The Impact of Nationalism, Patriotism and Internationalism on Consumer Ethnocentric Tendencies

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The study investigates the impact of patriotism, nationalism and internationalism as antecedents to consumer ethnocentrism in Turkey and the Czech Republic. Controlling for demographics, the findings indicate that the impact of patriotism and nationalism is not consistent across the two countries. Consumer ethnocentrism in Turkey is fueled by patriotism, and in the Czech Republic by nationalism. Internationalism does not have a significant effect on consumer ethnocentrism in either country. Managerial implications of these findings are considered and future research directions are identified.

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At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the world is experiencing a concurrent rise in two major forces: nationalism and globalization [The Economist, 1999]. While it may seem odd to speak about nationalism in an era of intensified global consciousness [Anderson, 1983; Roniger, 1995], nationalism is on the rise in various countries and has emerged as one of the main issues facing the world [Smith, 1992]. In trying to reconcile the paradox of nationalistic resurgence at a time of global economic and technological interdependence, Smith [1995, p. 24] argued that nation-states remain the primary object of loyalty in the modern world because a nation’s “memory is central to identity.” Indeed, the quest for a sovereign identity is driving much of the nationalistic sentiments today: as insecurities about globalization grow, loyalty to the nation-state increases. This helps explain why, at an economic level, the upsurge of globalization has failed to weaken economic nationalism [Nayar, 1997].

Nationalism is a concept that has been linked to both collective behaviors and governmental policies (e.g., economic protectionism and cultural isolationism) and to individual behaviors (voting behaviors, inter-racial relations, stereotyping, etc). Although both levels of nationalism have implications for international marketing, the present focus is on individual-level nationalism. In this context, the dismantling of trade barriers, deregulation of delivery services, technological advances in telecommunications and improved payment systems boost cross-border consumer purchases by reducing the problems of physical access to markets [Baker, 1995]. What remain to be seen are the socio-psychological barriers that might constrain consumers around the world from purchasing the now more easily available foreign products.

**STUDY OBJECTIVES AND POSITIONING**

To understand how individual-level nationalism translates into economic behavior, it is necessary to distinguish it from other kindred concepts such as patriotism and internationalism. Nationalism and patriotism are often used interchangeably and viewed as “negative internationalism” [Smith and Rosen, 1958]. However, “patriotism is commitment - a readiness to sacrifice for the nation - while nationalism is commitment plus exclusion of others, a readiness to sacrifice bolstered by hostility towards others” [Druckman, 1994, p. 47]. Internationalism, on the other hand, reflects positive feelings for other nations and their people [Kosterman and Feshbach, 1989]. All three concepts are centered around one’s general attitudes towards his/her country and those towards other countries. Whether these attitudes also enter into an individual’s economic sphere and can thus explain positive or negative dispositions towards domestic and/or foreign products is an issue that is still awaiting further investigation. While a number of studies have found that consumers, in general, are favorably biased towards domestic versus imported foreign products [for recent literature reviews see Baughn and Yaprk, 1993; Peterson and Jolibert, 1995], none has examined the impact of nationalistic, patriotic and internationalistic tendencies on such a bias. For example, imagine an individual who holds highly nationalistic and patriotic rather than internationalistic views: would his/her attitudes toward foreign products be affected by this fact?

The purpose of the current study is to identify the differential effects of patrio-

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