

# Exploring Ethnocentric Consumer Behavior in Children and Latino-Americans

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## ABSTRACT

Globalization is a force that is causing our world to be both more unified and fragmented simultaneously. The blending of cultures and products from around the globe can often lead individuals in search for a point of orientation, a sense of control, and a sense of identity. The purpose of this research is to explore the largest minority group in the United States, the Latino group, and to address where their consumer preferences lie within the United States ever globalizing market. It also will address generational differences in both the Latino and Caucasian groups and causes for these differences. It will conclude with the development of recommendations of how this research can be applied to better match the Latino consumer preferences.

## INTRODUCTION

Globalization is a force that is causing our world to be both more unified and fragmented simultaneously. The blending of cultures and products from around the globe can often lead individuals in search for a point of orientation, a sense of control, and a sense of identity. Immigrants and minority groups in the United States often do not know in which country to give their loyalty and patriotism, that of their heritage or the one in which they live (Cornwell and Drennan, 2004). Conversely, Americans do not know whether they should only buy American made products in order to protect their nations' economy and workers, or to accept foreign-made goods in order to better their quality of life. Herein lies a social problem; an extreme loyalty to one's country's products can further lead to ethnocentrism, "the proclivity for people to view their own group as the center of the universe, to interpret other social units from the perspective of their own group, and to reject persons who are culturally dissimilar while blindly accepting those who are culturally like themselves" (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). Ethnocentrism may take many forms including discrimination and animosity towards a different ethnic group. Additionally, it affects buying and purchase behaviors as one ethnic group may or may not buy products from a different ethnic group. This study will specifically identify consumer ethnocentric behaviors within the Latino and Caucasian demographics in the Milwaukee, Wisconsin area. There have been many studies that have proven ethnocentric behavior against the products or services of a minority group within their country. However, this study will uniquely provide Latino ethnocentric behaviors and consumer preferences of American and Latino goods. Furthermore, this study will measure how the Latino preferences differ from Caucasian preferences and differences between the preferences of children within these two demographics. It is hypothesized that the Latino responses will be less ethnocentric than the Caucasian group in all demographics, and that children will be less ethnocentric than the adult group.

## BACKGROUND

### *Terminology*

In order to fully understand the subject matter of this study, a few terms must be defined. Firstly, when discussing ethnocentrism, the term animosity also arises. Once a military term used to describe feelings for the enemy, the word animosity has now transferred its meaning to consumers and is described as negative feelings for a specific country resulting in the dislike of brands or products associated with that country. Rice and Wongtada (2007) examine the four different types of animosity listed below which affect consumer behavior. Policy animosity is a negative feeling or aggression expressed towards another country based on their governmental and war policies. Ecological animosity occurs when consumers choose not to buy a nation's products based on their environmental practices or maltreatment of animals. Social-cultural animosity occurs when one culture feels threatened by the products or brands associated with another culture. And lastly, economic animosity occurs when one culture feels

that they are suffering from economic superiority or hostility. All of these types of animosity may occur within a culture or demographic group causing an increase in ethnocentric behavior towards their country.

Secondly, the researcher will use the term Country-of-origin (COO) that can be described as “the total of all descriptive, inferential, and informational beliefs a person has about a particular country” (Rice and Wongtada, 2007). Although the outsiders image of the country and its products and brands may change over time, the COO is often used as a general guideline as to how their culture and products are perceived. For example, if a country produces high quality brands, a halo effect could take place and give the perception that all future products from that country will be of high quality as well.

Thirdly, altruism, in the sense of this study, can be defined as a mind set in which purchasing products that are manufactured in one’s country will help others in one’s country, whether it be by protecting jobs or stimulating the economy (Hopkins and Powers, 2007). “It has been reported that people are more likely to help members of their own race or country than they are to help members of other races or foreigners” (Hopkins and Powers, 2007). When this is applied to a COO, domestic products tend to have provided a standard of which foreign products are then evaluated (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). Altruistic behaviors direct ethnocentrism because it allows people to justify ethnocentric consumer behavior. Rather than not buying a foreign made product because of animosity reasons, a consumer can explain their domestic purchase by being a patriotic person who is helping the well being of her fellow countrymen.

Fourthly, the researcher will use the term Latino in this study to represent persons of any Latin American or Hispanic origin. From Habell-Pallán and Romero’s (2002) discussions on the term’s usefulness and dangers, the term Latino recognizes the fluidity of race and ethnic identification and yet encompasses the manner in which popular culture thinks of Latinidad and Hispanization.

Lastly, in this study children refers to people of 17 years of age or younger. The rest of the population will be called either adults or parents, these terms will be used interchangeably.

#### *The Increase of World Trade*

World trade has dramatically increased in the last century, particularly for the United States, which continues to show an average annual growth in trade of 8% (<http://stat.wto.org>). The United States are exchanging and importing agricultural, fuel, mining, and manufactured goods from numerous other countries around the globe. According to the World Trade Organization’s website, in 2007 the United States exported over \$1.16 trillion of goods but imported over \$2.01 trillion. This trade deficit makes the United States heavily reliant on goods and services provided from other nations including Latino countries within South and Central America. In fact, in 2007 over \$261 billion of goods were imported into the United States from South and Central America alone (<http://stat.wto.org>). These numbers prove that the United States economy could severely suffer if there are high levels of ethnocentrism towards United States products because United States citizens already rely on such a large amount of imports.

An increase in trade among countries can increase the quality and variety of goods, as well as decrease cost. However, there are many reasons why people choose to not buy foreign goods. As described by Hopkins and Powers (2007) some people make choices based on animosity towards other countries, while others make choices based on altruistic behaviors such as the belief that it will hurt the economy, may put domestic workers out of work, or is unpatriotic. Whichever the reason, many consumers who make these choices produce ethnocentric behaviors towards the products of the United States.

#### *Latino Populations and Culture in the United States*

The Latino population is the largest minority group within the United States today representing 14.8% of the total United States population in 2006 (based off of 2007 numbers from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). In Wisconsin, where the research was conducted, there is a population of 258,696 Latinos, roughly 21.5% of the state’s total Population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). Not only is the Latino population the largest minority group in the United States, it is increasing at a very rapid rate. For example, “one out of six new workers in the United States is Latino” (Páez and Suárez-Orosco, 2002). Passel and Cohn (2008), researchers from the Pew Research Center, estimate that by the year 2050 Latinos will make up over 29% of the United States population due to increased immigration and citizenship rates. Based off of these large growth estimates, this study intends to address the cultural and consumption patterns of the Latino demographic, as they will affect a large percentage of buyer behavior within the United States today and in the future.

The Latino demographic in the United States is very diverse as it is made up of many different cultures and country origins. The two largest countries of origin are Mexico, 64.1% of the Latino population, and Puerto Rico, 9% of the Latino population (<http://pewhispanic.org>). Because there are such large populations of Latinos in the

United States from Mexico and Puerto Rico, products from these countries have strong perceptions based on their COO. Additionally, more of their culture is incorporated throughout the nation that creates both opportunity and obstacles.

There are three main themes that emerge when analyzing the obstacles that face the Latino demographic: discrimination, various poverty factors, and cultural differences that lead to both animosity and ambiguous loss. Many people of Latino descent are discriminated against because of animosity towards a different culture and language and because of misconceptions related to the poverty in Mexico, Central America, and South America. Latinos have been leaving their countries that are “rich in culture, natural resources, and beauty but poor in terms of economic and social development” (Páez and Suárez-Orozco, 2002). Many Latino countries are poverty-stricken and cannot adequately pay for infrastructure or schooling resulting in poorly educated and little skilled workers (Páez and Suárez-Orozco, 2002). These themes have unfortunately become a stereotype and have been applied to many Latinos in the United States. Subjects such as “border crossings...critiques of transnational labor exploitation, and struggles for social justice” (Habell-Pallán and Romero, 2002) all reinforce the significance of nation and citizenship.

Poverty within the Latino demographic in the United States is also quite high, over 21%, and on average Latinos in the United States have a substantially lower median household income, \$38,235 compared to that of Caucasian Americans, \$51,920. However, the majority of the United States’ Latino population, 83.4%, is employed (<http://pewhispanic.org>). This high employment rate leads to animosity because of the belief that Latinos are taking jobs away from Americans. This is not the case because many “U.S. employers have learned to use low-skilled Latino immigrant labor more extensively and productively to fill the kinds of jobs that are shunned by most native-born workers” (Páez and Suárez-Orozco, 2002). In fact, the demand of Latino work has become structural in nature to the United States’ economy meaning that the labor source does not fluctuate during recessions or economic contractions. New trends are showing a great deal of Latino-Immigrant owned businesses as many immigrants prefer to hire and buy from within their own ethnic group or social network (Páez and Suárez-Orozco, 2002). Additionally, the industries that hire Latino immigrant labor have become more diverse to include service and high-tech manufacturing. Overall, there has been a significant drop in anti-immigrant sentiment since 1995 and many people today feel that “immigrants today are a benefit...because of their hard work and job skills” (Páez and Suárez-Orozco, 2002).

Lastly, there are many cultural changes that come into play when examining the obstacles that face the Latino demographic in the United States today. The two critical components that trigger animosity in Caucasian groups are family structure and language. An inclusive and interdependent family structure is very important to many Latino cultures. Often times, many generations live in the same household or in very close proximity with each other. This makes many Caucasians very uncomfortable because it clashes with their typical family norms of non-interdependent extended families. Secondly, language is a huge source of discontent because the majority of Caucasians does not speak Spanish and do not have any intention to learn. Social-cultural animosity grows as more Caucasians become uncertain about the growth of the Spanish language and being inundated in an unknown language. Interestingly, the Spanish language is a culmination of many dialects, intonations, and varieties that shape social constructions and communities within the majority of the United States’ Latino demographic. Because the demographic is so large with heritages from a vast variety of different countries, there are thousands of differences in words, sayings and accents that are present within the language itself. Therefore, language can enforce character in the Latino demographic which assists a form of cultural identity within the minority group.

Not only do these social differences create difficulties with the Caucasian groups, they also indirectly cause problems for the Latino groups themselves. These cultural differences both trigger and remedy ambiguous loss, or “grief and mourning occasioned by physical, cultural, and social separation” (Páez and Suárez-Orozco, 2002), more commonly known as homesickness. Often times, first generation immigrants can experience ambiguous loss because they are leaving family members behind and have to reconstruct a bicultural identity. There are often many mixed emotions, such as both sadness and elation, when beginning a new life in a new country, which causes grief to be incomplete and ambiguous. This loss encourages closer bonds with others that have similar heritages and languages, reinforcing the need for inter-dependent families and the use of their native language.

### *Latino Youth in the United States*

This study is unique in that it examines the differences in ethnocentrism of a minority group and within generational differences in that population. Youth are very important to the Latino culture and they are beginning to show signs of generational differences within levels of transnationalism, language, and education rates.

Transnationalism is “an analytic concept that is often used to refer to economic, political, and cultural strategies articulated by diasporic peoples across national spaces” (Páez and Suárez-Orozco, 2002). This signifies that there

are a great majority of Latinos who feel like they are living double lives with dual identities between their native country and the United States. However, there are variations in degree of transnationalism in Latino youth depending on the host country. For example, many Mexican citizens are quickly moving away from transnational strategies as there is a rapid Mexican growth. Many Latinos with a Mexican heritage tend to send less money back to Mexico, become less involved in Mexican politics, and tend to find a permanent settlement in the United States. Puerto Ricans, conversely, show increasing trends of towards transnationalism, they send large sums of money back to their home in Puerto Rico, and remain culturally, socially, and politically tied to their home country. Because transnationalism is a complex set of social adaptations, it is extremely important to examine why various levels of transnationalism occurs between the generations. It is believed to be less complex with each new generation, however Latino children who are born in the United States also suffer from transnational identities. This study looks on whether these transnational beliefs will impact consumer behavior towards American products, specifically if there are differences between the Latino youth and adults.

As mentioned previously, language is also a very important aspect to the Latino culture. However, studies prove that Latinos born in the United States are speaking more English in the home and are passing on their native tongue to their children less. According to 2006 data from the Pew Hispanic Center, an average of 18.3% of Latino adults only speak English in the home opposed to 31.3% of Latino children who only speak English in the home. These trends outline that the younger generations are not as proficient in Spanish and are instead learning only English. In the foreign-born United States' Latino demographic, only 23.4 % of adults say that they can speak English very well, however 52.4% of foreign-born children say that they can speak English very well. The native-born children and adults had nearly the same rate, about 50%, have well spoken English proficiency. Therefore, the Spanish language is clearly important to the Latino culture, but the younger generations of Latinos in the United States are also bilingual in English and Spanish or they lose the Spanish language all together and chose to only speak English.

Additionally, the younger generations of Latinos in the United States are also more educated than their parents. Common trends show that foreign-born Latinos are less likely to have educational attainment than native-born Latinos, however the rates for both groups are increasing at a rapid rate. For example, from the Pew Hispanic Center's 2006 data, on average 60.4% of Latinos in the United States have at least a high school diploma. 49.3% of foreign-born Latinos have at least a high school degree and over 75.6% of native-born Latinos in the United States hold at least a high school degree. Although the Latino group is the minority group with the least amount of college graduates, their enrollment and graduation rates are also increasing. In fact, 15.3% of native-born Latinos hold a college degree, and 10.1% of foreign-born Latinos have one compared to only 8% in year 2000. This increase in education is beneficial for the Latino demographic as a whole but also allows increased diversity in the classroom. When there is increased diversity in classrooms, children from all backgrounds can learn from each other and become more accepting of cultural differences. This is one reason why it is believed that children from both the Latino and Caucasian demographics may be more open to international trade than their parents. These differences are crucial to this study because they reflect how future products and services should be marketed to this ever changing demographic.

#### *Justification for Study*

It is apparent that the Latino demographic in the United States will continue to grow and that their preferences in consumer behavior will have a large effect on the present and future United States' economy. Although there has been research on ethnocentric behaviors of Caucasian Americans, there has been very little research about levels of ethnocentric behavior within an ethnic group. The impetus for this study is to find if the Latino demographic is more or less ethnocentric than the Caucasian demographic. Additionally, this research also will study differences, if any, among the future buyers in the United States, the Latino and Caucasian youth, and examine variations with the adult groups.

## **METHOD**

A survey was used to assess the value of ethnocentric behavior among Latino and Caucasian parents and children. The survey was a series of two ethnocentrism scales and a few demographical questions (please refer to Appendix A). Both of these scales and collection methods will be discussed individually.

The first scale was adapted from Ettenson, Klien, and Krishnan's (2006) 6-item variation of Shimp and Sharma's (1987) CETSCALE. The CETSCALE is a scale that was developed to measure consumer ethnocentrism and has been its principle scale of measurement since its development. It asks participants to answer how strongly they agree or disagree to 17 questions through a 7-point Likert style scale. The more strongly respondents agree

with the statements, the more ethnocentric their behavior towards goods of their country. In 2006, a 6-item version of this scale was tested and proven just as effective (Ettenson, Klien, and Krishnan, 2006). This scale used questions that were identical to the CETSCALE and used the same 7-point Likert scale, however it eliminated some redundancy and confusing questions from the original CETSCALE. Therefore, this scale was used because it was less complicated which was ideal as many respondents were children or spoke English as a second language. The researcher only slightly modified these questions in order for the children to fully understand some of the terminology.

After this first scale, four general information questions were asked. The first being “If you could choose a flag to hang outside of your house, what nation’s flag would it be?” This question is open-ended and was asked in order to identify which country a respondent would outwardly identify with. The next three questions, Gender, Age, and Country of Birth, were simply used for demographic purposes.

Following the demographic questions is the second ethnocentrism scale that was developed by the researcher and faculty sponsor in order to verify consumer preferences. One question is asked, “Circle the item that you would prefer to buy (for you and your household” is added in the adult surveys)” followed by a series of six pairs of colored pictures. Both the parent and children surveys are similar in that they have four pairs of low to medium-involvement purchase products and two pairs of high-involvement purchase products. The first three sets of products are either recognizable brands or products that clearly show the country from which it is made. The last three are nearly identical products with “Made in (country)” written below it. To measure this scale, each product pertaining to the United States that was circled counted as 1. The summation of all products from the United States provided the final scale of ethnocentrism, six demonstrating highly ethnocentric consumer behavior towards the United States. The results to both scales were analyzed using frequency tables, Chi-square tests, and independent samples T-tests. The results from these tests are reported and explored in the Results and Discussion sections of this report.

The surveys were administered in two separate manners. Firstly, a permission slip was sent home to the parents of the Caucasian students one week before the actual study in order to have parental and affirmed consent. The researcher then distributed the surveys to the children in a 6th, 7th, and 8th grade class in Greendale Middle School; each class had about 30 students. The Greendale School District in general has very low diversity, only 13% of all students are of a minority group, and is addressing those needs to diversify their programs. However, this low rate of minority presence provided a fairly large Caucasian group that was necessary for this study. After the students completed the survey, the researcher gave each student the parent version of the survey to bring home for their guardian to fill out. These surveys were returned within the week and picked up from each teacher.

The surveys that were administered to the Latino group were distributed in a different manner. The Latino Community Center provides programs for both Latino children and adults in the Milwaukee Area. The director was kind enough to hold an open house event in order for the researcher to survey both the parents and children simultaneously. Because many people used English as a second language, the surveys and consent forms were also translated into Spanish for anyone who preferred a Spanish copy (please see Appendix B). The surveys were then distributed to the parents of children in the 6th-8th grade range and students within this age demographic that were present, there are approximately 98 total students enrolled in their programs.

## RESULTS

The survey results were collected, recorded in a spreadsheet, and uploaded to a data editor for analysis. A total of 165 people responded to the survey. Of that total, there were 61 adult respondents and 104 children respondents. Demographically, 104 of the respondents were Caucasian and 61 respondents were Latino. Average ethnocentric scores for various demographics are compared in the following tables.

Parents showed a larger ethnocentrism score in both measures than the children. The parent’s mean for the first measure is 3.6694 compared to the children of 3.3850. For the second measure, which was statistically significant, the parents had an average mean of 4.9808 versus the children’s mean of 4.4375. See table 1.

**Table 1.** Differences in Means between Parents and Children

		Mean	Std. Deviation
Ethnocentrism Score 1	Parent	3.6694	1.4447
	Child	3.3850	1.0169
Ethnocentrism Score 2	Parent	4.9808*	1.4071
	Child	4.4375*	1.3043

\*p<0.05

Caucasian ethnocentrism scores for the first measure (3.4854) were slightly lower than that of the Latino population (3.5029). However, the ethnocentrism scores for the second measure are statistically significant and show that Caucasians have a much higher ethnocentrism score (5.0200) than Latinos (3.8125). See table 2.

**Table 2.** Differences in Means between Caucasians and Latinos

		Mean	Std. Deviation
Ethnocentrism Score 1	Caucasian	3.4854	1.0093
	Latino	3.5029	1.4919
Ethnocentrism Score 2	Caucasian	5.0200*	1.1099
	Latino	3.8125*	1.4826

\*p<0.05

When comparing the children's means, Caucasian children had an average mean of 3.3806 on the first scale, which was slightly lower than the 3.3939 of the Latino Children. For the second scale, there was a statistically significant difference between the Caucasian children, with a mean of 4.7761, and the Latino Children, with a mean of 3.6552. See table 3.

**Table 3.** Differences in Means between Caucasian and Latino Children

		Mean	Std. Deviation
Ethnocentrism Score 1	Caucasian	3.3806	0.8852
	Latino	3.3939	0.2190
Ethnocentrism Score 2	Caucasian	4.7761*	1.1257
	Latino	3.6552*	1.3700

\*p<0.05

The means between the Caucasian parents, 3.6806, and Latino parents, 3.6528, for the first scale was very slight. However, for the second scale the Caucasian parents had an average of 5.5152 opposed to the Latino parents who had a mean of a 4.0526, these results are statistically significant. See table 4.

**Table 4.** Differences in Means between Caucasian and Latino Parents

		Mean	Std. Deviation
Ethnocentrism Score 1	Caucasian	3.6806	1.1961
	Latino	3.6528	1.7822
Ethnocentrism Score 2	Caucasian	5.5152*	0.9056
	Latino	4.0526*	1.6490

\*p<0.05

Specifically looking at the Latino demographic, the parents have a slightly higher mean for both ethnocentrism score 1 (3.6528) and 2 (4.0526) than the children's first score of 3.3939 and second score of 3.6652. See table 5.

**Table 5.** Differences in Means between Latino Parents and Children

		Mean	Std. Deviation
Ethnocentrism Score 1	Parent	3.6528	1.7822
	Child	3.3939	1.2582
Ethnocentrism Score 2	Parent	4.0526	1.6490
	Child	3.6552	1.3700

Among the Caucasian demographic, the parents have a larger average score than the children. The parents mean for the first measure is 3.6806 whereas the children have a mean of 3.3806. The second score's differences are statistically significant, the parents had an average score of 5.5152 and the children have an average of 4.7761. See table 6.

**Table 6.** Differences in Means between Caucasian Parents and Children

		Mean	Std. Deviation
Ethnocentrism Score 1	Parent	3.6806	1.1961
	Child	3.3806	0.8852
Ethnocentrism Score 2	Parent	5.5152*	0.9056
	Child	4.7761*	1.1257

\*p&lt;0.05

Because the majority of the second ethnocentrism scores were statistically significant, the following tables show the differences in frequencies for each product that was in the second ethnocentrism scale.

The Latino group greatly preferred Jarritos brand soft drink (60%) to Crush (40%). Whereas the Caucasian group greatly preferred the Crush brand (85.4%) to the Jarritos brand (14.6%). Interestingly, the Latino children were more likely to buy Crush than their parents, 42.4% compared to 36.4%. However, both Caucasian parents and children greatly preferred the American brand Crush, 91.4% and 82.4% respectively. See table 7.

**Table 7.** Comparison of Soda Preferences

Ethnicity	Parent/Child	Crush		Jarritos	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Caucasian	Parent	32	91.4%	3	8.6%
	Child	56	82.4%	12	17.6%
	Total	88	85.4%	15	14.6%
Latino	Parent	8	36.4%	14	63.6%
	Child	14	42.4%	19	57.6%
	Total	22	40.0%	33	60.0%

In general, the Caucasian group significantly preferred the U.S. sweatshirts (89.3%) opposed to the Mexican sweatshirts (10.7%). However the Latino group liked the American sweatshirts (53.8%) only slightly more than the Mexican sweatshirts (46.2%). Both the American parents and children, 94.4% and 86.6% respectively, liked the American sweatshirts better. And both of the Latino parents and children liked the two almost equally, 55.0% of parents liked the American sweatshirts compared to the 53.8% of children respondents. See table 8.

**Table 8.** Comparison of Sweatshirt Preferences

Ethnicity	Parent/Child	U.S.		Mexico	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Caucasian	Parent	32	94.4%	2	5.6%
	Child	58	86.6%	9	13.4%
	Total	92	89.3%	11	10.7%
Latino	Parent	11	55.0%	9	45.0%
	Child	17	53.1%	15	46.9%
	Total	28	53.8%	24	46.2%

Only the adults were asked about which briefcase they would prefer to buy and 100% of the Caucasian respondents chose the American briefcase opposed to only 84.2% of Latino respondents. See table 9.

**Table 9.** Comparison of Briefcase Preferences

Ethnicity	Parent/Child	U.S.		Argentina	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Caucasian	Parent	36	100%	0	0.0%
Latino	Parent	16	84.2%	3	15.8%

Only the children respondents were asked about which backpack they would prefer to own. 65 Caucasian respondents, or 95.6%, preferred the American backpack compared to 28, or 87.5%, of Latino respondents. See table 10.

**Table 10.** Comparison of Backpack Preferences

Ethnicity	Parent/Child	U.S.		Argentina	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Caucasian	Child	65	95.6%	3	4.4%
Latino	Child	28	87.5%	4	12.5%

In general there was not a great difference between overall Caucasian and Latino preferences of shampoo, 77.9% and 71.7% respectively chose the American shampoo. Although, only 69.1% of Caucasian children chose the American shampoo compared to 94% of their parents. Similarly, only 64.5% of Latino children chose American shampoo versus 81.8% of their parents. See table 11.

**Table 11.** Comparison of Shampoo Preferences

Ethnicity	Parent/Child	U.S.		Argentina	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Caucasian	Parent	34	94.4%	2	5.6%
	Child	47	69.1%	21	30.9%
	Total	81	77.9%	23	22.1%
Latino	Parent	18	81.8%	4	18.2%
	Child	20	64.5%	11	35.5%
	Total	38	71.7%	15	28.3%

In total, there are very similar shoe preferences between the Caucasian respondents (71.8% preferred the American shoes) and the Latino Respondents (70.4% preferred the American shoes). Within the Caucasian demographic, 82.9% of adult respondents preferred the American shoes compared to only 66.2% of children respondents. The Latino respondents were very similar, 70.0% of parents and 70.6% of children chose the American shoes. See table 12.

**Table 12.** Comparison of Shoe Preferences

Ethnicity	Parent/Child	U.S.		Honduras	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Caucasian	Parent	29	82.9%	6	17.1%
	Child	45	66.2%	23	33.8%
	Total	74	71.8%	29	28.2%
Latino	Parent	17	70.0%	6	30.0%
	Child	24	70.6%	10	29.4%
	Total	38	70.4%	16	29.6%

Only the adults were asked to respond to which vacuum cleaner they preferred and 91.4% of Caucasians and 70.0% of Latinos preferred the vacuum that was made in the United States. See table 13.

**Table 13.** Comparison of Vacuum Preferences

Ethnicity	Parent/Child	U.S.		Mexico	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Caucasian	Parent	32	91.4%	3	8.6%
Latino	Parent	14	70.0%	6	30.0%

Only the children were asked to respond to which bicycle they would prefer to own and 77.9% of Caucasians and only 54.5% of Latinos responded saying that they would prefer the American made bicycle. See table 14.



**Table 14.** Comparison of Bicycle Preferences

Ethnicity	Parent/Child	U.S.		Mexico	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Caucasian	Child	53	77.9%	15	22.1%
Latino	Child	18	54.5%	15	45.5%

When categorized by birth country, 90.6% of Caucasian respondents who were born in the United States chose an American flag to hang outside of their home. 7.3% of Caucasians responded with another, non-Latino flag, 1.0% answered a Puerto Rican flag, and 1.0% chose a Mexican flag. Of the Latino respondents who were born in the United States, 51.6% wrote that they would hang an American flag, 16.1% chose a Puerto Rican flag, 16.1% chose a Mexican flag, 12.9% wrote that they would hang both an American and Latino flag, and 3.2% answered with two different Latino flags. Of the Latino respondents who were born in the Puerto Rico, 25.0% chose to hang an American flag outside their home, 25.0% chose a Puerto Rican flag, and 50.0% wrote both a Latino and American flag. Of the Latinos who were born in Mexico, only 28.6% said they would hang an American flag, 35.7% said they would hang a Mexican flag, 28.6% responded with both the American and Latino flag, and 7.1% said they would hang two different Latino flags. Lastly, 66.7% of Caucasians who were not born in the United States responded saying that they would hang an American flag outside their home and 33.3% responded with a different, non-Latino flag. See table 15.

**Table 15.** “If you could choose to hang a flag outside of your house, what nation’s flag would it be?”

Birth Country	Ethnicity	Flag of Choice					
		U.S.	Puerto Rico	Mexico	Other/ Non-Latino	Both Latino & U.S.	Two Latino
United States	Caucasian	90.6%	1.0%	1.0%	7.3%	0.0%	0.0%
	Latino	51.6%	16.1%	16.1%	0.0%	12.9%	3.2%
Puerto Rico	Latino	25.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%
Mexico	Latino	28.6%	0.0%	35.7%	0.0%	28.6%	7.1%
Other/ Non-Latin	Caucasian	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%

When comparing the preferences of the two demographics, 89.2% of Caucasians and 40.0% of Latinos answered that they would hang an American Flag outside of their home. Only 1.0% of Caucasian respondents wrote a Puerto Rican or Mexican flag opposed to 12.7% and 21.8% of Latino respondents respectively. 8.8% of Caucasian respondents answered that they would hang a different, non-Latino flag compared to 0% of Latino respondents. 21.8% of Latino respondents wrote both the American and a Latino flag and 3.6% answered two Latino flags compared to 0.0% of Caucasians. Within the Caucasian demographic, 97.2% of the parent respondents responded with an American flag opposed to only 84.4% of children respondents. 2.8% Caucasian parents also answered a different, non-Latino flag compared to 12.1% of Caucasian children. 1.5% of Caucasian children also answered Puerto Rico or Mexico. In the Latino demographic, 40.9% of parents and 39.4% of children answered with an American flag. Only 4.5% of parents compared to 18.2% of Latino children wrote a Puerto Rican flag. Both had similar preferences for the Mexican flag, 22.7% of adults and 21.2% of children. However 31.8% of adults and only 15.2% of children would hang both a Latino and American flag, and 6.1% of children, compared to 0.0% of adults, chose to hang two Latino flags. See table 16.

**Table 16.** “If you could choose to hang a flag outside of your house, what nation’s flag would it be?”

Ethnicity	Parent/Child	Flag of Choice					
		U.S.	Puerto Rico	Mexico	Other/ Non-Latino	Both Latino & U.S.	Two Latino
Caucasian	Parent	97.2%	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%
	Child	84.4%	1.5%	1.5%	12.1%	0.0%	0.0%
	Total	89.2%	1.0%	1.0%	8.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Latino	Parent	40.9%	4.5%	22.7%	0.0%	31.8%	0.0%
	Child	39.4%	18.2%	21.2%	0.0%	15.2%	6.1%
	Total	40.0%	12.7%	21.8%	0.0%	21.8%	3.6%

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

It is important to point out the significance level of the second ethnocentrism scale opposed to the first ethnocentrism scale. Although the first ethnocentric scale is used from the original Ettenson, Klein, and Krishnan's 6-item scale, the results may not have been significant for a number of reasons. Firstly, over 63% of the respondents were children, however the wording in the original instrument was geared towards adult groups only and the children may have had a hard time understanding such complex statements. Secondly, there may have been a bias towards the United States' goods because that was what the respondent thought the researcher would want to hear. The second ethnocentrism scale may have been statistically significant because there was a lack of difficult language and it better reflects consumer-buying behaviors. The difference between these scales suggests that all groups may say one thing about their preferences, however they chose to act on other beliefs.

Overall, the researcher can fail to reject both hypotheses as the research proves that parents, with an average ethnocentrism score of 4.9808, are statistically significantly more ethnocentric than children, who's average ethnocentrism score was 4.4375, and that the Caucasian group's average ethnocentrism score of 5.0200 was statistically significantly higher than the Latino group's average score of 3.8125. It can also be assumed that the Caucasian group closely resembles the national average, the United States' national average in Ettenson, Klein, and Krishnan's original 6-item scale is a 5.06. A few possible explanations for why the parents have higher ethnocentric scores stem from increased cultural diversity in schools and an increase in diversity education among the children. Students are becoming more accepting of different races and cultures because they are more social with other students of many nationalities. It has become a goal of many school districts, including the Greendale School District, to increase diversity of both students and teachers in order to give a greater, well-rounded education and to decrease animosity of other cultures in the process. According to a study done by Pew Research Center in 2007, 19.8% of students in United States public schools are Latino. This contrasts with the animosity that some Caucasian adults have towards the Latino group due to mass-immigration and the belief that they take jobs away from American workers. Additionally, there is an increasing trend of exporting not only manufacturing, but also white-collar jobs, out of the United States, which create a loss of jobs for all United States citizens. This mentality can cause animosity among both demographics towards other countries who are receiving the exported jobs as well as increase the likelihood of buying products only from the United States.

There many possible explanations for why the Latino demographic had a less ethnocentric score than the Caucasian demographic, the main cause being pride in one's culture. The Latino culture is becoming more apparent in the United States as the population grows throughout the country. In general, the Latino demographic is proud of their heritage and continues to pass it on to their children. Additionally, the Latino group also may have recognized various brands that they prefer simply because they remind them of their COO. Lastly, they may have been more open to international trade because they can see direct benefits of international trade within their native countries or the countries of their heritage. Many Latinos, especially the Puerto Ricans, keep close ties with many people from their country of origin (Páez and Suárez-Orosco, 2002). By keeping these close ties, it is easy to see the direct benefits that international trade may have for their country.

The last significant finding in this study was the comparison of flags that respondents chose to hang outside of their home. This question was left open-ended in order to have the respondent give a top-of-mind answer. It was no surprise that 89.2% of the Caucasian group (97.2% of Caucasian adults) answered that they would hang an American flag outside of their home. However, what were surprising were the vast differences in the Latino demographic. Only 40% of Latino respondents chose to wave an American flag outside of their home showing that over 60% wave a flag that represents their Latino heritage. About 34.5% of that 60% chose to hang either a Puerto Rican or Mexican flag. But even more interesting, 31.8% of adults and 15.2% of children chose to hang both a Latin and American flag. This raises the point that transnationalism is strong in the adult demographic and is definitely apparent in the children demographic. In total, 21.8% of respondents said that they would hang both flags outside of their home meaning that they have strong feelings of honor towards both countries and have a sense of commitment to both heritages. Additionally, 6.1% of Latino children respondents answered that they would hang two Latino flags outside of their home. Again, this proves that the Latino heritage from both parents is equally important to them and they feel that they should show pride in those cultures.

Because the largest minority group prefers international trade and American citizens, especially youth, are not greatly opposed to international trade with Latino American countries, it is suggested to continue or increase trade with the Latino countries. In fact, because the Latino population is drastically growing in the United States and many Latinos have proven that they prefer Latino made products to American made products, it is further suggested to increase trade with the Latino countries to better meet the needs of these demographics. Many in the Latino group have transnationalistic qualities and will chose to purchase more from their COO than American made goods.

Additionally, the children groups are increasingly open to international trade than their parents and will also better accept these products in the future when they are making purchasing decisions.

Secondly, products that are geared towards the Latino demographic also are recommended because the Latino group prefers to buy goods or services that represent their heritage. For example, American made goods that appeal to the tastes, flavors, and characteristics of Latino cultures would sell well as they better match the demand needs of this large and growing minority group. Similarly, Caucasian children are also learning and better adapting to various cultures and would also be more open to buy these goods or services in the near future.

In conclusion, the increase of international trade with Latino and United States products would have a positive effect due to little opposition in the Caucasian adult demographic and a great acceptance in both Latino demographics and the Caucasian youth.

## LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RECOMENDATIONS

This paper was not able to address differences in ethnocentrism and transnationalism among Latino sub-cultural groups, such as differences in Puerto Ricans versus Mexicans. Therefore it is recommended that future research could be done to detect differences between these cultures to better match the need-state of these cultural groups. The second recommendation is to have different products on the second ethnocentric scale that better matches the demographical sub-groups in the Latino population. For example, there were no products in the survey instrument from Puerto Rico and yet there were a great number of respondents from Puerto Rico. Thirdly, a study could be done to see which Latino country's products would be best accepted by the various groups. The results of that study could be useful to determine different trade policies with Latino nations. And lastly, this study is only representative of the Milwaukee population; a nation-wide study would better reflect the true feelings of ethnocentrism of the American people.

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## APPENDIX A

### Exploring Ethnocentric Consumer Behavior in Children and Latino-Americans

Principle Researcher: Kaitlin Erdmann

For each of the following questions, rank how strongly you agree or disagree with the statement (1 being Strongly Disagree and 7 being Strongly Agree).

1. The only products that should be brought into the United States to sell are products that America cannot make.

Strongly Disagree	Neutral	Strongly Agree
1    2    3	4    5	6    7

2. American products are the best and I will always buy them.

Strongly Disagree	Neutral	Strongly Agree
1    2    3	4    5	6    7

3. A real American should always buy American-made products.

Strongly Disagree	Neutral	Strongly Agree
1    2    3	4    5	6    7

4. Americans should not buy products from other countries because this hurts American business and can cause people to lose their jobs.

Strongly Disagree	Neutral	Strongly Agree
1    2    3	4    5	6    7

5. It may be more expensive in the long run but I prefer to support American products.

Strongly Disagree	Neutral	Strongly Agree
1    2    3	4    5	6    7

6. American consumers who purchase products made in other countries are responsible for putting their fellow Americans out of work.

Strongly Disagree	Neutral	Strongly Agree
1    2    3	4    5	6    7

If you could choose a flag to hang outside of your house, what nation's flag would it be?

---

Gender \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Country of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Circle the item that you would prefer to buy or use.

1.



2.



3.



4.



Made in Colombia



Made in the U.S.A.

5.



Made in Honduras



Made in the U.S.A.

6.



Made in the U.S.A.



Made in Mexico

Circle the item that you would prefer to buy for you or your household.

1.



2.



3.



4.

Made in Colombia

Made in the U.S.A.

5.



Made in Honduras

Made in the U.S.A.

6.



Made in the U.S.A.

Made in Mexico

**APPENDIX B****La exploración de comportamientos etnocéntricos en los niños y en los latino-americanos**

Investigadora Principal: Kaitlin Erdmann

Para cada una de las frases, ponga un círculo alrededor del número que indique su opinión. (1 es Lo Rechazo Fuertemente y 7 es Coincido Fuertemente).

1. Los únicos productos que se debe traer a los Estados Unidos para vender son los productos que no se puede fabricar en los Estados Unidos.

Lo Rechazo Fuertemente	Neutral	Coincido Fuertemente
1    2    3	4    5	6    7

2. Los productos norteamericanos son los mejores y los compraré siempre.

Lo Rechazo Fuertemente	Neutral	Coincido Fuertemente
1    2    3	4    5	6    7

3. Un norteamericano verdadero siempre debe comprar productos que son fabricados en los Estados Unidos.

Lo Rechazo Fuertemente	Neutral	Coincido Fuertemente
1    2    3	4    5	6    7

4. Los norteamericanos no deben comprar productos de otros países porque estos productos tienen un efecto negativo sobre los negocios norteamericanos y pueden causar la pérdida de empleos americanos.

Lo Rechazo Fuertemente	Neutral	Coincido Fuertemente
1    2    3	4    5	6    7

5. Puede ser más caro a largo plazo, pero prefiero apoyar los productos norteamericanos.

Lo Rechazo Fuertemente	Neutral	Coincido Fuertemente
1    2    3	4    5	6    7

6. Los consumidores norteamericanos que compran productos hechos en otros países son los responsables por los norteamericanos sin trabajo.

Lo Rechazo Fuertemente	Neutral	Coincido Fuertemente
1    2    3	4    5	6    7

Si pudiera escoger una bandera para poner afuera de su casa, ¿de cuál nación sería?

Sexo \_\_\_\_\_

Edad \_\_\_\_\_

Lugar de Nacimiento \_\_\_\_\_

Ponga un círculo alrededor del producto que preferiría comprar.

1.



2.



3.



4.



Hecho en Colombia



Hecho en los EE.UU.

5.



Hecho en Honduras



Hecho en los EE.UU.

6.



Hecho en los EE.UU.



Hecho en México



Ponga un círculo alrededor del producto que preferiría comprar para su familia.

1.



2.



3.



4.



Hecho en Colombia



Hecho en los EE.UU.

5.



Hecho en Honduras



Hecho en los EE.UU.

6.



Hecho en los EE.UU.



Hecho en México