

CONSUMER ETHNOCENTRISM RESEARCH IN SLOVAKIA IN THE MARKETING FIELD IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS: SUMMARIZATION AND SYSTEMATIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE

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Abstract: *The article focuses on the presentation of the current state of consumer ethnocentrism in the conditions of Slovakia based on the latest scientific knowledge. The article's goal is to provide an overview and organisation of the professional and scientific literature that has been written about consumer ethnocentrism in Slovakia. In our work, we use a number of scientific methods that are characteristic for secondary research. In this sense, we use a qualitative bibliographic analysis. The results of the work point to the current state, factors of influence, and trends of consumer ethnocentrism in Slovakia.*

Keywords: Consumer ethnocentrism, Slovakia, bibliometric.

1 INTRODUCTION

A theory developed towards the end of the 1980s is consumer ethnocentrism (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). Consumer ethnocentrism is the idea of viewing one's own country through the lens of its economic circumstances and how those circumstances affect its citizens (Korytinová and Vernerová, 2022). Consumer ethnocentrism was defined by Shimp and Sharma (1987) as “American consumers' belief in the inadequacy and immorality of buying foreign products; from the perspective of ethnocentric consumers, buying imported products is wrong because it negatively affects the home country's economy, causes job regulation, and is unpatriotic”. Therefore, from the perspective of the extremely ethnocentric customer, imported goods are unsatisfactory (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). The definition highlights this concept's broad significance.

Historically, Slovakia has undergone significant political and economic changes, transitioning from a part of Czechoslovakia to an independent nation in 1993 (Čvirik and Dotong, 2023). This historical background has played a role in shaping the identity and consciousness of Slovak consumers. Slovakian consumer ethnocentrism is a complicated phenomenon impacted by marketing, cultural, and economic variables. Businesses looking to thrive in the Slovak market must comprehend these characteristics. In the context of Slovakia, more investigation is required to examine new patterns and the dynamic character of consumer ethnocentrism. It is essential for businesses operating in Slovakia to understand and navigate the nuances of consumer ethnocentrism. This can involve tailoring marketing messages to resonate with local

values, incorporating elements of Slovakian culture into product design and promotion, and fostering a sense of community engagement.

To evaluate consumer ethnocentrism, a scale known as CETSCALE was developed. Despite having a fairly universal quality, it has been modified to meet the requirements of numerous investigations. It should be mentioned that, in reality, it serves as the sole instrument for measuring consumer ethnocentrism at the moment and is employed in a number of studies conducted in Slovakia on the subject.

The article's goal is to provide an overview and organisation of the professional and scientific literature that has been written about consumer ethnocentrism in Slovakia.

2 METHODOLOGY

We employ a variety of general philosophical-scientific techniques in the paper that is being given, including synthesis, analysis, scientific abstraction, and generalisation. We apply the meta-analysis procedure concurrently. A meta-analysis, to put it simply, is an examination of several sources and research from which a certain pattern is found or potential links are sought. Given that we specialise in Slovakian conditions, the paper mostly uses data from secondary sources, especially Slovak authors, from a scientific research perspective. The aim is to provide an image of the current situation in Slovakia in the context of consumer ethnocentrism. In terms of topicality, we use and systematize only high-quality scientific and

professional articles that are not older than 2018. We obtained scientific articles and metadata with the help of the Google Scholar database, where we used "Consumer ethnocentrism Slovakia" as key words, filtering the time interval of the results from 2018. To ensure maximal objectivity, we followed the Google Scholar algorithm to create a ranking of recommendations based on relevance to keywords. The generation result represents a source cited as Google scholar (2023). In the work, we will focus on the (first / most relevant) ten studies.

3 CONSUMER ETHNOCENTRISMS IN SLOVAKIA

As the first, i.e., the most relevant literary source based on the mentioned parameters, Google Scholar determined Čvirik (2021a) to be us. In the article, the author discusses the influence of consumer ethnocentrism and patriotism on the choice of selected domestic products, while the sample of the primary survey consists of 628 respondents. The results indicate that both examined concepts (consumer ethnocentrism and patriotism) have a statistically significant effect on the evaluation and preference of domestic production. Research on consumer ethnocentrism was conducted on the basis of a modified (9-item) version of consumer ethnocentrism, which achieved an acceptable overall level of reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.888). The author emphasizes that not all product categories are affected in the same way. The research points to the need to examine consumer ethnocentrism both in a broader (general) context, such as measuring consumer ethnocentrism and examining the possible effects of consumer ethnocentrism, and also more narrowly (specifically) in terms of effects on individual product categories. The results of the work point to a below-average level of consumer ethnocentrism.

The second article focuses on the influence of factors on the level of consumer ethnocentrism (Čvirik, 2019). In the article, the author presents comprehensive research that examines factors such as age, gender, income, level of education, worldmindedness, patriotism, and national economy assessment. According to the findings (Čvirik, 2019) of the primary study, consumer ethnocentrism is lower than average. Socio-demographic characteristics have a considerable impact on customer ethnocentrism. Because age is a big positive element, older consumers are more ethnocentric than younger consumers. Gender is also an essential issue, and according to the poll results, women are more ethnocentric than men. Another major component that has been investigated at the three levels of education appears to be the level of education. Consumers with less education are more ethnocentric in general.

The investigation of the income element revealed an intriguing situation. Consumer income has been found to be a significant determinant, but not in the way that foreign literature predicts, but in the other direction. As a result, low-income consumers are less ethnocentric than higher-income consumers. Exploring

the notions of worldmindedness and patriotism revealed a significant regression, indicating that these concepts are strongly connected. Worldmindedness has a detrimental impact on consumer ethnocentrism, but patriotism has a good impact. The influence of the assessment (attitude) on the national economy has been found to be a factor influencing the amount of consumer ethnocentrism in the sense that customers who feel that their ethnic group is superior to others are more likely to be ethnocentric.

The third offered research focuses on international comparison, namely the comparison of the rate and selected demographic influences between Slovakia and the Czech Republic (Čvirik2021b). The paper's findings show that demographic parameters (age and gender) influence consumer ethnocentrism in both nations, but not in the same way or to the same degree. The difference in culture that underpins consumer ethnocentrism might be the source of these discrepancies. For example, in the case of gender, Slovak women are more ethnocentric, while in Czech it is the opposite.

The fourth most relevant paper focuses on the meaning of consumer ethnocentrism among young Slovaks (Čvirik, 2021c). The author identified that the level of consumer ethnocentrism is significantly lower in the youth segment than was measured in other studies. The youth segment is defined as consumers under the age of 26. The study indicates that the influence and importance of consumer ethnocentrism in the youth segment (without controlling for other factors) is low. The author explains this by saying that young consumers are indeed interested in domestic products, but not because of the effect of consumer ethnocentrism but rather because of the characteristics that these products have (the country of origin effect).

The fifth research focuses on the possible connection between consumer ethnocentrism and the concept of world-mindedness (Čvirik and Stanková, 2019). The authors use a number of mathematical and statistical methods in order to examine and verify the relationship between the mentioned psychological and social concepts. Measurements were carried out on generally accepted scale instruments, while the level of reliability was verified.

Čvirik and Stanková (2019) state that such a relationship can be observed, and it is a strong negative relationship. In other words, consumers with a higher level of consumer ethnocentrism achieve a lower level of world-mindedness, and vice versa. This analogy is in line with the theoretical understanding of the concept, when a consumer showing consumer ethnocentrism is more oriented to the home country and its prosperity than to the whole world.

The sixth research presents an investigation of the dynamics of consumer behaviour in the context of ethnocentric tendencies (Olšovský et al., 2022). The article deals with dynamics in the context of observation over time, specifically in 2013 and 2020. The authors concluded that Slovak consumers are sensitive to price and are therefore not willing to pay a higher price for local products. It can also be stated that

the influence of ethnocentric tendencies can also be observed in the case of Slovak consumers.

The seventh research reflects on the COVID-19 situation, while the author's collective, led by Čvirik has four goals: (1) to assess the degree of health consciousness in Slovakia and Croatia during the pandemic and to highlight the likely effect of selected demographic parameters on this rate; (2) to determine the extent of consumer ethnocentrism in Slovakia and Croatia during the pandemic and to investigate the impact of selected demographic factors on this extent; (3) to investigate the link between health consciousness as a factor influencing consumer ethnocentrism; and (4) to identify differences in the studied variables in Croatia and Slovakia (Čvirik et al., 2023). The findings indicate a high degree of health knowledge among respondents, as well as an average (in Slovakia) and above-average (in Croatia) incidence of consumer ethnocentrism. The findings reveal a weak link between the studied concepts.

The eighth paper is methodical and methodological in nature, focusing on the appropriateness of using CETSCALE with seventeen items and CETSCALE with ten items in the conditions of Slovakia (Čvirik, 2022). As the name suggests, the aim is to examine the suitability of these two generally accepted tools. The results show that both instruments produce almost identical results, demographic variables have identical effects on them, and in general, they can be considered substitutes. The author points to the fact that the construct is similar, but the version with a lower number of statements may be more suitable for a higher willingness of respondents to respond to fewer statements (for reasons of time and for reasons of concentration of respondents).

The ninth research focuses on the investigation of the perceived price and quality of food in the context of the country of origin of the European Union by young Slovaks, while the emphasis is also placed on the influence of ethnocentric tendencies (Čvirik, 2023). The research consists of several parts, including the measurement of consumer ethnocentrism, the examination of the perception of the two basic factors affecting purchasing behaviour (price and quality), and the examination of the connections between these phenomena.

The findings reveal that various nations' perceptions of food pricing and quality vary. According to the findings, consumer ethnocentrism is lower than average in Slovakia, and it has an influence on food judgement solely in the home country.

The final tenth article examines young Slovaks again, while the goal is to investigate the potential influence of consumer ethnocentrism on the perception of organic foods (Čvirik and Korytinová, 2022). The authors focus on the measurement of consumer ethnocentrism with the help of CETSCALE. At the same time, they create a tool called the POF-scale (Perception of Organic Food Scale), which consists of thirteen statements and aims to measure the perception of organic food.

The authors verified the reliability of both instruments. The tool was applied to a segment of young Slovaks. The results indicate that the youth segment achieves a low level of consumer ethnocentrism. They also concluded that the perception of organic food is positive, and thus that young consumers are interested in products of this nature. At the same time, they point out that consumer ethnocentrism is unlikely to be a factor influencing the perception of organic products.

4 CONCLUSION

The aim of the article is to provide an overview and organization of professional and scientific literature that was written about consumer ethnocentrism in Slovakia. In the thesis, we take a closer look at the articles that were published in the last five years on the topic in question. The work has the character of a research or literary review of the ten most relevant scientific works in the field of consumer ethnocentrism in Slovakia. Optimisation when choosing the most relevant sources results from the Google Scholar algorithm.

Within the research presented, it can be concluded that CETSCALE appears to be a suitable tool for measuring and investigating consumer ethnocentrism in Slovakia. It can also be assumed that consumer ethnocentrism is a multidimensional concept that changes over time and therefore requires constant investigation. It is also influenced by many factors, be they demographic factors, psychological factors, or facts at the micro- and macro-economic levels. It can be estimated that the influence of factors is also dynamic, and therefore regular verification and investigation are appropriate. In this context, continuous research on the mentioned phenomenon is appropriate.

In the future, it would be appropriate to investigate other elements from secondary sources. It would also be advisable to examine other databases and create a more comprehensive overview. Google Scholar is unique in that it draws from multiple databases and can therefore be considered a universal source of knowledge.

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