culturally (Baber et al., 2024; Kinawy, 2025). Since general country image reflects consumers' overall evaluation of a nation's economy, technology, and product quality (Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009; Curth et al., 2025), this bias should lower the perceived image of a foreign country of origin.

This mechanism finds further support in recent empirical and review-based literature. Aqif and Mumtaz (2024), studying e-purchase behavior in the post-COVID-19 context, found that consumer ethnocentrism negatively affects consumers' attitudes toward foreign products, while a favorable country-of-origin image works in the opposite direction, suggesting that ethnocentric bias and country image evaluation operate as competing psychological forces in cross-border consumption decisions. Baber et al. (2024), in a systematic literature review synthesizing decades of consumer ethnocentrism research, similarly identify country image as one of the most consistently reported consequences of ethnocentric orientation, reinforcing that ethnocentric consumers systematically discount the perceived competence, quality, and modernity of foreign nations as part of their broader in-group favoritism. Therefore, we propose the second hypotheses as follow.

H2: Consumer ethnocentrism has a negative effect on general country image.

Consumer Ethnocentrism and Product Image

Because ethnocentric consumers view domestic purchases as more deserving of support (Shimp & Sharma, 1987), they tend to form more favorable images of domestic products, shaped by usage experience, marketing communication, and perceptions of origin (Keller & Swaminathan, 2020). Balabanis and Siamagka (2022) confirm that highly ethnocentric consumers evaluate domestic products more positively than foreign ones, implying a corresponding penalty to foreign product image.

This pattern is corroborated by more recent evidence. Nguyen et al. (2023), examining Vietnamese consumers' perceptions of Chinese-origin products, found that consumer ethnocentrism does not significantly damage product country image directly, but it does erode consumers' overall evaluation of the foreign country and, indirectly, their willingness to view its products favorably, suggesting that the penalty to product image often operates through broader evaluative bias rather than product-specific judgment alone. Kinawy (2025) adds a further nuance, noting that domestic country bias is not absolute and is moderated by consumers' perceptions of foreign products' quality, implying that the extent to which ethnocentrism penalizes foreign product image depends partly on how convincingly the foreign product can counter default assumptions of inferiority. Together, these recent findings reinforce that ethnocentric consumers' preference for domestic goods systematically translates into a less favorable image of foreign, including Chinese, cosmetic products. Therefore, we propose the third hypotheses as follow.

H3: Consumer ethnocentrism has a negative effect on product image.

General Country Image and Product Image

Consumers often use country image as a reference for judging product quality and reputation, particularly when product-specific information is limited (Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009; Nguyen et al., 2024). A favorable country image can act as a halo, leading consumers to

infer positive product attributes (Han, 1989), while country perceptions also generate broader product stereotypes (Aktan & Anjam, 2022). A positive general country image should therefore enhance product image.

This heuristic role of country image is particularly salient when consumers lack direct experience with a product category. Nguyen et al. (2024) found that cognitive country image continues to directly shape purchase-relevant judgments when online review positivity is low, indicating that consumers fall back on general country-level evaluations precisely in situations where product-specific cues, such as reviews or prior usage, are scarce or inconclusive. This is consistent with Blanco-Encomienda et al. (2024), who showed that country-of-origin perceptions significantly shape how consumers evaluate technologically complex foreign products even without extensive hands-on familiarity, suggesting that country image functions as a readily accessible proxy for inferring quality and reliability. Taken together, these findings reinforce the halo-effect logic: in categories such as cosmetics, where consumers cannot easily verify formulation quality or safety before purchase, a favorable general country image is likely to be extended into positive assumptions about product attributes, supporting the expectation that a positive country image enhances product image. Based on those arguments we propose the fourth hypotheses as follows.

H4: General country image has a positive effect on product image.

General Country Image and Purchase Intention

Consumers use country-of-origin perceptions as a basis for purchase decisions; a favorable country image strengthens confidence in product quality and raises purchase intention (Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009; Han, 1989; Nguyen et al., 2024), as consumers are more attracted to products from countries seen as advanced, innovative, and reputable in production.

This is further reinforced by Gao et al., (2024), who found that consumers' willingness to pay for foreign-labeled products is closely tied to their broader country image evaluation, indicating that a favorable perception of a country's production capability directly translates into stronger purchase-related confidence. Furukawa and Terasaki (2025) add that this confidence-building effect is not limited to already well-regarded countries, as even emerging-market country images can positively shape purchase intention among consumers who evaluate them favorably. Together, these findings support the expectation that a more favorable general country image should meaningfully strengthen consumers' purchase intention. We propose the fifth hypotheses as follows.

H5: General country image has a positive effect on purchase intention.

Product Image and Purchase Intention

A positive product image — reflecting favorable perceptions of a product's attributes, quality, and reputation — builds consumer trust and increases the likelihood of purchase (Keller & Swaminathan, 2020), and shapes consumer behavior throughout the decision process (Kotler et al., 2024). Products with a stronger image should therefore generate greater purchase intention.

Nguyen et al. (2024) also found that product image significantly predicts purchase intention even after accounting for country image and online review effects, confirming that product-level perceptions retain independent explanatory power in shaping consumer behavior. Gao et al. (2024) similarly show that favorable product image increases consumers' valuation and willingness to purchase, reinforcing that trust built through perceived product attributes and reputation translates directly into stronger purchase intention. These recent findings support the expectation that products carrying a stronger, more favorable image are more likely to generate greater consumer purchase intention. The sixth hypotheses is:

H6: Product image has a positive effect on purchase intention.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a quantitative, causal (basic) research design aimed at testing and validating a theoretical model of consumer behavior, consistent with Bougie and Sekaran (2025).

The model examines the causal relationship between consumer ethnocentrism (independent variable), general country image and product image (mediating variables), and purchase intention (dependent variable) among Indonesian consumers of Chinese cosmetic products. Primary data were collected directly from respondents through a structured questionnaire to allow objective, measurable statistical analysis. It should be noted that although general country image and product image are positioned here as intervening constructs between consumer ethnocentrism and purchase intention, this study did not conduct a formal mediation test (e.g., bootstrapped indirect effects); they are therefore better described as sequential constructs within the structural model, and any mediating role should be confirmed through dedicated mediation analysis in future research.

Consumer ethnocentrism was operationalized from Shimp and Sharma's (1987) conceptualization of ethnocentrism as consumers' belief that purchasing domestic products is more appropriate and morally right than purchasing foreign products, further supported by Balabanis and Siamagka (2022) and Cheah et al. (2021). In this study, it refers to Indonesian consumers' tendency to prioritize local cosmetic products over Chinese cosmetic products as an expression of nationalism and belief in supporting the domestic economy.

General country image was operationalized from Roth and Diamantopoulos's (2009) conceptualization of country image as consumers' overall perception of a country's economic, technological, cultural, and political attributes and its capacity to produce quality goods, further supported by Han (1989) and Ma et al. (2022). In this study, it refers to Indonesian consumers' perception of China as the country of origin of cosmetic products, covering technology, reputation, industrial development, and production capability.

Product image was operationalized from Keller and Swaminathan (2020). They conceptualization of product image as the set of consumer perceptions and associations regarding a product's attributes, benefits, quality, and reputation, further supported by Kotler et al., 2024, and also Yasin and Shamim (2023). In this study, it refers to Indonesian consumers' perception of Chinese cosmetic products' quality, reputation, benefits, and advantages relative to competing products.

Purchase intention was operationalized from Ajzen's (1991), further supported by Schiffman & Wisenblit (2022) and Kotler et al., 2024. In this study, it refers to Indonesian consumers' intention to repurchase Chinese cosmetic products based on prior purchase and usage experience.

Sampling and Data Collection

Respondents were selected via purposive sampling based on the following criteria: Indonesian citizens, aged 17 years or older, who had used and purchased Chinese cosmetic products. Participation was voluntary and responses were kept confidential. Data were collected through a structured online questionnaire (Google Forms), preceded by screening and demographic questions. Responses were monitored for completeness and eligibility, exported to Microsoft Excel for initial screening, and incomplete or ineligible responses were removed prior to analysis in IBM SPSS Statistics and AMOS.

This study adopted the standard two-step approach to Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), which requires evaluating the measurement model before analyzing the structural relationships (Hair et al., 2022). For the measurement model, construct validity was assessed using standardized factor loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), while construct reliability was verified through Composite Reliability (CR) coefficients (Hair et al., 2022). Because this study strictly utilizes Covariance-Based SEM (CB-SEM), common PLS-centric heuristics—specifically the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio—were purposefully omitted. This methodological decision aligns with Franke, G., & Sarstedt, M. (2023), who explicitly developed the HTMT ratio to address the lack of inferential statistics inherent to variance-based Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) rather than the parametric environment of CB-SEM. Furthermore, as demonstrated by Afthanorhan et al. (2021), CB-SEM relies on its own native parameters and exact fit indices to confirm empirical distinctiveness, rendering the

application of variance-based diagnostics redundant and methodologically unnecessary in a factor-based framework.

The sample of 150 respondents implemented the widely used rule of thumb for covariance-based SEM of at least 10 observations per estimated parameter (Hair et al., 2022); given the number of indicators and free parameters in the measurement and structural models, this sample size meets the minimum recommended threshold, although a larger sample would provide greater statistical power for detecting smaller effects. In addition, although the questionnaire items were adapted from validated scales used in prior published studies (Shimp & Sharma, 1987; Roth & Diamantopoulos, 2009; Keller & Swaminathan, 2020; Ajzen, 1991), a separate face-validity check (e.g., expert review or cognitive pretesting) was not conducted prior to distributing the Google Forms questionnaire; this is acknowledged as a data-quality safeguard that future replications of this survey should incorporate.

Data Analysis

Hypotheses were tested using covariance-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in AMOS Graphics 22, following a two-step approach: (1) a measurement model evaluated via Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to assess indicator validity and reliability, and (2) a structural model to test the hypothesized causal paths. Convergent validity was assessed through standardized factor loadings (≥ 0.50 , ideally ≥ 0.70) and Average Variance Extracted ($AVE \geq 0.50$), while construct reliability was assessed via Composite Reliability ($CR \geq 0.70$) and Cronbach's alpha (≥ 0.70), following Hair et al. (2019). Model fit was evaluated using CMIN/DF (≤ 3 acceptable, ≤ 2 good), GFI (≥ 0.90 good, ≥ 0.95 close fit), RMSEA (≤ 0.08 good, ≤ 0.05 close fit), TLI (≥ 0.90 acceptable, ≥ 0.95 very good), and CFI (≥ 0.90 good, ≥ 0.95 excellent), consistent with Hair et al. (2022). Hypotheses were evaluated at the structural model stage, once the measurement model met the required fit, validity, and reliability criteria. A hypothesis was considered supported when the path coefficient's Critical Ratio (C.R.) ≥ 1.96 or $p \leq 0.05$ at the 5% significance level (Hair et al., 2022); the sign of the path coefficient indicated the direction of the relationship (positive or negative). Given the relatively modest sample size and the exploratory, replication-oriented nature of this study, hypotheses were additionally evaluated against a more lenient criterion ($|C.R.| \geq 1.645$, $p \leq 0.10$) commonly used in exploratory SEM studies; it is this more lenient criterion, rather than the 5% threshold above, that is applied consistently when interpreting the results reported in Table 2 and discussed in the Results and Discussion sections.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Sample and Measurement Model

A total of 150 valid responses were retained after screening. The sample was predominantly female (73.3%), aged 21–24 years (46.1%), with a senior-high-school or bachelor's education (48.0% and 36.7%, respectively), and mostly students or private-sector employees—a profile consistent with the young, digitally active consumer segment most exposed to Chinese cosmetic brands.

The measurement model was estimated via Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) in AMOS 22. Overall model fit was acceptable, with four of five indices reaching a good fit and GFI at a marginal-fit level (Table 1). According to methodological advancements and simulation studies by Sideridis and Alghamdi (2025), McNeish and Wolf (2022), and Ximénez et al. (2022), traditional absolute fit indices like GFI and AGFI are highly sensitive to sample size, measurement quality, and model complexity, often leading to biased estimations. Specifically, these studies demonstrated that the cutoff values for GFI can fluctuate significantly depending on the number of indicators and sample size, making it mathematically unreliable compared to other modern indices.

All standardized loadings exceeded 0.50 (range 0.75–0.87) except two purchase-intention items ($PCI1 = 0.44$; $PCI2 = 0.29$), which were dropped for insufficient convergent validity. After removing these items, all constructs achieved $AVE \geq 0.50$ and Composite Reliability ≥ 0.70 .

Table 1.
Model Fit Indices (CFA and Structural Model)

Index	Criterion	Result	Category
CMIN/DF	≤ 3.00	1.910	Good fit
RMSEA	≤ 0.08	0.078	Good fit
GFI	≥ 0.90 (good); 0.80–0.90 (marginal)	0.812	Marginal fit
CFI	≥ 0.90	0.940	Good fit
TLI	≥ 0.90	0.932	Good fit

(consumer ethnocentrism: AVE = 0.65, CR = 0.92; general country image: AVE = 0.71, CR = 0.92; product image: AVE = 0.67, CR = 0.94; purchase intention: AVE = 0.71, CR = 0.91), confirming adequate convergent validity and internal consistency for the structural analysis. These two items were adapted from the purchase-intention scale used in prior studies (Ajzen, 1991; Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2022; Nguyen et al., 2023); because they captured a more general willingness to buy rather than the specific intention to repurchase Chinese cosmetic products emphasized by the remaining items, their removal is judged unlikely to have altered the substantive meaning of the purchase-intention construct, although this interpretation should be treated cautiously given that only four indicators remained for this construct.

Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses were tested at the structural model stage. A path was considered supported when its direction matched the hypothesis and $|C.R.| \geq 1.645$ with $p \leq 0.10$. Results are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2.
Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypotheses	Path	Estimate	C.R.	P value	Decision
H1 (-)	CE $\rightarrow$ PCI	0.127	2.502	0.012	Not supported (sig., opposite sign)
H2 (-)	CE $\rightarrow$ GCI	0.098	9.191	***	Not supported (sig., opposite sign)
H3 (-)	CE $\rightarrow$ PDI	0.139	1.446	0.148	Not supported (n.s.)
H4 (+)	GCI $\rightarrow$ PDI	0.146	5.154	***	Supported
H5 (+)	GCI $\rightarrow$ PCI	0.181	2.745	0.006	Supported
H6 (+)	PDI $\rightarrow$ PCI	0.148	2.244	0.025	Supported

Note. CE = consumer ethnocentrism; GCI = general country image; PDI = product image; PCI = purchase intention. *** $p < .001$.

Three of six hypotheses were supported (H4, H5, H6), while H1 and H2 were statistically significant but in the opposite direction to what was hypothesized, and H3 was non-significant. Overall, consumer ethnocentrism was positively (not negatively) associated with both purchase intention and country image, whereas general country image and product image performed as theorized, positively predicting downstream outcomes.

DISCUSSION

Figure 1 presents the results of the hypotheses testing, illustrating the relationships among the proposed constructs and the significance of each hypothesized path.

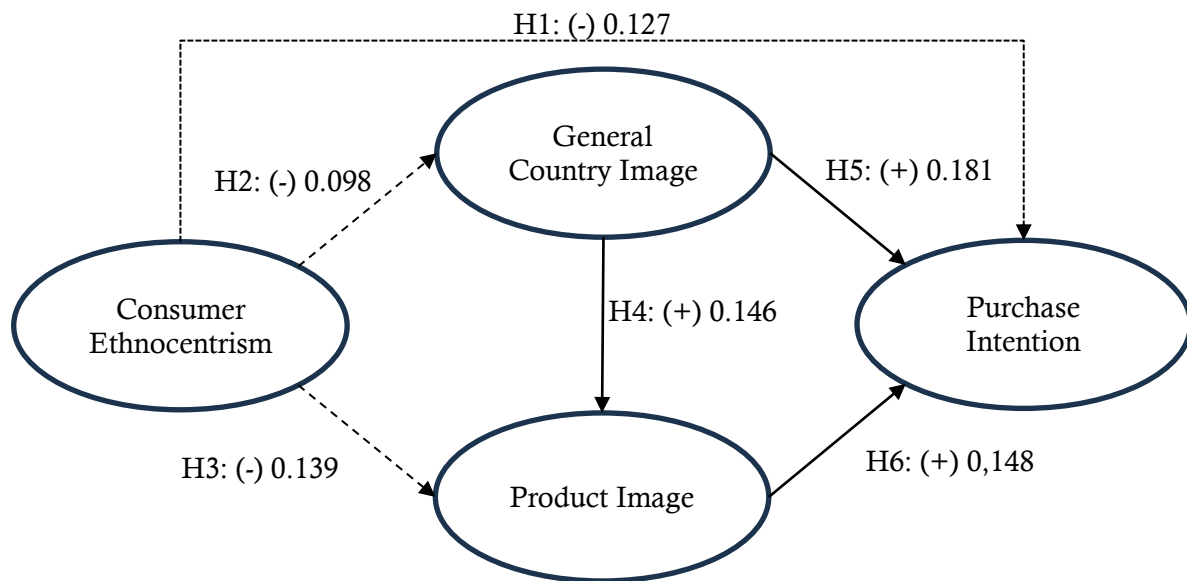


Figure 1.
Hypotheses Test Results

Consumer Ethnocentrism and Purchase Intention

While H1 hypothesized a negative effect of consumer ethnocentrism on purchase intention, the empirical findings revealed a statistically significant positive relationship ($\beta = 0.127$, C.R. = 2.502, $p = .012$), indicating that respondents with higher ethnocentric tendencies reported a greater, rather than diminished, intention to purchase Chinese cosmetics. This finding contradicts from Nguyen et al. (2023), who documented a negative effect among Vietnamese consumers, as well as the theoretical stance articulated by Salmanli and Omarli (2020) and Gantulga and Ganbold (2022) that ethnocentrism inherently dampens consumer interest in foreign goods. A plausible explanation for this unexpected direction lies in product category context; unlike the broad "foreign products" framing evaluated in prior literature, Chinese cosmetics in Indonesia have achieved rapid, highly visible advancements in functional quality, formulation innovation, and digital social media presence. Consequently, Indonesian consumers may evaluate these beauty offerings primarily on functional merit and aesthetic performance, even while maintaining nationalistic purchasing preferences toward other product categories. This empirical outcome strongly suggests that the inhibiting mechanism of consumer ethnocentrism on purchase intention is category-specific and context-dependent rather than universally applicable.

This counter-intuitive positive relationship highlights an emerging phenomenon termed "pragmatic nationalism" or "selective ethnocentrism," wherein modern consumers in developing economies compartmentalize their nationalistic ideals based on product domain, functional necessity, and perceived personal value (Baber et al., 2024; Aguilar-Rodríguez et al., 2025). In contemporary emerging markets, particularly among younger, digitally native consumer segments, national pride does not automatically translate into an absolute or blanket rejection of foreign goods; instead, consumers exercise nuanced selective judgment when evaluating personal care offerings where individual efficacy, dermatological safety, and aesthetic self-expression take operational precedence over macro-level economic protectionism (Kinawy, 2025). Foreign cosmetic brands entering Indonesia—most notably prominent Chinese market entrants such as Skintific, Focallure, Judydoll, and Perfect Diary—have strategically tailored their market penetration by combining hyper-localized digital marketing across interactive platforms like TikTok Shop and Instagram with rigorous local regulatory compliance, including Indonesian BPOM safety certifications and halal standards. This structural alignment allows ethnocentric consumers to psychologically rationalize their purchasing decisions, viewing Chinese cosmetics as safe, highly accessible, and value-driven personal wellness solutions rather than as economic

threats to domestic industries (Furukawa & Terasaki, 2025). Furthermore, recent systematic synthesis by Baber et al. (2024) and empirical insights from Curth et al. (2025) reinforce that the inhibiting boundary of consumer ethnocentrism substantially weakens in trend-driven, symbolic, and low-cost luxury categories such as skincare, where functional performance, active scientific ingredients, and immediate visual outcomes comfortably override ideological domestic bias. In this specific consumption context, highly ethnocentric Indonesian consumers perceive their acquisition of innovative C-Beauty products as a pragmatic personal choice that maximizes functional beauty benefits without compromising their underlying civic responsibility or national identity. Consequently, these findings contribute a novel theoretical insight to international consumer behavior literature by demonstrating that when foreign producers successfully harmonize product efficacy, localized safety compliance, and competitive pricing strategies, foreign purchase intentions can stably coexist with—and even positively correlate with—ethnocentric predispositions within dynamic emerging economy markets (Kinawy, 2025; Baber et al., 2024). It should be emphasized that constructs such as pragmatic nationalism, social media exposure, BPOM certification, halal compliance, and the evolving image of Chinese brands were not directly measured in the present research model; they are offered here as plausible post-hoc explanations for the unexpected positive path and should be treated as hypotheses for future confirmatory research rather than as findings of this study.

Consumer Ethnocentrism and General Country Image

The empirical evaluation of H2 revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between consumer ethnocentrism and general country image ($\beta = 0.098$, C.R. = 9.191, $p < .001$). This result contrary the hypothesized negative direction. This outcome also diverges from Nguyen et al. (2023), who documented a negative path in the Vietnamese context, but aligns partially with broader evidence that macro-country evaluations operate through distinct cognitive mechanisms. A plausible explanation is that Indonesian consumers' overall perception of China has been substantially reshaped by its rapid, visible technological advancements, industrial modernization, and economic growth, which are evaluated independently of domestic purchasing biases. Consequently, a consumer can simultaneously maintain a moral commitment to prioritizing local products while objectively acknowledging China's industrial, technological, and educational progress, echoing the core observations of Salmanli and Omarli (2020) and Gantulga and Ganbold (2022) that demonstrated national competence often drives country-image evaluations independently of ethnocentric prejudice.

This unexpected positive relationship illuminates a crucial theoretical distinction between cognitive country evaluations and affective nationalistic sentiments in international marketing (Furukawa & Terasaki, 2025). In modern consumer behavior literature, consumer ethnocentrism primarily reflects an affective and normative commitment to domestic market protectionism and in-group favoritism, which does not inherently require the cognitive derogation of an out-group nation's factual economic achievements (Baber et al., 2024; Curth et al., 2025). Within the Indonesian socio-economic landscape, China's prominent role as a global manufacturing power, infrastructural investor, and technological innovator provides an objective, empirical reality that consumers recognize regardless of their personal patriotic orientations. Consequently, ethnocentric Indonesian consumers can logically separate their normative duty to support local industries from their cognitive assessment of China's macro-level technological capability, economic strength, and industrial development (Kinawy, 2025). This psychological compartmentalization allows highly ethnocentric individuals to form favorable macro-country perceptions based on objective global developments, even while maintaining a strong personal preference for domestic consumption in their daily lives (Aguilar-Rodríguez et al., 2025). Furthermore, as cross-border trade, e-commerce connectivity, and digital media continuously showcase China's advancements in automation, biotechnology, and consumer goods manufacturing, the general image of China among emerging market consumers is increasingly anchored in rational performance indicators rather than emotional geopolitical stereotypes (Nguyen et al., 2024; Furukawa & Terasaki, 2025). This finding contributes important nuance to

Country-of-Origin (COO) theory by demonstrating that consumer ethnocentrism and favorable country image evaluations are not mutually exclusive constructs; instead, in dynamic emerging economies, ethnocentric predispositions can stably coexist with—and even positively align with—the cognitive recognition of a foreign country's industrial competence and global economic leadership (Baber et al., 2024; Kinawy, 2025). Because this positive path runs contrary to most prior evidence, an equally plausible explanation is measurement-related rather than substantive; before this result is treated as a robust theoretical finding, future replications should recheck the coding of the ethnocentrism and country-image items, the wording of any reverse-scored items, the direction of the country-image scale, and the possibility of conceptual overlap between the two measures used here.

Consumer Ethnocentrism and Product Image

H3 was not supported, as the ethnocentrism–product image path was positive but non-significant ($\beta = 0.139$, C.R. = 1.446, $p = .148$). This result is consistent with Nguyen et al. (2023), who likewise found no significant effect in the Vietnamese sample, although difference in the coefficient's sign. The consistency in non-significance across both studies suggests that consumers primarily evaluate a foreign product's image through concrete attributes—quality, innovation, packaging, and certification—rather than through their ethnocentric disposition, a view also supported by Gantulga and Ganbold (2022), who identify product-specific perceptions as the main driver of product image.

The non-significant impact of consumer ethnocentrism on product image provides meaningful theoretical insights into the cognitive decoupling between generalized nationalistic sentiment and specific product-level evaluations in personal care categories (Furukawa & Terasaki, 2025). In high-involvement and personal consumption domains like skincare and cosmetics, product image is predominantly constructed through direct sensory experiences, tangible attribute verification, and objective safety credentials rather than abstract socio-political ideologies (Kinawy, 2025). When evaluating Chinese cosmetics (C-Beauty), consumers tend to prioritize observable performance indicators, such as active dermatological ingredients, skin compatibility, visible efficacy, and formal regulatory compliance over the foreign origin of the manufacturing nation (Nguyen et al., 2024). Consequently, ethnocentric predispositions do not significantly distort or downgrade a consumer's perception of a foreign product's tangible image when high product quality and safety are clearly demonstrated (Baber et al., 2024). This finding aligns with modern international marketing literature suggesting that as market transparency increases through social media reviews, beauty influencer demonstrations, and digital e-commerce platforms, product-specific attributes effectively insulate product image from general consumer biases (Kinawy, 2025; Furukawa & Terasaki, 2025). In this context, Indonesian consumers evaluate Chinese cosmetics through an analytical, attribute-focused lens, ensuring that nationalistic protectionism remains separated from their assessment of a product's functional excellence and aesthetic appeal. Therefore, foreign cosmetic marketers entering emerging economies can successfully cultivate a strong, positive product image by emphasizing scientific validation, transparent ingredient sourcing, and localized regulatory compliance, thereby neutralizing potential ethnocentric barriers at the product evaluation stage (Baber et al., 2024; Nguyen et al., 2024).

General Country Image and Product Image

H4 was supported, so general country image had a positive and significant effect on product image ($\beta = 0.146$, C.R. = 5.154, $p < .001$). Consumers who view China more favorably as a country also tend to rate its cosmetic products more favorably, consistent with the halo-effect logic outlined in the literature review and with the core finding of Nguyen et al. (2023). Gantulga and Ganbold (2022) similarly identify country image as a key antecedent of product image among Mongolian consumers, reinforcing the generalizability of this relationship across different foreign-product contexts.

A standardized coefficient of $\beta = 0.146$, while statistically significant given the large critical ratio (C.R. = 5.154, $p < .001$), indicates that general country image explains a relatively modest portion of the variance in product image compared to other antecedents that may be present in the model. This suggests that although the halo effect is empirically confirmed, it operates as one of several converging influences on how consumers evaluate cosmetic products, rather than as the dominant determinant. From a theoretical perspective, this statistically significant path validates the enduring applicability of the classical halo effect within modern international marketing and consumer behavior research (Nguyen et al., 2024; Furukawa & Terasaki, 2025). As familiarity with the specific product category increases, the relative weight of general country image in shaping product evaluations may diminish, giving way to more product-specific image constructs.

General Country Image and Purchase Intention

H5 was supported, general country image positively and significantly predicted purchase intention ($\beta = 0.181$, C.R. = 2.745, $p = .006$), the largest structural coefficient in the model. This aligns with Nguyen et al. (2023) and with Gantulga and Ganbold's (2022) finding that country image is a key determinant of foreign-product purchase intention. It suggests that as China's international and technological reputation improves, Indonesian consumers become more willing to purchase its cosmetic products, independent of their ethnocentric disposition.

The finding that general country image emerges as the single strongest structural predictor of purchase intention in the model provides critical theoretical insights into consumer decision-making mechanisms within foreign market entry contexts (Nguyen et al., 2024; Kinawy, 2025). In modern international consumer behavior literature, a favorable macro-country image operates as a high-order cognitive schema and powerful signaling heuristic that systematically mitigates perceived functional, physical, and financial risks associated with foreign brand adoption (Furukawa & Terasaki, 2025). When evaluating personal care and beauty offerings—a high-involvement category characterized by intimate physical application, dermatological safety, and personal identity expression—consumers continuously seek overarching assurances of manufacturing precision, technological sophistication, and regulatory reliability from the producing nation (Baber et al., 2024). China's remarkable global trajectory, characterized by rapid technological innovation, industrial bio-engineering advancements, and economic modernization, has cultivated a robust macro-level reputation that directly instills consumer trust and behavioral readiness among Indonesian buyers. Consequently, positive cognitive assessments of China's broader national advancement translate directly into actionable purchase intentions, exerting a far more powerful structural influence than micro-level product evaluations or individual ethnocentric biases (Kinawy, 2025; Furukawa & Terasaki, 2025). This empirical dominance underscores that in dynamic emerging economies, macro-country reputation acts as the foundational trust catalyst, effectively bridging abstract admiration for a foreign nation's industrial competence with concrete purchase commitments toward its personal care brands (Baber et al., 2024). Furthermore, this outcome enriches Country-of-Origin (COO) theory by confirming that as an emerging superpower successfully transitions into a recognized global technological leader, its elevated general country image serves as an independent, primary driver of market adoption. This strategic mechanism enables foreign personal care brands to transcend domestic protectionist barriers and directly catalyze foreign purchase interest among digitally connected, value-driven consumers in international markets (Nguyen et al., 2024; Kinawy, 2025). It should be noted that this coefficient ($\beta = 0.181$) is only modestly larger than that of product image ($\beta = 0.148$); the difference between the two predictors is therefore better described as a modest, rather than a large or decisive, gap in explanatory strength.

Product Image and Purchase Intention

The structural analysis supported H6, confirming that product image exerts a significant positive effect on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.148$, C.R. = 2.244, $p = .025$). Consumers viewing Chinese cosmetics as high-quality and innovative are more inclined to buy them, corroborating

the cross-national consistency of product image as a key behavioral driver (Gantulga & Ganbold, 2022; Nguyen et al., 2023; Salmanli & Omarli, 2020).

These findings indicate that Indonesian consumers' purchase intention toward Chinese cosmetics is driven primarily by rational country and product image evaluations rather than ethnocentric sentiment, which counterintuitively yielded positive outcomes. This suggests that the negative effects of ethnocentrism documented in Vietnam, Mongolia, and Hungary are not universally generalizable, as advancements in quality, innovation, and country reputation can outweigh nationalist barriers in trend-driven categories like cosmetics.

Taken together, the unsupported hypotheses (H1–H3) indicate that the behavioral effects of consumer ethnocentrism are highly conditional rather than flawed in theory. This pattern is driven by the specific context examined: a fast-evolving personal care sector, a digitally native Generation Z cohort, and the active market penetration of Chinese brands. Since different dynamics may emerge in low-involvement industries or alternative demographic segments, these results highlight that the ethnocentrism–purchase intention link is highly context-dependent.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationships among consumer ethnocentrism, general country image, product image, and purchase intention toward Chinese cosmetic products in the Indonesian market using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The findings demonstrate that consumer ethnocentrism significantly influences purchase intention and general country image, whereas its direct effect on product image is positive but statistically insignificant. General country image significantly affects both product image and purchase intention, while product image has a significant positive effect on purchase intention. These findings indicate that although consumer ethnocentrism remains relevant in shaping consumers' responses to foreign products, country- and product-related evaluations provide more consistent explanatory power for purchase intention. In particular, the positive effects of general country image and product image reinforce the Country-of-Origin (COO) effect, suggesting that consumers' perceptions of the country of origin can shape their evaluations of foreign products and subsequently influence their purchase decisions. The findings also contribute to international marketing and consumer behavior literature by integrating ethnocentrism, country image, and product image within a single framework and demonstrating that purchase intention toward Chinese cosmetics is shaped by the interaction of psychological tendencies and cognitive evaluations of the country and product.

From a managerial perspective, Chinese cosmetic companies seeking to strengthen their position in Indonesia should simultaneously enhance country-related associations and product-related perceptions by emphasizing product safety, technological advancement, innovation, manufacturing standards, and internationally recognized quality certifications. Consistent product quality and positive customer experiences are also important for strengthening product image and purchase intention. These recommendations, including pricing, certification, social media engagement, and customer-experience management, should be interpreted as managerial implications consistent with the findings rather than as variables directly tested in the structural model. Nevertheless, the study has several limitations. Its focus on Chinese cosmetic products and Indonesian consumers may constrain the generalizability of the findings across other product categories, countries of origin, and consumer segments. Future research should therefore examine additional determinants such as brand image, perceived quality, trust, electronic word-of-mouth, customer satisfaction, and brand awareness. Researchers could also decompose consumer ethnocentrism into cognitive, affective, and normative dimensions, distinguish cognitive from affective country image, and extend the outcome beyond purchase intention to willingness to pay. Incorporating brand trust as a parallel explanatory mechanism and positioning future studies within the broader literature on consumer ethnocentrism would further strengthen theoretical development. Finally, comparative studies across countries, product categories, and consumer groups could provide deeper insights into when and why ethnocentrism, country image, and product image exert different influences on consumers' responses to foreign products.

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