

19th International Scientific Conference; Economics and Management 2014, ICEM 2014, 23-25  
April 2014, Riga, Latvia

## Consumer ethnocentrism and behavior in a market of dietary supplements

Ingrida Šmaižienė<sup>a\*</sup>, Rimgailė Vaitkienė<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a, b</sup> Kaunas University of Technology, K. Donelaičio g. 73, LT-44029 Kaunas, Lithuania

---

### Abstract

The study discloses the relationship between consumer ethnocentrism (CE) and behavior in the Lithuanian market of dietary supplements. The correlation between the CE level and consumers' demographic characteristics, as well as consumers' perceptions on quality and safety of local-made and imported dietary supplements are discussed. The relationship between the CE level and factors influencing purchase decisions is presented and discussed

© 2014 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license

(<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>).

Peer-review under responsibility of the Kaunas University of Technology.

**Keywords:** Consumer ethnocentrism; country of origin; consumer behavior; product perception.

---

### 1. Introduction

Despite the growing consumer cosmopolitanism and openness to foreign products, consumer ethnocentrism (CE) remains a significant issue in researching consumer behavior. CE refers to consumer perceptions that buying foreign-made products is inappropriate, immoral and may hurt national businesses and employment (Shimp & Sharma, 1987; Auruskeviciene et al., 2012). Transferred to economic actions, such CE attitudes effect consumers' perceptions of national and imported products, as well as purchase decisions (Kaynak & Kara, 2002).

Previous studies on CE explore consumers' ethnocentric feelings not only as a drive of the moral obligation to buy local-made products, but also as a determinant of product perceptions (Pecotich & Rosenthal, 2001; Smaiziene

---

\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +370 37 300122.

E-mail address: [ingrida.smaiziene@ktu.lt](mailto:ingrida.smaiziene@ktu.lt)

& Vaitkiene, 2013). High level of CE is related to rating the domestic products higher (Acharya & Elliott, 2003; Carpenter et al., 2013) and even paying premium prices for them (Drozdenko & Jensen, 2009). Consumers high in ethnocentrism tend to treat imported products as the ones with lower quality and decreased equity (Shankarmahesh, 2006; Saffu et al., 2010). In the marketplace, strong ethnocentric attitudes might lead to overestimation of domestic products or underestimation of foreign-made products (Sharma et al., 1995; Cumberland et al., 2010). Furthermore, the findings of Watson and Wright (2000) indicate that ethnocentric consumers are more likely to buy products made in close countries, if locally-made products are not available (Evanschitzky et al., 2008). It is possible to make the premise that ethnocentric consumers have more favorable perceptions of the products produced in geographically and culturally close countries.

The previous research suggests that CE might be used for predicting the importance placed on a product's country-of-origin in comparison to other intrinsic and extrinsic attributes of a product (Mockaitis et al., 2013). Consumers high in ethnocentrism pay more attention to the country-of-origin cue (Cumberland et al., 2010). Non-ethnocentric consumers are less concerned about the product's country-of-origin and pay more attention to other intrinsic and extrinsic cues (Cumberland et al., 2010); as such consumers do not feel any moral obligation to purchase domestic products (Acharya & Elliott, 2003; Saffu et al., 2010).

The level of CE is tightly related to consumers' demographic characteristics (Erdogan & Uzkurt, 2010; Siemieniako et al., 2011; Josiassen et al., 2011; Mockaitis et al., 2013). Furthermore, the empirical findings of previous researches suggest CE manifests in a different way in various markets. This calls for a product-specific and regional-specific approach while analyzing the phenomenon of CE. Product-specific approach leads to considering that consumers are more sensitive to country-of-origin of the products that are consumed directly (Drozdenko & Jensen, 2009) – food, drinks, toothpaste, etc. In this research, the market of dietary supplements was chosen, as the dietary supplements present a group of products that are consumed directly and are related to more physical risk when compared to other groups of products.

Regional-specific approach leads to searching some common tendencies among the countries with similar characteristics. In post-soviet countries, the consumer values and attitudes, including consumer ethnocentrism, were inevitably shaped by such factors as centrally planned economy, limited imports and lack of international competition, high consumption of national products, limited advertising and sales promotion techniques in the past (Reardon et al., 2005; Kreckova et al., 2012), as well as recent liberalization of economies and integration into the European Union. In this research, Lithuanian market was chosen as an example of post-soviet country and transitioning economy in the Central and Eastern Europe.

The research problem discussed in the paper: what is the relationship between the consumer ethnocentrism and consumer behavior in a Lithuanian market of dietary supplements.

This study aims to disclose the relationship between the consumer ethnocentrism and behavior in a Lithuanian market of dietary supplements. The following research questions are being discussed in the study: what is the relationship between CE and consumer demographic characteristics; what is the relationship between CE and consumer perceptions of domestic and imported products; what is the relationship between the CE and the importance of factors influencing purchase decisions; what is the relationship between the CE and sort of information searched during the purchase process in the market of dietary supplements. The research method applied are consumer survey (N=352) and statistical analysis.

## 2. Method

Data for this study was collected by means of coordinated survey online and survey in written form throughout Lithuania in April 2013. The sample consists of 352 consumers.

The CE level was measured with the help of consumer ethnocentric tendencies scale (CETSCALE) developed by Shimp and Sharma (1987). The original version of 17-item CETSCALE was modified and shortened to the 12-item scale. On the basis of the data collected by means of this scale, four groups of respondents having different ethnocentric attitudes were distinguished – from low CE to high CE.

In order to survey consumers' perceptions about the quality of dietary supplements manufactured in Lithuania and foreign countries, seven-point scale was used (1-very low quality, 7-very high quality). For surveying consumer's perceptions about the safety of domestic and imported dietary supplements the three-point scale was

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1113183>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1113183>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)