

Acculturation and purchase intention for Japanese food: The mediating role of consumer ethnocentrism of expatriates in Japan

B. V. S. Mekhala, H. K. D. K. Fernando

*Department of International Business, Faculty of Management and Finance,
University of Colombo, Sri Lanka*

This study intends to investigate the complicated relationship between the acculturation process of expatriates and their purchase intentions for food products of the host country. Furthermore, the study examines the mediating impact of consumer ethnocentrism towards the host country in the relationship between acculturation and purchase intention for host country food. According to the International Organization of Migration (IOM, 2024), 3.6% of the entire world population constitutes international migrants who represent a significant portion of the consumer segment in host countries. Therefore, this study investigates whether highly adapted expatriates demonstrate deep ethnocentrism toward their host country's products. As the main theoretical lens of this study, Consumer Culture Theory is used. For this study, data were collected through an online self-administered questionnaire from 162 expatriates living in Japan and SPSS 22 was utilized to analyze the gathered data. The major findings indicate that acculturation positively influences both consumer ethnocentrism and purchase intention. Consumer ethnocentrism also shows a significant positive impact on purchase intention. Moreover, mediating analysis reveals that consumer ethnocentrism towards the host country partially mediates the relationship between acculturation and purchase intention. By highlighting the role of consumer ethnocentrism in shaping purchasing decisions, this study provided valuable insights for international marketers focusing on effectively engaging with expatriates and adjusting their strategies accordingly. Eventually, this study bridges the gap between acculturation theories and consumer behaviour, contributing a remarkable view on how expatriates negotiate their dual identities in their host country.

Keywords: *Acculturation, Expatriates, Consumer ethnocentrism, Consumer culture theory, Japanese food*