

The Relationship Between Ethnocentrism with the Purchase Intention: A Research

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Abstract: Ethnocentrism can be defined as basing one's own culture as superior in comparison to other cultures. What makes ethnocentrism valuable in this research is to investigate whether ethnocentrism has changed according to current conditions (such as; pandemics, economic crises, the dilemma between countries, etc.) along with how the pandemic affects the Turkish consumer's intention to buy domestic and foreign fast-fashion brands. The data was collected via online by questionnaire. The result of the purchase intention scale research shows that the participants do not care whether the product is domestic or foreign. However, according to the results of the ethnocentrism scale, it is seen that Turkish people have an ethnocentrism degree from middle to a high level. Although there is no significant difference between the brands in the statistical data of the purchase intention scale, it is seen that the ethnocentrism level of the participants is from medium to high level while they verbally stated that they prefer the domestic fast-fashion brand. When the age and ethnocentrism levels of the participants are examined, it is seen that the young participants between the ages of 26–35 have the highest ethnocentrism levels among the age groups in this study. Although several previously published studies have shown that Turkish people, especially the young population, are not ethnocentric, it is seen that those who show medium to high levels of ethnocentrism in this study are from the young population. These results may have resulted from current economic situations and pandemic conditions.

Keywords: Purchasing Intention, Consumer Ethnocentrism, Domestic Fast-Fashion Brand, Foreign Fast-Fashion Brand, Online Marketing

JEL Classification: F1, M3, M16

1. Introduction

Product and service is a supply and demand business that has been going on for centuries and will never end. Consumption is a never-ending trend that leads to constant demands and needs for instant changes and development for customers in the

marketing sector. The marketing field, which develops according to the consumption needs of people, creates a great competitive market. Business owners are constantly in search of new ways to gain an edge over their competitors in product and service when it comes to marketing. The results of this research can help retailers to develop their marketing, advertising, and communication strategies by learning about consumers' orientations, domestic or foreign brand preferences, and ethnocentrism levels.

One of the most demanded marketing methods today is digital marketing. With the development of new technologies and globalization, shopping has become more popular and functional through digital marketing. With online marketing, businesses have been able to deliver their products and services to consumers faster. Also, companies should pay attention to the factors that affect the consumers' purchase intention.

2. Consumer Behavior and Purchase Intention in Marketing

Nowadays, consumer behavior changes and evolves rapidly, it is pivotal to understand the behavior of consumers and meet their demands. This change is daunting, even if it benefits the marketers. For the manufacturers, it is easy to find customers from home and abroad. For this reason, the most important criterion is to understand the needs of the consumers and offer products and services that specifically meet the conscious or unconscious needs of the consumers'. Consumer behavior data obtained as a result of solid research is more convenient than an intuitive sales strategy. With the emergence of the modern economic understanding called the consumption society, the interest in consumer attitudes and behaviors has increased (Senir, 2014). Firms collect data on purchase intent to predict the sales of their existing and new products. With these collected data, demand forecasts are made and strategies such as sales, promotional, and advertising are developed based on these data (Carter, 2009).

Purchasing intention is one of the crucial stages of the purchasing decision process, which emerges as a result of the consumer's reaction to stimuli (Tek, 1999). This intention is a consumer action that is heavily influenced by the agenda (such as international crises, politics, illness, and current economical situations). In this research, which was based on the period that this research coincided with, the changes in the purchase intention of consumers during the quarantine period due to the Covid-19 virus were discussed. Due to the pandemic, consumers have turned to domestic products and have taken a stance against foreign products (Migliore et al., 2021). As

mentioned earlier, ethnocentrism is the most effective factor in consumer purchase intention during the quarantine period. The exception occurs when we examine the studies on the issues affecting consumer behavior in marketing there are many studies on the compatibility of consumer behavior with the concept of ethnocentrism (Öztürk, S. A. and Öztay, H., 2019; Camacho et al., 2021).

Consumer purchase intention is a factor in predicting which products or brands the consumer will prefer in their next shopping (Fandos & Flavian, 2006; Wu & Ho, 2014). Besides this, studies such as Han (1988) and Herche (1992) stated that there is a positive relationship between purchase intention and domestic products.

3. Consumer Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism is defined as belief in one's ethnic group or culture's innate superiority. The concept of consumer ethnocentrism was adapted from Sumner's (1906) definition of general ethnocentrism by Shimp in 1984. Consumer ethnocentrism aims to understand how consumers compare domestic and foreign products, how/why their judgments may be exposed to various prejudices and errors, and the consequences that can have positive/negative reflections on businesses in this global age (Nisbett and Ross, 1980; Öztürk, S. A., Öztay, H., 2019).

If the consumer ethnocentrism is high, the consumer prefers domestic products and services. In cases where the ethnocentrism levels of the consumers are extreme, no matter how much research the brands do and develop themselves, those consumers are inconclusive, because those kinds of consumers have strict ethnocentric rules in their minds. People with high ethnocentrism feel like betraying their homeland when their moral values clashes with their belief. The reason for this is when ethnocentric people buy imported products; they think that they put domestic production at risk, hinder the development of their country, and cause a decrement in employment by purchasing imported products, thereby increasing unemployment and harming the local economy.

The ethnocentric level is described as the effect of globalization; cosmopolitan attitudes of today's consumers reduce ethnocentric feelings (Smyczek and Glowik, 2011). Thus, consumer ethnocentrism specifically helps in market segmentation, identifying the right target markets, helping firms understand consumer behavior, and determining local or national sales rates. To evaluate the level of ethnocentrism in the consumers' Shimp and Sharma created the Cetscale (1987).

4. Fast-Fashion Concept and Online Marketing

Fashion is regarded as a temporary cyclical phenomenon adopted by consumers for a certain period (Sproles, 1979). Over time, retailers realized that flexibility and quick response to the market are essential (Bhardwaj and Fairhurst, 2010), and the concept of fast fashion has been derived from this. Fast fashion has become a defining system of today's textile and clothing industry and this system aims to maximize the profit shares, laboring, production, time, capital, and natural resources. With the effect of globalization, the ideas and thoughts of consumers are constantly changing (Öztürk and Öztay, 2019). This changes happen so fast that fashion brands have difficulty keeping up with this high speed (Doyle et al., 2006). Therefore, the concept of fast fashion has emerged. Some of the brands get rid of the traditional seasonal sales approach and adopt the concept of fast fashion to constantly present new and fashionable products with new stores and small collections (Dal and Gürpınar, 2010). Today, consumers not only buy what they need but also shop for different purposes such as popularity and imitation by the fashion of the period (Odabaşı, 2006). According to Research and Markets website, the size of the global fast-fashion market in 2021 is USD 30.58 billion, and in 2025 it will be 39.84 billion.

With the increase in online marketing, it has become easier for consumers to reach fastfashion brands in comparison to the previous stages. Internet usage is increasing day by day. According to the Turkish Household Information Technologies (IT) usage research of the Turkish Statistical Institute, the rate of individuals using the internet in 2021 is 92.0%. According to Statista data, as of January 2022, the global digital population is 4.95 billion internet users and 4.62 billion of them are active social media users. As mentioned in Statista data, retail e-commerce sales totaled approximately US\$4.9 trillion worldwide in 2021, and this figure is projected to increase by 50% by 2025. The internet is a great resource that is widely used today and helps to meet every need. Online selling over the internet has helped retailers increase their profits.

Buying goods or services online has become a common tool for many people. More than 2 billion people worldwide shopped online in 2021, and this proportion is expected to increase further in 2022. While some consumers prefer to shop online because it is easy to buy from the site, high quality products and affordable prices (Algür & Cengiz, 2011), others prefer to shop in stores.

5. Investigation of Consumer Purchase Intention and Ethnocentrism

In the literature, consumer purchase intention and ethnocentrism issues have been examined separately or together on domestic or foreign brands. Some studies in the literature on these two subjects were reviewed. The level of ethnocentrism of some consumers is an important factor in determining the intention to buy domestic and foreign fast-fashion brands (Watson and Wright, 2000). As Öztürk and Öztay (2019) mentioned, there is a negative relationship between the intention to buy a foreign fashion brand and ethnocentrism, while in the other published studies stated that, there is a positive relationship between the intention to purchase a domestic fashion brand and ethnocentrism (Shimp, 1984; Shimp and Sharma, 1987; Watson and Wright, 2000).

Consumer purchase intention and ethnocentrism are aimed to investigate their effects on each other and confounding factors such as; demographic information and environment (Netemeyer et al., 1991; Küçükemiroğlu, 1999; Kaynak and Kara, 2002; Chrysochoidis et al., 2007; Erdogan and Uz Kurt, 2010).

In the Senir (2014) study, women are more ethnocentric in comparison to males while the gender has no effect on ethnocentrism in Nadiri's study (2010).

The effects of age on ethnocentrism were also examined in different consumer groups. The literature showed that age affects different ethnocentrism levels (Huddleston et al., 2000; Balabanis et al., 2001; Josiassen et al., 2011). For example in Caruana's (1996) study, there was a positive relationship between age and ethnocentrism level. Turkish consumers without ethnocentric tendencies have a more positive attitude toward import/foreign product purchases in comparison to ethnocentric (Küçükemiroğlu, 1999).

In the literature, the ethnocentric view of the consumer has changed with the effect of the globalization, pandemic, and worldwide political events in the last few years, and this change caused an effect on the consumers' fast-fashion brand choice (Pektaş, H., 2006; Migliore et al., 2021; Camacho et al., 2022; Khoa et al., 2022).

6. The Purpose And Importance of the Research

This research aims to examine the effects of ethnocentrism and purchase intention relations when consumers buy fast-fashion brands in the Turkish population. In this research, consumer purchase intention, consumers' preferred/willing brands, and

consumer ethnocentric tendency were examined. The results of this research can help retailers to develop their marketing, advertising, and communication strategies by learning about consumers' orientations, domestic or foreign brand preferences, and ethnocentrism levels. The effects of Covid-19 and the economic crisis were also investigated.

7. Hypotheses

H1: After the pandemic caused by the Covid-19 epidemic, the level of ethnocentrism is expected to be high in consumers.

H2: Turkish consumers tend to buy domestic fast-fashion brands in comparison to foreign fast-fashion brands when it comes to consumers purchase intention.

H3: There is a positive relationship between age and ethnocentrism levels and elderly adults tend to show higher ethnocentrism in comparison to young adults.

8. Method

The participants of this research consisted of consumers who lived in different provinces of Turkey. Due to the broad age range of the volunteers, the participants were divided into the same education level and age groups. Their relations with domestic and foreign fast-fashion branded products and ethnocentrism were compared.

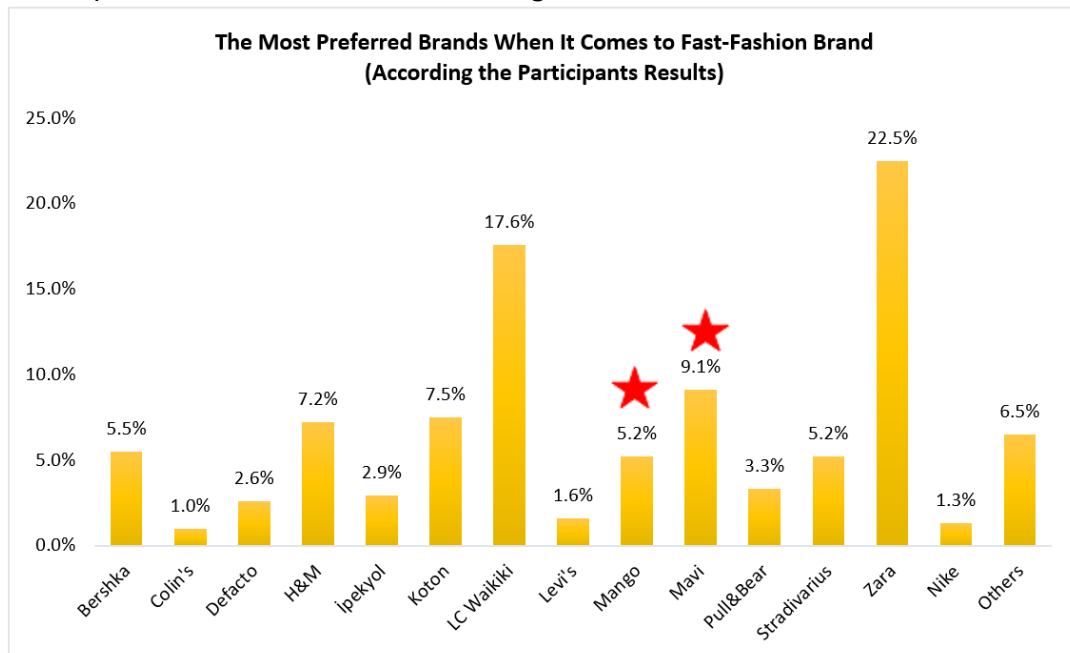
There were 304 total numbers of participants in this survey, and 79,3 % were female (n = 241) and 20,7 % were male (n = 63) included. Gender, age, and education level were collected as demographic information. The age range of the participants was between 18 and 50+. The majority of the participants were young adults.

The data were collected by the online survey method. Verbal consent was obtained from the participants. Two separate questionnaires were presented to the different participants. Both of the surveys had the same questions inside, but the main difference between the surveys was the brand of the fast-fashion product that is used in the questionnaire. Both surveys included the same image and price list for both jackets' pictures. While there is a domestic fast-fashion brand (Mavi-Turkish clothing brand) product in the first survey, there is a foreign fast-fashion brand (Mango-Spanish clothing brand) product in the second survey. Both brands that were used in the research were solid and popular brand.

9. Results

The questionnaire consisted of four parts. The first part of the survey included a few warm-up questions, in order to gather more information about the participants. 33.9% of the participants shop online several times a year and 45% of the participants make these purchases through joint sales channels such as Trendyol. Participants stated that they received information about fast-fashion products from social media with a rate of 59%. Also, 65.1% of the respondents stated that the country of origin of the product they bought has no effect on their purchase intention.

Finally, the participants were asked about their most preferred fast-fashion brands, and their response were turned into a chart (Figure 1).



- ★ Even if there is no symbolic percentage difference in the purchase intention of the participants. When the survey results of foreign and domestic brands are examined, it is seen that domestic (Mavi) brand is the more preferred brand than the foreign brand by the participants. In addition to the comparison between domestic and foreign brands, the study also collected more information about the other most known fast-fashion brands such as Zara, and LC Waikiki based on the Turkish population.

Figure 1. The Most Preferred Brands List in Fast-Fashion Brand

The second part of the questionnaire included three-item scales to assess consumers' purchase intention for the product in the questionnaire.

Table 1. Purchase Intention Details of Survey Participants for Domestic and Foreign Fast-fashion Brands

DOMESTIC BRAND	N	X	S.D.
Q1	156	2,81	1,19
Q2	156	3,38	1,14
Q3	156	3,46	1,08
FOREIGN BRAND	N	X	S.D.
Q1	148	2,94	1,24
Q2	148	3,36	1,08
Q3	148	3,59	0,98

To complete the statistical analyses, SPSS 25 version program was used. According to the statistical results, there were no symbolic differences between purchasing intentions towards both domestic and foreign product consumers. Following the performance results for the purchase intention in our sample group, in domestic fast-fashion purchase intention, 6 participants did not desire to buy the domestic products while in the foreign fast-fashion product 3 participants did not have any aspiration to buy. The rest of the participants did not choose any preferences for either domestic or foreign fast-fashion product purchases intention.

The third part of the questionnaire included the CETSCALE scale. The CETSCALE's internal consistency and reliability are very high, and the Cronbach's alpha for the studies ranges from .94 to .96 to Shimp and Sharma. CETSCALE assessed the ethnocentric tendencies of consumers 20% of the participants in our survey give importance to ethnocentrism, 79,27% do not care, and 0,65% are on the low-level ethnocentric level. According to the answers given to the questionnaire, the majority of the participants scored moderately on the ethnocentric scale. Almost a quarter of the remaining participants are ethnocentric, while the rest are undecided.

To assess the ethnocentrism levels of the participants, and test of normality all assumptions were checked. There were no univariate or multivariate outliers. Also, there was no violation of required assumptions. Although there was no violation, the total scores variables had to be transformed by using sqrt to meet the homogeneity assumption. According to Shapiro-Wilk test results, it did not show evidence of nonnormality ($W = 156, p = .579$ and $W = 148, p = .065$). The results rejected the null hypothesis and the data was normally distributed. Based on this outcome, and examination of the histogram, the analysis was continued with parametric tests.

To examine the participants' levels of ethnocentrism, test performances were divided into three different groups based on the cut-off point (Akin et al., 2009) as I) low ethnocentrism, II) medium ethnocentrism and III) high ethnocentrism. To understand whether consumers' ethnocentrism level is high or low in the CETSCORE calculation, Akin and his colleagues used the following assumption in their research. To determine the groups, the minimum score of 17 (1 x 17), the medium score (3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree) of 51 (3 x 17), and the highest score of 85 (5 x 17) were calculated as in the published article (Akin et al., 2009).

After the division, all groups were compared based on their levels of ethnocentrism. One-way ANOVA was applied, and the results showed that there were statistically significant differences between the levels of ethnocentrism in participants $F(2, 301) = 2,961, p = 0,53$. Post hoc analysis showed that high ethnocentrism was observed in the participants in comparison to both medium and low-level ethnocentrism (medium ethnocentrism $M=147,70, SD = 0,62$, high ethnocentrism $M = 173,95, p = 0,62$).

According to the results of linear regression analysis, no significant effect of ethnocentrism on consumer purchase intention was found $b=.017, t(302)=15.72, p =.766 R^2=.00$. However, when the ethnocentrism levels are examined separately according to the purchase intention, the majority of the participants scored moderately on the ethnocentric scale. The remaining participants are counted as ethnocentric, while the rest are uncertain.

Table 2. The Crosstab Results between Ethnocentrism Levels and Gender

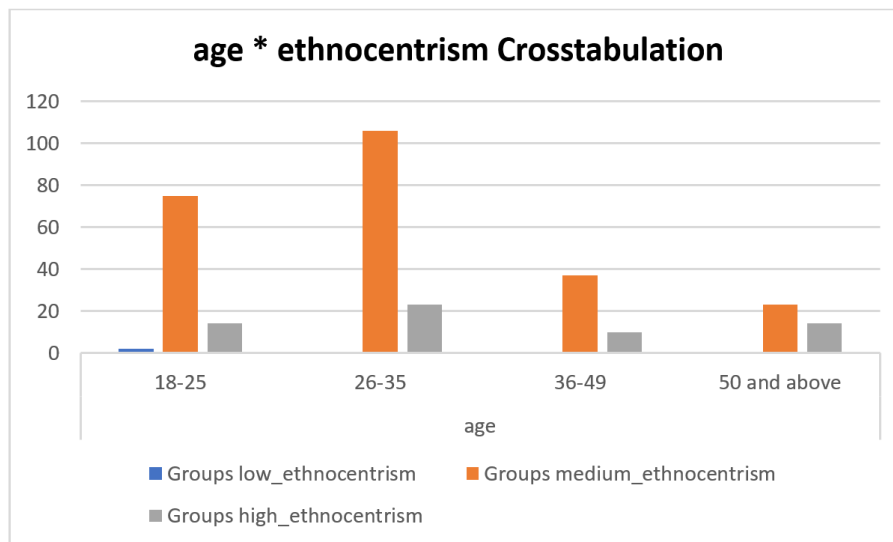
		Ethnocentrism and Gender Crosstabulation		
		Gender		Total
		Women	Men	
Ethnocentrism Total Score	Low Ethnocentrism	0	2	2
	Medium Ethnocentrism	196	45	241
	High Ethnocentrism	45	16	61
Total		241	63	304

The Chi-Square results showed that there was a significant relationship between ethnocentrism scores and gender $\chi^2 (4, n = 304) = 9.98, p = 0.041$. According to the results, women participants in this study are more ethnocentric in comparison to male participants.

Table 3. The Crosstab Results between Ethnocentrism Levels and Age

		Ethnocentrism Total Score and Age Crosstabulation				
		Age				Total
		18-25	26-35	36-49	50 and above	
Ethnocentrism Total Score	Low Ethnocentrism	2	0	0	0	2
	Medium Ethnocentrism	75	106	37	23	241
	High Ethnocentrism	14	23	10	14	61
Total		91	129	47	37	304

In the study, the participants were divided into four different groups based on their age; (I) 18-25 age range, (II) 26-35 age range, (III) 36-49 age range and (IV) 50 and above. The Chi-Square results showed that there was a significant relationship between ethnocentrism scores and age $\chi^2(6, n = 304) = 13.47, p = 0.036$. The majority of the participants were collected under medium ethnocentrism, and majority of these participants were aged of 26-35. The participants who showed high ethnocentrism tends to be from 26 to 35 years of age gap while for the low ethnocentrism age doesn't make significant differences.

**Figure 2. The Crosstab Results between Ethnocentrism Levels and Different Age Ranges**

The Chi-Square results showed that there was no significant relationship between ethnocentrism scores and education years $\chi^2(8, n = 304) = 10.08, p = .259$.

To investigate the effects of purchase intention on consumers' age a linear regression analysis was conducted. The results showed that there was statistically significant relationship between purchase intention and age $b = .017$, $t(302) = 52.56$, $p = .000$ $R^2 = .00$. The participants who showed high purchase intention tends to be from 26 to 35 years of age gap while for the low purchase intention age doesn't make a significant differences.

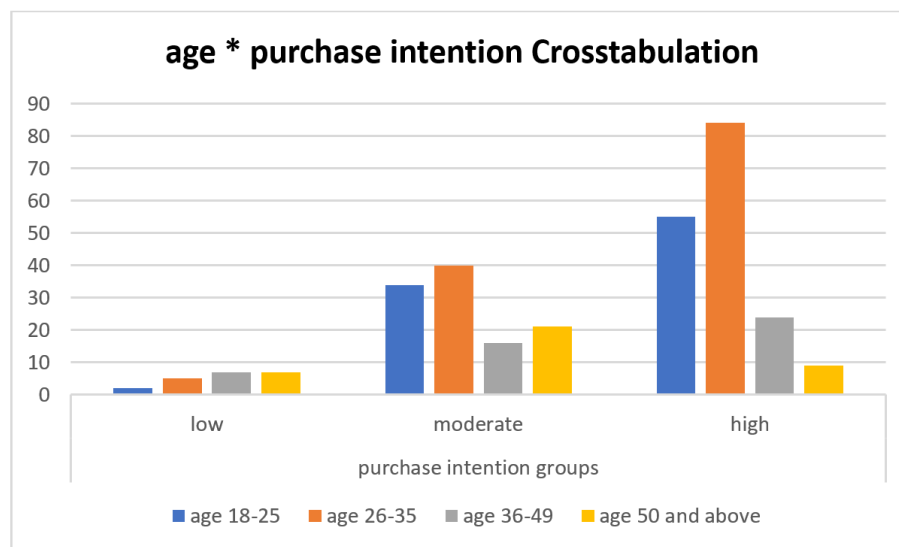


Figure 3. The Crosstab Results between Ethnocentrism Levels and Different Age Ranges

10. Discussion

Nowadays when everything is outdated and changing rapidly, the tastes and wishes of the consumer are constantly changing. The fast-fashion industry is a popularized type of marketing on this fast-paced consumption and ever-changing desires. Online shopping offers to consumers an opportunity to easily access the fast-fashion product they want to buy on the internet. Since the consumer does not need to go out or interact with anyone, they may find online shopping more attractive due to Covid -19.

Consumers' purchase intention can be easily affected by external factors. As stated in Migliore and colleagues (2021), some consumers' orientation to domestic products increased and their purchase intentions for imported products decreased during the Covid-19 pandemic period. Not preferring foreign products and intending to buy domestic products causes the ethnocentrism of consumers to rise. On the other hand,

low ethnocentric consumers compare the quality and performance of international and local goods and choose the best for themselves (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). In this study, the effect of purchasing intention on domestic and foreign product preference, which is affected by conditions such as epidemics, viruses, economic crises, international political crises, and the connection of this effect with ethnocentrism were examined.

Considering the results of the research, there is no relation between the purchase intentions of the participants and their ethnocentrism levels. However, when the participants were asked which fast-fashion brands they mainly preferred the brand Mavi (domestic) brand instead of the brand Mango (foreign) brand (Figure 1). To better understand which of the domestic and foreign brands the consumer prefers and which factors are affected purchase intention, some of the demographic information was examined along with ethnocentrism and consumer purchase intention. In the demographic information analysis, the gender analysis gives a significant result with ethnocentrism, but it should not be ignored that female participants are more than male participants in this study. The age analysis emphasizes that age significantly affects consumers' ethnocentrism levels and their purchase intentions (Figure 2 and Figure 3).

According to the results, the first hypothesis “After the pandemic caused by the Covid19 epidemic, the level of ethnocentrism is expected to be high in consumers” was supported. One possible explanation for this hypothesis could be that consumers' purchases of products from pandemic-origin countries have decreased due to the risk of transmission of the virus, specifically in China and other Asian countries (Migliore et al., 2021). As mentioned in a recent interview, even the basic supplies from China were not in high demand even though they were the cheapest in the market. In addition to this situation, strict customs restrictions were also playing a crucial role in supporting this hypothesis. China's National Bureau of Statistics states that industrial production in China decreased by 13.5% in early 2020 compared to 2019 due to the pandemic. Migliore and colleagues (2021) study, stated that ethnocentrism has been the most influential factor in consumer purchase intention during the quarantine period.

The results for the purchase intention did not support the “Turkish consumer tends to buy domestic fast-fashion brand in comparison to foreign fast-fashion brand when it comes to consumer purchase intention” hypothesis. According to Küçükemiroğlu's study in 1999, Turkish consumers without ethnocentric tendencies have a more positive attitude toward import/foreign product purchases compared to ethnocentric consumers. Even though the occurred economical situations over the last few years,

Turkish people still tend to buy foreign products in comparison to domestic products. In addition, some studies support the hypothesis that "there is a positive relationship between the intention to purchase a domestic fashion brand and ethnocentrism" (Shimp and Sharma, 1987; Watson and Wright, 2000).

When the results for hypothesis 3, "There is a positive relationship between age and ethnocentrism levels and elderly adults tend to show higher ethnocentrism in comparison to young adults.", are examined, it is seen that young participants are more ethnocentric than elder participants. Even though the literature showed that the ethnocentrism levels of consumers divided into age groups for research were affected differently for each group (Huddleston, P., Good, L. K., & Stoel, L., 2000; Balabanis, G. et al., 2001; Josiassen, A., Assaf, A. G., & Karpen, I. O., 2011; Gündoğdu, Y., 2020). As a result of the research, age has a relation to consumer ethnocentrism.

11. Conclusion

The results of the analysis do not show a positive relationship between the purchase intentions of the participants and their ethnocentrism levels. However, when the participants were asked which fast fashion brand they preferred, they stated that they would prefer the domestic brand more. The differences between the answers given by the participants to the Likert questions in the survey and the answers they expressed themselves shed light on the future studies. To understand why these two answers are different from each other, neuroimaging devices can be used to determine which of the answers given by the participant is more accurate. To understand whether the consumer will prefer a domestic or foreign brand and to better determine which factors affect the purchase intention, ethnocentrism and consumer purchase intention and some demographic information have been examined. In the analyzes made with demographic information, no significant relationship was found between all demographic characteristics except age, ethnocentrism, and consumer purchase intention. When the consumer purchase intention is examined, it is seen that the participants tend to buy foreign fast-fashion brand products more. However, due to the current pandemic, consumers' attitudes towards foreign brands have changed, and their support for the domestic brand has increased, and this has led to an increase in the ethnocentrism levels of the participants. According to the results of the analysis, the ethnocentrism levels of the young adults' age group were found to be high. In opposition to mentioned publications, the young adults' age group, which corresponds to the Y generation, is more ethnocentric.

The level of consumer ethnocentrism and purchase intention constantly changes according to the conditions of the consumer and the period in which he lives. Any research on these subjects will always bring a novelty to the literature because the consumer's opinion will constantly change and develop. For future studies, equal gender comparisons can be made, the number of participants can be increased and research on the consumption of luxury products can be done. In addition to behavioral data results, neuromarketing evaluation (Electroencephalography, Eye-Tracking etc.) can also be included.

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