

A study of ethnic perception gap on consumer boycott of Korean and Canadian University students

Ethnic
perception
gap

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Abstract

Purpose – In this paper, the authors aim to offer a cross-cultural comparison of the boycott intentions of university students in Canada with those of students in Korea.

Design/methodology/approach – The data were collected from students at Inje University and York University via self-administered questionnaire. A *t*-test found that Canadian students' answers showed significantly greater scores in ethnocentrism, boycott attitudes prior to reading the target article and motivations related to self-enhancement compared to those acquired from Korean students. However, the motivation of counterarguments and the boycott intentions of Korean students' toward Rogers, the parent company of Maclean's magazine, showed significantly higher scores than those gained from Canadian students.

Findings – The boycott case used in the study is Maclean's magazine, a Canadian news magazine, which published a controversial article called, "Too Asian? Some frosh don't want to study at an "Asian" University". A noticeable gap in each group of students' boycott attitude and intentions toward Rogers, the parent company of Maclean's magazine was found.

Originality/value – In the multiple regression analysis, the boycott motivation of self-enhancement was the most influential variable on boycott intentions. The boycott case examined in this paper is a practical case study of cross-national grouping as well as the perceptual difference of the *locus* of corporate accountability that comes from cross-cultural backgrounds.

Keywords Corporate social responsibility, Consumer ethnocentrism, Boycott, Consumer resist, Business ethic

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

Smith (2008) pointed out that the awareness of consumer role as citizen is increasingly emphasized. And not only stakeholders but also company's employees take part in the role of drivers of corporate responsibility. It is claimed that the company gains economic benefits from corporate social responsibility related to consumers' positive product and brand evaluations, brand choice and brand recommendations, company reputation. Klein *et al.* (2004) insist that consumer boycott is a fascinating

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form of consumer behavior, which is unwelcome to marketers yet consistent with the marketing concept.

In this context, scrutiny by consumer-oriented groups with new technologies and real-time global information flow may affect the concealing management practices of enterprises (Kim, 2012). Recent cases which reveal questionable business ethics and discriminative compensation policies caused by global companies, which include the recall of Toyota vehicles, the Volkswagen emissions scandal (Choi, 2016) and the toxic disinfectant in humidifier cleaner by Oxy in South Korea (Lewis, 2016), give rise to consumer resistance and boycotting. With this aspect of change, it is important for market-leading companies to establish ethical management and consumer-oriented policies. An entrepreneur of the new era needs innovative and creative management policies to pursue maximum profit and to be ethical and socially responsible (Park and Park, 2013). Therefore, innovative and creative entrepreneurs and their market-leading enterprises must carefully examine and analyze consumer groups' sensitive and critical issues related to ethnic, religious and cultural background and customs.

Consumer boycotts are a type of ethical and political consumption. The behavior of ethically motivated consumers is "the acquisition, usage, and disposition of products on a desire to minimize or eliminate any harmful effects and maximize the long-run beneficial impact on society" (Mohr *et al.*, 2001, p. 47). Harrison *et al.* (2005) defines ethical consumption when societal, environmental or animal welfare is considered in making purchasing and consumption decisions. John and Klein (2003) found that over 40 per cent of Fortune-50-companies may be boycott targets. However, marketing managers and policy makers often have little understanding of consumer protest behavior in general (Yuksel and Mryteza, 2008).

Consumer activities leading to boycott behavior evolve into more diverse and active patterns in offline as well as online cases. However, there have been only a few studies of the consumer behavior of boycotting. Furthermore, the most recent boycott studies have focused on factors within one cultural society only. To the authors' knowledge, no cross-cultural studies dealing with boycott behavior have been reported to date.

This study is motivated by an article initially entitled "Too Asian? Some frosh don't want to study at an "Asian" University" that appeared in Maclean's magazine in 2010. The article claims that there is a growing number of white students who avoid particular universities because of the perception that they are "too Asian" and that there is an over-enrolment of Asian students. The reaction and response to the article from the public was negative, and several organized groups attempted a boycott of Maclean's magazine which never materialized. From comparative analysis of the data from structured questionnaires given to university students in Canada and Korea, a noticeable difference was revealed. The authors believe that this awareness gap can be explained by differences in their perception of consumer behavior; Canada is a multi-ethnic nation, whereas Korea is a single-ethnic nation. The boycott case examined in this paper against Maclean's magazine is a practical case study of ethnic grouping and segregation as well as perceptual difference which comes from cross-cultural backgrounds.

For this reason, the purpose of this study is to provide a cross-cultural comparison of the boycott intentions of university students in Canada and Korea with a focus on the

difference regarding boycott attitudes, boycott motivations and ethnocentrism. Thus, this study may contribute to our understanding of consumer boycotts as well as academic research on multi-cultural subjects.

2. Theoretical background

2.1 *Concept of consumer boycott*

Friedman (1999, p. 4) describes a consumer boycott as “the attempt by one or more parties to achieve certain objective by urging individual consumers to refrain from making selected purchases”. Consumer boycotts are generally recognized as ethical consumption. Boycotters collectively punish companies for unacceptable behavior by not buying their products (Friedman, 1999). Boycotts are thought to be triggered when a group of consumers feel anger toward a company’s or industry’s actions or practices as violating moral norms. In retaliation, consumers apply economic and social pressure on the offending business *en masse* (John and Klein, 2003). Boycott success is achieved when the boycott leads to a cessation or remedy of the egregious act or practice (Smith, 1990).

Smith (1990) identified several factors that influence boycott effectiveness and boycott success, including the choice of target, the organization and strategy of the campaign group and responses from consumers to the boycott call. Companies may comply with boycott demands in response to the moral pressure and concern for the company’s reputation, even absent any impact on sales. Thus, the risk or a mere threat of a consumer boycott can be a driver of corporate responsibility.

Boycotters hardly get personal benefits even if the action succeeds. John and Klein (2003) and Sen *et al.* (2001) claimed that some factors may restrain one’s incentive to boycott which include the costs associated with the consumer’s dependence, preference and/or loyalty to the boycotted product and the unavailability in the marketplace of affordable substitutes. The perception that boycott campaigns can bring negative outcomes, such as increased unemployment, may deter one’s participation (Klein *et al.*, 2004).

2.2 *Research trend on boycott*

Klein *et al.* (2004) proposed four cost-benefit factors that predict boycott participation which are making a difference, self-enhancement, counterarguments and constrained consumption. The self-enhancement factor included elements of social normative influence. Counterarguments and constrained consumption are consistent with social dilemma tensions outlined in Sen *et al.*’s (2001) model. Self-enhancement was positively related to individual boycott participation, whereas counterarguments and the constrained consumption were negatively related to boycott participation. Also, the perceived egregiousness of the firm’s actions was a key to boycott participation. The more egregious a consumer perceived the firm’s actions to be, the more likely was that consumer to participate in the boycott (Klein *et al.*, 2004).

Farah and Newman’s (2010) results showed that intentions to boycott both Muslim and Christian are positively related to the attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control using theory of planned behavior (TPB) model.

According to Chen’s (2010, pp.11-12) dissertation, there are three views have on consumers’ decision to participate in boycotts. First, consumers use purchase votes to favor firms with a preferred societal impact (Dickinson and Hollander, 1991; Klein *et al.*,

2004; Sen *et al.*, 2001). Second, boycotts are collective social actions based on consumers' cost-benefit evaluations (Innes, 2006; John and Klein, 2003; Klein *et al.*, 2004; Sen *et al.*, 2001). Third, boycotts are individual emotive expressions (Kozinets and Handelman, 1998). Morality plays a central role in a person's intention to participate in a boycott in any case. The collective action and individual expression views also imply that there is an affective link between the perceived moral violation arising from the egregious act by a company and subsequent boycott intention.

There are several Korean studies that have reported on this topic. Jae and Jeon (2013) found that subjective norm, consumer efficacy and reference groups had an influence on consumer boycott intentions with the extended theory of planned behavior. Jeon *et al.* (2014) showed that the moderated mediating effects of consumer attitudes toward boycotts through self-regulation on the relationship between belief and behavior regarding consumer boycotts. Through the classification of the origin of manufacturing, boycott behavior with exclusionism is formed and affected by ethnocentrism and a sense of ethnic identification (Woo *et al.*, 2007).

2.3 Comparative study

Economic development, legal system, culture and individuals' perceptions of ethics between nations are interesting topics in consumer studies. Especially, there is a growing interest about consumer ethical actions in relation to their dealing with firms. Some cross-cultural researches have tried to examine countries that have more similarities. Rawwas *et al.* (1995) exemplified Northern Ireland and Hong Kong as these two markets have British links and some common underlying values. Egypt and Lebanon (Rawwas *et al.*, 1994) and Ireland and Lebanon (Rawwas *et al.*, 1998) were also illustrative countries that had similar environments. Whereas, Al-Khatib *et al.* (1997) found Egyptian and US consumers' perceived consumer ethical situations quite differently. However, there are few cross-cultural studies related with the boycott action.

3. Motivation and methodology of the study

3.1 Research motivation: Maclean's article

On November 10, 2010, in its annual University Rankings issue, a Canadian current affairs and news magazine, *Maclean's*, published an article initially entitled "Too Asian? Some frosh don't want to study at an Asian University". The article claims that there is a growing number of (white) students who avoid "big-name schools over perceptions that they are 'too Asian'". In other words, universities that are "too Asian" are "so academically focused that some students feel they can no longer compete or have fun".

One example used in the article is of an interview with a young white woman who stated that she, along with her younger brother, avoided the University of Toronto for this reason. The woman also claimed that the label "too Asian" is "not about racism. [...] [as] many white students simply believe that competing with Asians requires a sacrifice of time and freedom they're not willing to make". Instead, according to the article, white students choose their school based on "social interaction, athletics and self-actualization – and [...] alcohol". The writers warn universities that if they do not address this issue of "becoming too skewed one way" (i.e. "Too Asian"), they risk becoming "places of many solitudes" as opposed to places of integration, mutual understanding and dialogue.

The reaction and response to the article from the public was negative. The Chinese Canadian National Council spearheaded the campaign to demand that *Maclean's* and its

parent company Rogers Communications apologize for the negative stereotypes about Asians and Asian students presented in the article. Several of the people quoted in the article claimed that their comments were taken out of context or were misrepresented by the authors.

In light of the negative reaction, *Maclean's* quietly changed the title of the article on its online edition and published an editorial two weeks later entitled "Merit: the best and only way to decide who gets into university". Both *Maclean's* and Rogers Communications refused to issue an apology.

3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 Research questions

RQ1. Is there a significant difference in ethnic identity, boycott attitude, boycott motivation and boycott intention of university students in Korea with those of university students in Canada?

RQ2. To what extent did the independent variables influence the consumer boycott intention to *Maclean's* magazine itself and Rogers, the parent company of *Maclean's* magazine?

3.2.2 *The data and analysis.* The data used in this study were collected from university students at Inje University in Korea and York University in Canada via self-administrated questionnaire. The article contained in *Maclean's* magazine, "Too Asian? Some frosh don't want to study at an Asian University (www2.macleans.ca/2010/11/10/too-asian/)", was presented in the questionnaire. Total 329 of questionnaires were completed by Korean students in November 2013; 113 Canadian students completed online questionnaires from 2013 to 2014. The questionnaire was translated from English to Korean and back-translated into English. Females were 52.6 per cent of the sample, and their average age was 46 years.

Statistical analyses of the data were conducted using percentiles, frequencies, means, *t*-test and multiple regression analysis with SPSS Win program.

3.2.3 *Variables.* *Boycott intention toward Maclean's and boycott intention toward Rogers* were measured by modifying the scale of Klein *et al.* (2004) and Farah and Newman (2010). It was measured using a seven-point Likert scale with 1 "strongly disagree" and 7 "strongly agree". The reliability levels of Cronbach's α were 0.97 and 0.95 on the boycott intention toward *Maclean's* and Rogers, respectively.

The consumer attitude toward the boycott was measured using a seven-point Likert scale with a semantic differential scale (six questions). The reliability levels of Cronbach's α of boycott attitude pre-reading *Maclean's* article was 0.88 and post-reading *Maclean's* article was 0.93.

The consumer attitude toward Maclean's and consumer attitude toward Rogers were measured using seven-point Likert scale with two questions. The reliability levels of Cronbach's α of the attitude toward *Maclean's* and Rogers were 0.86 and 0.92, respectively.

To measure *boycott motivation*, we used the five-point Likert scale developed by Klein *et al.* (2004). Boycott motivation was composed of three sub-factors which were self-enhancement (four questions), counter-arguments (two questions) and constrained consumption (two questions). The reliability levels of Cronbach's α were 0.80, 0.62 and 0.61, respectively.

Consumer ethnocentrism specifically refers to ethnocentric views held by consumers in one country, the in-group toward products from another country and the out-group (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). It was measured using a five-point Likert scale with six questions. The reliability level of Cronbach’s α was 0.88 (Table I).

4 Results and discussion

4.1 Comparison of variables for consumer boycott: answered by Korean and Canadian university students

To compare the variables for consumer boycott between Korean and Canadian university students, *t*-test was conducted (Table II). Following are the four variables:

- (1) *Consumer boycott intention*: The consumer boycott intention of both groups against Maclean’s magazine itself were relatively high in points, 4.74 (Korean) and 4.61 (Canadian), and no significant difference was found. However, the consumer boycott intention against Rogers, the parent company of Maclean’s magazine, of Korean students (4.66) was significantly higher than that of Canadian students’ boycott intention (3.73) against Rogers. This result can be interpreted that there is a remarkable difference in students’ accumulative view regarding corporate group between Korean and Canadian students. In Korea, the influence of major conglomerates (called chaebols) is crucial and Korean students generally believe that companies in a conglomerate have the same management policy and culture. Because Canadians are composed of diverse ethnic groups and differences between groups are officially respected, Canadian students may feel the

Variables	No.	Scale	Range	Mean (SD)	Cronbach’s α
Consumer ethnocentrism	6	5	6-30	2.87 (0.79)	0.88
<i>Consumer boycott attitude</i>					
Pre-reading Maclean’s article	6	7	6-42	4.72 (1.05)	0.88
Post-reading Maclean’s article	6	7	6-42	4.95 (1.29)	0.93
<i>Boycott motivation</i>					
Self-enhancement	4	5	4-20	2.91 (0.82)	0.80
Counterarguments	2	5	2-10	3.02 (0.97)	0.62
Constrained consumption	2	5	2-10	2.84 (0.83)	0.61
Attitude toward Maclean’s magazine	2	7	2-14	2.92 (1.47)	0.86
Attitude toward Rogers	2	7	2-14	4.71 (1.42)	0.92
Consumer boycott intention toward Maclean’s magazine	2	7	2-14	4.74 (1.12)	0.97
Consumer boycott intention toward Rogers	2	7	2-14	4.66 (1.19)	0.95

Table I.
General tendencies of variables and reliabilities

Note: *N* = 442

Variables	Ethnic perception gap		<i>t</i> -value	df
	Korean (<i>n</i> = 328) Mean (SD)	Canadian (<i>n</i> = 113) Mean (SD)		
Consumer ethnocentrism	2.61 (0.56)	3.59 (0.89)	−11.05***	440
<i>Consumer boycott attitude</i>				
Pre-reading Maclean's article	4.58 (0.97)	5.13 (1.19)	−4.48***	440
Post-reading Maclean's article	4.94 (1.23)	4.99 (1.44)	0.33	437
<i>Boycott motivation</i>				
Self-enhancement	2.75 (0.73)	3.34 (0.91)	−6.33***	442
Counterarguments	3.39 (0.72)	1.95 (0.78)	18.16***	441
Constrained consumption	2.85 (0.77)	2.80 (0.99)	0.46	440
Attitude toward Maclean's magazine	3.00 (1.45)	2.71 (1.51)	1.81	440
Attitude toward Rogers	2.97 (1.45)	2.69 (1.50)	1.80	442
Consumer boycott intension toward Maclean's magazine	4.74 (1.12)	4.61 (2.07)	0.66	439
Consumer boycott intension toward Rogers	4.66 (1.19)	3.73 (1.96)	4.77***	442

Note: *** *p* < 0.001

Table II.
Results of the *t*-test among variables by residence

- management policy of Maclean's magazine is separate from that of Rogers, the parent company.
- (2) *Consumer boycott attitude*: In Table II, pre-reading points of boycott means a supportive attitude regarding boycott behavior before both groups of the students read the Maclean's magazine's "too Asian" article. It was found that both groups of students are actively supportive to boycott behavior to show pre-reading points, 4.58 (Korean) and 5.13 (Canadian), which is higher and generally Canadian students are more actively supportive to boycott attitude in consumer behavior. However, in post-reading points, which gained after both groups of students read the Maclean's magazine's "too Asian" article, the points of Korean students' rose to 4.94, whereas the points of Canadian students' slightly fell to 4.99. This interesting result presumably came out of cultural difference between two countries. It is explained that after reading the article Korean students seemed to put this case into a racial issue, whereas Canadian students may think opinions of both sides are equally acceptable.
 - (3) *Consumer boycott motivation*: Boycott motivation consists of three sub-factors, that is self-enhancement, counterarguments and constrained consumption. Korean students' self-enhancement (2.75) was significantly lower than that (3.34) of Canadian students'. However, Korean students' counter-arguments were significantly higher than that of Canadian students'. There was no difference in constrained consumption. In participating boycott behavior to Canadian students, economical benefits or satisfaction feeling were major motivation factors, whereas to Korean students, loose constraints on personal purchasing preference was a major motivation factor.

- (4) *Consumer ethnocentrism*: Consumer ethnocentrism of Canadian students' point (3.59) was higher than that (2.61) of Korean students', which is believed that competitive social atmosphere lowers Korean students' identification point.

4.2 Comparison of boycotting-related variables against Maclean's magazine and Rogers, the parent company of Maclean's magazine: answered by Korean and Canadian university students

Multiple regression analyses were conducted to find the influential variables for consumer boycott intention toward Maclean's and Rogers. Independent variables of multiple regression analyses were gender, country of residence, ethnocentrism, boycott attitude pre-reading the article and post-reading the article, boycott motivation (self-enhancement, counterarguments, and constrained consumption) and consumer attitude toward Maclean's and Rogers.

In the multiple regression analysis on the boycott intentions against Maclean's in the Korean sample (Table III), boycott attitudes pre-reading the article ($\beta = 0.142$) post-reading the article ($\beta = 0.325$) and boycott motivation of self-enhancement ($\beta = -0.371$) were statistically significant. Together with the other covariates, the model explained 45.2 per cent variation in consumers' boycott intentions against Maclean's. On the boycott intentions against Rogers, the model explained 52.7 per cent and the key variables were the boycott attitudes pre-reading the article ($\beta = 0.194$), post-reading the article ($\beta = 0.306$), the boycott motivations of self-enhancement ($\beta = -0.386$) and consumer attitudes toward Maclean's ($\beta = -0.134$).

In contrast, in the Canadian student sample, only boycott motivation of self-enhancement ($\beta = 0.523$) was statistically significant, and the full model explained

Variables	Boycott intension toward Maclean's magazine		Boycott intension toward Rogers	
	<i>b</i>	β	<i>b</i>	β
Gender	0.112	0.025	0.031	0.007
Consumer ethnocentrism	-0.003	-0.005	-0.034	-0.048
<i>Consumer boycott attitude</i>				
Pre-reading Maclean's article	0.055	0.142**	0.080	0.194***
Post-reading Maclean's article	0.098	0.325***	0.099	0.306***
<i>Boycott motivation</i>				
Self-enhancement	-0.284	-0.371***	-0.317	-0.386***
Counterarguments	0.123	0.079	0.049	0.030
Constrained consumption	0.042	0.029	-0.093	-0.060
Attitude toward Maclean's magazine	-0.016	-0.021	-0.110	-0.134*
Attitude toward Rogers	-0.032	-0.041	-0.017	-0.020
Constant		7.410		9.145
<i>R</i> ²		0.452		0.527
<i>F</i> -value		30.936***		41.473***

Table III.
Regression analysis
of boycott intention
(Korean)

Notes: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; Gender (1 = Male, 0 = Female)

about 55.4 per cent of boycott intentions against Maclean's magazine. Boycott motivation of self-enhancement ($\beta = 0.471$) and gender ($\beta = -0.236$) were significant variables and together with the other covariates explained 36.9 per cent of the variation in boycott intentions against Rogers. Female students had greater boycott intentions than male students (Table IV).

The results of this study support the results of Jeon *et al.* (2014), Jae and Jeon (2013) and Farah and Newman's (2010) attitude analysis study. Before our survey analysis, it was predicted that consumer ethnocentrism would be an influential factor for boycott behavior. However, the results showed that cultural background has the potential to play major role. It was also shown that consumer ethnocentrism is not a crucial factor in consumer boycotts but that it still plays a major role in socio-cultural variety.

5. Conclusion

Market-leading global enterprises, as well as innovative companies, should analyze each consumer group's critical issues regarding ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds and historic details. Then it is necessary to establish policies and manuals according to the result of the analysis. If a consumer boycott were to occur, the enterprise can resolve problems with an informed approach. The boycott case examined in this paper against Maclean's magazine is a practical case study of cross-cultural differences in consumer behavior.

In recent years, consumer activities leading to boycott behavior have evolved into more diverse and active ways in offline as well as online cases. This study attempted to make the cross-cultural comparison on the boycott intention of the university students at Inje University (Korea) and York University (Canada). The answers from Canadian

Variables	Boycott intension toward the Maclean's magazine		Boycott intension toward the Rogers	
	<i>b</i>	β	<i>b</i>	β
Gender	-0.995	-0.113	-2.010	-0.236**
Consumer ethnocentrism	-0.023	-0.030	-0.081	-0.110
<i>Consumer boycott attitude</i>				
Pre-reading Maclean's article	-0.057	-0.097	0.115	0.201
Post-reading Maclean's article	0.079	0.161	0.000	-0.001
<i>Boycott motivation</i>				
Self-enhancement	0.575	0.523***	0.501	0.471***
Counterarguments	-0.275	-0.109	-0.263	-0.108
Constrained consumption	-0.074	-0.035	0.001	0.000
Attitude toward Maclean's magazine	-0.205	-0.151	0.088	0.066
Attitude toward Rogers	-0.052	-0.040	-0.039	-0.031
Constant	4.562		0.221	
R^2	0.554		0.369	
<i>F</i> -value	14.956***		4.564***	

Notes: ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; Gender (1 = Male, 0 = Female)

Table IV.
Regression analysis
of boycott intention
(Canadian)

students and Korean students in the questionnaires revealed a noticeable difference in certain areas, in which the boycott triggered by Maclean's magazine was explained.

The consumer boycott intentions of both groups against Maclean's magazine received relatively high mean scores, 4.74 (Korean) and 4.61 (Canadian) out of 7 points. In contrast, when the focus turned to Rogers, the parent company of Maclean's magazine, the Korean students' mean score (4.66) was significantly higher than that of Canadian students' boycott intentions (3.73). This result may be explained by the remarkable difference in students' accumulative social view regarding corporate groups. In Korea, the influence of major conglomerates (called chaebols) on the nation's economy is crucial and Korean students generally seem to believe that companies in a conglomerate have the same management policy and culture. Meanwhile, Canadians are composed of diverse ethnic groups and differences between groups are somewhat respected, and Canadian students may believe that the management of Maclean's magazine is independent from that of Rogers. In other words, students in Canada may be more likely to believe that the editorial decision-making of Maclean's magazine operates autonomously from Rogers.

In [Table II](#), we show mean scores of boycott attitudes prior to having students read the Maclean's magazine's "Too Asian" article ("pre-reading the article"). We found that both groups of students were actively supportive of boycott behavior as shown by the pre-reading scores, 4.58 (Korean) and 5.13 (Canadian). Higher mean scores suggest that, in general, Canadian students are more actively supportive of boycotts. However, in the post-reading mean scores, obtained after both groups of students read the Maclean's magazine's "Too Asian" article, the mean score of Korean students' rose to 4.94, whereas the mean score of Canadian students' fell slightly to 4.99. This result is very interesting and presumably it came from cultural difference between the two countries. The Korean students appeared to interpret this issue as a racial one, whereas Canadian students may have more mixed feelings.

Boycott motivations related to self-enhancement was the most influential variable on boycott intentions against Maclean's and Rogers in the multiple regression analysis of the data of both Korean students and Canadian students ([Tables III](#) and [IV](#)). Consumer boycott attitudes were the second influential variable in Korean students only. In participating boycott behavior, Canadian students' economic benefits or feelings of satisfaction were major motivational factors, whereas for Korean students' loose constraints on personal purchasing preference was a major motivation factor. This study can contribute to both our knowledge of consumer boycott and the process of academic research on the subject.

It is concluded that there are both similarities and differences in the motivational differences between Eastern and Western perceptions of consumer boycott activism. Factors of motivation of self-enhancement and counterargument show the perceptual difference comes from activeness due to benefits and costs to be gained. Consumer boycotts can be a very effective tool to appeal for change among companies. And the role of consumer boycotts could become much more significant in the future, particularly with online connectivity and mobilization. With this potential, it will be incumbent upon businesses to engage in ethical and socially responsible practices.

Following guidelines can be suggested to enterprises from the analysis of this study.

First, enterprises need to establish consumer policy which suffices the consumer group's unique common justice and values for the countries like Korea or Japan whose ethnic group is nearly single and social common sense is converging.

Second, enterprises need to considerably prepare consumer policy which only keep neutrality to possible conflicts for the countries like Canada, USA or some European countries whose ethnic group is diverse and social common sense is diverging. Any kind of marketing, management and advertising strategies should be based on neutrality and impartiality to diverse consumer groups.

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