A Research on Employee Ethnocentrism

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Facts like globalization and competition carry organizations to new and different searches and this situation requires employees of an organization to take over more different responsibilities and show different performance. Like any other industries, hotel industry actors implement several strategies in order to satisfy consumers’ needs and wants, and in order to gain competitive advantage. These strategies play critical roles in the context of unique characteristics of services and interaction between employee and consumer, when they are examined from the service firms’ perspectives.

Ethnocentrism formally defined as “that 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”. Stated less formally, ethnocentrism is the habit of each group taking for granted the superiority of its culture. As seen from the definition, ethnocentrism is in close relationship with culture. Culture includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Stated more simply, culture is everything which is socially learned and shared by the members of a society. Ethnocentrism makes our culture into a yardstick with which to measure all other cultures as good or bad, high or low, right or queer in proportion as they resemble ours. All groups stimulate the growth of ethnocentrism, but not all members of the group are equally ethnocentric.
An ethnocentric staffing policy is one in which all key management positions are filled by parent-country nationals. Firms pursue an ethnocentric staffing policy for three reasons. First, the firm may believe the host country lacks qualified individuals to fill senior management positions. This argument is heard most often when the firm has operations in less developed countries. Second, the firm may see an ethnocentric staffing policy as the best way to maintain a unified corporate culture. Such reasoning tends to predominate when a firm places a high value on its corporate culture. Third, if the firm is trying to create value by transferring core competencies to a foreign operation, as firms pursuing an international strategy are, it may believe that the best way to do is to transfer parent-country nationals.

Hotel employees sometimes may show ethnocentric tendency in their decisions or in their work routines. This may be more critical and dangerous if they are interacting with guests. Knowing employees’ ethnocentric tendency may give important clues to hotel companies about their performance and organizational behavior. This study aims to identify ethnocentric behavior tendencies of 129 boundary spanning role employees, who work in 5 star hotels of Ankara, using Employee Ethnocentrism Survey. The reliability and validity of the survey instrument was assessed. Also in this study, independent t-test and analysis of variance tests were used to investigate differences, among respondents’ demographic variables. The results demonstrated that, boundary spanning role employees of 5 star hotels in Ankara have moderately ethnocentric tendency, and several significant differences in terms of respondents’ age and gender. Male employees, 39 age and elders, and high school graduates show a higher ethnocentric tendency among the hotel employees.