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## **Consumer Ethnocentrism: A Study on Norwegian Consumers**

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# **Consumer Ethnocentrism: A Study on Norwegian Consumers**

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

Globalization has led to increased movement of services and products across international and national boundaries. As a consequent, consumers across the globe are now able to access different products from foreign countries than ever before. This new development has led to increased global competition among companies. As result, consumers are currently overwhelmed with a variety of products, both foreign and domestic, from where they have to make a choice. Thus, the need for survival in the increased competitive environment has sparked many firms, especially domestic firms, to increase their focus towards understanding consumer behaviors in target markets, looking closely to consumer ethnocentrism. Helgeson, Kurpis, Supphellen, and Ekici (2017) observed, as a result of the growing presence of foreign firms, in local markets, it has become greatly imperative to gauge consumer's attitudes, perception and level of ethnocentrism regarding both foreign and domestic products. Relatively, Makanyeza and Toit (2017) argued that an understanding of consumer behavior in markets, highly dominated by foreign firms, is highly essential for marketers to design effective marketing designs and strategies. Chowdhury (2013) also added that the majority of the foreign companies have had a substantial presence in several markets and these different markets in turn show different consumption patterns. Thus, the rationale compelling the importance and urgency of uncovering these attitudes, perceptions and level of ethnocentrism is also well presented in previous studies. For instance, Watson and Wright (2000) made reference to (Crawford and Lamb, 1981) postulating that nations perceived as having similar cultures like that of a home country were more preferred compared to countries with different cultures. Relatively, Baruk (2019) argued that it is of greater essence to understand consumer's attitudes and perceptions towards different products and other determinant factors like level of ethnocentrism, if a firm desires to penetrate a market. Ignoring such factors can lead to failure in the national and international market.

To add on, Alsughayir (2013) argued that research on consumer ethnocentrism is relatively at its earlier stages within the marketing theory and practice. Consumer ethnocentrism as a concept take roots in sociology, and enables nationalistic assessment of imported products and services. Thus, in light of the increasing internationalization of products, consumer ethnocentrism take a

pivotal role in the global marketing environment (Ruyter, Birgelen, & Wetzels, 1998). In support, Shankarmahesh (2006) articulated that this era is partly characterized by the growth of globalization and liberalization, which have in turn stimulated the growth rate of the world trade. The tremendous growth of international trade has seen the reduction of tariff barriers opening wide territorial borders for trade with countries trying to achieve uniform product-related regulations within multiple industries. While Shankarmahesh (2006) sees this as a positive thing, he was also concerned by the changes in consumer behavior, attitude, and level of ethnocentrism towards products calling for urgent research to learn and understand this phenomenon. Ruyter, Birgelen, & Wetzels (1998) noted that ethnocentric consumers are more reluctant buy and consume foreign made products based on a sense of loyalty towards their home country. In turn, the tendencies of ethnocentric consumers to shy away from foreign products and services according to Sharma et al. (1995) can lead to negative attitudes toward foreign products. With this in mind, the following section presents the background of this study with further research into consumer ethnocentrism.

### *Background Study*

Consumer ethnocentrism is a term adopted from the overall idea of ethnocentrism developed more than eight decades ago. While it actually started as a purely sociological theory used to differentiate between in-group, group people identify with, and out-group, those group perceived as opposed to the in-group, ethnocentrism changed to be a psychosocial concept important to individual-level personality systems and a more general social and cultural analytic structure (Shimp & Sharma, 1987). Generally, Siagamka and Balabanis (2015) argued that ethnocentrism is a representation of the universal proclivity through which people can see the groups they are in as the center of the universe. Through ethnocentrism, groups learn to view other social units based on their group's perspective and disassociate themselves with individuals who have different cultures from them. In this view, the values and symbols of one's local and national groups might turn out to be an object of contempt (Javalgi, Khare, Gross, & Scherer, 2005).

Balabanis and Siagamka (2015) further postulated that the term consumer ethnocentrism can be used as representation of the widely held beliefs by many people about the morality and appropriateness of internationally-made products. Based on the view of ethnocentric consumers, it is very wrong to buy foreign-made products based on their perception, it damages the local economy, increases job loss, and is primarily unpatriotic. Thus, in this perspective, goods from other nations, out-groups, are tools of scorn to highly ethnocentric consumers.

However, non-ethnocentric consumers perceive foreign products as an object that can be appraised based on their own merit without considering where they were made. On another front, non-ethnocentric consumers may perceive foreign products as objects to be appraised more favorably because they are made in foreign countries. Functionally, consumer ethnocentrism gives people a sense of identity, a sense of belonging, and highly essential for the purpose of this paper, a knowledge of the in-group's acceptable and unacceptable buying behavior (Shimp & Sharma, 1987).

Shankarmahesh further argued that ethnocentrism manifests itself in some types of social groups as mentioned above, developing into patriotism, family pride, racial discrimination, family pride, religious prejudice, and sectionalism. Thus, the distinguishing factor of ethnocentrism underlies majorly the development of in-group's pride as its equivalent contempt for out-groups and perceptions of these groups as anti-thesis (Sharma, Shimp, & Shin, 1994). On the other hand, some authors contended that ethnocentrism is a universal facet that is deeply construed in many areas of intergroup relations. Some have even argued that ethnocentrism is part of human nature (Shimp & Sharma, 1987). Thus, consumer ethnocentrism was developed as a domain-specific concept to study consumer behavior and attitudes with their marketing implications. According to Karoui and Romdhane (2019), consumer ethnocentrism was thought of as a unique economic form of ethnocentrism that covers the beliefs of consumers regarding the appropriateness and morality of buying foreign products.

To a specific extend, some specific properties of consumer ethnocentrism were derived. The first property regards consumer ethnocentrism as a general tendency as opposed to some specific attitude. Secondly, consumer ethnocentrism was regarded as resulting from a perceived concern for a domestic country and the harmful impact imports may bring to the citizens of a country (Zeren, Kara, & Gil, 2020). The third property relates to the nature of consumer ethnocentrism as having an ethical dimension, where purchasing imported goods may be seen as being indifferent and unpatriotic to the plight of fellow citizens who are left without work. Fourth, consumer ethnocentrism is regarded as being inelastic in terms of price or other product-related attributes. Fifth, consumer ethnocentrism is presumed to be socialized as early as during childhood (Watson & Wright, 2000). Another property views overall consumer ethnocentrism as a social system considered to be an aggregation of individual tendencies. Such conceptualization is quite simple taking into account that it ignores the aggregation of various intermediate levels like institutions and organizations that happen for any social phenomenon.

Finally, consumer ethnocentrism was perceived as not only restricted to consumption goods and proclivity for locally-made products but also present in industrial products (Baruk, 2019).

Consumer ethnocentrism is often confused with “country-of-origin bias” even though these two topics are different and independent from each other. Some research has explained such differences based on examples. For instance, a study explained that Norwegian customers can show positive country-of-origin (COO) impact on French wine because of Norwegian-based product-class attributes but choose not to purchase it based on nationalistic reasons (Shoham & Brencic, 2003). Therefore, consumer ethnocentrism strongly regards to an overall tendency of trying to avoid purchasing products made from other countries in opposition to the image of a specific COO. Relatively, country of origin is a representative of the affective and cognitive facets of purchaser’s decision-making, while consumer ethnocentrism signifies the normative and affective facets of purchaser behavior. In this regard, buyers often depend on COO cues whenever they are unable to access information regarding the product (Shimp & Sharma, 1987). Consumers can also be strongly affected by general affective responses, which they may hold against a specific country. In addition to the impact of affective responses towards the home country of person on consumer ethnocentrism, normative pressures based on the feeling of consumers towards purchasing a locally made product is another major impact (Shankarmahesh, 2006). Thus, normative pressure remains a special facet of consumer ethnocentrism.

### *Problem Statement*

Norwegian-made products have through time and history been providing the structure of credit where Norwegian population examined foreign-made goods that were highly perceived as inferior and despised. However, a majority of people are becoming more sympathetic on international products as alternative to Norwegian goods, yet a section of consumers still strongly reluctant to purchase foreign goods and scorn other citizens for buying such products, making claim that such products leave Norwegians unemployed, hurting the economy, or they are unpatriotic. Some section of consumers are similarly vehement in defending the right to purchase any goods of their desire despite the country of origin where it is made.

Helgeson, Kurpis, Supphellen, and Ekici (2017) assert that Norway, a country with few established self-supported industries is dependent on a cross-border exchange, in other words, export, and import from foreign countries. The country has in recent years become more incorporated and exposed to other cultures, food, music, and values. However, without

Norwegian consumers' acknowledgment and purchasing power for imported products, many of the everyday products would not be available on the domestic market. Trading Economics (2020) argued that although imports accounted for 756 billion NOK in 2019, consumers will not automatically be accepting foreign products, nor does it indicate that consumer ethnocentrism will be nonexistent. An individual with more exposure to other cultures will most likely have an easier time accepting products produced outside Norway, than a particularly homogenous individual, with few interactions with foreign cultures (Shimp & Sharma, 1987).

The above discussion illustrates that consumer ethnocentrism is a well-discovered topic in the marketing field. Nevertheless, earlier research on consumer ethnocentrism in Norway is limited and there is insufficient literature on consumers' attitudes to imported products on the market. Such questions as, "Why and what factors contribute to Norwegian consumer ethnocentrism?" remain largely unanswered. Thus, in order for a foreign company to enter the Norwegian market it is helpful to have moderate knowledge of how consumers respond to various products, and likewise, to recognize the elements that support consumer ethnocentrism. Furthermore, it can possibly assist Norwegian and foreign companies in gaining further understanding of the purchase patterns of Norwegian consumers.

#### *Research Purpose*

As per the above concern, it became apparent to the researchers that consumer ethnocentrism in Norway as a growing business field is lacking and requires in-depth research to determine the attitudes, perceptions, and level of ethnocentrism among Norwegian consumers on foreign products, while also establishing the elements that support consumer ethnocentrism in Norway with an aim of assisting Norwegians and foreign companies to gain a deeper understanding of buying patterns of the Norwegian consumers. Thus, this paper aims to conduct thorough research to explore the level of consumer ethnocentrism in Norway and find out the factors that contribute to consumer ethnocentrism. Further, this paper will look to find out the attitudes and perceptions of Norwegian consumers on foreign products and establish their buying patterns.

#### *Research Questions*

Following the research purpose discussed above, the following research questions will be eminent.

- 1) What is the degree of consumer ethnocentrism in Norwegian population?
- 2) How does perceived product necessity influence the level of consumer ethnocentrism among Norwegian consumers?



- 3) In what ways does environmental concern affect the level of consumer ethnocentrism among Norwegian consumers?
- 4) How does cultural openness impact consumer ethnocentric tendencies for Norwegian consumers?
- 5) How does perceived threat on domestic economy affect consumer ethnocentrism among consumers in Norway?

### *Research Limitations*

As with other researches, this research also has some limitations and forces, which the researcher might not have control over. Therefore, this research will be limited to investigating consumer ethnocentrism and consumer perceptions only. While it was established that consumers buying patterns, particularly in Norway, require in-depth research, this research will only highlight some of these patterns as they relate to consumer ethnocentrism leaving room for further research. This is because of time constraints and other limiting factors like lack of sufficient information sources in this area that warrant thorough research. It also expected that finances will be a major challenge given the present financial restraints and thus, the researcher might not be able to comprehensively cover all the areas surrounding consumer ethnocentrism and patterns of buying behavior. Also, time constraints will be a major limiting-factor as this research study is a time constraint and as such some factors presumed as important to this study may not be investigated. Also, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and related strict measures, a face-to-face interview will not be achieved. Thus, online surveys in form of questionnaires will be used, which are usually perceived as rather limiting.

## Chapter Two

### Literature Review

#### *Consumer Ethnocentrism*

Consumer ethnocentrism, also known as Consumer Ethnocentric Tendencies (CET) was first defined by Shimp and Sharma in 1987. The theory of CET is an extension of the theory of general ethnocentrism by Sumner in 1906. Fundamentally the original theory defines ethnocentrism as: “the view of things in which one’s own group is the center of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it.” Each group nourishes its own pride and

vanity boasts itself superior, exalts its own divinities, and looks with contempt on outsiders”. Building further on this theory, Shimp and Sharma (1987) elaborate on the applicability of consumer ethnocentric tendencies onto consumption patterns. They explain how the theory of ethnocentrism as a psychological phenomenon affecting discriminatory behavior transcends into their consumption patterns.

Consumer ethnocentrism is defined as “beliefs held by consumers about the appropriateness, indeed morality of purchasing foreign-made products”. Furthermore, an ethnocentric consumer often has a bias towards their home market and feel wrongdoing in purchasing foreign goods from other nations. The reluctance towards the purchasing of foreign goods stems from the “threat” it opposes to the domestic economy (Shimp & Sharma, 1987), and the likelihood of reducing domestic labor activities (Karoui & Khemakhem, 2019). Steering from products of foreign origin, the more alien the higher the consumer skepticism (Watson & Wright, 2000). Presently this is something that companies have to adhere to if they wish to have a successful market penetration to countries where CET is high. Ma, Abdeljelil, and Hu (2019) articulated that companies need to find a way to mitigate this uncertainty if they wish for their company, brand, or product to experience success within a certain market. The way to do this is through finding out how strong CET is in the desired market, and what factors that have an effect on elevating or reducing this psychological phenomenon. Doing this can ensure the company to develop the best possible strategy for its product, communication, and marketing.

### *Ethnocentrism*

Ethnocentrism is a broad field for research and has continuously been closely connected to the negative side of country bias, patriotism, and nationalism. Presented in a study from Baruk (2019) and further discussed by Bizumic (2018) ethnocentrism also has an essential role in consumer’s decision-making process, influencing perceptions of foreign products and purchase intentions particularly the propriety of purchasing products from foreign nations. The theory of ethnocentrism is believed to be first developed by Sumner in 1906, although some might argue that it was first mentioned as early as in 1881, by Gumpłowicz. Ethnocentrism focuses on the establishment and the sustenance of an in-group; its culture, attitudes, values, goals, and more (Jiménez-Guerrero, Perez-Mesa, & Galdeano-Gómez, 2020). The idea of ethnocentrism fosters strong bonds with those of similar attitudes or preferences to those within their in-group (Sharma et al., 1995; Bizumic, 2018).

A more ethnocentric person will often favor their own in-group's values and ideas and reject outgroups by identifying unfavorable traits that distinguish the in-group from the outgroup (Shankarmahesh, 2006). Further explained by Bizumic (2018) is that ethnocentrism is an attitudinal concept stemming from people's faith on individual group as being more essential than others. Country of Origin is another topic whose effect on perception and consumption patterns has been dutifully explored. Country of origin has been proven to oftentimes influence CET. Where a product's origin often is linked to biases against particular countries, which influences the buying intentions of a product. In the field of consumer ethnocentrism, where studies have been done throughout the world, numerous research has been affiliated with the country of origin (Magnusson & A. Westjohn, 2011). Studies have shown that products from foreign countries fail the adoption in export markets, as a result of negative perceptions toward the country of origin (Balabanis, Diamantopoulos, Muller, and Melewar 2002; Pecotich & Rosenthal, 2001; Kaynak & Kara 2002).

However, the COO can either be negative/positive for the industry, depending on the perception from the customer and the CET is not something that is evenly predominant throughout all of the markets. Some industries will be exposed to higher CET by consumers than others, often within industries such as technology and food. A study has shown that person with the same level of ethnocentrism tend to hold a certain prejudice and discrimination towards the same country of origin (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2004). The country of origin is used to reduce the level of risk involved in adopting products. High-risk products, that requires more research of product attributes pre-purchase have shown to be greater influenced by country of origin (Bilkey & Nes, 1982). However, the degree of consumer ethnocentrism to a particular COO still ranges, based on goods category. To assume that all products from a certain country will be met with similar attitudes, can result in inaccurate product evaluations (Bilkey & Nes, 1982; Kaynak & Kara, 2002).

Moreover, the level of consumer ethnocentrism and the likelihood of adoption of a foreign product will be influenced by the previous mindset to the country of origin (Bizumic, 2018; Balabanis, Diamantopoulos, Mueller, & Melewar (2001); Helgeson et al., 2017). This construct can also be referred to as 'animosity'; "Remnants of antipathy related to previous or ongoing military, political, or economic events" (Balabanis, Diamantopoulos, Mueller, & Melewar, 2001). Although animosity is a construct built on consumer ethnocentrism, the construct in relation to consumer ethnocentrism focuses on perceptions against a specific COO, whereas consumer ethnocentrism addresses' biases on a macro-level.

Country of Manufacture Prior to purchase decisions are made by consumers, they form an evaluation of the product, particularly center on the quality of the product. The appraisal of goods quality is administered with the use of cues, to minimize uncertainties around the purchase (Jiménez-Guerrero, Perez-Mesa, & Galdeano-Gómez, 2020). Country of manufacture (COM) is believed to function as an extrinsic cue with the “made in” identification, which provides the consumer with information about the manufacturing country (Allman, Fenik, Hewett, & Morgan, 2016; Bilkey & Nes, 1982; Helgeson et al., 2017). When a consumer is provided with greater product information, COM has greater influence over the evaluation process, and therefore, the probability of rejection of imports will be higher in markets where consumers have greater information of COM (Helgeson et al., 2017).

Brand of the set of cues a consumer goes through in so to examine the quality level of the product, the most visible extrinsic cue is brand. In a way, it is possible to argue that the brand is an alternative to the country of origin as they are closely related. Pecotich and Rosenthal cited that in 1977 Olson argued that the higher popularity of a brand, the higher its impact on product appraisal. Building on this, they elaborated that a popular brand is a strong enough cue to get the better of or improve the COO (Pecotich & Rosenthal, 2001). C. M. Han suggests that brand name can even become a more profound decision making cue than the country of origin itself (Lee, Kim, & Pan, 2014). Consumers are highly likely to purchase specific goods based on the stature these goods from particular nations have attained, rather than because of the country of origin itself (Bizumic, 2018). It is important to note this for consumer ethnocentrism as country of origin and any linked brand names have had their effect on consumer behavior proven in plentitude (Shankarmahesh, 2006). When a recognized brand is presented evidence shows that a differential, enhanced quality rating towards the country of origin. For example, many consumers have high regard for Mercedes-Benz while very few have an actual driving and ownership experience (Ma, Abdeljelil, & Hu, 2019).

#### *Measuring Consumer Ethnocentrism (The CETSCALE)*

Although the theory of consumer ethnocentrism is based on general ethnocentric behavior, it does not mean that they are mutually exclusive. Assuming it is when conducting research on CET and using measurements meant for ethnocentrism is not a validated way to reach correct and relevant data. As Shimp and Sharma pointed out in their paper (1987) there were at the time existing scales to measure ethnocentrism, they were, however, not very important to the investigation of consumer ethnocentrism. Therefore, Shimp and Sharma (1987) developed their own survey in order to validate a research method for measuring CET; the CETSCALE. The

CETSCALE (Consumer Ethnocentrism Tendencies Scale) was developed and validated in America by Shimp and Sharma in 1987, it contains 17 elements of statements that reflect consumer tendencies towards purchasing foreign- and domestic made commodities. The statements were accompanied by a 7 point Likert-scale to measure the level of agreeance.

### **The validity of the CETSCALE**

Firstly, Shimp and Sharma performed four separate studies to assess the reliability and construct validity for the CETSCALE. All four had high internal consistency reliability with coefficient alpha being 0.94-0.96, indicating that the CETSCALE is a reliable index of consumers' ethnocentric tendencies. As they pointed out in their study, the validity can only be applied to the contemporary (at the time) American society, and applying it "to other cultures is entirely problematic at this time "(Shimp and Sharma, 1987). Later, in 1995 they had proved its validity in South Korea, and by 1991 it had been validated in West Germany, France, and Japan by Netemeyer, Durvasula, and Lichtenstein (Sharma et al., 1995).

Lastly, in 2012 a study was conducted on the dimensionality of the CETSCALE. The study did thorough research on applied CETSCALE studies and other studies that utilized an adapted version, to see the validation for using this measurement. The final result of the research supported the multidimensionality of the CETSCALE (Jiménez-Guerrero, Gázquez-Abad, & Linares-Agüera, 2014). This implies that the CETSCALE and modified versions have been validated in enough disparate cultures to be generally applicable for measuring consumer ethnocentrism across the globe. The need to apply the CETSCALE on Norwegian consumers is highly imperative. As the previous paragraph highlighted, the CETSCALE has proven validity in numerous cultures with vast differences, making it multidimensional applicable for consumer ethnocentrism across cultures. Nevertheless, the validity of the CETSCALE has yet to be proven in Norway in an acknowledged study, at least on a general, non-industry specific scale.

Helgeson, Kurpis, Supphellen, & Ekici touched upon the subject in 2017 with their study of consumers' use of COM contrasting Norway and the US. The study had 224 Norwegian respondents that answered a 10-item version of the CETSCALE. The study showed that Norwegians had a lower level of consumer ethnocentrism than Americans. The problem is that this study focused on COM above CET and the section highlighting consumer ethnocentrism within Norwegian consumers is marginal. Therefore, it is not an indicative study for consumer ethnocentrism in Norway, albeit it is the best scientific study that underwent applying the

phenomenon in Norway so far. As such, the lack of studies underwent on the topic of consumer ethnocentrism in Norway clearly shows the need for it.

#### *Consumer Perceptions and Impact on Foreign Products*

Ethnocentric tendencies in consumers are developed through different social, psychological, and demographic influences (Shimp et al., 1995). Within CET research there exist four broad categories of antecedents: socio-psychological, economic, political, and demographic (Shankramesh, 2006). To answer the research question socio-psychological variables were identified to further discover and predict the influence and patterns of consumer ethnocentrism (Balabanis, Diamantopoulos, Mueller, & Melewar 2000; Shimp & Sharma, 1987). However, with the limited resources available, for an achievable research paper, the scope had to be limited.

Therefore, we have chosen to focus only on the demographic and socio-psychological variables. The socio-psychological variables identified and tested in this study are perceived product necessity, cultural openness, perceived economic threat, and environmental concerns.

#### *Perceived product necessity*

Product necessity is decided by various objectives. The consumption behavior of a consumer is influenced by changes in the environment (Vida & Reardon, 2008; Balabanis, Diamantopoulos, Mueller, & Melewar, 2001). Therefore, changes and means of political, societal, and economic mechanisms will affect the perceived necessity and approval of the product (Vida & Reardon, 2008; Arrowquip, 2019). Further discoveries demonstrate that CE will have less impact on purchase attitudes to imported products and services, if it is considered to be a necessity in daily life (Huddleston, Good, & Stoel, 2001; Balabanis, Diamantopoulos, Mueller, & Melewar, 2001; Watson & Wright, 2000) and if there is limited availability of products in the domestic market (Ramadania, & Rustam, 2015). In this concept, the words import and foreign will be considered alike in the definition.

#### *Cultural openness*

The amount of exposure to foreign countries or other cultures affects an individual's characteristics and values, which influences the perceived perception of things from a foreign culture (Shimp et al., 1995). Shared values, beliefs, identity, and motives are all factors making up the definition of culture (Hylland Eriksen, 2017, p. 26- 31). Cultural openness, on the other hand, concerns the underlying factors to purchase behaviors of individuals (behavioral patterns) in home countries. It concentrates on the treatment of foreign cultures (Shimp et al., 1995;

Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985). Mendenhall and Oddou (1985) also referred to it as “perceptual dimensions”, where countries with higher perceptual dimensions are believed to have higher acceptance and support of entities from outside borders.

#### *Perceived economic threat*

Ethnocentric consumers are by nature more skeptical of foreign produced products and counter such skepticism by purchasing domestically produced products- to protect the domestic economy. This is also known as “ethnocentric insecurity” (Siamagka & Balabanis, 2015). However, according to a study from Sharma and Shin (1987), ethnocentric individuals have a high likelihood of having positive associations to foreign-made goods and services if it does not implicate excessive threats to the domestic market and personal welfare. Furthermore, when a group is experiencing outside- pressure and “threats” the cohesion within the (in-) group grows stronger (Hylland Eriksen, 2017, p. 163). That is, the probability of higher levels of CET increases when the (national) consumers feel at risk of the exporting country, which products are being imported. At times of higher competition and uncertainty, in-group unity strengthens, and individuals become more nationalistic and ethnocentric, according to Pecotich and Rosenthal (2001). This idea of ethnocentrism is also known as Realistic Conflict Theory (RCT). RCT concerns ethnocentric tendencies that are accelerated by social factors and the belief that there is a competition between groups for limited resources (jobs, economic power, political power) (Siamagka & Balabanis, 2015) because of the perception of threat for the national economy increases. Further analysis made by Javalgi, Khare, Gross, and Scherer (2005) disclose ethnocentric consumers' (relative) acceptance of purchasing imported products if the country of origin is of cultural resemblance to their own (Balabanis & Siamagka, 2017). Both religious- and political beliefs are a part of consumer culture, which is displayed in the decision-making process and influences consumer's attitudes to products (Kaynak & Kara, 2002; Siamagka & Balabanis, 2015). Furthermore, ethnocentric consumers tend to value their national identity and traditions higher than their counterparts, which have shown to be somewhat reflected in their consumption patterns (Herche, 2002).

#### *Environmental concern*

The global environmental challenge is described “to be the greatest challenge of our generation”. The concern for it in our contemporary society and importance for the population has only increased with time. It is said that the founding of UNCED, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in 1992 was the push that caused the increased

interest. It is also related to the fact that the first report of the environmental state of the world was not published until the 1990s, the general population was ignorant of the issue priorly (O'brien & Williams, 2016, p. 241-244). As stated earlier the post-war period after the fall of the Soviet Union brought in an unprecedented global market and international trade, and ever since, the rise in globalization and international trade has been continuous (Shankarmahesh, 2006).

The environmental challenges the world is faced with today are proven to be directly tied to human actions and activity on land (O'brien & Williams, 2016, p. 241-244), and just as the post-war period led to increase international trade it also spurred environmental protection organizations to emerge. Several studies have shown that the environmental concern of the population has manifested itself in consumption patterns as well, it is directly linked to anti-consumption (Kaynak & Kara, 2002). Other focus on how the industries can help mitigate the environmental issue through their supply chain, or as part of being a sustainable firm (Rustam, Wang, & Zameer, 2020; Seuring & Müller, 2008).

However, the studies connecting consumer ethnocentrism to environmental concerns are scarce. Despite the lack of research on the issue, it is not absurd to believe that a consumer with environmental concerns will inadvertently have a higher level of consumer ethnocentrism. The idea is that buying locally produced products is better as it will cut down on greenhouse gas emission, reduce air pollution, alleviate dependence on fossil fuels (Arrowquip, 2019). Although this sentiment is not very scientifically backed, as some research shows that organically produced long traveled products can be better for the environment than local non-organic products are (Gallaud, 2016). Regardless, the social norms and beliefs held by the population that a short value chain is better for the environment, therefore hold the potential of increasing a consumer's ethnocentric consumption patterns.

#### *Consumer Attitude and Buying Intention*

Consumer attitude has been defined as the propensity to act in a continuously unfavorable and favorable way towards a specified item (Chowdhury, 2013). The term item is used to mean a range of things, including promotions, stores, products, services, places, brands, and product categories. Consumer attitudes focus on the general judgment or evaluation that individuals make with reference to stores, brands, businesses, and products. In this sense, consumers who show a strong interest in a product or service are regarded as having a favorable attitude towards



such a particular product. In contrast, those who lack interest in a product are said to display a negative attitude towards such a good (Baruk, 2019).

Recent studies investigating consumer attitudes have proposed a tri-component model as the primary model for attitude (Chowdhury, 2013; Baruk, 2019; Watson & Wright, 2000). The tri-component model articulates that attitude involves three major elements; conation, affect, and cognition. According to Solomon (2010), cognition is helpful in describing the consumer's belief. This entails consumers' belief that whenever they consume a product, there is an excellent likelihood that it will result in a defined outcome. As such, the beliefs of consumers are a reflection of the features that consumers attribute to such products. Besides, affect entails the feelings or emotions of consumers towards a product or service. In this regard, the affective component is usually referred to as overall product evaluation. This is indicative that of the three components, affect is the only component that explains consumer attitudes comprehensively. On the other front, consumer beliefs are multidimensional in the fact that they describe different attributes that consumers accredit to an item. Regardless, consumer feelings are one-dimensional because they mirror consumers' proclivity towards a product or service. Therefore, consumer beliefs are essential to the extent that they describe service or product appraisal, which in turn forms the primary determinants of behavioral intention—implying that product beliefs inform product evaluations. Notably, conation refers to the buying intention, meaning, the purchasing intention, or behavioral intention. It is representative of the inclination of consumers to behave in a specified manner regarding a product. In some instances, the buying intention might reflect the behavior itself. However, consumers may buy a product despite their emotional attachment or feeling towards the product (Schiffman, Kanuk, & Kumar, 2010).

There is a general consensus that consumer attitude impacts their actions. Argyriou and Melewar (2011) postulated that a positive attitude towards a product or service has a high likelihood of affecting the people who are supposed to use it. Such ideology concedes with the theory of Planned Behavior. According to Ajzen (1988), the theory proposes that the intention to behave in a certain way predicts the resulting behavior. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of consumer attitudes towards foreign products is crucial in four significant approaches. First, such knowledge allows market segmentation. Secondly, it will enable product development offerings. To add on, it informs the designing of winning promotional strategies, and lastly, consumer attitudes are vital in predicting consumer behaviors in the marketplace (Makanyeza & du Toit, 2017).

### *Consumer Ethnocentrism, Buyer's Intention to Purchase Domestic Products*

As mentioned above, consumer ethnocentrism stems from the overall ideation of ethnocentrism. According to Shrimp (1984), ethnocentrism was first introduced several centuries ago by William G. Sumner. Overall, ethnocentrism as a notion “represents the universal proclivity for people to view their own group as the center of the universe, to interpret other social units from the perspective of their own group, and to reject persons who are culturally dissimilar while blindly accepting those who are culturally like themselves” (Shrimp and Sharma, 1987). Ethnocentrism became a significant part of marketing after a suggestion that proposed for it to be included as part of the potential factors, which have an ability to affect and forge consumer behavior (Jiménez-Guerrero, Perez-Mesa, & Galdeano-Gómez, 2020). Ever since, ethnocentrism is seen more as a human temperament, which has the ability to affect the choices of consumers in a range of buying situations (Ma, Abdeljelil, & Hu, 2019).

The first scholars to study and implement the idea of ethnocentrism in marketing field were Shrimp and Sharma and later constructed the phrase “consumer ethnocentric tendencies” (CET) (Shrimp and Sharma, 1987). There is a profound consensus that consumer ethnocentrism has an adverse effect on the purchase intention of consumers directed on imported goods. This means that a high level of consumer ethnocentric tendencies can bring about negative attitudes towards buying foreign goods. As a point of fact, consumers decline to purchase imported goods because they perceive them to be hurting to domestic economy and may also be directly or indirectly associated with unemployment. Relatively, Jiménez-Guerrero, Perez-Mesa, & Galdeano-Gómez (2020) added the aspect of allegiance towards the home country that compels citizens, particularly Norwegian Consumers, to decline to buy imported goods. Therefore, in Norway, there are majority of consumers displaying an impressive perception of ethnocentrism showing less interest in using of imported services and goods primarily based on a shared belief that such acts is immoral and detrimental to the domestic economy (Balabanis & Diamantopoulos, 2004).

In general, Shrimp and Sharma (1987) suggested that the degree of ethnocentrism can differ from one region to another and from one person to another in the same nation and even based on different countries. Balabanis and Diamantopoulos (2004) articulated that past research done on developed countries like Norway, have evidenced a strong willingness of ethnocentric consumers to purchasing local products in favor of the imported goods. Contrastingly, there is a general belief that consumers from undeveloped and developing nations show a strong preference for foreign products over domestic products. Therefore, it is safe to deduce that this

is a profound indication that the impact of ethnocentrism in developed nations, cannot be generalized to developing nations. There is a profound argument that the identified connections between the willingness to purchase locally-made goods and ethnocentrism is less in developing nations (Helgeson, Kurpis, Supphellen, & Ekici, 2017).

For instance, a 2013 cross-cultural comparative cultural research as referenced by Helgeson, Kurpis, Supphellen, and Ekici (2017) revealed that Norwegian consumers are more inclined towards ethnocentrism when compared to South Korean and Chinese consumers. On the other hand, studies of Mensah, Bahhouth, and Ziemnowicz (2011) revealed that regardless of the identified sense of ethnocentrism in some consumers; a part of Norwegian consumers are not highly ethnocentric. Bizumic (2018) suggested that in Norway and other developed nations it may not be logically adequate to just talk about ethnocentrism, rather it may mean finding some form of reverse ethnocentrism. As a point of fact, reverse ethnocentrism refers to “a type of ethnocentrism in which the home culture is regarded as inferior to a foreign culture” (Bizumic, 2018, p. 33).

Within the marketplace, the above necessitates the appraising goods that come from developed nations more negatively compared to locally-made goods. More interesting is the claim that consumers within developed nations like Norway, must commonly show less ethnocentrism in comparison to the consumers in developing nations. The rationale behind such claim has to do with the fact that people from developed nations should not have a bad feeling for purchasing and consuming foreign-made products given that the domestic economy relies on the adequate support for competition from international companies. Moreover, according support to imported goods in Norway can be a motivating factor for domestic companies to increase their product quality, thus, improving the general market quality (Bizumic, 2018). Besides, Norwegian consumers were found to be highly concerned with the status of their economy as it is largely vulnerable when exposed to international competition from relatively more developed nations like the US. As such, local consumption is strong. In such light, it would be safe to suggest that consumer attitudes in Norway are generally influenced by ethnocentrism, though subject to substantiating evidence. Perhaps, exploring the consequences of consumer ethnocentrism in connection with Norwegian consumers would illuminate more light of the above presumption.

### *Consequences of Consumer Ethnocentrism*

The main result of interest looks to answer if consumer ethnocentric tendencies can result to the buying of local goods in opposition to imported goods. studies have employed various concepts like “purchase intention” “attitudes towards buying foreign products” (Sharma et al., 1995), “willingness to buy domestic products” (Baruk, 2019), and “willingness to buy foreign products” (Shankarmahesh, 2006).

### *Direct consequences*

Consumer ethnocentrism gave rise to adverse attitudes towards imported goods in research papers like Sharma et al. (1995) and Karoui & Khemakhem (2019). Scientific evidence for a positive lin between buying intention and consumer ethnocentrism on local goods is present in research papers like Mensah, Bahhouth, and Ziemnowicz (2011) and Dogi (2015). Studies such as (Becic, 2017; Huddleston, Good, and Stoel, 2001; Lantz & Loeb, 1996) further indicated statistical support on the direct connection between consumer ethnocentric and willingness to purchase imported goods. Huddleston, Good, and Stoel (2001) also showed an adverse association between consumer ethnocentrism and evidence for international retail stores (Lunderberg & Overa, 2020).

### *Consequences through mediators*

Lunderberg & Overa (2020) proposed perceived responsibility, equity, costs, and empathy as potential mediators between the willingness to purchase imported goods and consumer ethnocentrism. The duo posited that consumer ethnonationalism had a negative impact on perceived equity. The understanding behind this construct laid on the fact that ethnocentric consumers tend to view multinational competition as strongly unfair to local industries. The reduction in perceived equity would be expected to affect buyers to decline imported goods in favor of the local products (Lunderberg & Overa, 2020). Empathy in this construct refers to “the ability to understand how a situation appears to another person and how that person is reacting cognitively and emotionally to the situation.” Again research showed that consumer ethnonationalism had a positive impact on empathic feelings for other people seen in similar terms as consumers. Such association was same to Karoui & Khemakhem (2019) supposition claiming that high level ethnocentrism has the potential to increase in-group unity. Such high empathy for the in-groups could potentially increase the tendencies to purchase local goods.

Lunderberg and Overa, 2020) articulated that a massive ethnonational identity had the potential to reduce the expected cost for supporting in-groups. In a different perspective, ethnocentric

consumers had the willingness to ignore the individualized economic cost of purchasing locally-made goods. This logic concedes with part of the essential elements of consumer ethnocentrism as mentioned above, particularly, its price is said to be inelastic in nature. Responsibility is referred to as the “acceptance of an obligation to alleviate the distressful situation.” Huddleston, Good, and Stoel (2001) articulated that while perceived responsibility increases, perceived equity diminishes making these constructs to display a tendency to purchase local goods. The researchers in their empirical research employing a huge Norwegian sample, widely gave support to the functions of the discussed mediating variables (Lunderberg & Overa, 2020).

Relative to Lunderberg & Overa, (2020) drop down of mediators indicated a new important mediator called “Country of Origin (COO)” effect. Huddleston, Good, and Stoel (2001) added image of country as another mediator between buying intention and consumer patriotism. Based on the foundation of scientific research comprising of Norwegian consumers, Huddleston, Good, and Stoel (2001) came to conclusion that country image was influenced by consumer ethnocentrism, though the association was moderated by the essence of the goods. Particularly, in an extensive review of “Country of Origin effects (COO),” Karoui & Khemakhem (2019) added consumer ethnocentrism as part of the implications of the country of origin coupled with other various implications like the economic development level and product class attribute.

Noteworthy, Mensah, Bahhouth, and Ziemnowicz (2011) credited consumer ethnocentric tendencies as an implication of country of origin. According to the authors, consumers with low-level of ethnocentrism applied country of origin cues for the unbiased appraisal of product traits. Regardless, the scientific outcome about the association between buying intention and country image remains largely continuous. While a number of studies failed to establish any significant impact of country of origin on buying intentions (Baruk, 2019) other studies have indicated a profound impact (Rustam, Wang, & Zameer, 2020; Seuring & Müller, 2008). Thus, consumer ethnocentrism, being primarily a normative and affective concept can then give rise to country of origin assessment that is fundamentally a cognitive concept. According to a past study, consumer ethnocentric tendencies is related with negative discernment of the quality of imported product. Scientific support for mediating impact of negative assessment for imported goods are present in such studies as (Lunderberg & Overa, 2020; Huddleston, Good, and Stoel 2001).

However, studying the Norwegian consumers, Rustam, Wang, and Zameer (2020) and Seuring and Müller (2008) failed to establish any relationship between consumer ethnocentric tendencies and appraisals of imported products' quality based on Norwegian goods. Notably, the research findings suggested a positive link between product discernment and CET based on Norwegian cameras. As such, they articulated that such outcomes are as a result of the increased brand populism of Norwegian products camera suggesting some form of moderating functions for brand populism with the links between product discernment and consumer ethnocentric tendencies.

#### *Consequences through moderators*

Research indicates two moderating factors between consumer attitudes and consumer ethnocentric tendencies towards imported goods. These factors include perceived economic threat and perceived product out of necessity. Perceived product out of necessity refers to the stretch to which consumers contemplate that an imported product is indispensable based on its absolute necessity (Sharma, Shimp, & Shin, 1995). As such Sharma et al. (1995) conceptualized that the impact of consumer ethnocentric tendencies on attitudes against imported goods is slightly stronger, following a negative direction, for those goods viewed as unnecessary. Such premise was also evidenced in the Norwegian sample.

Perceived economic threat as a concept is similar to “salience” discussed in the earlier part of this study if not for the fact that it was applied as a moderator by Rustam, Wang, and Zameer (2020). They also identified substantial evidence suggesting moderating impact of perceived threat. This means that consumer ethnocentric tendencies had affected attitude primarily for goods viewed as a threat to the local economy and individuals. Another study explored moderating impact of cultural similarity on connections between product evaluation and CET, identifying profound evidence within the settings of Norwegian consumers (Watson & Wright, 2000). This making it imperative to explore the consumer profile of Norwegian consumers to ascertain this finding.

#### *Consumer Profile in Norway*

##### *Consumer Profile*

Norway has an ageing population, with an average age of about 39 year. The country's population growth rate is depicted at 0.94 percent. Nearly 30 percent of Norwegian population was depicted to be lower than 24 years old, while more than 28 percent were above 55 years. Averagely, each household in Norway involves about 2 people with more than 38 percent of

the households comprising of people living alone, where nearly 44 percent being couples with or without kids. Besides, the household size was shown to be decreasing by each passing year. Moreover, the population demographics show that in Norway, there are roughly 102 males in every 100 females. Of this population, nearly 82 percent reside in urban areas where people are densely populated in the South based on its better climatic conditions and connection to Europe. Notably, Norwegians were highly educated with nearly 82 percent of adults between the ages of 25-64 having high school education while more than 43 percent having attended the university. Also, the country is working nation with about 68 percent of the working groups being employed in public and private sectors whereas more than 18 percent worked in municipal government, 11 percent in central government, and nearly 2 percent working in municipal county government (Banco Santander, 2020).

*Purchasing Power*

In terms of economic power, Norway has a GDP estimated at more than 639,600 NOK (\$75,500). The country’s mean salary is estimated at 547,300 NOK annually. As such, Norway being among the highest in Europe, has a relatively low purchasing power given that the increase in wages was not adequate enough to offset inflation. However, the adjusted disposable income was estimated at 3077,960 NOK per capita annually. According to projections, in 2017 consumption increased significantly but later went slowed down in 2018 before taking a decreasing curve as from July 2018. Relatively, the Gini index is low, though, income inequality is on the increase. Norwegian men earn a mean of 581,040 NOK per annum, while women earn a mean of 506,040 NOK, reflecting a rapid increase in the average women salaries 3.2 percent compared to men 2.7 percent (Banco Santander, 2020).

**Consumption Expenditure**

Purchasing Power Parity	2018	2019	2020 (e)	2021 (e)	2022 (e)
Purchasing Power Parity (Local Currency Unit per USD)	10.25	10.01	9.85	10.01	10.05

*Consumer Behavior*

Norway is strongly a consumer society with high interest in new products like emerging technologies. With a high consumption rate, consumers in Norway overall prefer to pay more for quality products. For them, they strong attachment for value for money in favor of low prices. Given this behavior, most consumers conduct a product search before purchasing them especially online. However, high cost of items in Norway has forced a number of consumers to start considering Swedish products with general consumer confidence falling as from 2018

though it remains higher compared to 2017. Regardless, more than 96 percent of the population have access to the internet whereas 63 percent agreed to purchase most of their goods online at least once in month. Averagely, the most purchased item is beauty products, shoe, electronics, and books where consumers find both local and imported goods appealing. A study revealed that more than 3 percent of online buying are for goods from foreign countries particularly; Germany, China, the US, and Sweden (Banco Santander, 2020).

Regardless of their seemingly double standards for both foreign and domestic products, Norwegian consumes show a strong loyalty to the domestic brands. However, majority of online consumers indicated that they were disloyal to one seller. Moreover, Norwegians use social media as information sources with Facebook becoming increasingly saturated. This even while some like Snapchat gain increased penetration rate particularly among the younger population with about 23 percent using advertising blockers. Noteworthy, Norwegian consumers are slowly taking interest on ecologically friendly models of consumption. Norwegians spending on food has significantly reduced even as the consumption of vegetables and fruits increased. Nevertheless, there was a 9 percent increase in the consumption of organic food in final the final quarter of 2018. Second-hand markets are thriving, particularly online based on the environmental and economic reasons (Banco Santander, 2020). Generally, Norwegians have positive opinions on shared economy and have the belief that it benefits the consumers.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Methodology**

In this chapter, the researcher introduces a systematic explanation of the research methods employed in response to the research questions developed for this study. Therefore, the methods used for this research include both quantitative and qualitative research methods. In this section, this paper will describe the methods used to conduct research and answer the research question. Furthermore, research methods and design used will be illustrated. The conceptual framework and methodology follows the CETSCALE developed by Shimp and Sharma (1987). The web-based questionnaire developed for this paper is modified version of CETSCALE, customized to fit the parameters of his research. Thus, this study used a quantitative approach, which will help collect more representative data that will be important in analyzing the variables related to the research question. It also incorporated research design, the location of the study, target



population, sampling techniques, sample size, research instruments, data collection techniques, data analysis and ethical considerations.

### *Research Design*

As observed by Lewis (2015), a research design is considered to be a plan, structure, and strategy of an investigation intended to obtain answers to the research questions or problems. This study will therefore use descriptive design to investigate the attitudes and perceptions Norwegian consumers regarding foreign-made products against locally-made products. According to Gripsrud, Olsson, and Silkoset, (2017), argued that when selecting a research design, there are three factors impacting the decision; the level of ambition to identify the connection between variables, knowledge of theoretical studies that identify the relevant variables, and experience with subject. They further explained three major forms of designs; causal, exploratory, and descriptive. Thus, this paper will employ descriptive research to accomplish its objectives and clarify the research question. Descriptive research aims to describe phenomenon and its characteristics. This research design is mostly concerned with what more than how or why, therefore survey tools like questionnaires are frequently used to gather data (Nassaji, 2015). Still, Lewis (2015) observed that the descriptive studies are not only restricted to fact findings but may often result in the formulation of essential principals of knowledge and solutions of the significant problem. Descriptive research design is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to sample individuals. It provides precisely defined information, and its findings are conclusive. Descriptive research design is a method of investigation in which data is collected and analyzed to describe the current conditions, terms or relationships concerning a problem. Mostly, descriptive design are used where the researcher has a fundamental knowledge on the subject. With descriptive research, one is free to draw relative secure conclusion about different variables having a positive or relationship, making a descriptive design more essential. Based on the above information, the researcher decided to use a descriptive research design because, in light of its advantages, it will help to accurately and comprehensively answer the research question. Therefore, a descriptive research design is applied without any interference in the study with little or no manipulation. Notably, this research design was suitable for this study because of its electronic nature of survey, as the researcher employed a web-based survey to collect data. Through such, this study was able to reach respondents from far and wide within Norway while allowing them to answer and complete the survey on their own without any interference.

### *Quantitative Design*

Quantitative design relies on numerical and statistical data collected through different instruments. The explored data is used to observe, predict and explain researched variables, the correlation and relationship between the variables (Mertler, 2016). The main objective with quantitative research methods is to present the results in an objective manner, in that sense that the objectivity of the study can be applied in general situations. Quantitative research is often narrow and focuses on studying the variables of the research question. As such, this study will apply a quantitative design because of its interest in determining potential variables' effect on consumer ethnocentrism, and how it would be demonstrated in consumer's consumption patterns towards foreign versus domestic products. As the research's main goal is to find the general level of consumer ethnocentrism within Norwegian consumers, using a quantitative method is more justifiable as a higher number of respondents will be more represented.

### *Nonexperimental Quantitative Research*

When conducting a quantitative study, the researcher can choose an experimental or nonexperimental route, depending on the objective and nature of the study. Nonexperimental research design is administered without interference in the study and little or no manipulation is done. The nonexperimental quantitative research was applied because of the electronic nature of the survey, as a web-based survey was used to collect the data. Web-based surveys allow respondents to complete the survey on their own and allows us to reach parts of population in other geographical areas. However, drawbacks on the method is the representativeness of the data. A few of the responses are expected to deviate and will therefore not qualify as a representative for the study (Mertler, 2016).

### *Location Study*

The study will be conducted in Norway. The study location was chosen by the researcher since it is where the researcher resides. The country was also considered since it provided access to both resources and respondents that will be necessary for this research. The country is viewed to be accommodating the larger population of consumers with different perspectives towards foreign products compared to locally made products.

### *Target Population*

As observed by Gupta, A. (2000), the study targeted more than 150 respondents from various locations around Norway. Of this respondents only 101 will be included in the research study. The targeted population will be selected from all over the nation, this because the study survey

will be conducted online and as such, it will be difficult to control respondents based their locations within Norway. Therefore, as long as respondents are within Norway they will be able to access the survey study. The research will also target respondents over the age of 18, both male and female with at least high school education. Such respondent are perceived to have the basic education and can easily read and understand the survey questions.

### *Sampling Technique*

Census was applied to the selection of the sample size. Census refers to the quantitative research method, in which all the members of the population are enumerated. Census shall be used because it gives every respondent in the target population an equal chance to be selected as a study respondent and thus have no bias and ease generalization of gathering findings. Census is good as it connotes enumeration of the subgroup of elements chosen for participation and also due to the population that is heterogeneous in nature. Also, it is reliable and accurate technique. The disadvantage of census is that it is costly and time consuming.

### *Sample Size*

It is imperative for the researcher to have knowledge and understanding about the number of responses required for the research study to make statistical logical results. Thus, elements like standard deviation (Std.), population size, confidence level, and margin of error (Confidence interval) will be considered for this research. Therefore, the study used a total of 101 respondents from all over Norway. These figures are shown in Table 1.

### *Research Instrument*

Due to the nature of the study carried out, the researcher used questionnaires on respondents for data collection, because questionnaires give in-depth information and it is confidential. According to Lewis (2015), use of questionnaire is one of the common data collection tools employed in research work. Switzer, G. E., Wisniewski, S. R., Belle, S. H., Dew, M. A., & Schultz, R. (1999), stated that questionnaires are a set of questions printed or typed in a definite order on a form or sets of forms. They obtain important information about the population where

each item in the questionnaire is developed to address specific objective. Mai, J. E. (2016), stated that questionnaires are used extensively to gather data on current conditions, practices, opinions and attitudes quickly and in precise way.

Thus, the researcher developed a questionnaire for the respondents and was published online through google for ease and timely collection of data. Online was chosen as the most appropriate method of data collection given the new Covid-19 guidelines that restrict face to face meeting, while advocating for people to stay and work from home. Therefore, getting people to participate physically in the study survey would be quite challenging. An introductory note was made to introduce the researcher's study. The questions were based on the research objectives, where the researcher employ closed-ended questionnaires. The importance of questionnaires is that the respondents were able to feel free and give out all information in a confidential manner. The researcher also ensured that research questions had no ambiguity and misinterpretation.

#### Questionnaires for Respondents (Appendix I)

Also, questionnaire was employed in collecting data directly from the respondents by sending them to some respondents via email. These respondents were known to the researcher and also the researcher had their contacts, thus it was easy to reach them directly. Generally, both questionnaire (those send through email and those posted online through google) consisted of questions that were closed ended. The questionnaires were accompanied with instructions explaining purposes of the study. Questions were structured in such a way that the respondents were provided a list of responses from which to select appropriate answers. Closed ended questions are always used to describe an individual's attitudes, beliefs, ad attributes. It provides the respondents participating in the survey with a set of options that accurately express their feelings. Each of this questions have unique characteristics that can be used objectively within the survey (O'Leary & Israel, 2015).

Questionnaire was structured in the following sections according to research objectives: background information like age, gender, and education, where a drop down lists of predetermined answers were provided. Among the answer list, respondents were given a chance not to disclose their age, gender, or education as it was not obligatory. Questions were structured in such a way that the respondents were provided a list of responses from which to select appropriate answers. Notably, the survey questions were generated and modified based on Terence A. Shimp and Subhash Sharma (1987).

### *Data Collection Procedure*

The questionnaires were distributed to the online through Google forms. Each of the selected participants were free to access a copy, which they were required to fill within a week and later their responses collected by the researcher. Each copy were published in various sites including social media sites where respondents could access them easily. The survey forms were well presented and made appealing to attract respondents. This was the most convenient and relevant approach, because it allowed the survey to be quickly exposed to as high of a number of respondents as possible. To restrict error, the respondents could edit their responses as many times but restricted to only one submission. This meant that after they had submitted their responses, they were not able edit or make any corrections.

### *Operationalization*

Operationalization is the process of translating theoretical terms to empirical measurements (Gripsrud et. al., 2017, p. 129). In order to operationalize the variables a web-based survey was created. The survey was based on an adapted version of the CETSCALE and divided into 19 major sections. Of the 19 section three sections represented demographic questions, age, gender, and education, 1 section represented the introduction part and the other sections represented the 15 questions skillfully constructed to answer the research question. Most of the questions are therefore based on the earlier studies' questions, however a few questions were reformulated in order to better fit the scope of the intended research area, and to properly measure the variables. All of the questions were formulated as a statement accompanied by a 7-point Likert-scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" to measure their level of agreement.

### *Ethical Consideration*

Prior to data collection from the study subjects, the researcher will ascertain that every data collection instrument employed in this research are reliable and valid for the purpose of generating relevant information for the study. As mentioned in the data collection section, the survey questions were generated and modified based on Terence A. Shimp and Subhash Sharma (1987). Also, the researcher will provide online copies of the questionnaire to respondents prior to the beginning of collecting data. Further, while planning for this research study, the researcher sought clearance and permission from every useful authority by following the correct chains of command. Also, the researcher shall also strive to avoid or keep plagiarism at the minimum by acknowledging and referencing the authors cited within the study. In addition, the researcher looked for informed consent of participants in the study prior to sending the

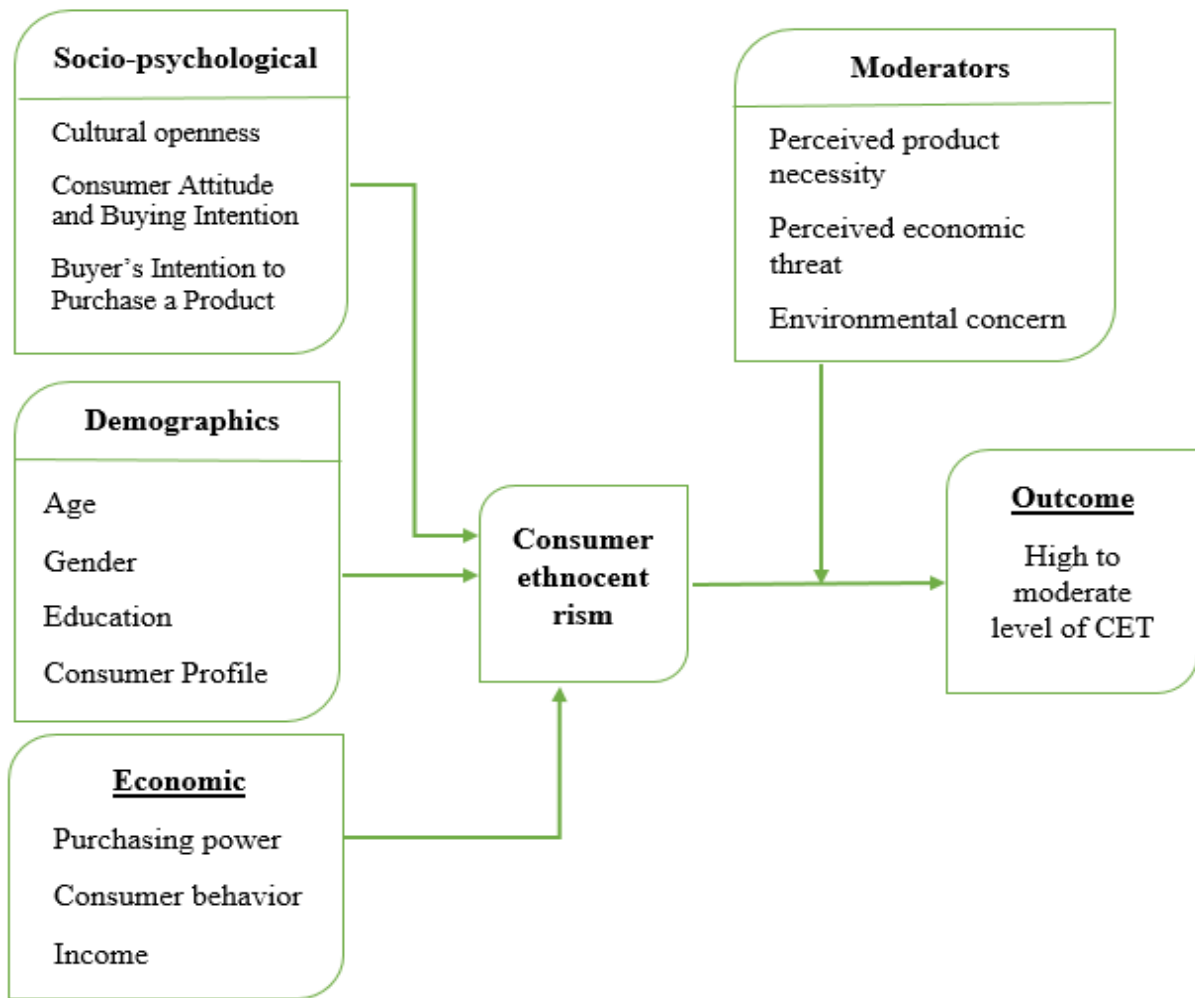
questionnaires via email. This also meant informing the respondents about the research objectives and purpose. In that spirit, the researcher will be keen enough to respect the standards of anonymity while ensuring confidentiality of information collected from the participants. Ultimately, the researcher will ensure integrity by presenting findings and results honestly and objectively without any bias.

### *Errors of Measurement*

Within errors in measurements there exist two main errors - the lack of observations and measurements errors (Gripsrud et. al., 2017, p. 182). Lack of observations has three sub-errors: coverage error, this error is when the population is not properly covered through the sampling frame; non-responsive errors, occurs when those one wish to answer the research does not, the actual response is not as big as the planned response; sample errors, this is when the research proclaim certain statements about the population on behalf of the results found in the sample. Due to time-constraints and resources, the sample in this research is not representative to the entire Norwegian population but can still be helpful to give an indication of the situation. The desired target group for this research was quite broad, which made it easier to acquire relevant respondents. Throughout the study the sample will be addressed as “Norwegian consumers” but acknowledge that it is non-representative for the entire population of Norwegian consumers. Measurements errors occurs in two parts, through the survey and through interaction: by the respondent, by interviewer and the circumstance (Gripsrud et. al., 2017, p. 183-185).

Measurements errors through the survey can be mitigated by pretesting it to identify certain wordings and questions that needs to be corrected. It is important for the survey to make use of the vernacular in order to make it universally understandable (Shimp & Sharma, 1987). Measurements through interaction can happen on behalf of the respondent not understanding the question, have no desire to answer honestly (especially when discussing sensitive topics such as ethnic prejudice), or is unsure of their opinion. Measurement error on behalf of the interviewer did not occur in this study as the questions were not open-answered and no qualitative study was conducted. Circumstantial measurements error could have occurred; however, the survey was self-administered and because of this we are unaware of potential errors that could have occurred due to this.

*Conceptual Model*



*Figure 1: Conceptual Model*

## Chapter Four

### Empirical Findings and Data Analysis

The primary objective of this study was investigate the level off consumer ethnocentrism amongst Norwegians, with an intent of understanding the attitudes and perceptions of Norwegian consumers towards foreign made products. Therefore, this section will present the secondary and primary findings of this study and further the data analyses based on ANOVA and regression analyses.

## *Empirical Findings*

### *Secondary Findings and Hypothesis*

The study relied on the comprehensive review of different pieces of literature relating to consumer ethnocentrism to develop four major hypotheses. From the developed hypotheses, the first two will be used to test age and ethnic identity and demographic variables. The remaining hypotheses will be used to test the socio-psychological variables identified for this research. From the research review, a large portion of existing literature on consumer ethnocentrism indicated a strong and positive relationship between age and consumer ethnocentrism. For instance a study by Shankarmahesh (2006), showed that six out of nine studies articulated a positive relationship while the remaining three found no relationship. As such, looking at the initial research, there is profound empirical support for a positive relationship between age and consumer ethnocentrism. Another study, theorized that such positive relationship could lead the older generation closer to experiencing war, where the younger generation are far off. Based on these researches this study is convinced that there is a positive relationship between age and consumer ethnocentrism. Therefore, based on the previous studies, this study expects that the results of this research will reveal a substantial difference in consumer ethnocentrism based on ages of Norwegian consumers. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis;

*H1: the younger generation will be less ethnocentric compared to older generation.*

Besides, our findings from previous research showed that cultural openness had a negative relationship to consumer ethnocentrism, giving an intuition that people who had less ethnocentric proclivities were frequently more receptive to other cultures. According to Shimp et al. (1995) and Helgeson et al. (2017), revealed that Norwegian consumers prefer to be less consumer ethnocentric. Furthermore, based on the findings of the two studies, this study expects that the consistent exposure of Norwegians to foreign cultures would be illustrated by the level of consumer ethnocentrism. This led to the second hypothesis of this study;

*H2: consumer ethnocentrism and cultural openness will have a negative correlation for Norwegian consumers.*

Also, previous studies illustrated that the degree of ethnocentric proclivities influences the willingness to purchase foreign made products. For instance, Kaynak and Kara (2002) and Shimp et al. (1995) found that in economies with scarce resources, consumers are compelled to buy foreign made goods. They further argued that in markets that offered both foreign made and domestic products, ethnocentric consumers still chose domestic products as alternatives



over foreign made products more regularly. Relatively, Siagmagka and Balabanis (2015) also articulated that foreign made products that were seen as unnecessary, would elevate ethnocentric perceptions on the goods. However, other studies like Balabanis & Siagmagka (2017) and Ramadania et al. (2015), revealed a shift in ethnocentric consumer's consumption patterns, in the face of necessity. As such, there was an increased probability for the consumption of products considered to be of greater necessity.

*H3: the degree of consumer ethnocentrism will be impacted by the perceived product prerequisite.*

Also, from the findings of previous studies it was apparent that the support of domestic economy and fear of buying foreign products that imposed harm or intruded on social structures was a widely discussed concept of ethnocentric people (Balabanis & Siagmagka 2017; Shimp et al. 1995). Other studies like Lee, Kim and Pan (2015) indicated that the level of consumer ethnocentrism increased whenever consumers felt threatened. In addition, it became apparent that foreignness from outgroups had the potential of provoking heightened CET. As such, trade deficits and unemployment rates influencing CET could frequently elevate perceived levels. Notably, economic circumstance could also influence perceive levels (Siagmagka & Balabanis 2015; Lee et al. 2014). Other secondary findings also suggested that the ongoing Covid-19 situation could specifically create an interesting situation based on the perceived threat by the Norwegian consumers, which had caused social panic and economic instability in the country. Thus, based on the Covid-19 situation in the country and the concept of increased CET with outgroup threats, this paper perceived an increased awareness on the locally made products and the subsequent support for the domestic economy.

*H4: whenever there is perception of threat on the domestic economy, Norwegian consumers will show greater consumer ethnocentrism towards foreign products.*

The variable on environmental concern in relation to consumer ethnocentrism lacked proper exploration by previous studies, however as illustrated in the earlier discussions it should have. This study was able to identify that there was a growing concern among people regarding sustainable living lifestyle that would protect the environment. Therefore, this study can argue that such environmental concerns cut across consumer consumption patterns, where consumers with higher degree of environmental concerns would show a higher degree of CET. This paper therefore hypothesized that Norwegian population display high level of environmental concern.

*H5: environmental concerns will increase consumer ethnocentric on consumption pattern in the general Norwegian population.*

### *Primary Findings*

#### ***Data Cleaning***

The researcher conducted an online survey, based on google docs, on 110 respondents, of them, 9 failed to complete the survey. The incomplete surveys were excluded as null and void, as they lacked merit and data to warrant a numerical value, and thus the remaining 101 fully completed surveys were included for the study and accorded numerical values. However, majority of the survey were still useful as they were over 50% completed. Therefore, to enable the remaining collected material to be used, forms with blank spaces were accorded a 0 value, which would be taken as missing value. The survey forms that were not completed were then excluded from the dataset to strengthen the survey analysis. For the demography section, three question prompts were includes that required respondents to choose their age, gender, and education level from a drop down list. This would help the study to identify and categorize respondents based on age, gender, and level of study.

#### ***Sample***

After cleaning the data, the survey included a total of 101 respondents. Of this sample population, 59.4% (60) were female while 40.6% (60) were male. The respondent's age in the survey were classified to fit the older and younger generations. For older generations the representative ages were between 44 and 55 years and those above 55 years, the younger generation included all those 18 years and above but not exceeding 44 years. A further breakdown illustrates that among the young generation, respondents of ages 18-24 were 36.6%, (37) age 25-34 42.6% (43) being the largest group, and age 35-44 being 15.8% (16). A breakdown for the older generation revealed respondents at 44-55 years were 4.0% (4) while those who were 55 years and above was only 1% (1). The education section was further categorized under five major categories. Thus, based on their education, the respondents with high school level were 19.8% (20), those of a bachelor's degree level 43.6% (44) making the largest number within this group. For respondents at a master level were 31.7% (32), PHD or higher level 3% (3) and 2% (2) of those who largely preferred not to tell. The results are well illustrated below by a chart graph. The disparities in age and education were expected as the questionnaire was greatly distributed by reaching out to friends, personal contacts like email addresses and family members.

*Table 1: Age and Sample Size*

<b>Age</b>	<b>Target Population</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Respondents between age 18-24	37	37	36.6
Respondents between ages 25-34	43	43	42.6
Respondents between ages 35-44	16	16	15.8
Respondents between ages 44-52	4	4	4.0
Respondents of ages 50 and above	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Table 2: Education and Sample Size*

<b>Education</b>	<b>Target Population</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
High School	20	20	19.8
Bachelor Student	44	44	43.6
Master's Degree	32	32	31.7
PhD or Higher	3	3	3.0
Prefer not to say	2	2	1.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Table 3: Gender Demographics*

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Target Population</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Female	60	60	59.4

Male	41	41	40.6
Prefer not to say	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Your age

101 answers

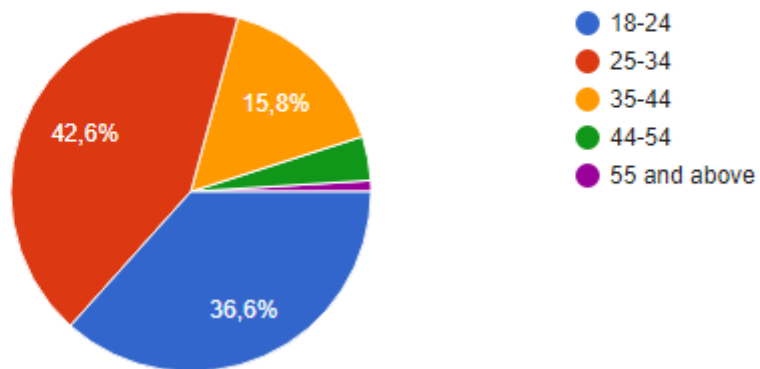


Figure 1: Age Demographics

### Gender

101 answers

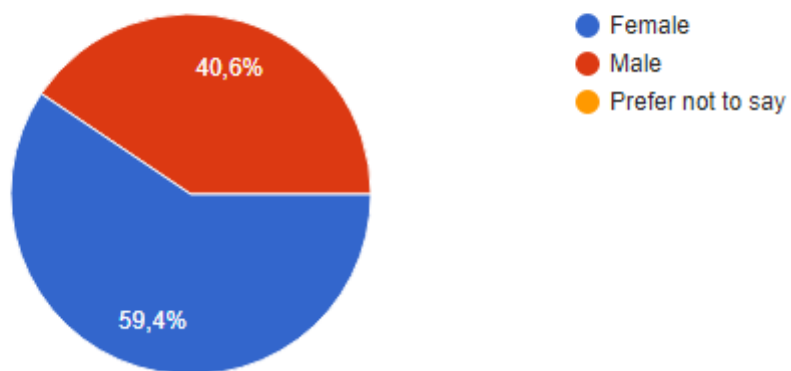


Figure 2: Gender Demographics

## Your Education

101 answers

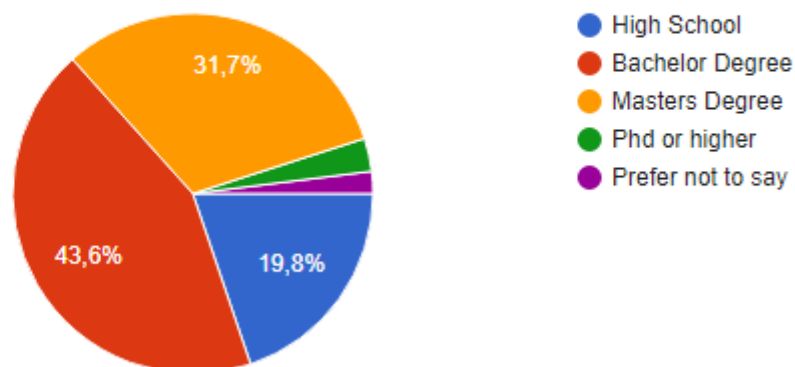


Figure 3: Education demographics

### *Validity and Reliability of Data*

#### **Validity**

According to Heale and Twycross (2015), validity ensures accuracy and precision of the correlation for the analyzed data. Thus, it is possible for quantitative studies to improve its validity by researching over a wider area with several independent variables simultaneously and by actively attempting to minimize potential errors. As such, Hacker and Violato (2009) proposed three main areas of validity including face validity, content validity, and construct validity.

**Face Validity.** Face validity expresses the types of measurements that the researcher tends to measure subjectively. As a point of fact, this ensures that the intended measurements are clearly stated in ways that all respondents will agree to it. Extensively, face validity is the ability to measure the degree to which the applied terms relate to the measurement intentions of the researcher. Most often, this type of validity is done through pre-tests, which was applied for this research (Gripsrud et al., 2017). Before distributing the survey questions to the intended respondents a pre-test was done, where the researcher sent the developed 15 questions to 10 respondents to test their understanding and ability to answer the questions effectively. Moreover, most of the survey questions were based on existing literature, particularly the CETSCALE validity, which further strengthened the face validity of the primary data.

**Construct Validity.** This type of validity is often relevant when the study intends to investigate the correlation between theoretical terms. According to Gripsrud et al. (2017), construct validity refers to the testing of terms and their connection to the operationalization construct.

Importantly, construct validity is strongly focused on the extent to which a specific measure correlates with other measures in consistency with the theoretically developed hypotheses regarding the construct that is being measured. Thus, there are two subtypes of construct validity; discriminant validity, which is a test to examine the level of uniqueness measured in various variables, and convergent validity, which is test to examine whether the assumed indicators that measure similar theoretical variables are highly correlated (Gripsrud et al., 2017).

Therefore, to enable this research to test convergent validity, the researcher performed a factor analysis. Gripsrud (2017) argued that a factor analysis is a statistical model applied in the analyses of the correlation among various variables and their connection to a broader factor. In this terms, a factor can therefore be taken to mean a dimension of construct among a series of variables. Often a factor is considered moderately high whenever the factor loadings of the variables are higher than 0.3 within the analyses. It is thus common for variables to load on numerous factors, making it essential to review the difference in determining if they are further enough apart has any significant difference to the factors. There are research studies arguing how large the difference in the factor loadings should be in presence of varying cross charge. Thus, some studies have articulated that the difference should be 0.1, while other have argued for 0.2. However, for this analysis, all variables with cross charges bearing a difference greater than 0.1 were kept. The researcher then divided these variables into factors they were strongly relevant for. Thus, to achieve this, Varimax rotation will be applied, thus making it difficult to correlate the factors. Through Varimax rotation, the researcher will then be able to rotate the factors to attain the largest of variations between the factor loadings (Gripsrud et al., 2017)

From the factor analysis, this study was able to reduce the survey questions from the initial 17 questions as presented in the CETSCALE analysis to 15 questions based on five factors. The factors included consumer ethnocentric tendencies, environmental concern, cultural openness, perceived economic threat, and perceived product necessity. Relatively, some remaining variables indicated cross charges higher than 0.1, which were further fitted within the factor they most suited for further analysis, which will be demonstrated in the reliability section. Thus, based on the argument that a factor must possess at least two variables for it to be considered as accurately measured, the researcher was able to retain all the five factors. However, some of the questions that were excluded from this analyses, were believed to have weakened environmental concern variable, this is well articulated under the discussion section.

### ***Reliability of Variables***

According to Gripsrud et al. (2017), reliability focuses on the level of similarity a measurement will produce when repeatedly tested. In this view, they argued that reliability is highly concerned with two major facets; internal consistency and stability overtime. While there lacks a proper methodical approach to measure stability overtime, Cronbach alpha ( $\sigma$ ) is used as the best approach to measure internal consistency. According to Helms, Henze, Sass, and Mifsud (2006), the Cronbach alpha is a typically employed indicator in measuring reliability, where frequently, the degree of reliability is taken to be high when the displayed numbers are greater than 0.7. However, it is strongly cautioned that the number should not be allowed to go beyond 0.96 as this would indicate a high similarity index for the variables used.

*Perceived economic threat*; for this factor there were four questions that correlated including questions 3, 6, 8, and 11. However, within these factor, there were questions with high cross charges. For instance, question 8 had a higher loading that would rather be considered under consumer ethnocentric tendencies. Since this question, “*We should buy products manufactured in Norway rather than allowing other countries to rich off-us,*” did not measure this variable, the researcher chose to consider it under CET. Thus, testing this variable with the remaining three questions, questions 3, 6, and 11, was still enough to give back a satisfying Cronbach alpha of 0.797. This then brought the need to use these questions in further analyses.

*Consumer Ethnocentric Tendencies*; this variable was the dependent variable that will be used in the analysis section for regression analysis. Also for this variable seven questions were passed through the factor analysis, questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, and 15. However, question 3 was strongly tied to perceived economic threats, “*Norwegians should buy Norwegian products so the local population can be kept employed,*” and had a higher loading for perceived economic threats, which made imperative to exclude it from this variable and consider it under perceived economic threat. Furthermore, question 2 and 15 also had a direct correlation with the perceived products out of necessity and had a higher loading for the variable. Also like question 3, question 2 “*Only those products that are not available/rare in Norway should be imported*” and question 15 “*Foreign products should be taxed heavily to reduce their entry into Norway*” were excluded from this variable and considered under perceived product out of necessity. However, the remaining four questions; questions 1, 4, 8, and 9 strongly correlated with CET giving forth a satisfying Cronbach alpha of 0.804.

*Cultural openness*; subsequently, there were only 3 questions that had a direct relation with this variable. The questions included questions 5, 7, 12 and were all considered under this variable because the resulting factor loadings and Cronbach alpha were both satisfying. Initially, question 12 was intended for CET variable, however, as the two questions intended for this variable failed to meet the reliability threshold, the researcher decided to keep it here. Significantly, question 12, “*Additional tariffs should be put on all imports,*” displayed equal factor loading for CET variable and this variable, with high reliability for both variables, and it will be mentioned in the discussion, the ambiguous wording of this question made it suitable to measure this variable too. Also, upon the fact that question 12 was stated in a way that makes it concede with this variable, this is to say that the degree of agreement with this question may positively influence cultural openness. With the inclusion of question 12, the three questions; 5, 7, and 12, brought back a high reliability with 0.778 Cronbach alpha.

*Environmental concern*; under this factor the researcher considered 4 key questions; questions 10, 13, 14, and 15. However, questions 10 “*There should be very little buying or trading from other countries unless out of necessity,*” and 13 “*It may cost me in the long-run but I prefer to support Norwegian products,*” were better suited for perceived product out necessity variable. Both had high factor loading under perceived products out of necessity variable, while their exclusion from this variable led to a significant increase in the variable’s Cronbach alpha. As such, the researcher was compelled to remove this two questions from this variable and consider them under perceived product out of necessity. Thus, for this variable, two questions, questions 14 and 15 were considered as they showed a high reliability with a Cronbach alpha of 0.845.

*Perceived product out of necessity*; this factor yielded 3 questions; questions 10, 2, and 13. All the questions had satisfying factor loading with a reliability Cronbach of 0.834. Being the last variable to be passed through the factor analysis, all there were no questions to be excluded, while the three remaining question made a perfect fit for this variable. Therefore, the researcher considered both questions under this variable.

**Table 4: Factor Analysis and Reliability Scores**

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Factor Loadings</b>	<b>Cronbach’s Alpha</b>	<b>Factor</b>
Q3	0.75	0.797	<b>Perceived Economic Threats</b>
Q6	0.71		
Q11	0.56		
Q1	0.56	0.804	<b>Consumer Ethnocentric Tendencies</b>
Q4	0.65		



Q8	0.58		
Q9	0.62		
Q5	0.55	0.778	<b>Cultural Openness</b>
Q7	0.74		
Q12	0.60		
Q14	0.83		
Q15	0.55	0.845	<b>Environmental Concerns</b>
Q10	0.62	0.834	<b>Perceived Product out of Necessity</b>
Q2	0.72		
Q13	0.54		

From the above factor analysis results, the collected primary data was successful validated and measured for reliability with the results indicating a high reliability score for the data, which were further ascertained to be valid.

#### *Data Analysis*

##### *Descriptive Research Analysis*

Descriptive research design are commonly applied on studies to explore and observe the relationship between one or more variables. According to Anastas (1999), the descriptive research design describes the nature of the study based on statistical tools that present the appearance of the research focus rather than explaining it functionalities. Thus according to DeCarlo (2018), researchers applying descriptive designs should be mindful of lack of temporality for causality when making conclusions. Thus, the lack of temporality makes it challenging to fully prove the relationship between variable.

Besides, McLeod (2019) argued that when using questions on a consistent degree measurement the collected data should as usual be distributed. Normal distribution intends that the questions have enough variation between them. Notably, this initiated the analysis of skewness and kurtosis to help analyze the variations further. In this sense, skewness reflects the asymmetric of the curve, if it is skewed right or left. A standard distributed curve should fall within the intervals of -2 to 2 and bell curve (Shanmugam & Chattamvelli, 2016). Any data falling outside the interval -2-2 indicates a deviation from the distribution illustrating inadequate variation within the recorded answer. Kurtosis analyzes data distribution and height of the curve in connection to the standard distributed curve. Within this notion, the value of the standard distribution of kurtosis is at 3, however the values falling between the intervals -2 to 2 are taken as acceptable (Shanmugam & Chattamvelli, 2016; Muzaffar, 2016).

*Table 5: Overview of Skewness and Kurtosis*

Question	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev	Skewness	Kurtosis
<b>Perceived Economic Threat</b>							
<b>Q3.</b> Norwegians should buy Norwegian products so the local population can be kept employed	101	1	7	2.42	1.31	-1.94	2.38
<b>Q6.</b> It is not right to purchase foreign n products because it puts Norwegians out of jobs	101	1	7	2.83	0.34	-1.39	1.26
<b>Q11.</b> Norwegians should not buy foreign products, because this affects Norwegian business and causes unemployment	101	1	7	2.30	0.26	-0.44	-0.17
<b>Consumer Ethnocentric Tendencies</b>							
<b>Q1.</b> Norwegian people should always buy Norwegian products rather than imported products	101	1	7	3.01	0.31	0.63	-0.13
<b>Q4.</b> Norwegian products should come first, last, and foremost	101	1	7	1.84	0.499	0.61	-0.322
<b>Q8.</b> We should buy products manufactured in Norway rather than allowing other countries to rich off-us	101	1	7	2.55	0.45	0.19	-0.64
<b>Q9.</b> It is also best to buy Norwegian products	101	1	7	1.97	0.33	-0.305	-0.46
<b>Cultural Openness</b>							

<b>Q5.</b> Purchasing foreign products is un-Norwegian	101	1	7	2.38	0.42	-0.11	0.03
<b>Q7.</b> A real Norwegian should always buy Norwegian products	101	1	7	1.93	0.37	-0.17	-0.32
<b>Q12.</b> Additional tariffs should be put on all imports	101	1	7	2.55	0.45	-0.42	-0.10
<b>Environmental Concerns</b>							
<b>Q14.</b> Other countries should not be allowed to put their products on Norwegian markets	101	1	7	1.84	0.499	-0.36	-0.67
<b>Q15.</b> Foreign products should be taxed heavily to reduce their entry into Norway	101	1	7	1.84	0.499	0.11	-0.25
<b>Perceive Product as out of Necessity</b>							
<b>Q2.</b> Only those products that are not available/rare in Norway should be imported	101	1	7	2.38	0.42	-0.31	0.14
<b>Q10.</b> There should be very little buying or trading from other countries unless out of necessity	101	1	7	2.59	0.38	-0.43	-0.21
<b>Q13.</b> It may cost me in the long-run but I prefer to support Norwegian products	101	1	7	2.42	1.31	-0.26	0.08

The administration of the survey in form of digital questionnaires, was based on the Likert-scale with a minimum score of 1 to a maximum of 7 as illustrated in the above table. For the study, a minimum score of 1 represented “strongly disagree” while a score of 7 represented “strongly agree”. There were some inconsistencies in the number of respondents (N) in each question because some respondents were unable to complete the whole survey. The mean value represented average value of each variable and the standard deviation represented the variation of data, where a lower number suggests the closeness of the value to the mean.

In the illustrated table above all the questions were to fall within the skewness interval of -2 to 2, and where numbers closer to 0 suggested a more standardized curve. However, from the table it is noticeable that question Q3. *“Norwegians should buy Norwegian products so the local*

*population can be kept employed*” had a value that was more than 2 on the kurtosis curve (2.38). This is suggestive that the variable have a slightly smaller variety of data distribution. This was not a surprise, as the researcher had anticipated that majority of the respondents would highly agree to purchasing domestic products and show a strong willingness or preference towards such products. According to DeCarlo (1997), the high degree of kurtosis, can make a curve leptokurtic thereby weakening the overall standardization of data. However, it is rather obvious that mean tests like variance tests, are strong in moderating departures from standardization. As such, it is generally discouraged to depend solely on such feature to remove further examination. Concerned with this notion, Kim (2013) argued that a combination of tests, visual inspection, and result assessment can be employed to examine whether the assumption of normality is acceptable or not. In light of this, the researcher decided to keep the above question (Q13) for further analysis acknowledging that it has a potential to influence the normality of data.

#### *Level of Consumer Ethnocentrism Tendencies*

From the validation and reliability test results, there emerged 4 questions correlating to the degree of ethnocentrism. Therefore, based on the application of a 7-point Likert-scale, the highest possible score was 28. Classifying the scores into three different levels the following classes were generated; low (scores of 13 or below), medium class (scores 14-27), and high class (scores 28 and above). These classes would help illuminate an understanding on the degree and presence of consumer ethnocentrism among the Norwegian consumers. Based on the survey data, this research identified that majority of the respondents showed a high level of ethnocentrism, however, it largely centered the division classes between high and medium level of CET. Imperatively, it became apparent that a larger number of Norwegian consumers at present viewed foreign products in a negative way.

#### *ANOVA-analysis*

The researcher employed an ANOVA-analysis to detect any similarities between groups within the independent variables like age in hypotheses H1. Age as a variable was classified into six classes: 18-24 = AG1, 25-34 = AG2, 35-44 = AG3, 45-54 = AG4, and 55 and above = AG5.

However, based on the focus of this paper to illustrate the difference between the younger and older population ethnocentric tendencies, it was imperative to set a boundary between the younger and older people. As such, in the analysis of the first hypothesis, age variable was

divided into two major parts. AG1, AG2, and AG3 were labelled as younger generation while AG4 and AG5 were labelled older people.

*H1: the younger generation will be less ethnocentric compared to older generation.*

In this construct, the researcher looked to test and verify if there were any substantial differences between the younger and older generation's ethnocentric tendencies with a focus of looking at age as a variable; AG1, AG2, AG3, AG4, and finally AG5.

Thus, to increase the accuracy of the results, the ANOVA-analysis will be supported by a 0.05 significance level and a 95 percent confidence level. Values more than 0.05 were deemed to have no substantial difference between the groups.

***Table 6: ANOVA-Analysis of H1***

	<b>Level</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>Std error dif.</b>	<b>Lower CL</b>	<b>Upper CL</b>	<b>p-Value</b>
<b>Ethnocentrism</b>	20-24	1.098	1.078	-1.030	3.226	0.309
	25-34	0.820	1.108	1.367	3.008	0.46
	35-44	0.662	0.232	0.204	1.122	<b>0.005*</b>
	45-54	0.435	1.082	-1.702	2.572	0.688
	55+	0.186	0.323	-0.452	0.824	0.566

Illustrated by table 6, there was a significant difference on ethnocentric tendencies within the measured age groups,  $\text{prob} > f = 0.047$ . From the analysis, the older generation; AG4 and AG5, had higher means; AG4 = 5.065, and AG5 = 4.865 as compared to AG1 = 4.361, AG2 = 4.402, AG3 = 4.679. Moreover, to further examine which levels differ from each other, a respondent t-test was employed. There was also need for extended analysis of the p-Value, which confirmed the differences in age and ethnocentrism, where AG2 and AG4 had significant p-Value of 0.005, AG2 and AG5 had p-Value of 0.0204. Moreover, they recorded a difference of 0.663 and 0.463 respectively differentiated from AG2. This is indicative that people of older age had a high score on ethnocentrism compared to their younger counterparts. Therefore, it was safe to confer 97% and 99 % support for the hypothesis and thus argue that younger generation were less ethnocentric.

*Perceived Product out of Necessity*

To verify consumer perceived product out of necessity, questions Q2, Q10, and Q13 were formulated. All of these questions were then subjected to nominal measurement level. Q2

looked to examine respondent’s preferences for foreign products based on the need to supplement products that are rare or lack in Norway. Q10 tested respondents preferences based on the need to reduce or minimize buying or trading only when a need arises. Q13 on the other hand tested customer’s preference and loyalty to domestic products regardless the cost. Therefore, to analyze these questions, a direct ANOVA-analysis was used to assess the relationship between ethnocentrism and this variable. Thus, significance level was set at <0.05 and was operated with a 95% confidence interval.

*Table 7: ANOVA-analysis for Q2, Q10, & Q13*

	<b>Level</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>Std. error dif.</b>	<b>Lower CL</b>	<b>Upper CL</b>	<b>p-Value</b>
	Strongly agree	0.842	0.306	0.241	1.444	0.006*
	Agree	0.691	0.346	0.010	1.372	0.047*
	Neutral	0.833	0.371	0.102	1.564	0.026*
	Disagree	0.463	0.395	-0.314	1.242	0.242
	Strongly disagree	0.564	0.317	-0.059	1.188	0.076

Throughout this analysis, the researcher failed to detect any substantial differences between the tested variable on perceived product out of necessity based on ethnocentrism  $P > F = 0.124$ . Regardless, the p-Value for level agree response indicated a significant difference where  $p = 0.0062$ . From the result outcome, the researcher found that respondents who answered Neutral had a lower average of CET in relation to the counterparts;  $m = 4.19$  and  $m = 5.03$ . To add on, the level of “Strongly Agree” and “Neutral” presented a p-Value of 0.026, strongly indicating to be different from each other. Relatively, “Agree” level and “Neutral” displayed a modest p-Value of 0.047, just beneath the significance level. A further analysis of the small variation revealed the difference setting it at 0.691. Also, an average for “Disagree” equaled 4.833 and the average for “Neutral” was 4.192 demonstrating together that the small difference indicating that respondents with preference for Norwegian products had a higher consumer ethnocentric tendency, compared to those who preferred other foreign brands. Conditions: F-ratio = 1.690 and Df = 6.

### *Regression Analysis*

For further analyses, the researcher further applied multiple regression, which would help in discovering the impact multiple independent variables have on dependent variables. The underlying causation could not be proven with such an analysis, however, based on Gripsrud et

al. (2017), this study remained positive that the analysis will reveal whether the relationship is substantially different from 0. Moreover, Mason and Perreault (1991) argued that a multiple regression analysis is among the most applied and favored analysis, based on its widespread availability, strength to violation of underlying assumptions, applicability to various types of problem and data, and ease of interpretation.

According to Israeli (2006), RSquare refers to the correlation coefficient that clarifies the part of variance explained in the dependent variable made known through the independent variable. If these variables amount to their full capacity, then the RSquare will equal to 1. However, when the independent variables fail to explain any variance in the dependent variable, the RSquare will be equal to 0 (Gripsrud et al. 2017). For the assessment of this study, the accounted variance equaled to 35.7%. Relatively, the RSquare Adj. remained mostly the same, but takes into focus the quantity of respondents and variables within the analysis, which valued at 34.4%. This brings to perspective the revealing that dependent variables can be explained by other multiple variables (Gripsrud et al. 2017). Not surprising, the researcher anticipated this occurrence to the extent that this study even removed some variables that were relevant based on the feasibility of the study.

Nonetheless, this study applied Std. Beta to change the degree of measurement for independent variables in matching each other. This will be essentially useful in the events the variables to be compared are for instance, nominal against consistent; with the Std. Beta this study will be able to manipulate the values to range between -1 and 1 disregarding the original degree of measurement (Gripsrud et al. 2017). Therefore, using the retrogressive analysis, this study looks to test and verify the three remaining hypotheses; environmental concerns, perceived economic threat, and cultural openness. To achieve the aims of this test, the significance level will be taken at 0.05 and confidence interval at 95%. Also, this analysis aims to test and verify hypotheses H2, H4, and H5. Given that these three hypotheses are one sided, the study will divide the p-Value based on the regression analysis outcome by two.

***Table 8: Multiple Regression Analysis***

<b>Variables</b>		<b>Respondents</b>
<b>Cultural Openness</b>	Std. Beta	-0.23
	Estimate	-0.17
	Std. Error	0.07

<b>Environmental Concerns</b>	Std. Beta	0.19
	Estimate	0.11
	Std. Error	0.05
<b>Perceived Economic Threat</b>	Std. Beta	0.3
	Estimate	0.23
	Std. Error	0.07
<b>RSquare (RSquare Adj.)</b>		<b>0.357</b>

*H2: consumer ethnocentrism and cultural openness will have a negative correlation for Norwegian consumers.*

The test on this hypothesis yielded a p-Value of 0.0059, since p-Value was <0.05 it revealed strong evidence indicating a significant impact of cultural openness on CET. The Std. and the estimate both indicated that it had a negative impact of -0.2, thereby supporting this hypothesis.

*H4: whenever there is perception of threat on the domestic economy, Norwegian consumers will show greater consumer ethnocentrism towards foreign products.*

A test on perceived economic threat returned a p-Value of 0.013 where the p-Value was <0.05, with a positive Std. Beta and estimate, thereby supporting this hypothesis.

*H5: environmental concerns will increase consumer ethnocentric on consumption pattern in the general Norwegian population.*

Another test on environmental concern yielded a p-Value of 0.0006, where p-Value was <0.05, with a positive Std. Beta and estimate. Therefore, the test supported this hypothesis showing a significant positive impact on the degree of CET among Norwegian consumers.



## Chapter Five

### Discussion and Conclusion

#### *Research Discussion*

The primary purpose of this research study was to examine the level of consumer ethnocentrism among Norwegian consumers, their attitude towards foreign products, and whenever possible reveal their buying patterns. As revealed in the above analysis, the level of CET among Norwegian consumers was moderate to above average. However, question Q3 included in the analysis had a higher kurtosis level than the expected -2 to 2 level. This in every perspective had a consequential impact on the findings of this study. Nevertheless, the strength of the administered tests and the fact that this question qualified the test of all the reliability and validity analyses makes it credible for consideration as a sample representative.

Based on the developed variables in this study, the researcher uncovered four socio-psychological and one demographic variable that was represented through the five hypotheses. Throughout the research, the researcher identified multiple factors that could be included in this study, however, the factors were left out to restrict this study within the feasibility parameters and the short time frames through which this research was to be conducted. Many of the variables were derived from existing literature and the works done by earlier researchers. The survey questions which formed the basis for the hypotheses were adopted and modified from the CETSCALE by Shimp and Sharma (1987). Moreover, the results of this research study were mostly as expected and positively answered the hypotheses. However, some key deviations were uncovered, which require further investigation.

To start with, the lack of any significant differences in AG3 was quite surprising. However, the significant difference between AG2 and AG4 and AG5, positively confirming the hypothesis H1, revealing that the younger population in Norway were less ethnocentric. Also, the analysis indicated a significant difference between age and the level of consumer ethnocentrism as expected by the researcher. Notably, the research made a presumption that the number of people in the age class AG3 would be less than those in the age group AG4. It was then evident that the line of separation lied in consumers in their early 30s and thus, this paper proposes a further test of difference for consumers between ages 35 and above. Relatively, AG4 and AG5 were the smallest groups with 4 people and 1 person respectively, which may be indicative that the sampled sizes were too small to precisely represent that age group. As such, based on the ordinal scale applied on age by this research, it was regrettable that the researcher could not make any changes that could be explored further.

Also, the analysis results positively supported hypothesis H2, which was associated with cultural openness. For this hypothesis, the researcher made the presumption that a consumer associated with multiple cultures would be more enlightened on cultural aspects thereby being less ethnocentric. Once more this was based on the smaller sample size, which could have affected the accuracy of the results, however, looking at the analysis outcomes, the impact of working only with consumers of single cultures as opposed to multiple, would not reveal any substantial difference on CET level. Following the line of thought of using consumers with multiple cultures, as seen from Skinner's study regarding increased ethnocentric tendencies among these consumers, the researcher perceived that the result from such an attempt would have had a reversed impact as opposed to the assumptions of the researcher.

Based on the factor analysis, the researcher decides to drop two questions based on cross charges being closer between factors. The two questions were all meant for the environmental concern variable. However, dropping these two questions did not affect the scope of this study in any way. However, the scope intended for the variable on environmental concerns was slightly affected, and the researcher strongly believes that if these two questions could fit within the research parameters, they would have a significant improvement on the variable outcomes. However, regardless of the measurement results from the reliability and validity tests, the researcher is convinced that the two questions were not important in answering the research question. Even though removing the two questions was necessary, because of their absence in the research the researcher failed to investigate the buying patterns of Norwegian consumers with respect to foreign-made vs domestic products.

Based on table 5, question Q1 that investigated the preference of Norwegians on domestic products revealed that Norwegians had a great preference for products made in Norway as their best options. Empirically, this would mean that when certain environmental factors are combined and with a healthy economy, Norwegian consumers would have a profound preference towards Norwegian products. This means that a fully developed value chain in Norway would lead to increased preferences for Norwegian products strongly opposed to foreign production. This strongly concurred with the findings and proposals of Watson & Wright (2000) that foreign companies should partially move their manufacturing firms to the target markets to overcome the effects of consumer ethnocentrism.

Moreover, the analysis findings on Q2, Q10, and Q13 placed under the variable Perceived products out of necessity, strongly indicated that Norwegians who prefer certain products and brands were highly likely to have greater ethnocentric levels towards foreign-made products. Therefore, this study discovered specifically that there was a significant difference between Norwegian products that are generally seen as of great necessity and products that were non-Norwegian or were not relevant in the survey. These results aligned with the works of Alden, Steenkamp, and Batra (1999), where some products like food were specifically seen as commonality in several countries and were, therefore, did not qualify as a necessity when buying imported products. Though non-deliberate, the absence of the product's perceived necessity showed the likelihood of opening up a chance for greater ethnocentric tendencies. Even without the statistical evidence from the analysis, through direct observation of the distribution of the results from questions Q2, Q10, and Q13, it is evident that there is strong favoritism for Norwegian products among Norwegian consumers. Based on this, it is fair to claim that in presence of product availability, the perceived product out of necessity was lower and in turn heightened consumer ethnocentrism. Also, following the overall factor analysis score indicating a significant value, this study can conclude that perceived product out of necessity had a significant impact on Norwegian consumer's preference for domestic products over foreign-made products. Thus, this paper is strongly convinced that when consumers perceived a product as of necessity, they were bound to show a great preference for such a product regardless of its origin.

To add on factor analysis, this study also conducted a regression analysis to test and verify hypotheses H2, H4, and H5, all of which were positive to the researcher's expectation. For the researcher, regression analysis was the best analysis tool to test these hypotheses, with a possibility of accurate results. The outcomes showed no significant positive impact of environmental concern on consumer ethnocentrism, both on the younger population and the general population as expected by the researcher. Importantly, with reference to the analysis results, the older population was strongly influenced by environmental concerns among the general population. In line with existing literature, Liere and Dunlap (1982) articulated that research indicates a proven and in abundance negative relationship between age and environmental concerns. Emerging also is the need for further research to investigate the reason behind the importance of raising CET level in the older population.

Possibly, this suggests that the aging population who have been proven to show a higher level of consumer ethnocentrism, apply it as an excuse to be moral regarding their prejudice. To explain this, there is a great potential that the aged disguise behind the societal consciousness

as more desirable compared to common plain discriminant tendencies. This can also be explained by the fact that Norwegian made products are somehow expensive compared to foreign products. This also explains the first hypothesis for this paper, where based on the high prices of locally made products, the younger population are less ethnocentric because they are more concerned with prices compared to the older generation. Thus, the younger population grows fonder of foreign products for the sole reason that Norwegian products are much expensive compared to foreign-made products. Knowledge of the financial strength and motivation of the respondents. As noted by Lunderberg and Overa (2020), environmental concern based on consumer ethnocentrism is a facet that requires further research.

Nevertheless, this confirms Shrimp and Sharma's (1987) premises that depending on the economic conditions of a country, lower-income consumers were more ethnocentric than higher-income consumers. Also, this study went ahead to upgrade the Shrimp and Sharma's premises by adding that in circumstances where domestic products are perceived as more expensive than foreign products, low-income consumers tend to shift their likeness towards foreign products becoming less ethnocentric. This concept was well supported by Lunderberg and Overa (2020) who argued that given that Norwegian products were substantially expensive compared to foreign products, the younger population tend to be less economically comfortable. They further explained that because of this, the younger population shift their preference towards foreign products because the national products are expensive for their budget.

Relatively, while this study acknowledged that cultural familiarity is a broad topic comprising of multiple dimensions like experience, the researcher attempted to find the connection between cultural construct and consumer ethnocentric tendencies in Norway. As revealed by the regression analysis, the test on cultural openness yielded a p-Value of 0.0059, since p-Value was  $<0.05$  it revealed strong evidence indicating a significant impact of cultural openness on CET. The Std. and the estimate both indicated that it had a negative impact of -0.2, thereby supporting this variable. This explains the direct impact of cultural sensitivity on the willingness of consumers to purchase or not to purchase a product. While few studies have explored this concept, this study referenced the premises of Sharma et al. (1995) indicating that consumers with a high level of cultural sensitivity are often positive and are less threatened by other culture and as such, this type of consumers show high preference for foreign products than the consumers with a lower level of cultural sensitivity. This further explains the analysis findings of this study that cultural openness had a significant impact on cultural ethnocentrism.

Furthermore, the findings supported Hypotheses H2 that cultural openness and consumer ethnocentrism tendencies would have a negative correlation on Norwegian consumers. This is well illustrated by the answers to question Q5 which sought to test the level of cultural openness among Norwegian consumers. From the survey data, a majority of the respondents (38.6%) strongly agreed that purchasing foreign products is un-Norwegian. This revealed the level of cultural openness and consumer ethnocentric tendencies among Norwegian consumers, further showing a negative correlation. A further indication revealed that Norwegian consumers are less willing to purchase foreign products in a move to keep and promote their cultural identity. Thus, as expected consumer ethnocentrism and cultural openness towards foreign products in Norway revealed a negative correlation between the two concepts. However, the correlation was rather negligible with a p-Value of 0.059 along with a negative impact of -0.2, which allows this research study to make the claim that consumer ethnocentrism is not a substantial predictor of cultural openness among Norwegian consumers.

On another front, our analysis of the perception of threat on the domestic economy yielded a positive result. The test returned a p-Value of 0.013 where the p-Value was  $<0.05$ , with a positive Std. Beta and estimate, thereby supporting the formulated hypothesis that whenever there is a perception of threat on the domestic economy, Norwegian consumers will show greater consumer ethnocentrism towards foreign products. Also, based on the survey result, a majority of the respondents agreed (38.2%) that when foreign products affect Norwegian businesses negatively and putting people out of employment, then Norwegians should forsake purchasing them and promote domestic products. This positively supported hypothesis H4 suggesting that upon a threat to the domestic economy, Norwegian consumers showed a strong level of consumer ethnocentrism. This is because most of the respondents showed a willingness to purchase domestic products as a sense of patriotism and loyalty to ensuring the growth of their domestic economy.

In line with Shrimp and Sharma (1987), this study's findings revealed that for a significant number of individuals in Norway, economic livelihood and quality of life were threatened by foreign products. Here people anticipated experiencing a higher degree of threat are those in low socioeconomic environments given that their jobs are highly displaceable and those individuals living in areas where international competition is quite high. To practically explain this concept this paper turns the reader's attention to the current Covid-19 issues that have presented a special chance to explain the effects of perceived economic threat hypothetical questions. For instance questions, Q3, Q6, and Q11 sought to test the actions of Norwegian

consumers under the perception of a threatened domestic economy. These reactions based on the analysis findings can be well explained by the current efforts Norwegians are putting to adjust and respond to the Covid-19 situation. According to Lunderberg and Overa (2020), the modern issue of Covid-19 has raised a unique opportunity to measure the variable of perceived economic threat. They argued that international trade is always growing while cross-border exchanges have become increasingly essential for countries.

However, Lunderberg and Overa (2020) went ahead to argue that the Covid-19 pandemic has led to a world shut-down, which has been extremely detrimental to the cross-border dependent global economy where the Norwegian economy was not excepted. Their study findings showed that the pandemic has influenced consumer skepticism on foreign products, in all spectrums, the present situation has significantly heightened the level of consumer ethnocentrism. Going back to this research's findings, the researcher argues that in presence of severe economic threats like the Covid-19 pandemic, Norwegians have been observed to move towards solutions that favor domestic products over imported products. Thus, it is imperative for international companies to understand this phenomenon as revealed by this study for them to appropriately time market penetration. Thus, in the case where a country experiences circumstances that threaten its economy like what is happening currently in Norway, it would likely be important for international firms to wait for such threats to pass before entering a market.

Relating to the above, some of these economic threats can be explained in terms of ethnocentric insecurities, which Guo and Lin, (2017) articulated as rampant in developing countries like Norway. People with ethnocentric insecurities perceive foreign products as a threat to the domestic economy, threatening their jobs and survival of the health of the domestic firms or even unfair play by foreign countries. Such insecurity perception can force consumers into taking some drastic measures to prevent or respond to the threats facing their domestic economy. Thus, consumers in such countries like for this case Norway, have a high likelihood of being influence by some patriotic events like purchasing domestic products, support promotional campaigns, which may result in them holding a high level of ethnocentrism or showing increased levels of consumer ethnocentric tendencies towards foreign products.

Regardless, the findings from the analysis part regarding consumer ethnocentric tendencies revealed a positive outcome as expected by the researcher. The analysis outcomes based on hypothesis H1 showed a significant number of Norwegian consumers viewed foreign products negatively. This, therefore, suggested moderate to high consumer ethnocentric tendencies among Norwegians. Imperatively, the survey results conceded with this concept suggesting a

significant level of CET among Norwegians. This was based on survey questions Q1, Q4, Q8, and Q9. All of these questions had a higher score of more than 30%, suggesting that more Norwegians are of the idea that Norwegians should buy Norwegian products. For instance, more than 32% of the respondents agreed with question 9 while a majority remained neutral which might suggest they were either thinking about it or would consider it in the future. Perhaps question Q4 would be the perfect representation of the level of consumer ethnocentrism in Norway as it directly examined Norwegians preferences for Norwegian products. In this question, more than 30% (20.6% agree + 10.8% strongly agree) agreed that Norwegian products should come first, last, and foremost.

Focusing the above questions on existing literature and the regression analysis to find support or lack of support for the questions, brought back a positive result. Kibret (2016) after reviewing multiple studies, concluded that most of the global population had moderate consumer ethnocentrism tendencies. Based on this global moderate CET level, the studies reviewed strongly indicated that developing countries like Norway had higher levels of consumer ethnocentric tendencies compared to developed economies like the US. They explained this discovery arguing that the high CET level was because most consumers in developing worlds had lower income, were less educated, and had poor exposure to globalization. Therefore, this went ahead to confirm and explain the outcomes of this analysis, while it contributed to the understanding and interpretation of the survey results.

Besides the above

general inferences on consumer ethnocentric tendencies, Karoui and Khemakhem narrowed down this view basing their research on demographics. This largely aligned with the research focus of this paper and it was even interesting that the analysis outcomes of this study concurred with their study results and conclusion. More like this research study, Karoui and KhemaKhem (2019) also found that the younger generation was less ethnocentric compared to the older generation. This was strong support for the analysis outcomes of this paper, further confirming the hypothesis H1, where the researcher expected that the younger generation would be less ethnocentric compared to the older generation, which is in-depth explained in the analysis section and tables 4 and 5. However, while this study failed to ascertain the attitudes of Norwegian consumers in relation to consumer ethnocentric tendencies, the researcher indicates that consumer ethnocentrism is a revealing of consumer attitudes towards a product.

This study there argues that the levels of consumer ethnocentric tendencies can be used to explain the attitudes of such consumers. Therefore, high levels of CET inferred a negative

attitude toward foreign-made products. This is confirmed by Karoui and KhemaKhem (2019) when they agreed that high consumer ethnocentric tendencies implied an unfavorable or negative attitude towards buying foreign made products. This went to connect the variables on cultural openness and perceived threat to the domestic economy. A strong sense of cultural identity and patriotism or loyalty towards one's culture could lead to increased CET, thereby suggesting a positive correlation between cultural openness and CET levels among consumers. For instance, the analysis results reinforced by the survey outcomes showed that consumer ethnocentric tendencies increased among Norwegian consumers out of respect and loyalty to a strong cultural identity. This suggesting that a significant number of Norwegian consumers felt that it was un-Norwegian to buy foreign products. Also, this study findings suggested that most Norwegian consumers, particularly the older generation, who displayed a strong sense of consumer ethnocentrism, were most likely to do so on the perception and belief that foreign products had detrimental consequences on the domestic economy notwithstanding increased unemployment and some foreign countries reaching-off them. This suggesting that upon the perception that foreign products were hurting their national economy, Norwegian consumers would not hesitate to shift preference towards domestic products in an effort to save their economy.

### ***Significance of Research Study***

Even though both consumer ethnocentrism and CET levels on foreign products being widely extensively investigated, results were frequently contradictory and somehow confusing. From a deeper perspective, little research had been done on CET levels and attitudes of consumers in Norway. In this view, any study with a focus on the level of consumer ethnocentric tendencies and attitudes towards foreign-made products in Norway would go further in contributing to theory development. Therefore, based on this, there was a compelling need to conduct research within these parameters to enrich and contribute to the lacking theory. Also, the importance of this research lied on the imperative to develop informed insights that would serve as a guide to international companies on how, where, and when to explore markets in Norway with low risks of incurring low sales. In line with Shrimp and Sharma (1987), consumer ethnocentrism as a concept and its measurement through CETSCALE can help supplement the lack of adequate knowledge regarding socio-psychological factors while responding to the call for domain-specific concepts in consumer behavior and marketing. Nevertheless, studying consumer ethnocentrism in Norway can enhance the knowledge of the way consumers and corporate



buyers compare foreign and domestic products and the logic explaining why their judgment may be subject to several forms of error and bias.

### ***Practical Implications of Research***

This research has substantial practical importance for international companies both those that are already operating in Norway and those with the intention to penetrate the Norwegian market. For international players to develop appropriate marketing strategies, position Norwegian and other foreign-made products, and ascertain future success, these firms will require comprehensive insights regarding Norwegian consumers, their preferences, attitudes, and buying tendencies, and their motivation to use certain products. Consumer ethnocentrism is a concept that influences consumer's attitude and their buying intentions towards foreign products, making it a major marketing implication for foreign products. The results of this study have many potential implications for modern marketing managers. One way to this is the potential that firms can use these results as part of their periodic tracking studies. Study results have revealed how strong ethnocentric tendencies are in Norway and whether the use of Norwegian-made and buy-Norway themes would be prudent for future promotional campaigns. Though it would be gullible to contemplate that ethnocentrism alone would provide a useful foundation for market segmentation. However, if the analysis scores of this study can be correlated with actionable segmentation variables, like the combination of age demographics and ethnocentrism variables, marketing communication programs could be directed to those target markets that are perceptible through appropriate media channels and retail outlets.

### ***Conclusion***

On the Onset, this paper aimed to conduct thorough research to investigate the level of consumer ethnocentrism in Norway and find out the factors that contribute to consumer ethnocentrism. Further, this paper looked to find out the attitudes and perceptions of Norwegian consumers on foreign products and establish their buying patterns. As such, the paper successfully explained the level of consumer ethnocentrism and its relationship among different explanatory variables. Based on the analyses and the removal of two questions initially intended for this research, the researcher was unable to demonstrate in length the attitudes and purchasing patterns of Norwegian consumers. Also, the study lacks a thorough explanation of the approaches to alleviating the importance of these variables or how to practically apply them. The paper is just a reflection of the present state of consumer ethnocentrism, which can work as a guideline into the mechanisms underlying the formulation of marketing strategy that can be affected by this study.

From the analysis and discussion above, Norwegian consumers were found to have a slightly high to moderate level of consumer ethnocentrism. For one, as evidenced through regression analysis, the perceived economic threat had a positive relationship to consumer ethnocentric tendencies, and therefore the current level present among respondents qualified as a representative. This variable was rested upon three questions, Q3, Q6, and Q11, which both illustrated a positive correlation with consumer ethnocentrism. This is illustrated by the support of the current Covid-19 situation as a perceived factor that foreign products would harm the national economy. Attributive to this finding, this research study proposes the need for international companies to halt their market penetration plans and wait for this pandemic to subside. This also meant that foreign companies operating in Norway should also reduce their obvious foreignness.

While it was difficult to prove if perceived product out of necessity had a substantial impact on the level of consumer ethnocentrism in Norway, the study found a significant p-Value for Q2 and Q13 when compared to “Neutral”. When the respondents were to choose whether only those products unavailable or rare in Norway should be imported, the majority agreed (27.9%) followed by neutral (16.3%). On the question of the necessity to support Norwegian products even though it may be costly in the long-run a significant number of respondents (23.1%) agreed while the majority of the respondents remained neutral (30.8%). This withstanding, even the lack of statistical proof could stop the indication that the respondents showed a substantial level of favoritism towards foreign-made products when available. Therefore, the study infers that the availability of Norwegian-made products in markets where foreign products operate is still a strong reason enough to warrant the consideration for strategy. Moreover, it can be inferred that consumers with a higher preference towards purchasing products other than those available in the Norwegian market showed more leniency to foreign products, thereby underscoring consumer ethnocentrism.

Implicitly, among all the variables, this study was able to establish that environmental concerns had the most significant effect on the dependent variable. This suggests that Norwegian consumers had a strong preference for products that do not harm the environment. On this variable Q14 and Q15 seemed befitting to answer the preferences of Norwegian consumers on products based on their perceived environmental friendliness. Based on the explained assumption that foreign products and international firms existing within Norway markets are more environmentally friendly than domestic firms and products, the researcher attempted to find consumer’s thoughts regarding the need to stop other countries from putting their products in Norwegian markets. Based on its level of environmental safety, the majority of the

respondents strongly disagreed (44.4%) that foreign products should be disallowed from putting their products on /Norwegian markets. This was by 33.3% the second majority who disagreed with this notion further suggesting the increased preference of Norwegian companies for products that ensure environmental safety. This was indicative that Norwegian consumers were highly attracted to environmentally friendly products that they were unwilling to purchase or consume products that threatened the safety of their environment. Thus, this forms a strong basis for foreign firms to profoundly mitigate the assumption held towards them and their environmental footprint.

Regarding cultural openness, this study revealed that cultural openness and consumer ethnocentrism tendencies would have a negative correlation with Norwegian consumers. The function of this variable was based on three questions; Q5, Q7, and Q12. From the survey result, the majority of the Norwegian consumers were less concerned about their identity as Norwegians when it came to purchasing foreign products. However, this was narrowed down to age demographics, where the majority of the younger generation AG1, AG2, and AG3 were less concerned compared to the older generation AG4 and AG5 who strongly agreed that it was un-Norwegian to buy foreign products (Q5). Also, a majority of the respondents disagreed (40.8% disagreed + 36.9% strongly disagreed) that real Norwegians should always purchase Norwegian products. This indicated a negative correlation between cultural openness and consumer ethnocentrism.

Therefore, this study established a significant level of consumer ethnocentrism among Norwegians. While the study revealed a moderate to high consumer ethnocentrism among the Norwegian consumers, it also became apparent that the younger generation was less ethnocentric compared to the older generation. Accompanying data revealed that the tendencies of the younger generation being less ethnocentric was as a result of the domestic products being more expensive compared to foreign products. While this did not have a significant effect on the older generation, it strongly influenced the younger generation's preferences towards foreign products, as they were less economically comfortable. This means that the high prices of local products compared to foreign products did fit their pocket budgets.

### ***Limitations***

Partly, some limitations for this study, like failure to explore the consumer attitude and buying patterns, have been well articulated above. However, there were other major limitations such as the measurement errors linked to the survey, presented the most profound potential to impact the outcomes of this study. Also, on limited timeframes to conduct this study and administer the research survey, the researcher strongly feels that this can weaken the validity of data. Also,

this failed to conduct a pre-test to achieve greater validity on the tested variables and accurately measure the amount of data covered within the constructs of research parameters as intended. This was more evident following a call from one of the respondents seeking clarification for a question he did not understand. Furthermore, conducting a pre-test would have allowed the researcher to identify such a complex formulation of the question and correct it appropriately beforehand, thereby presenting to the respondents accurate and refined questions reducing obscurities. Also, based on the limited timeframe, this study was compelled to apply a non-probability sample, particularly, convenience sample. The researcher, therefore, perceived damage to the validity result because convenience sampling did allow randomization of samples. Notably, given that the sample group was self-selective, it was challenging to infer general remarks on the study population. As such, the researcher was unable to determine if the sample size was an accurate representation of the general population.

Reflecting on the entire research, this study was time constrained given the challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent disruption of normal study. As such, to meet the strict deadline, the researcher had to formulate the survey questions based on the CETSCALE study. This means that the survey questions were directly picked from Shrimp and Sharma's (1987) study and were modified to suit the focus of this research. Furthermore, the researcher relied heavily on existing research studies to achieve the aims of this research, heavily borrowing from (Lunderberg & Overa, 2020), who conducted a slightly similar study with this research with similar variables and hypotheses. However, the distinguishing factor lies in the fact that this research capitalized on the weaknesses and gaps that Lunderberg and Overa (2020) failed to address to conduct a more in-depth study. For instance, while Lunderberg and Overa failed to find a significant difference between the perceived products out of necessity, this study established that this variable had a significant effect on consumer ethnocentrism. Also, based on the smaller sample size (101) of this research as compared to (169) of Lunderberg and Overa (2020), the outcomes and results of this study were very different from the existing study. To add on, the survey questions of this were different from that of Lunderberg and Overa, thereby explaining the strong difference between the study and theirs. Therefore is safe to ascertain that despite using the existing study as a guide to this research, the accuracy and credibility of this research study remain unchanged. This because the research study is my work and the results are independent of any influence from other existing research studies.

### ***Recommendations for Further Research***

While the time could allow the researcher to include all variables affecting consumer ethnocentric tendencies, this research had to use only four variables that were deemed necessary

to achieve the research aims of this paper. As such, this study recommends further research to use the other existing variables like country of origin, that could not be included in this research yet they had a significant impact on CET within Norwegian consumers. Furthermore, nationality as a concept has been described by multiple studies to be of the essence in exploring consumer ethnocentrism and has consistently been shown to have a strong impact on consumer ethnocentrism. For instance, Lunderberg and Overa (2020) argued that nationalism was believed to influence people's perceptions towards foreign made products, most often revealing negative stereotypes. They also discovered that high nationalism had a positive impact on consumer ethnocentrism. Despite this strong effect of nationalism on consumer ethnocentrism, it was included in this research as a variable though it qualified for inclusion in every way. Again this was because of the limited timeframe that could allow the researcher to cover every angle. Thus, this paper recommends that further research studies should focus efforts on this variable with particular reference to the impact of negative nationalism on Norwegian consumer ethnocentric tendencies. Relatively, this study acknowledges that there are many other issues that studies on consumer ethnocentrism might address and further explore. Thus, this study recommends thorough research based on a comprehensive meta-analysis on the underlying relationship between consumer ethnocentrism and its consequences and antecedents.

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