



Testing Consumer's Ethnocentrism towards Malaysian Made Products by Using Trucet Scale

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this paper is to test the correlation using Trucet scale to such constructs as openness, dogmatism and collectivism/individualism. It also to identify the most influential independent variable on consumer ethnocentrism. Besides that, this study also been done to examine the relationship between dependent variable (consumer ethnocentrism-Trucet scale) and independent variable (dogmatism, openness, collectivism). Data collection done by using primary source such as questionnaire distributed to 100 respondents in Malacca. Questionnaire been constructed using 7 point likert scale (totally disagree-strongly agree). Secondary data used were journals and articles. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software been used to analyse the data by testing Cronbach Alpha, descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation. Consumer's ethnocentrism is expected to be positively correlated with the variables given. Each and every variables will be measured separately the correlation by using Trucet scale. Ethnocentrism will be useful especially when consumers are reluctant to make use of services provided by foreign companies as they fear this could damage the domestic economy. Practically, this study will help the governments and marketers to identify the patterns of consumption behaviour by their citizens. Besides that, this scale will help government to analyse, promote and protect the local industry. On the whole, they can learn consumer's attitude and decide what is good for nation and citizen.

KEYWORDS: Consumer Ethnocentrism, Trucet Scale, Dogmatism, Openness, Collectivism.

INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to provide an clear view of the background of the study. It also discusses the problem statement and the objectives of the study. The word "ethnocentrism" is originally a sociological concept, which is introduced by [15], who defines it 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. Each group nourishes its own pride and vanity, boasts itself superior, exalts its own divinities and looks with contempt on outsiders". It has used the word refer to ethnic centric feelings (hence, "ethnocentrism") in his book "Folkways". Ethnocentrism potraits an inferior view of all other groups, except of someones own group of people. Ethnocentrism been widely used in various situations of ones daily life, politics and social life, thus also in economic and commercial environments especially when consumers are less desirable to make use of services provided by foreign companies as they fear this could damage the local economy. Consumer ethnocentricity is a manner that influences consumer behavior, and thus has important marketing strategies for companies doing business in international markets or companies that are expecting to expand globally. Consumer ethnocentrism towards services can be defined as "consumers trust on willingness and relativeness of consuming services provided by alien companies [16]. Consumers with ethnocentric tendencies believe that the use of services, provided by foreign companies, will be destroying the domestic economy, and eventually will harm their own personal wellbeing, for instance, in terms of unemployment or lead to less prosperity. This leads to preference of their own country products and consumers tends to reject foreign made products. Consumer ethnocentrism is closely related to so-called country-of-origin image effects; both concepts evoke certain attitudes towards services from abroad. The main difference can be found in the specific nature of these attitudes. The main tenet of consumer ethnocentrism is the dichotomy of the attitudes towards two groups of services: domestic (in-group) and foreign (out-group). The construct has been developed having in mind only the domestic products and it gives a simplistic static gross indication about the attitudes towards foreign products. In [13] has adapted [15] concept of ethnocentrism to actually study consumer behavior and named it "consumer ethnocentrism". It specify that consumers who are ethnocentric infer that buying foreign made products is non patriotic, causes termination of jobs, and harm the local economy. Vice verse , consumers who are non-ethnocentric view imported products on their virtue without consideration of where these products are made. Consumer ethnocentrism, as defined by [12], "represents the beliefs held by American consumers about the appropriateness, indeed morality, of purchasing foreign made products". The

basic premise of the ethnocentric belief is that the purchase of foreign products will in some way 'hurt' America. This 'hurt' may take many forms, but centers primarily on the ethnocentric consumer perceiving the purchase of a foreign product as causing negative economic impact or being an unpatriotic act. Trucet scale has been developed in order to measure consumer ethnocentrism with 14 scales item. Trucet scale has good psychometric properties, consistently demonstrating construct validity in various tests of discriminance and convergence. Trucet scale is designed to truly capture consumer ethnocentrism in the way the concept was first propounded by [15]. Trucet scale deliberately avoids the pitfall of contamination by strictly adhering to Sumner's definition of ethnocentrism and deriving its scale items from an initial pool of unbiased items. Trucet scale was developed and introduced by [5]. The 14-item Trucet scale also satisfies "3-Component View of Attitude" [17].

Consumers are known as the important determinant for marketers to produce their products. Some researchers concerned on determining whether consumers are prone towards preference for domestic products. Therefore, this research had been carried in Malaysia specifically to identify the preference tendency of consumers towards their local products by using constructs which been used in previous research. This will help the marketers and relevant parties to study their consumers purchasing behavior and will re-think of any possible solutions to attract their consumer to be faithful with their local products. Besides that, tests that have been done by [5] which focus on the discriminant validity and convergent validity of Trucet scale with dogmatism, and collectivism. Initial tests also indicate that, in correlations with related psychometric constructs, Trucet scale has satisfied the demands of convergent validity and discriminant validity; and nomological validity. Hence, on the balance of evidence, Trucet scale satisfies the rigours of reliability and validity [18]. The objective is to examine the correlation between consumer ethnocentrism as measured by Trucet scale to such constructs as dogmatism, openness and collectivism.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In [12], it phrases "consumer ethnocentrism" "represent the belief held by the American consumers (for example) about the appropriateness, indeed morality, of purchasing foreign products". Highly ethnocentric people has a variety of values, emblem and community and hold in scorn the values of other groups. The idea trigger interpretation for the prejudice toward domestic products [7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 19]. Trucet scale is designed to truly capture consumer ethnocentrism in the way the concept was first propounded by [15]. Trucet scale deliberately avoids the pitfall of contamination by strictly adhering to [15] definition of ethnocentrism and deriving its scale items from an initial pool of unbiased items. In [5] opted for constructing a specific scale to measure this constructs, named as the Trucet scale.

Dogmatism may be explained as the intolerance and prejudice of a bigot, or, in simpler terms, the predisposition to fundamentally strong views. In [12] has used 20-item dogmatism scale to demonstrate a positive correlation. Dogmatism refers to a personality trait that views reality in black and white.

According to [20], in the USA those exhibiting less dogmatism have been found to display a more favorable attitude towards foreign products. In [12] reports a statistically significant correlation of 0.40 between ethnocentrism and dogmatism in their "crafted with pride" study. In his evolution of theoretical propositions which about the authoritarian personality assume on what appears to be an opposite posits. He has engrossed and exhibit that people measure sources and idea without regard to topic. This theory suggests that people have an abiding personality syndrome that predicts how open or accepting they are of concepts and people in general.

Cultural openness is driven by receptiveness to communicate with people from other cultures and experience some of their artifacts. Studies that found a negative relationship between cultural openness and CETSCALE [12] seem to have relied heavily on conventional wisdom that "cross-cultural interactions and travel opportunities can broaden one's mind". However, such studies fail to consider another adage namely that of "familiarity breeds contempt" in the same vein. Given that global consumers are considered to be individuals whose cultural and national differences do not affect their buying behaviour. It is reasonable to assume that as the level of importance that an individual attaches to ethnocentric tendencies decreases, the more that individual could be viewed as a globally open consumer [21, 22]. However, the results from previous empirical studies are not consistent. It found that "cultural openness" was negatively related to consumer ethnocentric tendencies. The "cultural openness" merely implies a passive exposure and acceptance or no rejection of foreign culture and people [11].

Collectivist cultures people are mutually beneficial within their own groups (family, tribe, nation, etc.), give value and importance to their own group in order to shape their behaviour on the basis of in-group norms, and behave in a common way. In broad, collectivists prefer or are anticipated to maintain solid relations with in-groups-typically relatives, friends or colleagues-than individualists. Precisely, collectivists generally tend to subordinate personal goals to group goals and an individual's goal is attained through contributing to the in-group's goals [23].

METHODOLOGY

All the questions were close-ended in nature as closed questions help respondents to make quick decisions to choose among several alternatives before them [10]. The questionnaire consists of three major sections, ranging from section A to section C. Each section has subsections regarding the relevant variables in this study. The questions had been given to 100 respondents in Malacca. For the questionnaire, Likert scale 1-7 (Totally disagree-strongly agree) had been used. Questions for the independents variables had been adopted from previous studies meanwhile questions for the dependent variable; consumer’s ethnocentrism as measured by Trucet scale. In this study, a descriptive study was initially undertaken to describe the group of the respondents involved with their basic characteristics. Hence, profiles of the respondents’ demographic information (e.g. age, race, religion, sex, highest academic qualification, income, marital status, management level and hometown) as well as the variable involved (e.g. Trucet scale, openness, dogmatism, and collectivism/individualism) were obtained to provide an understanding of the present status of the respondents. Furthermore, hypothesis testing had been done on Trucet scale, openness, dogmatism, and collectivism to explain several relationships. In this research, non-probability sampling had been used whereby convenience sampling had been used in each element. It means that, individuals that are readily available had been selected as a respondent for this research. This research is descriptive research because we are trying to find the behaviour of the respondent with their ethnocentric tendencies towards their country.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reliability test had been conducted for Trucet scale resulted Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.93 with 14 items in Trucet scale. Reliability has also been conducted on related constructs that are hypothesized to be theoretically related to consumer ethnocentrism. The reliability coefficient of the Openness scale is 0.819 with number of item 7 as in the openness scale. The reliability coefficient of the Dogmatism scale is 0.866. And the numbers of items are 20. The reliability coefficient of the Collectivism scale is 0.649 with 6 items. All the constructs are reliable with outstanding Cronbach’s Alpha value except for collectivism has a moderate reliable value. Therefore, we conclude that the questions are valid.

Table 1: Reliability test

Variables	Cronbach Alpha	No.of Items	Internal consistency
Trucet Scale	0.928	14	Good
Dogmatism	0.866	20	Good
Openness	0.819	7	Good
Collectivism	0.649	6	Moderate

Correlation between Consumer Ethnocentrism (Trucet Scale) and Dogmatism

Table 2: Correlations between Trucet scale and dogmatism

		Trucet	dogmatism
Trucet	Pearson Correlation	1	.349(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	100
dogmatism	Pearson Correlation	.349(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	100	100

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

Hypothesis H₁: Consumer ethnocentrism (Trucet scale) and dogmatism are positively correlated and supported. The correlation between dogmatism and consumer ethnocentrism (Trucet scale) is weak but significant $r = 0.349$ ($p = 0.000$)

Correlation between Consumer Ethnocentrism (Trucet Scale) and Openness to Foreign Cultures

Table 3: Correlations between Trucet scale and openness

		Trucet	openness
Trucet	Pearson Correlation	1	-.135
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.181
	N	100	100
openness	Pearson Correlation	-.135	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.181	
	N	100	100

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

Hypothesis H₂: Consumer ethnocentrism (Trucet Scale) and openness to foreign culture are negatively correlated is supported because the correlation is weak and not significant, $r = -0.135$ ($p = 0.181$)

Correlation between Consumer Ethnocentrism (Trucet Scale) and Collectivism

Table 4: Correlations between Trucet scale and collectivism/individualism

		Trucet	Col/ind
Trucet	Pearson Correlation	1	.480(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	100
Col/ind	Pearson Correlation	.480(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	100	100

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

Hypothesis H₃: Consumer ethnocentrism (as measured by Trucet scale) and collectivism are positively correlated and supported. The correlation between collectivism and consumer ethnocentrism (as measured by Trucet scale) is weak but significant $r = 0.480$ ($p = 0.000$)

CONCLUSION

The main objective of the study is to examine the relationship of consumer's ethnocentrism using Trucet Scale to such constructs as dogmatism, openness and collectivism had been achieved. Trucet Scale can be applied to identify consumer's ethnocentric tendencies towards Malaysia or ones nation. By using such information, it can help government to identify the pattern of consumption behaviour of their citizen. Besides that, they can improve themselves by taking into consideration type of rights, knowledge and goods needed by their citizen. If their consumer ethnocentric tendencies are weak, remedial action to fend off foreign products and services can be taken into consideration as suggested by [1, 4, 24]. Besides that, these scales will help the government in smaller countries to analyse, and then, promote and even protect the local industry. The government will able to think the way of promoting its nation and create trust within their citizen.

Moreover, the relationship measured between the constructs will help country to realize what is important and good for the country. Through the constructs which had been measured, it can be said that the government as well as marketers can learn the consumer attitudes. This will help the marketer to identify the pattern of consumer behaviour and can help them to improve more on their marketing strategy. Marketer may adjust on their advertisement strategy looking at the ethnocentric tendencies of the consumer. For future, this research can be expanded by identifying antecedents and predictability power of Trucet scale towards different ethnic groups in Malaysia.

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