

# The Interplay of Perceived Brand Globalness, Localness and Consumer Cosmopolitanism: A Social Identity Complexity Perspective

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## **Abstract**

This paper introduces social identity complexity to explain cosmopolitan consumers' brand preferences in respect to perceived brand globalness and localness. Contrary to the predominant ingroup vs. outgroup view, we propose that for cosmopolitans both their cosmopolitan and local identities serve as ingroups. Hypothesizing on the interrelationships between these two ingroups, we conducted four experimental studies. Respondents evaluated real brands in low-price utilitarian and hedonic product categories. Results show that (1) only for utilitarian products (2) cosmopolitanism negatively moderates the effect of perceived brand localness on perceived quality, leading to higher quality perceptions for global brands. We can explain these results with a compartmentalization of multiple identities, by which identities are activated context specific. A promising communication and branding strategy for utilitarian products can be to decrease brand localness, if cosmopolitans are a target group.

**Keywords:** *perceived brand globalness; consumer cosmopolitanism; social identity complexity*

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