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THE CONSUMER ETHNOCENTRISM DIAGNOSIS OF POLES, SLOVAKIANS AND ROMANIANS WITH THE USE OF THE CETSCALE METHOD

Summary

The results of the empirical research have been presented in the following publication. Their main aim was to define the consumer ethnocentrism level of the inhabitants of Poland, Slovakia and Romania. The main source material was acquired due to direct interviews, conducted in three towns: Rzeszów (Poland), Kosice (Slovakia) and Oradea (Romania), in a chosen group of 1200 respondents (400 people in each town). The international CETSCALE questionnaire, which has been subjected to the validation process, has been used as a measuring instrument. The analyses presented, clearly indicate that Polish, Slovakian and Romanian consumers show ethnocentric tendencies. However, the strongest CET scale values have been obtained in Slovakian communi-ty. It has also been noted that demographic factors have meaningful influence on the ethnocentric level of the three researched groups.²

Keywords: consumer ethnocentrism, CETSCALE questionnaire, Poland-Slovakia-Romania empirical research

Introduction

In the conditions of global manufacturing, the opening of economics to the world and more and more efficient international logistics, domestic markets are filled up with unified, global goods offer, which has bigger and bigger quantitative and structural range. During the process of purchasing, consumers have to choose among hundreds and thousands of goods, which represent manufacturers

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almost from all over the world, items, which have unique features and utilities, which make traditional trading stock more attractive.

The growing scale of international goods exchange and the phenomenon of massive inflow of foreign products connected to it, paid attention to negative effects of the full opening of economies to foreign countries – to the inflow of the capital and goods from one's own country, to the level of competition on the internal market, to the changeable situation on the domestic labor market. The ethnocentric phenomena are more and more often observed in different spheres and areas of human activity as a counterbalance of common presence of "strangers" – people, products, institutions and norms, they are perceived and judged in different ways, but more and more often as a defensive reaction of market subjects, social and vocational groups, and even authority institution. Skillfully monitored phenomena of preferring one's own material and spiritual possessions in different guises and strength can be (and are) the target of external stimulation from the interested social, political and economic authorities.

In the following paper, the phenomenon of consumer ethnocentrism has been discussed and the empirical research results have also been presented. Their main aim was to conduct a wide diagnosis of Polish, Slovakian and Romanian consumers' ethnocentric attitudes, including their ethnic differences. Particular attention has been paid to defining consumer ethnocentrism level and showing the influence of chosen demographic factors on the CETSCALE values.

The characteristics of consumer ethnocentric phenomenon

The behavior of individuals and groups, which evinces itself in differentiating and preferential shaping of one's own environment and proper structures, norms or ideas for it. The behavior is registered and recognized in different societies, in different phases and development. They decided about their organization and functioning in different external conditions, above all about their ethnic, cultural and economic distinctiveness. Accepted predominance of one's own social group has transferred to treating appropriate organizational and functional solutions as better than others, distinguishing and recommending them.

Social ethnocentrism has evinced in different forms and moments of human behavior. In every case, however, it meant obeying one's own organization, its features and structures as perfect and better, more efficient than other social systems. In practice, it was connected to rejection of different norms and programmes, not acknowledging them, as well as imposing one's own order, customs, institutions and views.³

Not trying to explain the phenomenon of social ethnocentrism in a deeper way, only mentioned at this point, the following types of social ethnocentrism can be distinguished among others:

- ethnocentrism relating to customs,
- educational ethnocentrism,
- denominational ethnocentrism,
- political ethnocentrism,
- economic ethnocentrism.⁴

In each area of human activity mentioned, it is connected to acknowledging predominance and practical usage of such evaluated rules and norms of behavior, programmes and concepts, methods and technologies, which are perceived in a certain community as their own, domestic, the only ones appropriate, because they have been created and checked in this environment.

Economic ethnocentrism has a special character and expression. According to the essence of the ethnocentrism phenomenon, it evinces in acknowledging as the only correct and right. That is why it is worth implementation in practice of husbandry, concepts, ideas, recipes or one's own technologies, offered by domestic institutions or the citizens of a country, thanks to this adapted to internal conditions and profitable to the whole economy. Therefore, economic ethnocentrism evinces itself in preferential treatment of one's own country oriented programmes, economic thought, internal market, domestic enterprises and institutions. Appropriate solutions and decisions are connected to them in the processes:

- privatization, restructuration and modernization of enterprises,
- supply in producing factors,
- in investments localization,
- in penetration of outlet markets,
- introducing new technologies.⁵

By having everything one's own way means displacing and omitting the decision-making options, which come from abroad or are also connected with people or institutions from different countries, they concern foreign capital,

³ A. Falkowski, B. Rożnowski, T.W. Witkowski, *Etnocentryzm konsumencki – nowe wyzwanie dla marketingu*, "Marketing i Rynek" 1996, No. 3–4.

⁴ A. Szromnik, E. Wolanin-Jarosz, *Etnocentryzm konsumencki na zglobalizowanym rynku – czynniki i procesy kształtowania (cz. 1)*, "Marketing i Rynek" 2014, No. 4.

⁵ Ibidem.

brands and technologies. This way of thinking and acting, such determined making-decision processes and appropriate products to them (also called "economic patriotism") lead to closure of a country's economy, isolation from external income, based the whole system on economic self-sufficiency.⁶

Some manifestations of economic ethnocentrism have been known in the environment of economists, enterprises, as well as managers, scientists, social and political activists in different countries, especially in the ones of real socialism. They have also appeared to a small extent in the times of reforms and system changes, when the choices between "my own" or "foreign" were the essence of socio-economic changes.⁷

The victory of a wide concept of economic union, the opening of the economy to the progress and innovations, in the result the inflow of foreign capitals streams caused coexistence of domestic companies sector and foreign companies sector in economy. Ethnocentric orientation in managing has received a new form, this time in the area of market decision making of consumers, by purchasing consumer goods in trade. The problem comes to the choice – to buy but in which enterprise, in which company invest one's purchasing power – in a domestic or foreign one? The appropriate orientation to buy in the shops of domestic companies, which have home capital and local sellers, can be called trade ethnocentrism.

Accenting local, regional or domestic origin of the trade capital and home property of the companies can be found in socio-political programmes of many party organizations, federal and collective ones. The condition of their success is the awareness of the subjects' ownership of market of commercial services – the knowledge about possessive attachment of trading companies, including especially big organizations of supermarket and hypermarket chains, the knowledge about trading cooperative activity and local franchising networks. Only then, decisions of the place choice where to do the shopping and appropriate organization of retail trade will be decisions, no matter which country the institutional brand comes from, its name or marketing symbolism.⁸

Social identification of the trade companies' owners (possessive attachment) is not an easy case, mostly because of the fact that huge trading sales

⁶ A. Szromnik, E. Wolanin-Jarosz, Potrebitelskij etnocentryzm – ekonomiczeskij patriotyzm kak determinanta razwitija mieżdunaroduovo towarooborota, "Prakticzieskij Marketing" 2012, No. 7. ⁷ Cz. Bywalec, Konsumpcja a rozwój gospodarczy i spoleczny, C.H. Beck, Warszawa 2010,

p. 39.

⁸ K. Karcz, Z. Kędzior, *Postawy konsumentów wobec produktów krajowych i zagranicznych*, CBiE, Wyd. Akademii Ekonomicznej, Katowice 1999, pp. 26–39.

networks have a strategy of imitating the nationally sourced capital and the same companies, or taking into consideration multinational, their possessive structure. Defining the country of origin of a super- or hypermarket, saloon, warehouse or shopping mall considerably obstruct and relatively often darken the sales of the sales points in the whole chains and enterprises among the participants of the global trade services market.

The decisions of consumers concerning the choice of the trading place – the places where people buy determine, to a large extent, the choice of the product bought. It results from the fact, that the foreign sales point usually offers imported products. There is a dependency, between the country of origin of the trade capital (the company's possession) and the country of origin of the products sold. In the foreign networks of super- and hypermarkets, in which foreign product brands dominate, the buyers have limited possibilities of choice among the foreign products and the domestic ones. The decision making process itself is ambiguous and darkened. Ethnocentrically directed consumer, who looks for the products which come from their country, is on purpose deceived by marketing announcements – names, signs, symbols.

Consumer ethnocentrism, as a general phenomenon, which often has massive intensity scale, has its deeper roots. It is connected, with general assessment and relations to foreign solutions and projects, recipes and technologies, to the presence of "strange" enterprises on the domestic market and their participation in the socio-economic changes.⁹ American scholars – T.A. Shimp and S. Sharma were the first to define the term consumer ethnocentrism and conducted wider empirical research in the USA, giving the beginning to the more detailed research of this phenomenon in different countries of the world.¹⁰ According to these authors consumer ethnocentrism is "a belief shared by consumers concerning obligation and morality of buying domestic products".¹¹ Ethnocentric behavior of the customers concerns decisions connected to the choice, the purchase and the use of the domestic products.

⁹ A. Figiel, *Etnocentryzm konsumencki. Produkty krajowe czy zagraniczne*, PWE, Warszawa 2004, pp. 23–28.

¹⁰ T.A. Shimp, S. Sharma, *Consumer ethnocentrism. Construction and validation of the CETSCALE*, "Journal of Marketing Research" 1987, Vol. 24 (3), pp. 280–289.

¹¹ Ibidem.

Consumer ethnocentrism can be characterized by the following properties.¹² Firstly it emanates from the care of one's own country and the fear of losing control over the economy, what can be caused by import. Secondly, it contains motives prompting to stop buying foreign products. For the consumers with a high level of ethnocentrism, purchasing products made in other countries is not only an economical matter but it also creates moral problems. This moral engagement makes consumers, in extreme cases, look for domestic products, even though, their quality is much lower than the quality of imported ones. Thirdly, it can be assumed that the ethnocentric level is the sum of individual tendencies of people who belong to a given social group. The consequence of consumer ethnocentrism is thus: overestimating domestic products, depreciating the meaning of import and the feeling of moral duty to buy domestic products, which in consequence creates barriers for the international trade development.

The research methodology

In the following research the main source material was achieved thanks to direct interviews done in three towns which belong to Karpacki Euroregion: Rzeszów (Poland), Kosice (Slovakia) and Oradea (Romania). The interviews were done from December 2011 to April 2012. The survey sample was 1200 respondents¹³ (400 people in every town), chosen in a quota way. The quotas were – gender, age and education.

As a measuring tool the CETSCALE questionnaire has been used. It was translated into Polish, Slovakian and Romanian.¹⁴ This instrument consists of 17 questions to which answers are marked on seven point Likert's scale, where 7 means "I absolutely agree", however 1 "I absolutely disagree". The points from particular questions are summed up and are between 17 to 119. In order to elim-

¹² A. Szromnik A. Figiel, *Etnocentryzm konsumencki jako bariera rozwoju i wymiany towarowej*, w: *Wybrane problemy handlu międzynarodowego*, Wyd. Akademii Ekonomicznej, Kraków 1997, p. 129–140

¹³ The size of the sample complies with the requirements of the representative nature. It has been calculated on the basis of the formula: $n = \frac{\Pi(1-\Pi)Z_{\alpha}^2}{E^2}$; where \prod = population proportion,

E = permissible mistake, Z_{α}^2 =the number of standard deviations. See: S. Mynarski, *Praktyczne metody analizy danych rynkowych i marketingowych*, Wyd. Zakamycze, Kraków 2000, p. 40.

¹⁴ In Rzeszów direct interviews have been conducted by the authors of the article and the respondents chosen to this aim. However, in Oradea , the empirical material has been gathered by the team of research workers and the students from the Department of University of Economy in Oradea under Prof. dr F. Stefanescu's direction. However, in Kosice, the empirical material has been gathered by a group of employees and students of Management Faculty in Kosice, at University of Economics in Bratislava, under management of Prof. dr hab. W. Liestkovska.

inate any inaccuracies in translation, which could cause that a given tool may not be as effective as expected, a CETSCALE questionnaire was validated. Taking into consideration the fact that the measure was done only once, the validation was done only in the range of internal accuracy. The most adequate measure in this case was the use of α -Cronbach factor.¹⁵ In the result of the calculations, which were carried out, it turned out that the discussed factor for the questionnaires in Polish, Slovakian and Romanian had values higher than 0.70. It means that both measuring instruments were correct – internally correct. The collected research material, after previous reduction, served to create the data base. The results of the questionnaire researches were elaborated with the use of STATISTICA 7.0. programme, which was used to tabulation and classification of the sets of data based mainly on the scaling process. The ANOVA variance analysis and the linear correlation analysis have also been used at work, especially to determine dependencies which occur between the objects and features researched.

Ethnocentric attitudes of Polish, Slovakian and Romanian consumers – the empirical research results

The direct research conducted among Polish, Slovakian and Romanian respondents defined the average level of consumer ethnocentrism in the three researched communities. In order to do the intended task, the above mentioned international CET scale has been used. The results of the comparison analysis showed that the CETSCALE value for Polish respondents was 65.8 points, for Slovakians 66,9, whereas for Romanians 60.5 (tab. 1). This data indicate that Slovakians, in their marketing choices, show the strongest ethnocentric tendencies. This diversity is significant statistically, which is confirmed by the testing factor result of ANOVA variance¹⁶ - $p = 0.0002^{****}$, with the use of which an average level of prejudices to foreign products was compared in the three groups.

¹⁵ J. Brzeziński, *Metodologia badań psychologicznych*, Wyd. Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2011, p. 47.

¹⁶ The variance analysis (ANOVA) is a statistical technique which serves to compare an average level of the numerical feature in a few populations. In this test zero hypothesis is put, according to which in all the compared groups the numerical feature, which is taken into consideration, has the same average level. On the basis of the value of the probability test p, appointed on the basis of the variance analysis test, the hypothesis can be rejected (if p is adequately low), what in fact means the influence of the grouping factor on the numerical feature. Por. A. Luszniewicz, T. Słaby, *Statystyka z pakietem komputerowym STATISTICA. Teoria i zastosowania*, C.H. Beck, Warszawa 2001, p. 225, A. Zeliaś, *Metody statystyczne*, PWE, Warszawa 2000, pp. 112–157.

Table 1

	CETSCALE									
Country	\overline{x} (average)	Me (the median)	s (standard deviation)	Min	Max					
Poland	65.8	65.0	26.5	17	119					
Slovakia	66.9	66.9 66.0 20.7			119					
Romania	60.5	57.0	23.1	17	113					
P_{ANOVA} (test factor p of variance analysis ANOVA)	0,0002***									

The average CETSCALE values for the respondents from Poland, Slovakia and Romania

Source: own elaboration.

The distribution of the CETSCALE values in 10-point divisions has been presented in the histogram (draw. 1) below. It turns out that not quite than 50% of the Polish, 66% of Slovakian and 58% of Romanian respondents achieved the sum of points from individual questions in the range from 50 to 80 (these are middle values). 21% of Rzeszów inhabitants, 14% of Kosice and 14% of Oradea inhabitants were characterized by a very high level of consumer ethnocentrism – over 80 points. However, the lowest CETSCALE values (in the range from 17 to 40) were in groups of 20% Polish and Romanian consumers and only 11% among Slovakian respondents.

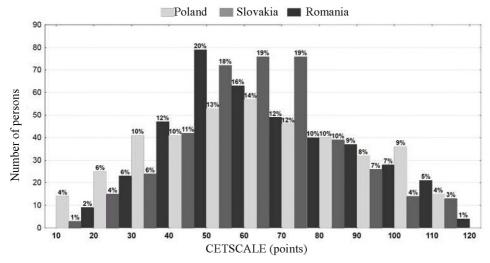


Fig. 1. The sample structure with reference to the achieved values of the CETSCALE Source: own elaboration.

In the following research, the influence of the chosen demographic factors on the consumer ethnocentrism level of the respondents from Poland, Slovakia and Romania, has been analyzed. In order to do the intended task, the above mentioned ANOVA variance analysis has been used. The data included in the table 2, indicate that there is a statistically crucial difference in CETSCALE value among women and men in Poland. Female Polish respondents show stronger ethnocentric tendencies than men. However, as far as the respondents from Slovakia and Romania are taken into consideration, it should be stressed that their attachment to domestic products is on the average level equally among women and men, and of course the factor – gender does not differentiate the achieved CETSCALE values.

Table 2

	CETSCALE											
Gender	Country											
	Poland				Slovakia				Romania			
	N	\overline{x}					Me	S	N	\overline{x}	Me	s
			Me	S	N	\overline{x}	1010	2	11		1110	5
Woman	222	68.4	65.0	26.8	207	68.2	67.0	19.1	206	62.0	58.0	23.3
Man	174	62.6	62.5	26.0	192	65.7	64.0	22.2	194	58.9	57.0	22.9
$ \begin{array}{c} P_{\text{ANOVA}} \\ \text{(test } p \text{ factor)} \end{array} $	0.0308*			0.2204			0.1782					

Gender as the determinant of the CETSCALE value- the results of ANOVA variance analysis

Source: own elaboration.

The conducted research also concerned establishment of age influence on the CETSCALE value in relations to the three surveyed groups of Poles, Slovakians and Romanians. In order to define the strength of connection between the researched features, the linear correlation factors (R) analysis¹⁷ has been used. In the table 3, the values of linear correlation factors (R) and values of test *p* probability corresponding to them, have been presented. As it can be seen, there is a statistically crucial dependency between the age and the CETSCALE values in the three researched communities – Polish, Slovakian and Romanian. It can be said that there is a tendency of a stronger prejudice towards foreign

¹⁷ Correlation factor R is a rate which receives values in the range of -1 to 1. Absolute value of a factor gives evidence for the correlation strength and a sign of its direction. The results may and should) be completed by the results of the relevance correlation factor (p): which would allow to assess if if a dependency found in a sample is a reflection of a more general relation which is in the whole population, or is it a matter of coincidence.

products among relatively older people. This dependency, however, has a very weak strength – the CETSCALE level indicates that there is a very big differentiation, regardless of age.

Table 3

Country	Linear correlation factor – R	Probability of test <i>p</i> values
Poland	0.14	0.0046**
Slovakia	0.15	0.0028**
Romania	0.22	0.0000***

The results of the linear correlation analysis including the influence of age on the CETSCALE value

Source: own elaboration.

The influence of the respondents' education level on the CET scale value has also been defined in the following presentation. The results of the analyses are in the table 4. They clearly show that there are crucial differences in the summary CETSCALE, in relation to the three levels of Polish, Slovakian and Romanian consumers' education. It turns out that for the Polish population, the respondents with elementary and vocational education show much stronger ethnocentric tendencies than the consumers with secondary and post-mature education (test factor p ANOVA = 0.0000^{***}). In the Romanian group there are similar tendencies as among the Poles (however they are not that strong). It cannot be stated, however, statistically crucial differentiation in an average level of the CETSCALE values in Slovakia (test factor p ANOVA = 0.7663).

Table 4

	CETSCALE											
Education	Poland				Slovakia				Romania			
	Ν	\overline{x}	Me	s	Ν	\overline{x}	Me	s	Ν	\overline{x}	Me	s
Elementary and vocational	28	85.6	92.0	23.5	32	67.4	67.0	19.9	116	67.7	67.5	23.4
Secondary and post-mature exam	170	67.6	70.0	25.6	214	67.6	66.5	20.5	179	56.6	53.0	22.2
Higher	196	61.4	60.5	26.6	153	66.0	64.0	21.2	104	59.2	53.5	22.8
P_{ANOVA} (test factor p of va- riance ANO- VA analysis)	0.0000***				0.7663			0.0002***				

Education as determinant of the CETSCALE value - the results of the variance ANOVA analysis

Source: own elaboration.

In order to fully illustrate the above dependencies, the drawing 2 presents different CETSCALE values in the sectional view of certain levels (groups) Polish, Slovakian and Romanian consumers' education. The graph includes the average scale value, 95% of trust range and a typical changeability scope for the results presented.

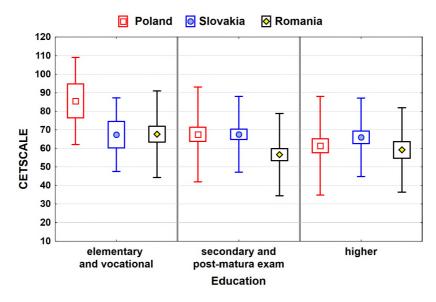


Fig. 2. The average values of CET scale depending on the level of Polish, Slovakian and Romanian consumers' education

Source: own elaboration.

Conclusions

The presented research results allow to formulate some meaningful conclusions. In general, it can be stated that Polish, Slovakian and Romanian consumers show ethnocentric tendencies, however, there are crucial, statistical differences between these groups. Slovakians show the strongest ethnocentric tendencies (the CETSCALE value is 66.9 points), the Polish respondents take the second place (65.8 points), Romanians are third, with 60.5 points. To compare, the results of the international research conducted in this range¹⁸ are worth mentioning. And so, G. H. Brodowsky (1998r.), by analyzing the answers of the chosen – representative group of the USA inhabitants, defined the CETSCALE

¹⁸ E. Wolanin-Jarosz, Ethnocentric tendencies of Polish, Hungarian and Ukrainian consumers – the comparative analysis on the basis of direct researches, in: Studia Ekomiczne. La Societe de L'information. Perspective Europeenne et Globale, ed. C. Martin, M. Jaciow, Zeszyty Naukowe Wydziałowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego w Katowicach, Katowice 2013, No. 151.

factor on the level of 61.68 points for them. G. Chryssochoidis, in turn, in the year 2007, showed that the sum of points from individual survey questions for Greece citizens was -65.49^{19} . Howerver, C.Y. Wong in 2008, claimed that the Chinese have average ethnocentric tendencies (56.25 points).²⁰

The conducted empirical research also showed the influence of demographic factors on the consumer ethnocentric level of the Poles, Slovakians and Romanians. It turned out that there is a significant crucial difference in the CETSCALE value among women and men in Poland. Female Polish respondents show stronger ethnocentric tendencies than men. Similar relations have not been observed in Slovakia or Romania.

In the following research, correlations between the level of Polish, Slovakian and Romanian consumers' ethnocentrism and their age have been established. It results from the data received that in the three surveyed communities, older people show stronger ethnocentric tendencies in relation to foreign products.

The analyses results very clearly showed crucial differences in summary CETSCALE in reference to three levels of education of Polish, Slovakian and Romanian consumers. In particular, for Polish and Romanian population, the respondents with elementary and vocational education show much stronger ethnocentric tendencies than the ones with secondary and post-mature education. Similar relations have not been observed in Slovakian community.

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¹⁹ G. Chryssochoidis, A. Krystallis, P. Perreas., *Ethnocentric beliefs and country-of-origin* (COO) effect: impact of country, product and product attributes on Greek consumers' evaluation of food products, "European Journal of Marketing" 2007, No. 41 (11/12), pp. 1518–1544.

²⁰ C.Y. Wong, M.J. Polonsky, R. Garma, *The impact of consumer ethnocentrism and country of origin sub-components for high involvement products on young Chinese consumers' product assessments. Asia Pac.*, "Journal of Marketing and Logistics" 2008, No. 20 (4), pp. 455–478.

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DIAGNOZA POZIOMU ETNOCENTRYZMU KONSUMENCKIEGO POLAKÓW, SŁOWAKÓW I RUMUNÓW Z WYKORZYSTANIEM METODY CETSCALE

Streszczenie

W publikacji zaprezentowano wyniki badań empirycznych, których głównym celem było określenie poziomu etnocentryzmu konsumenckiego mieszkańców Polski, Słowacji i Rumunii. Podstawowy materiał źródłowy pozyskano dzięki wywiadom bezpośrednim, przeprowadzonym w trzech miastach: Rzeszowie (Polska), Koszycach (Słowacja) oraz Oradei (Rumunia), na próbie 1200 respondentów (po 400 osób w każdym mieście). Jako instrument pomiarowy wykorzystano międzynarodowy kwestionariusz CETSCALE, który poddano procesowi walidacji. Przedstawione analizy wyraźnie wskazują, że konsumenci polscy, słowaccy i rumuńscy wykazują skłonności etnocentryczne, aczkolwiek największe wartości skali CET uzyskano wśród zbiorowości słowackiej. Odnotowano również znaczący wpływ czynników demograficznych na poziom etnocentry-zmu trzech badanych grup.

Slowa kluczowe: etnocentryzm konsumencki, kwestionariusz CETSCALE, badanie empiryczne Polska-Słowacja-Rumunia.

Tłumaczenie: Elżbieta Wolanin-Jarosz