

CONSUMER ETHNOCENTRISM AND QUALITY PERCEPTION OF MALAYSIAN PRODUCTS AMONG YOUNG CONSUMERS

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the ethnocentrism level of Malaysian young consumers, their perception on the quality of domestic or Malaysian products, and their preference towards food and non-food domestic brands. It intends to provide empirical evidence of the young consumers' ethnocentrism level since the government has taken measures to promote the 'Buy Malaysian Products' campaign. Data was collected using self-administered structured questionnaire from 121 university students representing "young consumers". The results revealed that perception on the quality of Malaysian products influenced the level of ethnocentrism and the intention to purchase Malaysian products. However, the direct effect of ethnocentrism on the intention to purchase Malaysian products was found to be not significant. Consumer ethnocentrism was also found to be positively associated with preference for food related domestic brands but not with non-food domestic brands.

Keywords: Consumer ethnocentrism, product quality, purchase intention, halal, young consumers.

Introduction

Globalization has resulted in an increasing proportion of foreign products and brands in the market. Customers have more choices in making purchase options. Customers' readiness to accept foreign products is becoming an increasingly critical issue for marketers and is of concern to the government especially during the global economic slowdown, as the slowdown in other countries will affect exports.

The 'Buy Malaysian Product' campaign was introduced by the Ministry of Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism in 1984 and was re-introduced in 1998 and 2009. The purpose of this campaign is to increase consumers' demand towards Malaysian products and to reduce domestic dependency towards imported goods, thus accelerating economic growth in Malaysia (<http://kpdnkk.gov.my>, 2009). The campaign also provides the opportunity for Malaysian entrepreneurs to prove their capability in producing quality products with consistent supply (<http://www.bernama.com>.) Malaysian made products include pre-packed goods which have the name and address of a manufacturer in Malaysia, products made, assembled and modified locally, goods that go through the final process in Malaysia,

