

## **An Exploratory Study of the Ethnocentric Tendencies of Mexican-American Consumers**

### **Abstract**

This research explores Mexican-American (M-A) consumer ethnocentric tendencies. Are they ethnocentric towards Mexican-made goods? Are they ethnocentric towards American-made goods? Are these ethnocentric tendencies related to the country of birth, or moderated by antecedent demographic, ethnic affiliation, or media use variables? Using the CETSCALE to measure ethnocentric tendencies, we found that most M-As have developed cultural allegiances to both countries. Country-of-birth effects were not found, and only some moderator variables were correlated to ethnocentrism. Understanding consumer ethnocentrism of M-As is important because of the current size and future growth of this ethnic population and their purchasing power.

### **Track**

Consumer Behavior

### **Key Words for Indexing**

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## **An Exploratory Study of the Ethnocentric Tendencies of Mexican-American Consumers**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this research is to explore Mexican-American (M-A) ethnocentric consumer tendencies. Conventional consumer ethnocentrism research has assumed that consumers are ethnocentric towards their home country. Because M-As live in two “worlds,” the one of their birth or ethnic origin (Mexico) and the one they live in (USA), a key question is towards which country are they ethnocentric, if either one or both are preferred. In practical terms, do they have a general preference for Mexican goods or American goods?

Many M-As were born, grew up in Mexico, and then migrated to the U.S. after having acquired their home culture. Growing up in this emerging market context influences the perception of imported and local goods and services of Mexican consumers. Mexico has emerged as a leader in international trade while promoting regional trade and integration, gaining access to GATT in 1986 and starting the NAFTA in 1994. While some Mexican consumers accept foreign-made products as good alternatives to locally produced items, other Mexican consumers reject imports based on their negative attitudes toward these goods. The former consumers show preference for foreign-made products and advocate freedom of choice. The latter consumers believe that buying imports hurts Mexican labor and the economy, and it is unpatriotic. However, when they migrate to the U.S., how do these preferences shift? Moreover, are these tendencies passed on to the generations born in the U.S.?

Mexicans have a special term for people who prefer anything foreign over the local equivalent. They are called *Malinchista*. The term originates from “*la Malinche*, or *Malintzin*, or *Malinali*,” a native Nahua woman who conspired with Hernando Cortez in the conquest of the Aztecs in Mexico. As a young woman she was taken from the Gulf of Mexico by the Spanish, and she quickly learned their language and culture, which she then used to help defeat the Aztecs, her tribe’s enemies. She served as Cortez’s translator, advisor, intermediary and mistress, giving birth to his son, Martin. Through today “*La Malinche*” is a Mexican icon that has become a symbol of Mexicans “selling-out.” The word *malinchismo* is used by modern-day Mexicans to refer pejoratively to those countrymen who prefer a different way of life from that of their local culture. Thus, the concept of *Malinchismo* is well established in Mexico as an antonym for ethnocentrism.

Understanding Mexican-American ethnocentric tendencies can be helpful for targeting products at this group of consumers in the U.S. Moreover, it may foreshadow ethnocentric tendencies of other ethnic consumers in the U.S.

## **The Hispanic and Mexican-American Market**

The significance of measuring consumer ethnocentrism of Hispanics lies in the size of the market segment, the growth potential of the segment, and its purchasing power. The U.S. Hispanic population was estimated at 53 million as of July 1, 2012, making this group the nation's largest ethnic or racial minority (*U.S. Census Bureau, 2013*) in the country. Hispanics constitute 17% of the national population.

M-As are the largest segment of the U.S. Hispanic population accounting for nearly two-thirds (64%) of the U.S. Hispanic population in 2012. There were 33.7 million Hispanics of Mexican origin in the United States in 2012, according to an analysis of Census Bureau data by the Pew Research Center (Gonzalez-Barrera and Lopez, 2013). This estimate includes 11.4 million immigrants born in Mexico and 22.3 million born in the U.S. who self-identified as Hispanics of Mexican origin. M-As represent 11% of the national population (Gonzalez-Barrera and Lopez, 2013).

The Hispanic population is growing fast, faster than non-Hispanics. In the past decade (2000–2010), Hispanics accounted for more than half (56%) of the nation's population growth (Passel *et al.*, 2011). The Hispanic population grew by 2.2%, or 1.1 million persons, in 2012 alone. The U.S. Hispanic population is projected to reach 128.8 million persons by 2060 (*U.S. Census Bureau, 2013*). In 2060, it will represent one-in-three persons in the U.S., up from one-in-six in 2013. By comparison, the non-Hispanic population is expected to peak by 2024 and decrease henceforth (*U.S. Census, 2013*).

The size of the Mexican-origin population in the U.S. has risen dramatically over the last four decades as a result of one of the largest mass migrations in modern history. In 1970, fewer than one million Mexican immigrants lived in the U.S. By 2000, that number had grown to 9.8 million. By 2007, it reached a peak of 12.5 million (Pew Hispanic Center, 2011). Today, 35% of Hispanics of Mexican-origin were born in Mexico. And while the remaining two-thirds (65%) were born in the U.S., half (52%) of them have at least one immigrant parent (Gonzalez-Barrera and Lopez, 2013).

Hispanic aggregate purchasing power is estimated at \$1.2 trillion in 2013 according to the Selig Center for Economic Growth (Humphreys, 2013). The Hispanic consumer market in the U.S. is larger than the entire economies of all but 13 countries in the world (Humphreys, 2013). The purchasing power of this group has grown 20% since 2010, and is forecasted to grow to \$1.5 trillion by 2015 (Humphreys, 2012) due to population growth and further employment gains. By comparison, African-American consumers have an estimated purchasing power of \$1 trillion, and Asian-Americans have an estimated \$713 billion (Humphreys, 2013). Hispanic consumers' buying power represents 9.7% of U.S. consumers' buying power in 2013, up from 6.8% (\$499 billion) in 2000 (Humphreys, 2013). Mexican Americans have over 60% of the Hispanic purchasing power, or an estimated \$7.2 trillion. Hispanic purchasing power is expected to grow even faster with the potential immigration reform. This reform would allow unauthorized persons to legalize their residence status and employment in the

country. Immigration reform could affect up to 11.1 million unauthorized immigrants (Passel and Cohn, 2011) living in the country, most of whom are of Mexican origin.

## **Consumer Ethnocentrism**

### **The Concept of Consumer Ethnocentrism**

In social psychology, ethnocentrism helps groups secure the survival of their groups and their cultures by supporting in-group attributes, such as seeing one's own group as superior to others and seeing other groups as inferior, while also pursuing in-group interests (economic, social, or political). Ethnocentrism is viewed as a concept applicable to individual and group behavior analysis (Levine and Campbell, 1972). It is a universal concept rooted deeply in intergroup relations (Lewis, 1976). Thus it is a powerful influence over individual and group decisions.

In marketing, Shimp and Sharma (1984, 1987) have adapted the concept of ethnocentrism to consumer behavior and proposed a psychometric construct to measure it called the CETSCALE. Ethnocentrism represents consumer beliefs about the appropriateness and morality of purchasing foreign-made products. Consumer ethnocentrism implies a preference for domestic products, and a prejudice against imports. It also implies a cultural bias against imports and has been termed economic nationalism (Sharma *et al.*, 1995). From a theoretical and practical viewpoint consumer ethnocentrism can help explain several consumer attitudes and behaviors.

Consumer ethnocentrism has been used in marketing to understand the country-of-origin (COO) effect of products. Ethnocentrism effects on COO product perceptions have been shown in several countries around the world, such as Seidenfuss *et al.* (2013) in ASEAN; Sharma (2011) in China and India; Chrysochoidis *et al.* (2007) in Greece; Fakharmanesh and Miyandehi (2013) in Iran; Yoo and Donthu (2005) in Japan; Sharma *et al.* (1995) in Korea; Kaynak and Kara (2002) in Turkey; and Stoltman *et al.* (1991) in the U.S. Ethnocentrism has also been used to predict foreign-product purchase intentions and forecasting imports in studies by Shimp and Sharma (1987) and Herche (1992) in the U.S.; Josiassen *et al.* (2011) in Australia; Wang and Chen (2004) in China; Fakharmanesh and Miyandehi (2013) in Iran; and Witkowski (1998) in Hungary and Mexico.

Moreover, Reardon *et al.* (2005) and Basfirinci (2013) have shown the effect of ethnocentrism on brand and ad attitudes in transitional economies. Supphellen and Gronhaug (2003) demonstrated the moderating effect of ethnocentrism on brand personalities in Russia. Kaynak and Kara (1998) and Seidenfuss *et al.* (2013) used consumer ethnocentrism to identify distinct market segments in Azerbaijan and ASEAN, respectively. Spillan *et al.* (2011) showed the relationship between ethnocentrism and consumer lifestyles in Latin America. Moreover, Klein and Ettenson (1999) have shown the relationships

between consumer animosity (a nation-specific construct) and consumer ethnocentrism (a construct related to a foreign product or service).

Consumer ethnocentrism is moderated by other variables. Sharma *et al.* (1995) identified demographic variables that moderate consumer ethnocentrism, such as age, gender, education, and income. Demographic variable correlations to consumer ethnocentrism have also been found by Josiassen *et al.* (2010) in Australia, Strehlau *et al.* (2012) in Brazil, Hsu and Han-Peng (2008) in China, Bailey and Gutierrez de Pineres (1997) in Mexico, and Klein and Ettenson (1999) in the U.S. Moreover, Shankarmahesh (2006) has reviewed ethnocentrism's antecedents, which are classified as demographic, socio-psychological, political, and economic. Demographic descriptors can be used for segmentation analysis and to identify target market opportunities related to consumer ethnocentrism.

From a practical point of view, understanding ethnocentrism can be used to develop product positioning strategies in foreign markets, identify barriers to successful foreign marketing campaigns, and to develop appropriate promotion, distribution, retail location, and pricing strategies for imported products (Netemeyer *et al.*, 1991; Stoltman *et al.*, 1991).

With the size and growth opportunity of Hispanic consumers, bilingual packages could become more common and necessary in the U.S. However, Gopinath and Glassman (2007) found that ethnocentrism and prejudice have a negative effect on evaluations of products with bilingual (English and Spanish) packages over English-only packages among the general population.

Moreover, understanding consumer ethnocentrism can help international trade and integration policy-makers gain insights regarding consumer biases against foreign goods (Sharma *et al.*, 1995). Understanding ethnocentric tendencies can also aid in the development of "buy domestic" (e.g., made-in-the-USA or "*Hecho en Mexico*") promotional campaigns (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). In conclusion, from several micro and macro marketing perspectives, understanding consumer ethnocentric tendencies is beneficial.

### **Consumer Ethnocentrism and *Malinchismo* among Mexican-Americans**

To the highly ethnocentric consumer, buying foreign goods may be an economic and moral issue. They may prefer domestic-made products and put aside foreign-made ones, regardless of price, quality, or other intrinsic product characteristics. Product evaluations by ethnocentric consumers tend to overestimate domestic products and underestimate foreign products because of their stance on ethnocentrism. Buying domestic products is viewed as morally good, necessary, socially legitimate, and patriotic. These attitudes stem from a love and concern for their country and the fear of losing control over one's economic interests, or those of countrymen, as a consequence of buying imports.

Conversely, in Mexico the highly *Malinchista* consumer is attracted to foreign goods because they are foreign-made (Bailey and Gutierrez de Pineres, 1997). *Malinchistas* equate foreign-made products with positive attributes such as good,

good quality, and reliable. Furthermore, *Malinchistas* prefer foreign-made products because they are different, unique and set them apart from their local counterparts, regardless of the negative social effects of imports on the local community. In general, foreign goods are better than domestic ones to the *Malinchista* consumer.

After Mexico entered GATT in 1986, some Mexican industries (*i. e.*, toy, textile, candy and shoe) struggled due to the influx of imported goods. Moreover, Mexican manufacturers feared NAFTA would have the same effect after 1994. Consequently, *Malinchismo* became such a major concern that the Mexican government initiated in the late 1980s a “Made in-*chismo*” campaign to encourage local consumers to buy locally-made products over foreign-made products. (“Made in-*chismo*” is a catchy play on words on *Malinchismo* for the Mexican market.) Advertisements appeared in every local magazine and on television asking local consumers to compare quality, price and service before buying foreign products over local equivalents. Moreover, one television advertisement warned consumers that not all imported products are high-quality and some will disappoint you. In the 1990s, the logo “*Cuidado con el made in... chismo*” (“Beware of the made-in *chismo*”) was used to warn local consumers against purchases of foreign goods (Ruiz-Ocampo, 1999). Moreover, the Mexican government promotes today a “*Hecho en Mexico*” (Made in Mexico) logo for producers to promote their locally-made goods, subject to government authorization. (*CNN Expansión*, 2009).

Two studies have studied consumer ethnocentric tendencies of Mexicans in Mexico (Witkowski, 1998; Bailey and Gutierrez de Pineres, 1997). Witkowski (1998) found Mexicans scoring high on the CETSCALE; and also found ethnocentrism related to age, education, and foreign languages spoken. This study was based on a convenience sample of 200 respondents in Mexico City and Tijuana. However, Bailey and Gutierrez de Pineres (1997) found upscale Mexican consumers preferring foreign products. Ethnocentric preferences were mediated by age, education, and household size. This study used a sample of 400 household decision-makers (mostly female head of household) from upper and middle socio-economic status in three cities (Mexico City, Guadalajara, and Monterrey).

Zolfagharian and Sun (2010) explored ethnocentrism and COO effects among bicultural Mexican-American and monocultural consumers of either American or Mexican ethnic-origin. This study used student samples from a large university located in a U.S.-Mexico border city. They found bicultural Mexican-American consumers were less ethnocentric and less susceptible to the COO effect than either monocultural group. The bicultural consumers had higher product evaluations and purchase intent toward American brands than either monocultural group. Bicultural consumers also had higher product evaluations and purchase intent toward Mexican brands than American monocultural consumers. Thus, bicultural Mexican American consumers appear to be more open to products from both countries. Both monocultural groups were more ethnocentric and generally prefer domestic brands over foreign brands. Moreover, they found no significant difference in ethnocentrism between bicultural consumers who were cultural integrators or alternators, as two approaches to

acculturation. Bicultural integrators alternate cultural identities and switch back-and-forth between them, adjusting their social interactions to the specific cultural environments. On the other hand, bicultural integrators combine their cultural identities and embrace cultural differences in social settings (LaFromboise *et al.*, 1993).

In a related study among Australian immigrants, Poon *et al.* (2010) found consumer ethnocentrism negatively related to attitudes toward foreign products among three groups, Asian-born, Western-born and native Australians. Asian-born migrants in Australia had the lowest ethnocentrism of the three groups due to greater cultural dissimilarities between Asian-born migrants and the other two groups.

### **The CETSCALE**

Shimp and Sharma (1987) proposed the CETSCALE construct to measure consumer ethnocentrism. The construct is designed to measure consumers' ethnocentric tendencies (i.e., a disposition to act in a consistent fashion) related to purchasing foreign-made versus domestic-made goods. The original scale was designed with U.S. subjects and is considered one-dimensional.

The development of the original CETSCALE followed stringent and extensive assessments of the reliability and validity of the construct (Bearden *et al.*, 1993), as well as many validation studies with multiple country samples. Internal consistency estimates, using Cronbach's coefficient alpha, are generally around 0.90 in most other studies cited previously. For example, Netemeyer *et al.* (1991) report 0.91 to 0.96 alpha coefficient with student samples in Germany, France and Japan; Sharma *et al.* (1995) report 0.91 alpha coefficients with Korean consumers and students; Witkowsky (1999) reports 0.92 and 0.90 alpha coefficients with convenience samples in Hungary and Mexico, respectively; and Pereira *et al.* (2002), report alpha coefficients of 0.92 in India, 0.89 in Taiwan and 0.88 in China.

The CETSCALE has been replicated and validated through numerous studies using samples from cultures around the world (Luthy, 2007). It has tested well in developed economies, such as Canada (Kucukemiroglu *et al.*, 2005), Germany (Evanschitzky *et al.*, 2008), Japan (Yoo and Donthu, 2005), Spain (Luque-Martínez *et al.*, 2000), Russia (Good and Huddleston, 1995; Supphellen and Gronhaug, 2003, Klein *et al.*, 2006), and Turkey (Kaynak and Kara, 2002), among others. It has also been tested in developing economies, such as ASEAN (Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia, Seidenfuss *et al.*, 2013), Brazil (Strehlau *et al.*, 2012), China (Pereira *et al.*, 2002; Wang and Chen, 2004; Klein *et al.*, 2006; Hsu and Han-Peng, 2008; Sharma, 2011; Bi *et al.*, 2012), India (Bawa, 2004; Pereira *et al.*, 2002), Iran (Nadimi *et al.*, 2012; Fakhmanesh and Miyandehi, 2013; Sepehr and Kaffashpoor, 2012), Taiwan (Pereira *et al.*, 2002), South Africa, Mozambique, and Ghana (Pentz *et al.*, 2013), and Vietnam (Kucukemiroglu *et al.*, 2006), among others.

The original CETSCALE consists of 17 items scored on a Likert scale. However, not all studies have used all 17 items. Klein *et al.* (2006) found a valid and reliable six-item version of the CETSCALE with samples from six countries

(China, Russia, U.S., France, Germany, and Japan). Their reliability coefficients for the six-item scale were above 0.8 for all national samples investigated. Other studies have successfully used shorter scales, such as 7 items in Australia (Poon *et al.*, 2010), Lebanon and Tunisia (Mrad *et al.*, 2011); 10 items in Brazil (Strehlau 2012), India (Bawa, 2004), Iran (Sepehr and Kaffashpoor, 2012) and Mexico (Bailey and Gutierrez de Pineres (1997). The main arguments for a shorter scale are parsimony with respondent's time, and avoiding repetition and potential confusion with similar questions in the scale.

In sum, there is strong support for the ethnocentrism construct and its measurement via the CETSCALE for our application in this research with Mexican-American consumers. Now we will discuss the research questions for this study.

### **Research Questions**

While there are many studies about consumer ethnocentrism, there is little guidance for predicting consumer ethnocentrism among bicultural ethnic consumers, such as M-As. Most studies about consumer ethnocentrism are based on a single country of reference (*i.e.*, the home country). Because M-As live in two “worlds,” the one of their birth or ethnic origin (Mexico) and the one they live in (USA), a key research question is towards which country are they are ethnocentric, if either one or both countries are favored.

Are ethnocentric preferences for either country related to country of birth? Would Mexican-born M-As have more ethnocentric tendencies towards Mexico, while U.S.-born M-As have more ethnocentric tendencies towards the U.S., due to their nationality and acculturation evolution.

Moreover, are ethnocentric tendencies associated with demographic variables found in other studies, such as age (older persons tend to be more ethnocentric), gender (females tend to be more ethnocentric than males), or education (more educated persons tend to be more ethnocentric). Do these tendencies apply for both countries?

Hispanics in the U.S. have different degrees of ethnic affiliation and ethnic identity, as well as language ability and use of Spanish and English. Are these variables related to consumer ethnocentrism? Are Spanish-dominant M-As more likely to be ethnocentric towards products made in Mexico? Conversely, are English-dominant M-As more likely to be ethnocentric towards products made in the U.S.?

Does Spanish and English media use affect ethnocentric tendencies? This is predicated on Spanish-language media portraying M-A's ethnic background and lifestyle and reinforcing it, while English-language media does the same for the U.S.

In practical terms, do M-As prefer Mexican goods or American goods when both are available? Are they more open to products from both countries? Understanding M-As' ethnocentric tendencies can be helpful in targeting products at this group of ethnic consumers in the U.S.

## Research Methodology

### Mexican-American Sample

A stratified random sample of consumers was used to measure consumer ethnocentric tendencies in a major southwestern city in the U.S. with a large M-A population. Based on U.S. Census tract information, sampling target tracts were selected at random among census tracts with 20% or more Hispanic persons living in the area. Conducting interviews in areas with lower density (less than 20%) of Hispanic households is challenging, impractical and expensive due to the low number of qualifying households. Starting sampling points within the census tract were also identified at random, with a predetermined interviewing route pattern until a quota of 8-12 interviews per census tract was achieved.

All respondents in the sample self-identified as being Mexican, Mexican American, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Central American, Hispanic, or Spanish. The vast majority of respondents were of Mexican ethnicity, as is true in the general population in this location. All respondents were heads of household, either male or female. Consequently, we feel this research is representative of this ethnic group.

The final sample consisted of 311 interviews. Sample characteristics are provided in Table 1. We believe these characteristics provide additional context for interpreting this research and they tend to support general observations about the location.

**Table 1**

**Mexican-American Sample Characteristics**

Sample Characteristic	Measurement	M-A Sample
Born in country:	Mexico	60%
	USA	38%
	Other	2%
Gender	% Female	53%
Marital status	Married %	65%
Level of education	Average # of years	9
Age	Years old	56
Household members	Average # persons	4.4
Household members <18	Percent's of None, 1-	21%, 59%,
Living in house dwelling	% living in house	78%
Language speaking ability:	Spanish better	46%
	English better	21%
	Both equally	33%
First language spoken:	Spanish	82%

	English	15%
	Both	3%
Strength of ethnic affiliation	1=V St, 2=St,	1.68
Ethnic identity (identify with	Hispanic 1 <sup>st</sup> , Anglo	67%
	Anglo 1 <sup>st</sup> , Hispanic	22%
	Both Hispanic and	11%
Watch Television in Spanish	Avg. # hours per day	2.6
Watch Television in English	Avg. # hours per day	2.3
Listen to Radio in Spanish	Avg. # hours per day	2.6
Listen to Radio in English	Avg. # hours per day	1.3

### Questionnaire Development and Application

An English language questionnaire was developed for a major media client to investigate Hispanic consumer attitudes and usage of selected product categories, such as automotive, air travel, banking, health services, recreation, shopping patterns and media.

The questionnaire was translated into Spanish by three trained bilingual researchers. Although the concept of ethnocentrism can be etic, the CETSCALE is emic (i.e., anchored in a country-of- reference). Thus, we paid special attention to anchoring well the Spanish translation of the CETSCALE in Mexico and the U.S. This material was back-translated (Spanish to English) by two independent bilinguals following the procedures outlined by Brislin (1970). The “back translations” showed face validity in the conceptualization and measurement. Moreover, we applied recommendations for survey research with Hispanic consumers made by Hernandez and Kaufman (1990) for questionnaire design and interviewer training, such as using simplified (shorter) Likert scales, using simple words and local Spanish dialect in questionnaire design, and matching interviewer-respondent backgrounds for better interaction during the interview.

A field pre-test of the questionnaire resulted in minor improvements about question formulation, questionnaire design, interview duration, interviewer training, and fieldwork scheduling. However, a key issue brought up in the pretest was the respondent confusion caused by the repetition of the 17 items in the CETSCALE for each country (U.S. or Mexico). This was compounded by respondent fatigue and additional interviewing time. Consequently, it was decided to shorten the number of items for one of the two national scales tested in the same interview. The researchers selected 4 items from the original longer scale. The four items selected appeared to be most representative and essential items in the original scale. Moreover, we justify the shorter scale based on Boyle’s (1991) statement that Cronbach’s alpha formula favors higher reliability (internal consistency) estimates when there are more items in the scale, while more items may only add redundancy. *A*

*posteriori*, we discovered that 3 of the items selected are also included in the Klein, *et al.* (2006) shortened 6-item scale which was found valid and reliable in six countries, developed and developing.

Moreover, we used a 5-point Likert scale to simplify the response scale, as recommended by Hernandez and Kaufman (1990). Using the 5-point scale yields a scale range between 17 and 85 for the 17-item scale, and a scale range between 4 and 20 for the 4-item scale. Higher scores represent higher ethnocentrism and lower scores represent higher *Malinchismo* (prefer foreign). Further review by the interviewer team verified the improvements. In sum, these procedures yielded an adequate Spanish version equivalent of the original CETSCALE for our study.

To be clear on how the CETSCALE was measured, we used a split sample methodology. On a random basis, interviewers used a 17-item CETSCALE anchored in either country (U.S. or Mexico) plus a short 4-item CETSCALE anchored in the other country (Mexico or U. S.). This approach allowed us to have full measurement with the 17-scale for each of the two countries with approximately half of the sample, plus it allowed us to measure an individual's ethnocentrism toward the other country with the short 4-item scale, while minimizing respondent confusion and fatigue. Moreover, this approach was necessary to measure consumer ethnocentrism for the U.S. and Mexico with the same individual. We did not receive negative feedback from interviewers who executed this approach for measuring ethnocentrism.

Respondents were interviewed face-to-face by trained bilingual interviewers in either English or Spanish, according to the language preference of the respondent that was established at the onset of the interview. About 70% of the interviews were conducted primarily in Spanish and 30% were conducted primarily in English.

Interviews were conducted on weekday evenings and weekends to include working persons in the sample. All interviews were verified by field supervisors in the field. Moreover, after the data collection was complete, 10% of the interviews identified on a random basis were verified via telephone.

## **Findings**

Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the 17-item CETSCALE for either country anchor were very good, above 0.87. As expected, the reliability coefficients for the 17-item scale are comparable to those found in other studies around the world. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the 4-item CETSCALE for either country anchor were in the range above 0.61 and are considered minimally acceptable for exploratory research with the parsimonious scale. Consequently, we will use the 4-item scale results only for comparisons of ethnocentrism for the two anchors by the same persons.

**Table 2**

**CETSCALE Mean's and Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients**

<b>CETSCALE</b>	<b># Items</b>	<b># Cases</b>	<b>Scale Mean</b>	<b>Scale St. Dev.</b>	<b>Items-Mean</b>	<b>Alpha</b>
Mexican Ethnocentric Anchor	17	156	45.99	12.71	2.70	0.87
	4	138	10.95	3.53	2.74	0.61
U.S. Ethnocentric Anchor	17	134	53.15	14.08	3.12	0.89
	4	161	11.06	3.81	2.76	0.71

We analyzed the distribution of the CETSCALE scores and items-mean for the two country anchors of the scale. Because we used a 5-point Likert scale, the scale range is between 17 and 85 for the 17-item scale and between 4 and 20 for the 4-item scale. The average items-means score can conceptually range from 1 to 5 at the extremes. The higher the score in these scales, the more ethnocentric is the tendency. The distribution was uneven and asymmetric, with few responses at the extremes. For example, the items mean scores skewed slightly towards the low end (skewness = .093) for the Mexican anchor and slightly towards the high end for the U.S. anchor (skewness = -.113).

We analyzed sample means for both CETSCALE anchors in multiple comparisons. First, we compared mean CETSCALE scores to the scale median (i.e., 51, 12, or 3). All t-test comparisons to the scale median were statistically significant ( $p < .10$ ), except for the U.S.-17 scale. M-As were found to be overall less ethnocentric (below median) towards Mexico and slightly more ethnocentric (above median) towards the U.S. Moreover, M-As were found to be slightly more ethnocentric towards the U.S. than towards Mexico.

Second, we compared CETSCALE items-mean for the two country anchors (Mexico or U.S.) for the same individuals using the t-test. The U.S.-17 vs. Mex-4 test was significantly different ( $p < 0.00$ ), but the Mex-17 vs. U.S.-4 was not significantly different ( $p < 0.12$ ).

Third, we compared CETSCALE scores anchored in Mexico or the U.S. using the t-test. Split sample comparisons were statistically significant ( $p < 0.00$ ) with Mexican Americans being less ethnocentric towards Mexico than the U.S. Moreover, to utilize the entire database we combined scale measurement (17-item and 4-item) using items-mean for each anchor of the scale. Combined scale comparisons were statistically significant ( $p < 0.00$ ) with Mexican Americans being more ethnocentric towards the U.S. Based on these comparisons we conclude that Mexican-Americans are slightly more ethnocentric towards their host country (U.S.) than towards their country of ethnic origin (Mexico).

Fourth, to investigate the extent of “common” ethnocentrism between the scales we analyzed the correlation between the two scales for the same individual using Pearson correlation coefficients presented in Table 3. All correlation coefficients are statistically significant at the .01 level. These results show that M-As are comparably ethnocentric or *Malinchista* towards both countries, U.S. or Mexico. Next, we will explore antecedent moderator variables for this bias.

**Table 3**  
**CETSCALE Inter-Correlations**

<b>CETSCALE Inter-Correlations</b>	<b>Mexican Americans</b>
Mex-17 and U.S.-4	.520*
U.S.-17 and Mex-4	.578*

\* Significant at <.01 level

To explore the relationship between consumer ethnocentrism for Mexico or for the U.S., we ran correlation analysis with demographic, ethnicity, and media moderator variable sets. The variables utilized are listed in Table 4. In this table we present the correlation coefficient (Pearson, Kendal’s tau or Spearman rho) applicable to the data and a two-tail significance test.

**Table 4**  
**Correlation Coefficients**

<b>CETSCALE Score by Demographic Variables</b>	<b>Correlations</b>	
	<b>U.S.-17</b>	<b>Mex-17</b>
Age (1=<45,2= 46-65, 3=66+)	-.068	-.023
Gender (1= Male, 2=Female)	-.050	.135
Level of education (years of formal education)	-.043	<b>-.236**</b>
Country of birth (1=Mexico, 2= U.S.; 3=Other)	.068	.152
Marital Status (1=Married; 3= Single)	.103	.041
# of Persons living in Household	-.097	.052
# of Persons <18 living in Household (0, 1-3, 4+)	-.127	-.051

<b>CETSCALE Score by Ethnicity Variables</b>	<b>Correlations</b>	
	<b>U.S.-17</b>	<b>Mex-17</b>
Language ability (1=English>Spanish; 3=Spanish>English)	.036	.055
First language spoken (1=English; 2= Both; 3=Spanish)	-.067	-.043
Language of interview (1=English; 2=Spanish)	.000	.030
Strength of ethnic affiliation (1=Very Strong; 5=Very Weak)	.063	<b>-.106*</b>
Ethnic identification (1=Hispanic 1 <sup>st</sup> /Anglo 2 <sup>nd</sup> ; 2=Both Hispanic and Anglo; 3=Anglo 1 <sup>st</sup> /Hispanic 2 <sup>nd</sup> )	.082	<b>-.130*</b>

CETSCALE Score by Media Variables	Correlations	
	U.S.-17	Mex-17
Television preference 1=Spanish only; 2=Both; 3=English only, on 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> choice of television station	<b>.155*</b>	.023
Radio preference 1=Spanish only; 2=Both; 3=English only, on 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> choice of radio station	.048	-.034
Read English language Local Newspaper	<b>.265**</b>	.010
Read Spanish language Local Newspaper	.174	-.059
Hours watching Spanish television per day	<b>-.244*</b>	<b>.269*</b>
Hours watching English television per day	.196	-.135
Hours listening to Spanish radio per day	-.059	<b>.301**</b>
Hours listening to English radio per day	-.156	<b>-.291*</b>

\* Significant at <.05 level

\*\* Significant at <.01 level

We found some significant correlations between the moderator variables and ethnocentrism. For the Mexican-anchor,

- Education is inversely related to consumer ethnocentrism.
  - More educated M-A consumers are more open to non-Mexican, foreign products than less educated consumers.
- Strength of ethnic affiliation is positively related to ethnocentric tendencies towards Mexico.
  - M-As with stronger ethnic affiliation prefer Mexican products.
- Hispanic identification is positively related to ethnocentric tendencies towards Mexico.
  - M-As with higher ethnic identification prefer Mexican products.
- Spanish-language television watching is positively related to ethnocentrism towards Mexico.
  - The more Spanish-language television M-As watch, the more Mexico ethnocentric they feel.
- Spanish-language radio listening to is positively related to ethnocentrism towards Mexico.
  - The more Spanish radio M-As listen to, the more Mexico ethnocentric they feel;
- English-language radio listening to is negatively related to ethnocentrism towards Mexico.
  - The more English radio M-As listen to, the less Mexico ethnocentric they feel.

For the U.S. anchor:

- English-language radio preference is positively related to ethnocentrism towards the U.S.
  - M-As who prefer English-language over Spanish-language radio stations have greater U.S. ethnocentric tendencies.
- Readership of English-language newspapers is positively related to ethnocentrism towards the U.S.
  - M-As who regularly read English-language newspapers are more U.S. ethnocentric;
- Spanish-language television watching is negatively related to ethnocentrism towards the U.S.
  - The more Spanish-language television M-As watch, the less U.S. ethnocentric they feel.

## Discussion

### Study Implications for Marketing Theory and Practice

It appears that M-As have developed cultural allegiances to both countries over time for the immigrants, and from birth for the natives. M-As showed near average ethnocentric tendencies in general, towards either country. Prior research by Zolfagharian and Sun (2010) had shown M-As as less ethnocentric (prefer foreign goods) in an experiment with an M-A student sample.

Although the correlations found between consumer ethnocentrism and the demographic, ethnic and media variables were in the expected direction, we expected to find more moderators of consumer ethnocentrism for both countries. Most surprising was that country of birth did not affect ethnocentric perceptions towards either country. For example, we would have predicted that Mexican-born persons would be more ethnocentric towards Mexico because of their cultural upbringing. However, it is possible that many of the Mexican-born migrants are *Malinchistas*, and migrated to the U.S. because they prefer foreign living experiences.

The 17-item CETSCALE applied to M-As was found to be reliable and useful for measuring ethnocentrism for either country anchor. Our short, 4-item CETSCALE fell short of expectations. We believe the number of items was too few to measure the extent of the ethnocentric construct. Future studies with M-As or other ethnic groups should consider the Klein *et al.* (2006) shortened 6-item scale that was found reliable and valid in six countries, developed and developing. We tested this option on our existing data using a 6-item subset. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for the US-6 scale was .767, and .727 for the Mex-6 scale. The improvement in the reliability coefficient is positive and could be considered as satisfactory internal consistency for the shorter scale. Correlation coefficients were highly (0.931 and 0.937,  $p < .001$ ) between the 17-item and 6-item subset for the same anchor country. We also compared the item-means between the 17-item and 6-item subset for each anchor. We found no statistically significant difference between the item-means for the U.S.-anchored scale (3.126 vs. 3.087), but we found a statistically significant difference ( $p < .005$ ) between the item-means for the Mexican-anchored scale (2.633 vs. 2.705). In practical terms, we do not find substantive the difference cited for the Mex-6 scale, and it is a small trade-off for parsimony that avoids respondent confusion and fatigue in a study like this.

Future research should study consumer ethnocentric tendencies of other Hispanic subgroups, such as Puerto Ricans, and other Central and South American ethnic groups. This research offers limited insights about these subgroups. Their ethnocentric tendencies are likely to differ from M-As because of differences in their migration experience. For example,

many Salvadorians and Nicaraguans came (escaped) to the U.S. to avoid political conflicts in their countries, while many Colombians and Peruvians came to the U.S. attracted by work opportunities, like many Mexicans.

The most significant managerial impact of our findings is that marketing managers can better understand Mexican-American consumer characteristics of those inclined to buy imported and/or domestic products. Both importers and domestic manufacturers can now better target *Malinchista* and ethnocentric consumers using the associated characteristics presented.

### **Study Limitations**

This study acknowledges three limitations. First, ethnocentrism is a dynamic and complex trait, not static over time. It can change with environmental and situational factors. For example, Mexican-American attitudes toward products made in the USA or Mexico may change due to economic conditions and product availability. Over the last 10 years, the devaluation and revaluation and of the Mexican peso relative to the U.S. dollar makes Mexican good prices fluctuate making them more or less affordable than foreign goods. Moreover, the increased availability of Mexican products as a consequence of NAFTA has favored the *Malinchista* preferences. Second, our study analyzed consumer ethnocentrism as a global construct applicable to all products and all countries. Ethnocentrism may well encompass all foreign products to some extent, but its effects are likely to be product specific, even when products are directly comparable. Third, Mexican-American consumers could be *malinchista* toward goods from developed nations, but not towards goods from developing nations. As Klein and Ettenson (1999) have argued, consumer ethnocentrism (a construct related to foreign goods generally) is conceptually distinct from consumer animosity (a nation-specific construct).

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## **Appendix**

### **4-Item CETSCALE in English and Spanish**

1. Only those products that are unavailable in the U.S./Mexico should be imported from other countries.
  2. A real Mexican-American should always buy American/Mexican products.
  3. It may cost me in the long run, but I prefer to support American/Mexican products.
  4. Curbs should be put on all non-U.S./non-Mexico imports.
- 
1. *Solamente aquellos productos que no se producen en Estados Unidos/México deberían importarse.*
  2. *El verdadero Mexicano-Americano debe comprar siempre productos hechos en México.*
  3. *Aunque me cueste en el largo plazo, yo prefiero apoyar a los productos Americanos/Mexicanos.*
  4. *Debe ponerse freno a todas las importaciones que no son de Estados Unidos/México.*