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THE RELATIONSHIP OF CIVIL IDENTITY AND CONSUMER PREFERENCES OF DOMESTIC GOODS

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Abstract

The article presents the results of an empirical study of the relationship between indicators of civil identity and consumer preferences of domestic goods. The process of globalization and unstable economic and political events create conditions for a more thorough analysis of the characteristics of consumer preferences and the study of the relationship between the preferences of domestic goods by consumers and indicators of civil identity. The study consisted of three parts: a study of the attitudes of respondents towards a producing country (Patosha, Volkova), a study of indicators of civil identity (Tataro A.N., modification of Trefilova O.), the determination of consumer preferences for goods from different countries (Patosha, Volkova). The sample of the study was 125 residents of Russia. As a result of the empirical research, the hypothesis about the relationship of indicators of civil identity and consumer preferences of domestic goods was proved. A consumer who feels that he belongs to the state is more likely to prefer domestically produced goods. In addition, the results of the study show the presence of ethnocentrism among Russian consumers. The results of the study may be useful to representatives of domestic business for better promotion of their product on the market. In addition, a new methodology for studying consumer preferences has been designed, which may be useful for the future study of consumer preferences.

Keywords: *civil identity, consumer-behavior, country-of-origin, business psychology, organizations*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the conditions of the modern economy, a glut of the market with goods is observed, which puts the consumer in a situation of comparing two or more products among themselves and choosing the best one. The choice of a product by the consumer is influenced by a huge number of factors. In order to attract the attention of the client, business demands information about the features of

consumer behavior during the purchase. For a long time, researchers believed that when making a purchase decision, the consumer was mainly guided by such factors as the price of the goods, quality, income level of the consumer, the country of origin of the goods. But increasingly, researchers are trying to take into account psychological factors that may affect the preference of a product. One of these factors is the civil identity of the consumer.

In the context of globalization, the problems of civil identity become relevant. The erosion of borders between states, the increasing popularity of virtual communication creates conditions for the emergence of uncertainty and difficulty in determining belonging to one or another state (community). Today, the need for identity becomes quite acute for a person, as crisis occurs, which can be designated as "depletion and degeneration of sociality" [Bordriard, 2006]. Traditional social institutions are changing or disintegrating, humanity is moving to "online", the concept of "virtual identity" appears, significantly different from the social one. Globalization turns traditional society into a "risk society" [Beck, 1986], in which the foundations of people's lives are destroyed, collective identities disintegrate [Zharkova, 2016].

On the one hand, the process of globalization is now taking place and the role of the producing country is being erased. In the first place goes "brand ". But on the other hand, this study is carried out on the Russian market, which implies the impact of the economic and political conditions that now affect the Russian economy. It is likely that due to the economic and political events that are currently taking place on the Russian market (imposing sanctions, import substitution, etc.), the impact of the country of origin on consumer preferences will continue to be traced.

Thus, both business and science need an understanding of the factors that influence consumer preferences for goods and services. Moreover, the study of consumer preferences in connection with ethnocentrism and civil identity in the complex modern socio-political conditions was not carried enough.

1.1 .Model and Data

Preference is a socially and personally determined positive subject-object relation of the consumer to the product, service or their attributes, which determines the choice. [Posypanova, 2012]. Preferences are also called consumer tastes [Laver, 1946]. Product preference occurs at the "pre-purchase assessment of alternatives" stage, when consumers compare several options, analyzing their characteristics. When choosing a product, the consumer evaluates its characteristics. Some of these characteristics will be decisive, and he will evaluate them more rigorously than others. Most often, such essential characteristics of a product are the price, brand, reliability, quality, etc. [Angel, 1999].

According to studies, consumers care about the country in which the product was invented and where it was made [Parkvithee e.t.c., 2012]. Country of origin is distinguished by researchers as a "given" characteristic of a product; it was proved that it plays a significant role in making decisions about the choice of goods in one line with such characteristics as price, warranty on the product, and so on [Makienko, 2002].

In modern conditions of mixing politics and economics, the intervention of the political factor in the businesses processes, it is necessary to consider the features of civil identity in the sphere of consumer preferences.

Civil identity is the most important component of social identity, and arises from the individual's awareness of his involvement in a certain community that can call itself a nation [Ivanova, Mazilova, 2008]. Most researchers agree that the concept of "civil identity" includes the awareness of belonging to a community of citizens of a particular state, having meaningful meaning for an individual.

Civil identity includes the following indicators:

a) "strength" of civil identity - the degree of the subjective awareness of the individual as a representative of his state;

b) valency, which lies in pride in one's country and in feeling calm confidence in one's state at the pole of positivity and vice versa at the pole of negativity [Tatarko, 2014].

Studies of the relationship between civil identity and consumer behavior indicate a connection between these two phenomena. Thus, it was proved that patriotic feelings are associated with consumer behavior, and understanding the natural characteristics of "their" territory projects a loyal attitude to the products produced on its territory [Golubovskaya, 2013]. It was also revealed that civil identity is a factor for changing preferences of goods in favor of the consumption of domestic products for political reasons [Patosha, Ivanova, 2015].

Thus, we assume that there is a relationship between indicators of civic identity and consumer preferences for goods from different countries. As well as relating to the country has a direct relationship with the preference for products made in this country.

Objective: to study the relationship of civil identity and consumer preferences for goods from different countries.

The research method consists of three parts.

The first part is aimed at measuring attitudes towards a producing country - Russia, China, Germany, United Kingdom. On a 5-point Likert scale, the following questions must be answered:

- I have a ... attitude to this country (Negative - positive);
- I ... this country (do not like - like);
- I ... buy goods from this country (Never - Very often).

The second part contains questions on the measurement of the valence and power of the civil identity of the respondents [Dayneka, Trefilova, 2017].

The third part includes studying the preferences of products produced in different countries. The following procedure was developed for this. On the online page, respondents were offered four of the same type T-shirts. The peculiarity of the presentation of information about the goods was the following: the description of the color and material of manufacture was identical, but the country of origin was different for each of the proposed sample (Russia, Germany, China, United Kingdom).

The choice of T-shirts as stimulus was made due to the fact that the T-shirt is an e product that can afford a greater range of active buyers. In addition, this product allowed to get rid of the problem of product recognition and its association with any well-known brand.

For each of the proposed options, respondents had to rate on a 4-point scale it's quality, popularity with consumers, the desire to buy, the estimated cost.

The sample of the study was 125 residents of Russia, 76 of them are women and 49 are men. Age range from 18 to 65 years.

2. RESULTS

Table 1 Descriptive statistics for measuring attitudes towards a producing country

	Attitude to the country		Like the country		Buy products from country	
	Mean (M)	Standart deviation (σ)	Mean (M)	Standart deviation (σ)	Mean (M)	Standart deviation (σ)
Russian Federation	3,81	1,07301	3,52	1,29873	3,97	,93726
Germany	3,95	0,76048	3,72	1,13859	2,47	0,92959
China	3,44	1,05842	3,11	1,23925	3,72	1,14018
UK	3,92	0,88149	3,74	1,22411	2,28	0,99677

According to Table 1, respondents are prone to buying Russian goods and buying them often enough, the attitude of the respondents towards Russia is rated as quite high.

Of the four countries, the lowest rates has got China. This is probably due to the stereotyping of goods from this country. But despite this, respondents often gave preference to goods from China. Perhaps this is due to the cheapness of Chinese goods.

Rarely enough, respondents tend to make purchases of goods from Germany. Attitude of respondents to Germany is kept at a fairly high level (but the figures decreased compared with the data of the 2016 survey (4,0198), respondents rate Germany at a high level (the indicator also dropped from 2016 (3.9109) [Patoshka, Volkova, 2016]).

The respondents most rarely make purchases of goods from the UK. The ratio of respondents to the UK is kept at a fairly high level; respondents rate the UK at a high level, slightly higher than Germany.

Compared to three other countries, Russia is still estimated at the level of average values in the eyes of the respondents, but a tendency towards an increase in the respondents' positive attitude towards Russia is already visible.

Table 2 Spearman's correlation analysis between the variables "Civil Identity Indicators" and "Product Preference".

	Buying goods producing in Russia
Preference to be a citizen of Russia only	0,258 **

**p≤0,01

Correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between high rates of Civil identity and the purchase of domestic goods, which confirms the hypothesis. Respondents with high rates of civic identity are more likely to buy domestic goods.

Table 3 Spearman's correlation analysis between the "Attitude to Russia" and "Indicators of Civil Identity" variables.

	Preference to be a citizen of Russia only	Feeling of belonging to Russia	Pride in being a citizen of Russia
Attitude to Russian Federation	0,409**	0,424**	0,235**
Like Russian Federation	0,551**	0,490**	-
Frequency of purchases from Russian Federation	-	0,228*	-

**p≤0,01, *p≤0,05

The higher the respondents' attitude towards Russia and the more they like Russia as a country, the more they would like to be citizens of the Russian Federation and the more they feel their belonging to Russia. Also, respondents who highly appreciate Russia, stronger feel a sense of

pride for his ownership of the country. The higher rates of positive attitudes to Russia as a country" correlate with "the desire to be citizens of the Russian Federation", as well as with "a sense of belonging to Russia". A significant positive relationship was established between the "frequency of purchases of goods from Russia" and the "sense of belonging to Russia."

Below are data on the relationship between the attitude to the country and the preference of goods from these countries.

Table 4 Spearman's correlation analysis between the "Attitude to Russia" and "Product preferences"

	Quality of goods from Russian Federation	Buying goods from Russian Federation	Price of goods from Russian Federation	Demand for goods from Russian Federation
Attitude towards Russian Federation		0,206*	- 0,346**	
Like Russian Federation	0,328**	0,246**		
Frequency of purchases from Russian Federation		0,190*		0,268**

**p≤0,01, *p≤0,05

Table 5 Spearman's correlation analysis between the "Attitude to China" and "Product preferences".

	Buying goods producing in China
Frequency of purchases from China	0,230*

*p≤0,05

Table 6 Spearman's correlation analysis between the "Attitude to Germany" and "Product preferences"

	Quality of goods from great Germany	Buying goods producing in Germany	Demand for goods from Germany
Attitude to Germany	0,299**	0,209*	0,216*
Like Germany	0,222*		

**p≤0,01, *p≤0,05

Table 7 Spearman's correlation analysis between the "Attitude to UK" and "Product preferences"

	Quality of goods from great Britain	Buying goods producing in UK	Demand for goods from the UK
Attitude to UK	0,294**	0,294**	
Like UK			0,228*
Frequency of purchases from the UK			0,300**

**p≤0,01, *p≤0,05

The correlation analysis revealed significant links between the attitude to the country and the preference of goods from this country. This confirms previous studies [Patoshka, Volkova, 2015, 2016] and points to the fact that the relation to the country has a relationship with the preference of goods from this country.

Correlation analysis showed that the higher the attitude to the country, the greater the propensity to buy goods from this country and the higher the quality of the goods from this country.

An interesting result that was obtained – between the indicators "attitude to Russia" and

"the price of goods from Russia" observed a negative significant relationship, which may indicate that the respondents formed a positive attitude to Russia, and the prices of domestically produced goods are estimated as quite low (compared with imported goods).

3. CONCLUSION

The study proved that the relationship between the preference of domestic goods and indicators of civil identity, indeed, exists. Consumers with higher rates of civil identity are more likely to buy goods from Russia.

In addition, it was found that in the economic and political situation in our country, the producing country, as a factor of consumer behavior, also affects the consumer. Russia was evaluated by consumers at a very high level, while domestic goods are perceived by respondents at an average level. This may be due to the manifestation of such a factor as ethnocentrism. These results should be taken into account by companies that operate on the Russian market – the use of cultural and historical symbols in communication with consumers, emphasizing a positive attitude to the country will have a positive impact on the perception and preference of the product or brand by consumers.

The topic under study needs further study with the expansion of the sample to improve its representativeness. In addition, it is necessary to take into account the age of the respondents (since the indicators of civil identity of representatives of different age groups may differ).

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