

Dynamics of Ethnocentrism among Senior College Students: Implications to ASEAN Economic Community

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ABSTRACT

Global economic interdependence is inevitable. This phenomenon became more pronounced as ASEAN countries head off to economic integration in 2015. The Philippines as a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) views the reality of economic integration and interdependence as becoming even more imminent as it moves closer to become integrated into one community in 2015 (Riguer, 2012). The Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities (PACU) has been consistently raising a more specific concern during its two successive annual conferences: that of the preparedness of college graduates as they poise to be an inevitable part of this free flow of services and free flow of skilled labor -- two of the core aspects of ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) establishment (AEC Blueprint, A2, A5). How holistically prepared are our graduates in meeting this economic integration? While preparations are undergoing for the needed skills, are they also prepared psychosocially? Studies have observed subsequent psychological processes such as ethnocentrism as well as openness to ideas and consumer products as a result of global economic turbulence due to increasing interdependence (Shankarmahesh, 2006; Cameron, Kocum, Berry, 2012). This study looked into ethnocentrism and socio-cultural

orientations among college students in two biggest universities in a selected city in Northern Mindanao. Causal-comparative research design was used. Using survey questionnaires as the main data gathering tool, data were collected from 267 randomly selected senior college business students. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis via Amos 20 feature of SPSS 16 was used to establish the path coefficients. Results indicate a good fit was revealing significant paths on openness, cultural conservatism, and materialism to ethnocentrism. Findings of this study substantially inform institutional curricular reform decisions to augment current institutional efforts in preparing college students as future labor force for global interdependence.

Keywords: Ethnocentrism, Economic integration, Global interdependence

INTRODUCTION

Global economic interdependence has inevitably grown extremely as an outcome of massive technological progress and policies that are aimed at opening national economies to competition internally and externally (United Nations Secretariat, 2009, 2011). Seeing the world getting more and more connected with various modes of cooperation and integration, the Philippines as a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) views the reality of economic integration and interdependence as becoming even more imminent as it moves closer to become integrated into one community in 2015 (Riguer 2012). The Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities (PACU) has been consistently raising a more specific concern during its two successive annual conferences: that of the college graduates' preparedness to be in the mainstream of this free flow of services and free flow of skilled labor -- two of the core aspects of AEC establishment (AEC Blueprint, A2, A5). How holistically prepared are our graduates in meeting this economic integration? Competency-based courses are among the highly focused programs in the Philippine colleges and universities where diverse competencies are defined by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) as well as the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). There is, however, no clearly defined emphasis on preparing students psychosocially for this economic integration. Studies have reported that there are consequent psychological processes as a result of global economic turbulence due to increasing global interdependence and these include ethnocentrism as well as openness to ideas and consumer products (Shankarmahesh, 2006; Cameron,

Kocum, Berry, 2012).

Ethnocentrism is the belief in the superiority of one's ethnic group (Kraye, 2013); while Shimp and Sharma (1987) distinctively say that it is "the beliefs held by consumers about the appropriateness, indeed the morality of purchasing foreign-made products and loyalty of consumers to the product manufacturers in their home country." In essence, highly ethnocentric people take pride in their values, symbols, and people. At its extreme highly ethnocentric people hold in contempt the objects, products and values of other groups (Shimp *et al.*). Thus, if students are highly ethnocentric, they may find difficulty to integrate themselves into future workforce in this forthcoming integration and interdependence. In fact, ethnocentrism is viewed to be among the new forms of protectionism that are foreseen to ward off international competition as a result of globalization (Porter, 1986; Shankarmahesh, 2006). It is even considered as "one of the most enduring forms of non-tariff barriers of global economic interdependence" (Shimp and Sharma, 1987).

Ethnocentrism is very much part of human nature. Weinstein (2013) cited various theorists advocating the centrality of ethnocentrism as part of human nature (Lynn, 1976; Mihalyi, 1984; Rushton, 1989). Most people are ethnocentric at one point or another as people best relate to their cultures. Individuals though are mostly unaware of their ethnocentric tendencies (Barger, 2008; Cunningham, Nezlek, and Banaji, 2004 as cited by Weinstein, 2013). That is, in this concept, one group considers itself to be superior and qualified while other groups to be unimportant, weak, and inferior. Tomkiewicz, Bass, Gribble (2011) recognized that ethnocentrism may exist among college students even if there are efforts to advance multiculturalism and encourage openness. Their study suggested that ethnocentrism may be a major obstruction in students' career as they face the globalizing market. Within this socio-cultural context, ethnocentric tendencies in high levels may indeed hinder students' preparation to be part of the future workforce of this global economic interdependence.

Lee Nehrt, a pioneering international business scholar in his seminal book *Business school curriculum and faculty: Historical perspectives and future imperative* (1993), asserted that "it is the responsibility of education to prepare people for the world in which they will be living." Thus, business students and practitioners need to understand how ethnocentrism can influence career success or the success of their employers (Weinstein, 2013).

This study looked at socio-cultural variables that influenced college students' ethnocentricity. Its significance to local and international marketers lies in the beneficial understanding of student-consumers' reasons for buying domestic versus imported goods in terms of selecting their target markets and in formulating appropriate marketing strategies (Kammarudin, Mokhlis and Othman, 2002). Results of this study would encourage universities to review their business education curriculum. Responsive academic preparations can help students towards a more informed consumer behavior.

FRAMEWORK

The advent of globalization has brought changes in consumers' behavior and has highlighted the need for a better understanding of the factors that influence consumer behavior such as ethnocentrism (Gupta, 2011). This study assumed that ethnocentrism is better understood within the dynamics of openness to diversity, cultural conservatism, fatalism and materialism (Kamaruddin, Mokhlis and Othman, 2002; Shankarmahesh, 2006; Gupta, 2011).

Ethnocentrism. This sociological concept is considered a nearly universal pattern that represents biased attitudes and behaviors. This includes a tendency for individuals to view other groups from their perspective and to reject culturally dissimilar ideas and people (LeVine and Campbell, 1972; Hammond and Axelrod, 2006). Individuals preferring to be with one's favored group and encouraging benefits and interests based on ethnic values may develop selective "thinking that one is ultimately correct in making such choice and that policies and rules that promote alternatives are disruptive of cultural, linguistic, and religious sentiments" (LeVine and Campbell, 1972; Kamaruddin, Mokhlis and Othman, 2002). Other studies view ethnocentrism as a form of superiority complex and protectionism. Shimp and Sharma (1995) who popularized the term "consumer ethnocentrism" said that highly ethnocentric individuals view their country as superior to the rest of the world (Keegan and Green, 2004) and that buying products that are locally manufactured is morally appropriate in a normative sense. This also means that ethnocentrism means preferring an individual's culture to the culture of any other group. Many argue that the concept of ethnocentricity can be regarded as an attitude (Christensen, 2014) part of human nature. Weinstein (2013) mentioned various theorists advocating the centrality of ethnocentrism as an integrative part of human nature (Lynn, 1976; Mihalyi, 1984; Rushton, 1989). The authors stress their concern that

ethnocentrism may be a major obstruction in students' future career in the globalizing market. At its extreme, consumer ethnocentrism is viewed more as among the new forms of protectionism that are foreseen to ward off international competition as a result of globalization (Porter, 1986; Shankarmahesh, 2006); it is also considered as "one of the most enduring forms of non-tariff barriers (Shimp and Sharma, 1987).

Furthermore, consumer ethnocentrism is said to be influenced by customer's characteristics such as materialism, fatalism, cultural conservatism and openness (Josiassen, Assaf and Karpen, 2011; Shankarmahesh, 2006; Gupta, 2011). Thus, it is hypothesized that ethnocentrism can be explained by these socio-cultural variables.

Materialism. Belk's (1985) concept of materialism explains it as "the importance a consumer attaches to worldly possessions which assume a central place in a person's life and are believed to provide the greatest source of satisfaction and dissatisfaction." It is the combination of three dimensions – possessiveness, non-generosity, and envy. The scale relies primarily on indicators of emotional reactions and acts as measures of personality. Belk believes that materialistic consumers tend to evaluate foreign products more favorably as these products are associated with image status, wealth and personal achievement (Kamaruddin *et al.*, 2002). This suggests that the most materialistic the person becomes, the less ethnocentric he can also become. However, Richins and Dawson (1992) refuted this argument as they viewed materialism as a value and reasoned that "materialism reflects the importance a person places on possession and its acquisition as a necessary or desirable form of conduct to reach desired end states, including happiness." This may or may not be material possessions. This model further treats materialism as a value that influences the way people interpret their environment and the way they structure their lives (Kongsompong, 2005). From both models, it is deduced that since highly ethnocentric persons put importance on what they possess including their love of and loyalty to the products manufactured in their home country, it is most likely that the tendency to become more materialistic is greatly possible. Josiassen, Assaf, and Karpen (2011) cited a vast amount of research revealing that more ethnocentric consumers tended to be more materialistic. It is hypothesized that ethnocentrism is positively related to materialism.

Fatalism. Another consumer characteristic is fatalism that is described as the belief that what happens, or has happened, in some way is destined to occur (Dennett, 1984; Solomon, 2003). Wildman (2011) cited three categories of fatalism described by Elder (1966) which are: theological fatalism, or the belief

that God or some other moral order controls man's destiny and the outcomes of his actions; empirical fatalism, or the belief that phenomena occur for no discernible reason and that outcomes cannot be controlled; and social fatalism, or the belief that one's general position in life is fixed and cannot be changed. This present study used theological fatalism considering the religiosity of Filipinos. Filipinos have been found to be highly religious as shown by their religious beliefs and practices, and religious affiliation (Abad, 1995). Türküm (2006), on the other hand, considered fatalism as self-protecting behavior. His study shows that research related to self-protecting behaviors where individuals control over events is expressed in different forms such as fatalism. Individuals tend to protect their possession including the intrusion of what is perceived to be destructive to their established beliefs and culture. Fatalism, therefore, complements ethnocentric tendencies within the self-protecting context since ethnocentrism while questioning the morality of purchasing foreign-made products, insists on loyalty of consumers to the products manufactured in their home country (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). Viewing fatalism as a self-protecting behavior, this present study hypothesized that ethnocentric tendencies are positively related to fatalism.

Openness to Diversity and Challenges. Openness to diversity has been defined as an attitude of awareness and acceptance of both similarities and differences that exist among people (Sawyer *et al.*, 2005 and Gregory, 2009). Students, after a host of college involvements in classrooms and outside exposures, are expected to change the direction of greater tolerance to individual differences and toward generalized openness to experience (Whitt, Edison, Pascarella, Terenzini, Nora 2001; Bowman, 2014). Pascarella *et al.* (1996) distinctly identified openness as "an orientation toward enjoyment from being intellectually challenged by different ideas, values, and perspectives as well as an appreciation of racial, cultural, and value diversity." Individuals higher in openness will have fewer rigid views of right and wrong, what is appropriate and inappropriate, etc. (Black, 1990; Caligiuri, Jacobs, Farr, 2000). Shankarmahesh (2006), on the other hand, discussed studies that found a negative relationship between cultural openness and consumer ethnocentrism (Shimp and Sharma, 1987; Howard, 1989). However, these findings were contested considering that arguments can rather be too simplistic to generalize that cross-cultural experiences and familiarity with other cultures alone will mitigate ethnocentric tendencies in general. Items in the openness scale of this study indicated more of cultural diversity. Openness is seen as an integral outcome of the undergraduate experience and is believed to influence ethnocentric tendencies, which means the higher the openness, the

lower the ethnocentric tendencies of individuals. It is then hypothesized that openness is negatively related to ethnocentrism.

Cultural Conservatism. Conservative persons are those that “show a tendency to cherish traditions and social institutions that have survived the test of time and to introduce changes only occasionally, reluctantly and gradually” (Sharma, Shimp, & Shin, 1995). In its extreme form, conservatism can manifest itself as religious intolerance, insistence on strict rules and punishments and an anti-hedonic outlook (Wilson and Patterson, 1968 in Sharma *et al.*, 1995). Sharma *et al.* and Strauss in Al Ganideh and Zaytoonah (2011) strongly asserted that religion is the core of conservatism. Zumbrunnen and Gangl (2007) found evidences that cultural conservatism stands as a distinct strand of conservative attitudes and explained conservatism as the “general belief in the importance of preserving traditional values taking into account its strong religious component.” They used two measures to capture cultural conservatism: strong religious element and traditional values. Al Ganideh *et al.* (2012) found out that there is a proportional relationship between conservatism and ethnocentrism, implying that conservative consumers have high ethnocentric tendencies towards their local products. Further, they concluded that among the variables studied, conservatism has the strongest influence on consumer ethnocentrism.

Considering the literature reviewed and the issues on ethnocentrism, this study sought to explain the phenomenon of student-consumers’ ethnocentrism in terms of their behavior and attitudes. Thus, it explored empirical evidences that materialism, fatalism, cultural conservatism as well as openness to diversity and challenges can influence the degree of ethnocentric tendencies of students-consumers particularly senior students. Figure 1 presents the initial assumptions of the study.

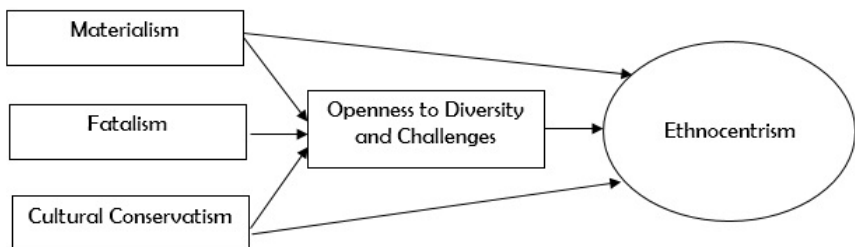


Figure 1. Schematic Presentation of the Study.

Given the above discussions, two hypotheses were tested.

Hypothesis 1: Ethnocentrism is significantly related to all the socio-cultural variables such as materialism, fatalism, openness to diversity and challenges and cultural conservatism.

Hypothesis 2: Openness to diversity and challenges mediates the relationship between fatalism and ethnocentrism while materialism and cultural conservatism influence ethnocentrism.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in two autonomous universities in Region 10, Liceo de Cagayan University, and Xavier University. These universities are the only ones in the region granted Autonomous Status by the Commission on Higher Education for the last five years. Granting of this coveted distinction requires these universities to attain a standard of quality education higher than what is set by the government. There were 267 randomly sampled senior college business students. Quantitative data were gathered using the Ethnocentrism and Socio-Cultural Variables Survey Questionnaire. The first twelve items measured ethnocentrism from Shimp and Sharma (1987), the succeeding eight items measured openness (Pascarella, Marcia, Nora, Hagedorn, Terenzini, 1996). The next four items measured cultural conservatism (Zumbrunnen and Gangl, 2008), four items measured fatalism (Solomon, 2003) and five items measured materialism (Belk, 1985). The instrument underwent reliability test and was able to establish its reliability (Cronbach's Alpha) coefficients within the acceptable limits after discarding some items.

The study employed causal-comparative research design utilizing Path Analysis to confirm the hypotheses. Structural Equation Modeling analysis via Amos 20 feature of SPSS 16 was used to establish the path coefficients. The presentation of research results was guided by literature on the causal path analyzes as reported by Boomsma (2000), Suhr (2000) and Kenny (2012). The estimation procedure utilized "model fit", "strength of the postulated relations between variables of interest", and "reliability of the parameter estimates." The discussion observed frequently used absolute fit indices since the measures provide the major indication of how the proposed theory fitted the data. Thus, in the presentation of the result, their calculation is not dependent on comparison with a baseline model but is instead a measure of how well the model fits in comparison to no model at all (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1993). Hooper, Coughlan, and Mullen (2008),

therefore, suggested that in this listing of category, the following procedures should be included and measured: Chi-Squared test, RMSEA, GFI, AGFI, the RMR and the SRMR.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the descriptive data of the sample that included scale reliabilities, means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations for all the study variables. The different parts of the scale representing the various constructs have the following Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient (R): ethnocentricity, 0.82; openness to diversity & challenges, 0.82; cultural conservatism, 0.64; fatalism, 0.64; and materialism, 0.63. In testing reliabilities, an alpha of 0.75 or greater is acceptable for instruments that assess knowledge and skills while 0.50 or greater is acceptable for attitude and preference assessments (Tuckman, 1999; Litzinger, Lee, Wise and Felder, 2005). The alpha values for all the five scales used in this study met this criterion; for this reason, the scales are reliable. The range of responses is 1 to 4 where 4 is the highest indicating strong agreement.

Table 1. Scale Reliabilities, Means, Standard Deviation, and Zero-Order Correlation

Variables	R	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Ethnocentricity	.82	3.03	.43				
2. Openness to Diversity & Challenges	.82	3.39	.42	.417**			
3. Cultural Conservatism	.64	3.50	.57	.296**	.384**		
4. Fatalism	.64	3.47	.67	.259**	.413**	.519**	
5. Materialism	.63	2.79	.57	.355**	.212**	.118	.240**

Correlations (n=205 ~ 207); **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Ethnocentricity, the dependent variable of the study, had a mean of 3.03, implying that the student-respondents are moderately ethnocentric. Students were likewise moderate in their openness (3.39), cultural conservatism (3.50) and fatalism (3.47). However, they perceived themselves to have low materialism (2.79). At zero-order correlations, ethnocentricity was observed to be significantly related to openness ($r=0.417$, $p < 0.01$), cultural conservatism ($r = 0.296$, $p < 0.01$), fatalism ($r = 0.259$, $p < 0.05$), and materialism ($r = 0.355$, $p < 0.01$).

Table 2 below shows the values for the calculation of path coefficients. The values in the last row show the standard fit criterion as the basis for determining the best fit model.

Table 2. Results of the Calculation of Overall Model Fit Indices of the Hypothesized Models

Models	χ^2			NFI	GFI	CFI	AGFI	RMR	RMSEA
	Value	df	prob						
Hypothesized Model 1	149.729	6	0.000	.468	.814	.471	.534	.050	.300
Hypothesized Model 2	.120	1	0.729	.999	.999	.999	.997	.001	.000
<i>Standard Fit Criterion</i>	<i>Not Significant; Ratio of χ^2 to df ≤ 2</i>			$\geq .95$	$\geq .95$	$\geq .95$	$\geq .95$	<i>Nearing zero</i>	$< .06$

Proposed hypothesized model 1 was a poor fit, considering that the χ^2 was highly significant implying that the hypothesized model does not fit the sample and so with the other measures that were less than 0.9. RMSEA at .300 was also found to be not significant. Thus, hypothesized model 1 is not acceptable,

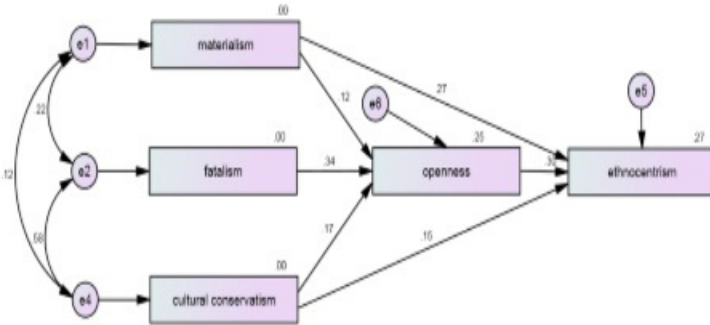


Figure 2. Hypothesized Model 2: The Best Fit Model.

Figure 2 shows the path coefficients in the diagram representing the best fit model. Fatalism and openness to diversity are endogenous variables or caused variables. Materialism, fatalism, and cultural conservatism are the exogenous variables or the independent variables. From the figure, openness is both a cause and an effect variable shown to influence ethnocentrism, but an effect of fatalism. The path coefficients of materialism and ethnocentrism (0.27, $p=0.00$), cultural conservatism and ethnocentrism (0.15, $p=0.01$), and openness and ethnocentrism is (0.30, $p=0.00$) disclose the effects of the independent variables on ethnocentrism. Fatalism influenced openness (0.34, 0.03).

Additionally, the R-values show that 25% of the changes in openness could be explained by materialism, fatalism, and cultural conservatism as shown by the

equation: $\text{openness} = 0.34 \text{ fatalism} + 0.12 \text{ materialism} + 0.17 \text{ cultural conservatism}$. The figure further discloses that 27% of the variations of ethnocentrism could be attributed to the openness, materialism, and cultural conservatism. The structural equation: $\text{ethnocentrism} = 0.30 \text{ openness} + 0.27 \text{ materialism} + 0.15 \text{ cultural conservatism}$ explains this condition. The model reveals that among the independent variables, ethnocentrism is greatly influenced by openness followed by materialism and supported by fatalism and cultural conservatism. The model also indicates that the higher the students' openness, materialism, and cultural conservatism, the greater are their tendencies to ethnocentrism. It further shows that openness mediates the effect of fatalism on ethnocentrism.

Ethnocentrism is caused by materialism, cultural conservatism, fatalism, and openness to diversity and challenges. The results show that openness mediates the effect of materialism, fatalism and cultural conservatism on ethnocentrism, in that the higher the degree of materialism, openness and cultural conservatism, the greater the ethnocentric tendencies of the students. Findings of this study confirm that openness, materialism, and cultural conservatism are predictors of students' ethnocentrism. Students' openness was likewise observed to have greatly influenced ethnocentrism positively in that the greater the openness of the students, the higher their ethnocentrism becomes. It also mediated the effects of fatalism on ethnocentrism. Openness lessened the impact of fatalism seen as positively complementing ethnocentrism. Caligiuri, Jacobs, and Farr (2000) asserted that openness as a personality characteristic can ultimately help facilitate the acceptance of cultural diversity and that individuals higher in openness will have less rigid views of right and wrong, what is appropriate and inappropriate. This study proves otherwise and implies that students could less accept cultural diversity when they have a higher degree of ethnocentrism. While Shankarmahesh (2006) discussed studies that found negative relationship between cultural openness and consumer ethnocentrism (Shimp and Sharma, 1987; Howard 1989), the findings were challenged and it was said that it is rather simplistic to generalize that cross-cultural experiences and familiarity with other cultures will lessen ethnocentric tendencies in general.

It is inferred that students may have seen nothing immoral in being extremely concern of the country's economy in the context of patronizing domestic products while being opened to discussions with people having diverse culture, which may not necessarily make them or influence them to think or do like other cultures. Although Shankarmesh used cultural diversity openness, the items in the scale of this study indicated cultural diversity such as "I enjoy having discussions

with people whose ideas and values are different from my own,” “Contact with individuals whose background (e.g. race, national origin, sexual orientation) is different from my own is an essential part of my education,” and “Learning about people from different culture is a very important part of my college life.”

Similar to openness, materialism influences consumer behavior specifically ethnocentrism. Materialism contributes to ethnocentrism positively in terms of “one values what one possesses.” Josiassen, Assaf, and Karpen (2011) after analyzing several studies concluded that the most ethnocentric consumers, the more materialistic they become (Olsen *et al.*, 1993). This affirms the study’s stance that the ‘possessiveness’ aspect of materialism contributes more to ethnocentrism positively in the context of “one values what one possesses” premise. It is further inferred that patronizing one’s domestic products and valuing one’s country’s economy are something very important to students.

Further path analysis shows cultural conservatism having positive bearing on ethnocentrism and being a covariance of fatalism. Students in this present study tend to be conservative consumers and possess high ethnocentric tendencies towards their local products. This is also supported by the studies of Al Ganideh and Zaytoonah (2011). The nature of their responses to cultural conservatism and fatalism leans more on the students’ religious element and traditional values, which might have influenced their responses opting to be more loyal to the country’s products. Although one of the two university-samples is non-sectarian, the religious tradition of the founders has been kept alive in the various practices of the university. Students expressed highest agreement on the items ‘I believe that our country needs to return to more traditional values when it comes to issues like marriage, family and sex’ and “My religion gives me a great deal of guidance in my day-to-day living.” The students’ high possessiveness (materialism) and protectionism are believed to influence ethnocentrism.

There are serious and practical implications that can be drawn from the study beyond the theoretical implications that the socio-cultural variables influence ethnocentrism. First, moderate ethnocentrism (mean = 3.03) implies that students’ tendency to swing from high ethnocentrism at one time to low at another time reveals ambivalence. This is seen in their highest agreement on the items that “It is best to purchase domestically made products because it helps the country’s economy” and “Only those products that are not available in the country should be imported” and their high disagreement on the items “Foreigners should not be allowed to put their goods in the local market because this hurts the economy and puts people out of work.” Most people are ethnocentric at

one point and may manifest another behavior according to how people best relate to their own cultures; individuals are mostly unaware though of their own ethnocentric tendencies (Weinstein 2013; Barger 2008; Cunningham, Nezlek, and Banaji, 2004).

The positive causal path of materialism, openness, and cultural conservatism to ethnocentrism calls for the consistent management of these variables to ensure the readiness of students for global interdependence. Studies recognized that students' ethnocentrism is part of human nature just as the other socio-cultural variables: materialism, openness, fatalism, and cultural conservatism. These attitudes and behaviors can become major obstructions in students' career in the global context if their interplay is not fully understood.

CONCLUSIONS

Students' moderate ethnocentrism is desirable, but the positive influences of socio-cultural variables such as materialism, openness, and cultural conservatism on ethnocentrism can become imminent threats to their readiness for ASEAN 2015. Ethnocentric attitude including the behaviors that influence it has to be toned down if students are to cope in an increasingly interdependent world. If college students are to be successful in today's multicultural business world, they need to understand the dynamics of ethnocentrism and cultivate "a culturally sensitive frame of reference and mode of operation," according to Weinstein (2013) citing Scott (1998) and Rosado (1994). Helping students recognize the interplay of materialism, openness and cultural conservatism to ethnocentrism prepares them for better quality of life. The findings of this study compel universities to review their curriculum and pay attention to the approaches and outcomes that define students' preparedness for interdependence other than the professional competencies expected of them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings and conclusion, it is imperative for universities to institutionalize efforts to deepen students' self-awareness of one's ethnocentric tendency for them to be equipped with the appropriate knowledge, attitude, and the means to address ethnocentric issues to facilitate workplace success and integration into this socio-economic interdependence of nations.

Together with the core values of the institution, the dynamics of ethnocentrism

with materialism, openness and cultural conservatism should be integrated into the institutions' curriculum maps, syllabus, and learning guides for business management students. Such conscious effort should be well implemented through classrooms and non-classroom programs and be seriously monitored to ensure that students are fully prepared students for life and their entry to global economic interdependence.

Since this study was conducted among business management students, it is also recommended that this study be replicated in other colleges to strengthen the theory drawn so that appropriate interventions can be done for the integration preparations among all college students.

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