“South African consumer ethnocentrism and attitudes towards foreign convenience products”

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ARTICLE INFO	Andrew R. Kamwendo, Karen M. Corbishley and Roger B. Mason (2014). South African consumer ethnocentrism and attitudes towards foreign convenience products. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, *12*(4-si)
RELEASED ON	Monday, 15 December 2014
JOURNAL	"Problems and Perspectives in Management"
FOUNDER	LLC “Consulting Publishing Company “Business Perspectives”

NUMBER OF REFERENCES **0**

NUMBER OF FIGURES **0**

NUMBER OF TABLES **0**

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South African consumer ethnocentrism and attitudes towards foreign convenience products

Abstract

The evolution of country-of-origin research has led to the development of the consumer ethnocentrism concept. This study looks into the concept of consumer ethnocentrism (CE) and its relationship with product selection and investigates the relationships between consumer ethnocentrism and South African consumers' attitudes towards foreign convenience products. The aim of the study is to determine the extent to which CE affects consumer behavior among South African consumers. Through the use of the CETSCALE questionnaire, an analysis of the levels of consumer ethnocentrism displayed by consumers of different demographic characteristics is conducted. A research model highlighting the antecedents to consumer ethnocentrism is developed and tested using an Analysis Of Variance (ANOVA) test. The study is in the form of a descriptive survey. 500 questionnaires are distributed, with 476 useable questionnaires being obtained. SPSS 21.0 is used to analyze the data. Non parametric tests are used as the data was not normally distributed using a Kolmogorov Smirnov test. The research hypotheses were tested using a nonparametric Chi square test. The Pearson chi-square test is used to test for the existence of variances within the responses provided by the respondents to individual question. The study reveals that only ethnicity has a significant relationship with CE. Ethnocentric tendencies are the strongest among Black South Africans. Theoretical and practical implications of the study are presented with the provision of suggestions regarding future research.

Keywords: consumer ethnocentrism, convenience products, CETSCALE, ethnicity, consumer attitudes.
JEL Classification: M13.

Introduction

According to the findings of country-of-origin research, consumers are inclined to favor products produced domestically. Although these findings have not been the same throughout, it is apparent that consumers exhibit varying levels of domestic preferences conceptualized as 'consumer ethnocentrism' (CE) (Altintaş and Tokol, 2007). Ethnocentrism is a sociological idea established more than a century ago by Sumner (1906, p. 13) as, "the view of things in which one's own group is the centre of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it". Ardono et al. (1950), referred to it as "ethnic centeredness". Shimp and Sharma (1987, p. 280) defined CE as, "the belief held by consumers about the appropriateness of, indeed morality of, purchasing foreign-made products". The argument behind CE is underpinned by a preference for in-group (domestic) products (Pentz, 2011).

CE is believed to be built based on domestic preference and not, a negativity towards any particular country (Josaissen et al., 2011). Consumer ethnocentrism has been associated with "domestic country bias" (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos, 2004). The greater the domestic country bias the greater the likelihood that the individual will exhibit high levels of ethnocentrism. It is believed that ethnocentric consumers naturally favor their own countries and automatically reject all foreign products (Carter, 2009). Consumers are thought to develop patriotic and nationalistic feelings that cause them to want to protect their domestic economies. The concept of ethnocentrism is therefore of great interest primarily because of how it influences consumer behavior and ultimately consumption patterns.

According to Hamin and Elliott (2006), a common finding of many studies seemed to be that consumers from developed countries apply a higher or more positive rating to products from their own country or similarly developed countries, than to products from foreign and/or less developed countries. As far as consumers from less developed countries (LDCs) are concerned, Hamin and Elliott (2006) believe that evidence from research conducted in countries such as Mexico, the Philippines, Jordan and Nigeria, suggests that consumers in these countries seem to rate products from more developed countries (MDCs) more highly than domestic products. Hamin and Elliott (2006) also note that, alongside the generalized preference for products originating from more developed countries, there is also evidence to suggest that some consumers will always prefer to buy products manufactured in their home country.

Further studies carried out in the field of consumer behavior have highlighted differences in consumers' cognitive processes and behavior (Josiassen et al., 2011). These differences are believed to be a product of differences in consumer demographics (age, gender, income, race and income) (Cooil, Keiningham, Aksoy and Hsu, 2007; Fisher and Dubé, 2005; Meyers-Levy, 1989). In accordance with Pentz (2011) and Estifanos (2003), South African consumers exhibit ethnocentric tendencies at varying degrees. Despite the obvious impact of consumer

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demographics, the full extent to which they influence ethnocentric tendencies among consumers is still unclear and presents a research gap (Pentz, 2011). Homburg and Giering (2001) concluded that gaps within researchers' understanding of the full impact of demographics in consumer behavior inhibit the managerial relevance of studies in this area. Following studies carried out by Pentz (2011) and Estifanos (2003), it is clear that demographic inconsistencies are evident in the development of ethnocentrism in South Africa.

In attempting to fully understand CE, the problem exists that there is a lack of knowledge about the impact of consumer demographics on consumer ethnocentrism, particularly in South Africa, one of Africa's leading economies. The objectives of the study were therefore expressed as follows:

- to determine the existence of ethnocentric tendencies among South African consumers in Durban;
- to determine the moderating effect that demographic variables of gender, age, education and ethnicity have on ethnocentrism.

1. Literature review

1.1. Effect of consumer ethnocentrism. Based on the findings of country-of-origin (COO) research, consumers are inclined to favor products produced domestically. Although these findings have not been the same throughout, it is apparent that consumers exhibit varying levels of domestic preferences conceptu-alized as 'consumer ethnocentrism' (Altintaş and Tokol, 2007). COO studies carried out in North America, Europe and Asia show that CE lowers consumer's opinions of imported products, for example, USA (Shimp and Sharma, 1987; Suh and Kwon, 2002), Germany (Evanschitzky et al., 2008), Netherlands (Josiassen, 2011), South Korea (Suh and Kwon, 2002) and Australia (Poon, Evangelista and Albaum, 2010). Studies by Damanpour (1993) and Elliott and Cameron (1994) demonstrated that within more developed countries, consumers view their domestic product quality as being higher than that of foreign products and therefore favor them above foreign products. Research carried out in LDCs has shown that consumers rate products from their own countries less favorably (Granzin and Olsen, 1998; Jaffe and Carlos, 1995; Okechuku and Onyemah, 1999). De Run, Chan and Khalique (2012) discovered that, developing countries exhibited a positive preference for goods from MDCs even in the absence of distinct product differences. Hamin and Elliott (2006) noted that evidence from research conducted in countries such as Mexico, the Philippines, Jordan and Nigeria suggests that consumers from these countries also seem to evaluate imported products from more developed countries more favorably than domestically produced products. In contrast to developed countries, in LDCs, domestic products are often regarded as being of poor-quality especially when they are compared with imported products (Batra et al., 2000; Wang and Chen, 2004).

Many country-of-origin researches have been focused on CE and its effects on conspicuous consumption. Such researches have linked consumers' need for recognition and status to their purchasing behavior (Wang and Chen, 2004). In their study, Wang and Chen (2004) postulated that conspicuous consumption is synonymous with CE, especially in developed countries, but that in developing countries there is a negative correlation between CE and conspicuous consumption. Studies have revealed that a bias of preference against developing country products seems to rise in the luxury product class (Manrai et al., 1998). Cordell (1991 and 1992) makes the assertion that increases in the level of perceived risk will cause consumers to reject brands from developing countries. He went on further to state that products from developing countries, within the luxury market, suffer more rejection than within other categories. However, research findings from Giraldi and Ikeda (2009) and Han (2010) show that inconsistencies exist with regard to respondents' cultures and product categories. These variances seem to cover all product categories (shopping, specialty and convenience products). This is in support of an earlier study on the influence of COO on consumer preferences which illustrated the existence of variances in consumer preferences across different product dimensions (Leonidou et al., 1999).

Other studies found that the importance of the COO as a quality indicator seemed to be higher for more technically complex products than for simpler ones (Eroglu and Machleit, 1988). It can therefore be assumed that the importance of a products origin is lowered amongst less technically complex products. This may be true especially in LDCs where consumers in LDCs have been understood not to rely on COO information to make purchasing decisions as other factors also have a mitigating effect on a consumers' willingness to buy, such as product quality and durability (Wang and Chen, 2004). Curiosity is therefore aroused about the effect that CE is likely to have on less-conspicuous and less technically complex products in developing and LDCs. Due to the negative correlation between conspicuous construction and CE a positive correlation is likely to exist between CE and less

conspicuous product categories, which includes convenience products.

1.2. Antecedents to ethnocentrism. Consumer ethnocentrism is thought to be a product of a number of attributes (Pentz, 2011). Political, economic, demographic and psychological factors have been recognized as the major attributes to the construct. Ethnocentrism results in an array of sociological responses which range from racial discrimination to sectionalism among other protectionist responses (Shimp and Shin, 1995). Since ethnocentrism is a learned behavioral attribute, a key area of interest has been the effect demographics play in the level of ethnocentrism exhibited.

1.3. Demographics. Consumer demographics have been an area of key interest in CE studies (Huddleston, Good and Stoel, 2001). Demographic characteristics have been listed as one of the antecedents to CE which may have a moderating effect on ethnocentric tendencies (Pentz, 2011). An empirical study by Chong and Cheng (2011) verified the existence of notable differences in research participants' display of ethnocentric tendencies according to their demographic characteristics. Among the most researched demographic characteristics the following have been identified, namely age, and gender, education and race/ethnicity. These relationships are illustrated in Figure 1.

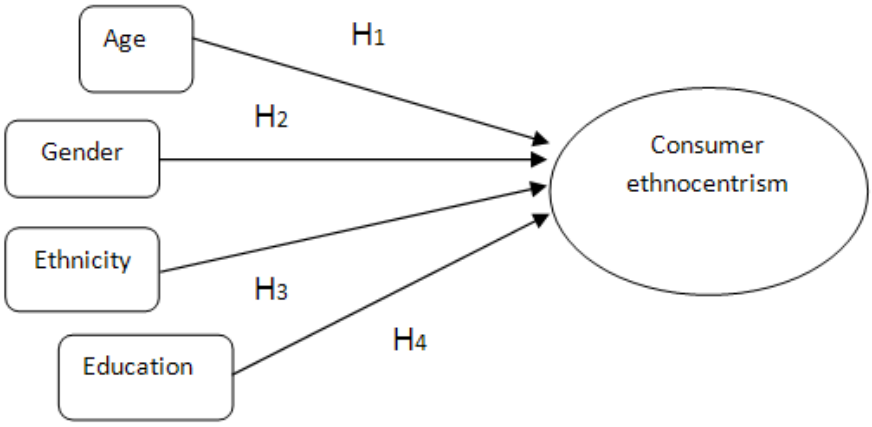

Fig. 1. Consumer ethnocentrism antecedent model

1.3.1. Age. Findings with regard to the correlation between consumer ethnocentrism and respondent age are quite varied (Shankarmahesh, 2006). It is largely understood that older consumers tend to exhibit higher levels of ethnocentrism (Balabanis et al., 2001). These findings have been based on the understanding that older consumers are generally more conservative (Altintaş and Tokol, 2007; Josaissen et al., 2011). Consequently, one can assume that there exists a positive relationship between the ages of consumers and CE (Ramsaran-Fowder, 2010). Unlike the above stated results, Mittal and Tsiros (1995) found that age is not always positively related to CE. Similar results were obtained by Shankarmahesh (2006). Cheong (2011) cited a study conducted by Shergil (2010) in New Zealand, which showed that consumers between the ages of 16 and 25 exhibited ethnocentric tendencies.

Even though variances exist within CE, a greater proportion of existing studies support the idea of a positive relationship between consumers' ages and CE. More recent studies seem to support this assertion (Bawa, 2004). As a result the following hypothesis was developed:

H1: A positive correlation exists between CE and a consumer's age.

1.3.2. Gender. Women are believed to care more about safeguarding 'social harmony' and are more concerned about in-group behavior (Han, 1988; Sharma et al., 1995) while men seem to display lower levels of consumer ethnocentrism in a number of studies (Nielsen and Spence, 1997; Sharma, Shimp and Shin, 1995). This argument, therefore, gives merit to Bawa's (2004, p. 44) assertion that the dominant view is that, women show more ethnocentric tendencies. However, women have also been found to show signs of favoring imported goods more than their male counterparts (Dornoff, Tankersley and White, 1974; Johansson, Douglas and Nonaka, 1985). At the same time, other studies could not find any relation between gender and ethnocentrism (McLain and Sternquist, 1991; Balabanis et al., 2001). Josaissen et al. (2011) examined the contradictory results and found no evidence to support the argument. Based on the variances shown in the literature it is then hypothesized that:

H2: South African women display the same level of CE as South African men.

1.3.3. Ethnicity. The ethnicity (race) of the consumer seems to provide insufficient information as to the consumers' levels of ethnocentrism (Piron, 2002). A

study carried out in Australia revealed that members of the dominant culture showed relatively high levels of CE as compared to members of the cultural minority (Zarkada-Fraser and Fraser, 2002). One study conducted in South Africa by Bevan-Dye et al. (2012) on 'generation Y' consumers and black South Africans displayed a significant level of ethnocentrism. The full implication of consumer ethnicity is vague due to the limited number of studies on the subject of ethnocentrism and CE.

H3: The distribution of consumer ethnocentrism is the same across all ethnic groups.

1.3.4. Education. Past research revealed that highly educated people tend to overestimate foreign product quality while less-educated people overestimate domestic product quality (Schooler, 1971; Dornoff et al., 1974). Nguyen, Nguyen and Barrett (2008), however, found no such relationship between education and foreign product preference and this also seems to be the dominant view among most authors (Javalgi et al., 2005; Saffu and Walker, 2005). As a result H4 was hypothesized.

H4: There is no relationship between the level of CE and the level of education of consumers.

1.4. Measurement of consumer ethnocentrism. Early studies by Shimp and Sharma (1987) established an instrument to quantify the CE phenomenon, which they termed the Consumer Ethnocentrism Scale (CETSCALE). This instrument was established to measure consumer "tendency" rather than attitude, where tendency denotes the notion of a consumer's general disposition to act, while attitude represents feeling towards a particular object (Teo et al., 2010). The CETSCALE was originally developed in the form of a Likert scale fashioned from an original pool of 180 items into a 17-item, Likert-scale questionnaire (Shimp and Sharma, 1987).

Over the years, the CETSCALE has been tested in numerous countries for example USA and Russia (Durvasula et al., 1997; Nielsen and Spence, 1997), South Korea (Sharma, Shimp and Shin 1995) and Spain (Luque-Martinez et al., 2000). The CETSCALE has evolved overtime, being shortened from a 17-item scale to a 10-item scale (Bawa, 2004). The CETSCALE can be used with less than ten items, for example a 6-item scale was used to validate the presence of ethnocentric tendencies by Klein et al. (2006). As a result a 7 item CETSCALE may be assumed suitable to measure CE.

2. Methodology

The study was in the form of a descriptive survey investigating the effects of demographic characteristics on ethnocentrism among South African consumers. According to Churchill and Iacobucci (2010), descriptive research identifies the frequency of something occurring or the relationship between variables, which supports the objectives of the study.

2.1. Sampling. The population of this study comprised approximately 65000 students and staff members from two universities within the greater Durban, South Africa area, viz. Durban University of Technology and University of KwaZulu-Natal. It is generally understood that the greater the size of the sample the more reliable the research findings. Roscoe (1975, cited by Sekaran and Bougie, 2010) emphasizes that an appropriate sample size is between 30 and 500 respondents. He further states that a population size of 75 000 and 1 000 000 should have a sample size between 382 and 384.

Table 1. Desired sample size

Age		Young (18-40)				Old (41-65)				Total
Highest qual ethnicity		Matric	Diploma	Degree	Postgrad	Matric	Diploma	Degree	Postgrad	
Black	Male	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	56
	Female	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	64
White	Male	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	56
	Female	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	64
Colored	Male	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	56
	Female	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	64
Indian	Male	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	56
	Female	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	64
Total		60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	480

Purposive sampling was used to select the universities for their ability to provide the full range of the demographics. The study made use of quota sampling within the universities. Quota sampling was used to sample universities on the basis of pre-specified characteristics (demographic characteristics) highlighted within the existing literature. Quota sampling criteria included the following demographic characteristics: age, gender, education and ethnicity. Convenience sampling was also used within the

sample in order to fill the quotas enabling the selection of individual respondents. Respondent selection was based on the convenience with which the researcher would be able to obtain respondents at the two universities. Seven or eight respondents were selected for each quota cell (see Table 1 for the target quotas). A final useable sample of 476 responses was obtained.

2.2. Data collection. A self-completion questionnaire was utilized to collect data. The questionnaire was divided into two sections which comprised of CETSCALE questions to determine ethnocentrism (see Table 2, for questions) and participant demographics. For the younger age categories, questionnaires were administered at the two universities via classroom intercept. Classrooms, in which questionnaires were to be administered, were chosen based on the researcher's convenience until the quota was filled. The questionnaires were administered by the researcher in the presence of an appointed university representative. Respondents were required to drop completed questionnaires into a sealed box to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. For the older age categories, questionnaires were administered via e-mail and personal interviews with staff at the two universities.

2.3. Data analysis. Descriptive statistical methods were utilized to summarize the data and the appropriate inferential statistics were used to test the statistical significance of the findings. Kruskal-Wallis and Mann-Whitney U tests and Chi-square tests were used to test the hypotheses. The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 21.0).

2.4. Instrument reliability. According to Welman et al. (2005) an internal consistency method can be employed to determine the reliability of a measuring instrument. This method uses Cronbach's coefficient alpha as a degree of an instrument's internal consistency. The research instrument scored a level of 0.729 which indicates a high (overall) degree of acceptable consistent scoring for the research (Andrew et al., 2011, p. 202), which is to be expected because of the use of the CETSCALE questionnaire, which has previously been proven reliable.

3. Result

For the purpose of the study the desired sample size was 480 participants. Only 476 participants provided usable responses to questions asked within the research instrument. The sample distribution is illustrated within Table 2.

Table 2. Sample distribution

Demographic variables	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Level of education	Primary	3	.6
	High School	221	46.4
	Diploma	85	17.9
	Degree	111	23.3
	Postgraduate	56	11.8
Race	Black	314	66.0
	White	50	10.5
	Colored	54	11.3
	Indian	58	12.2
Age group	18-20	146	30.7
	21-35	258	54.2
	36-50	56	11.8
	51-65	16	3.4
Gender	Male	250	52.5
	Female	226	47.5
Total		476	100.0

3.1. Research model.

Table 3. Variables entered/removed[a]

Model	Variables entered	Variables removed	Method
1	Level of education, gender, race, age group[b]	.	Enter

Note: a – dependent variable: CETSCALE average; b – all requested variables entered.

Table 4. ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	*F*	Sig.
1	Regression	6.563	4	1.641	2.567	.037[b]
	Residual	301.019	471	.639		
	Total	307.583	475			

Note: a – dependent variable: CETSCALE average; b – predictors: (constant), level of education, gender, race, age group.

The *F*-value is 2.567. The *p*-value associated with this *F*-value is 0.037. These values are used to answer the question "Do the independent variables reliably predict the dependent variable?" The *p*-value is compared to the alpha level (typically 0.05) and, if smaller, it can be concluded that the predictors can be used to give a good indication of performance since the significance value is less than 0.05. In this case, since the *p*-value (0.037) is less than 0.05, we can say that the independent variables predict the dependent variable.

Table 5. Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	*t*	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.725	.172		15.807	.000
	Age group	-.031	.060	-.029	-.522	.602
	Gender	.014	.075	.008	.181	.857
	Race	.104	.035	.140	3.006	*.003*
	Level of education	.005	.040	.007	.135	.892

Note: a – dependent variable: CETSCALE average.

The last column tests the hypothesis that the coefficients (*B*) are not that different from zero (0). It is observed that one of the coefficients (highlighted) plays a significant role (as the coefficient is *not* zero).

The regression equation can be presented in many different ways, for example:

$$Y_{predicted} = b_0 + b_1*x_1 + b_2*x_2 + b_3*x_3 + b_3*x_3. \quad (1)$$

The column of estimates (coefficients or parameter estimates, from here on labelled coefficients) provides the values for b_0, b_1, b_2, and b_3 for this equation. Expressed in terms of the variables used in this example, the regression equation is:

CETSCALE Average = 2.725 – (0.031 × Age Group) + (0.014 × Gender) + (0.104 × Race) + (0.005 × Level of Education). (2)

3.2. Validity. Factor analysis was used to determine whether the instrument measured what it was meant to measure (Metler and Vannatta, 2002; Moonsamy and Singh, 2012). The CETSCALE was split into finer elements as illustrated in Table 6 in the rotated component matrix.

Table 6. CETSCALE Questions

Section B	Component 1
1. I buy SA brands only	.507
2. The purchase of foreign products is unpatriotic	.507
3. The purchase of foreign brands hurts the economy.	.698
4. In spite of the cost, I prefer to buy domestic products	.670
5. I only purchase foreign products not found domestically	.639
6. I only purchase domestically produced foreign brands.	.627
7. The government should heavily tax foreign brands.	.652

Note: extraction method: principal component analysis; a – 1 component extracted.

The method employed in the extraction of elements was the principal component analysis and Varimax with Kaiser normalization as the main method of rotation. As a result, items found to be 0.5 or more imply an effective measurement along the various components. The variables loaded perfectly along one factor. It was concluded that the CETSCALE measured exactly what it was meant to measure, which was to be expected from a previously validated questionnaire (CETSCALE).

Table 7. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy.		.786
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Approx. Chi-square	511.378
	df	21
	Sig.	.000

Table 7 reflects the results of the KMO and Bartlett's test. The requirement is that the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy should be greater than 0.50 and Bartlett's test of sphericity less than 0.05. In both instances, the conditions are satisfied which allows for the factor analysis procedure.

3.3. Questionnaire results. The detailed results for each question, according to each of the demographic

characteristics, are provided within the Appendix. Responses to the individual questions within the CETSCALE questionnaire produced scores summarized in Figure 2, showing the results of the five point Likert scale collapsed into three categories, that is, disagree, undecided and agree.

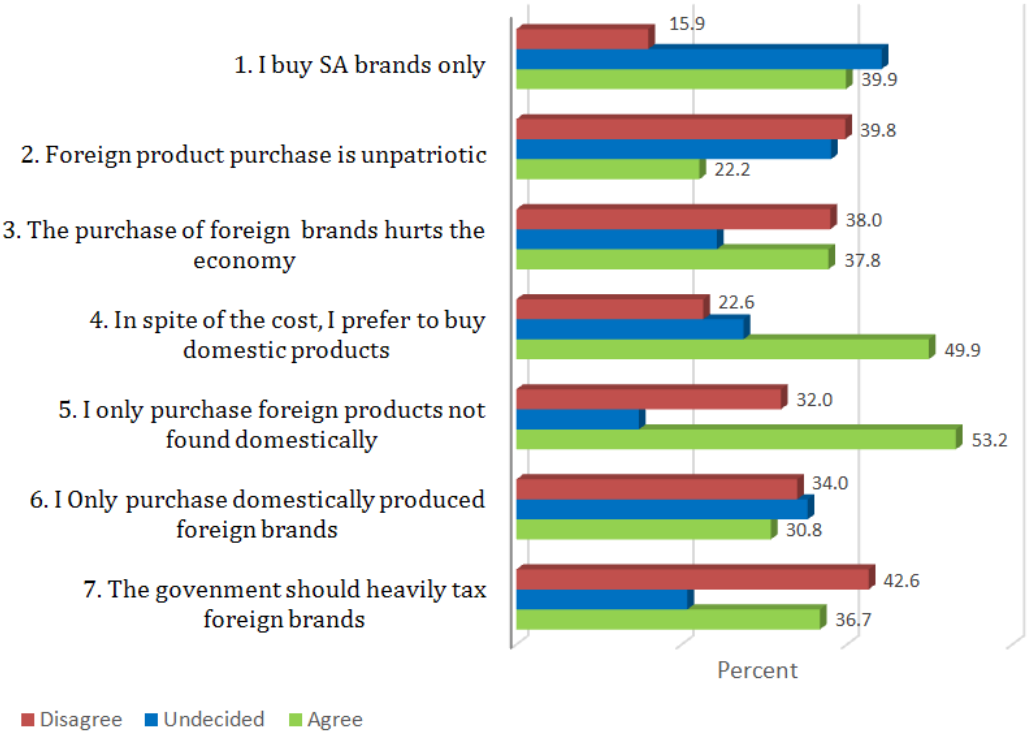

Fig. 2. CETSCALE percentage scores

The two highest levels of agreement were for "In spite of the cost, I prefer domestic products" (49.9%) and "I only purchase foreign products not found domestically" (53.2%). This indicates a strong preference for local brands, with the respondents choosing to purchase foreign brands only in the absence of local alternatives. Relatively similar numbers of respondents agreed compared to those who disagreed with the statement "The purchase of foreign brands hurt the economy", that is, 37.8% to 38.0% respectively.

For only the first and sixth statements did the respondents score higher percentages of indecision than agreement or disagreement (Figure 2). This may be attributed to consumers' long history with imports, which is typical in Africa, thus making it difficult to separate the two (foreign and domestic). Apart from the first, fourth and sixth statements, all the others indicate higher disagreement percentages than those for agreement.

The main objective of the study was to determine the level of ethnocentrism among South African consumers within Durban. Based on the average responses put forward by respondents 38.6% were in agreement with ethnocentric responses whilst 32.1% were in disagreement. As a result the slight difference within the average responses illustrates the existence of weak ethnocentric tendencies by respondents.

To determine whether the differences in responses were significant, the chi-square test was done for each individual statement, that is, between agree and disagree. The null hypotheses tested the claim that there were no differences in the scoring options per statement. The results are shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Chi-square test results

	SA brands only	Foreign purchase unpatriotic	Foreign brands hurt the economy	Beside cost I prefer domestic products	Only purchase foreign products not found domestically	Only purchase domestically produced foreign brands	Heavily tax foreign brands
Chi-square	207.078	113.312	10.641	65.51	56.03	73.363	6.359
Df	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.031	.000	.000	.000	.174

Since all of the *p*-values, except the last, are less than 0.05, the implication is that the distributions were not even. That is, the differences between agreement and disagreement were significant. It is

noted that the category of "Undecided" also contributes to the level of significance.

3.4. Bi-variate analysis. The Chi-square test was performed in order to establish the existence or non-existence of statistically significant relationships between the CETSCALE and demographic variables (Vaughan, 2001). The null hypotheses state that no significant relationship exists between the CE questions and the socio-demographic factors. To test the statistical significance, a p-value < 0.05, was set. Table 9 summarizes the results from the Chi-square tests. The direction of the scores can be ascertained in the Appendix.

Table 9. Pearson Chi-square tests

Item	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Education
1. I buy SA brands only	0.293	.282	.002*	0.328
2. Foreign product purchase is unpatriotic	0.799	.693	.467	0.302
3. The purchase of foreign brands hurts the economy	0.682	.443	.048*	0.853
4. In spite of the cost, I prefer to buy domestic products	0.305	.763	.005*	0.114
5. I only purchase foreign products not found domestically	0.085	.340	.004*	.041*
6. I only purchase domestically produced foreign brands	0.571	.007*	.004*	0.828
7. The government should heavily tax foreign brands	0.182	.213	.000*	0.143

The results from the Chi-square test support the existence of a number of significant relationships mainly between respondents' ethnicity and CE. Individual scores provided for each section are highlighted in the Appendices. The average values of the CETSCALE were recoded for agree, uncertain and disagree and as illustrated in Table 10 the results of the-Chi square test are indicated.

Table 10. Chi-square test

Test statistics	
	CAv2
Chi-square	41.979[a]
df	2
Asymp. sig.	.000

Note: a – 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 158.7.

3.5. Research hypotheses. Non parametric tests were used as the data was not normally distributed (Kolmogorov-Smirnov p-values < 0.001). A null hypothesis (*H0*) was developed in order to test the extent to which the literature related to the South African situation.

The null hypothesis of the study was:

H0: South African consumers exhibit ethnocentrism towards convenience products

Table 10 shows that the finding of ethnocentrism in the sample were statistically significant (Chi-square = = 41. 979; df = 2; p = .000) and therefore H0 can be accepted.

The study also sought to determine the influence of consumer demographics on CE. As illustrated by the Chi-square test (Table 9), the participants demographic characteristics where tested against individual questions within the questionnaire. The findings showed that the participant's age, gender and education had a statistically insignificant influence on the responses provided but respondents' ethnicity had a statistically significant influence. The Chi-square test (Table 11) was also used to test the demographic characteristics against the CETSCALE average.

H1: A positive correlation exists between CE and a consumer's age.

H2: South African women display the same level of CE as South African men.

H3: The distribution of consumer ethnocentrism is the same across all ethnic groups.

H4: There is no relationship between the level of CE and the level of education of consumers.

To determine whether the demographic characteristics had a moderating effect on the answers to the CETSCALE questions, a Chi-square test was conducted. The results are illustrated in Table 11.

Table 11. Hypothesis testing (test statistics)

	Age group	Gender	Race	Level of education	Ethnocentrism
Chi-square	290.992[a]	1.210[b]	426.319[a]	275.387[c]	219.619[d]
df	3	1	3	4	28
Asymp. sig.	.000	.271	.000	.000	.000

Note: a – 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 119.0; b – 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 238.0; c – 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 95.2; d – 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 15.6. Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is 0.05.

Based on the results of the Chi-square test, the *p*-values of all the demographic characteristics show that only gender has a *p*-value which is greater than .05. Consequently this falls within an acceptable range of deviation and therefore H3 was accepted as any differences in ethnocentric responses between men and women occurred purely by chance. Age, race and level of education showed *p*-values of .000 respectively. Since the *p*-values are < 0.05, H1, H3 and H4 hypotheses were rejected, as some factor other than chance was operating for the deviation to be so great.

4. Discussion

Developed from an established instrument, a shortened version of the CETSCALE was employed (Evanschitzky et al., 2008; Klein et al., 2006). Based on the Cronbach alpha results, the CETSCALE measured what it was intended to. Due to the conditions of normality not being met (KS *p*-value < 0.001), indicating the existence of differences within the overall responses put forward by respondents, the overall mean scores obtained from the CETSCALE questions show that participants agreed with four out of seven of the statements (see Appendix). The results show a general preference for domestic products amongst respondents. Respondents disagreed with the notion of associating patriotism and product purchase as well as disagreeing with the suggestion of heavily taxing foreign brands. The results supported previous studies conducted in South Africa, which showed that South African consumers displayed ethnocentric tendencies (Estifanos, 2003). The results extend the effects of CE from conspicuous product consumption to other product categories that require less product involvement. Although a preference for domestic brands exists, consumers seem open to the idea of foreign products, which is consistent with studies carried out in other developing African countries (Mensah et al., 2011). Such preferences seem to be supported by South African's long history with foreign products which may make it difficult for consumers to differentiate foreign product from domestic products (De Run et al., 2012). Respondents disagree with the notion of domestically produced foreign brands and with the notion of limiting foreign products through heavy taxes.

4.1. The moderating effect of consumer demographics on CE. A model illustrating the factors influencing the development of ethnocentric tendencies was established and tested using an Analysis Of Variance (ANOVA) test (Table 4). The assumption made was that a consumers demographic characteristics have a moderating effect on consumer ethnocentrism. The ANOVA test revealed that the independent variables predict the dependent variables (Table 3).

Results revealed that only ethnicity had a significant relationship with ethnocentrism. Table 5 shows that no significant differences exist within the responses put forward within the categories of age, gender and education. As a result respondents displayed similar levels of ethnocentrism according to their gender and age. Significant differences were only observed within participant responses when analyzed according to their ethnicities.

4.1.1. Age. Although the literature varies there is no evidence to support the existence of a significant association between respondent's ages and their responses to the CETSCALE questions. The results from the study show that participants' ages did not influence their product preferences. The Chi-square test (Table 11) revealed that the respondents did not display statistically significant differences in their responses based on their age. Based on the Pearson's Chi square test (Table 9), no statistically significant relationship was found between the respondents' age and the CETSCALE questions resulting in the rejection of H1 hypothesis. As a result, no positive relationship exists between age and CE.

4.1.2. Ethnicity. The results from the study show the existence of statistically significant relationships between five CETSCALE questions and ethnicity (Table 9). According to the Chi-square test (Table 11), the distribution of ethnocentrism is not the same across categories of ethnicity resulting in the rejection of H4a. Variances were seen in participant's responses to the CETSCALE questions. For "SA brands only," all ethnicities generally agreed with the statement, with Black participants displaying the highest level of agreement followed by Coloreds, Indians and lastly White participants. This trend can be attributed to the social identity theory (Brown, 2000; Pentz, 2011). All ethnicities, therefore, identify themselves with their country of residence (South Africa) thus supporting the existence of ethnocentric tendencies within the population.

For "foreign purchase is unpatriotic," all racial groups generally disagreed with the given statement. It seems that there is no connection between a participant's view of patriotism and the purchase of products. Based on this discovery, one of the underlying premises behind ethnocentrism is undermined as the understanding that ethnocentrism results in the development of strong nationalistic feelings are not evident throughout the study. According to an earlier study, CE results in protectionist tendencies against a possible negative economic impact, which can be associated with economic patriotism (Bandara and Miloslova, 2008). This deviates from the finding of

Pentz (2011) who found a significant association between ethnocentrism and patriotism in South Africa. Although participants disagreed with the statement, no significant connection was found between ethnicities and foreign product purchase.

Participants provided mixed responses to "Foreign brands hurt the economy." Black and Colored respondents moderately agreed with the statement while Indians and White respondents moderately disagreed. The results may be explained by looking at each racial group's historic connections. Since Indian South Africans and White South Africans both have a historic and possibly existing connection with other countries, they may be less inclined to think that foreign purchases cause any harm to the South African economy. Racial groups that have less of a connection with other countries may be more inclined to believe foreign purchases may harm the economy.

For the statement, "In spite of the cost, I prefer domestic products", all racial groups moderately agreed with the statement. The highest level of agreement was shown by Black respondents followed by Indians, Coloreds and then Whites. This trend supports the results of previous statements where Black participants display the highest levels of agreement and White participants displaying the least. All consumers display an emotional connection, choosing to forgo a possible financial benefit for a moral benefit, that is, the idea of providing economic support for domestic companies (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). White participants disagreed with the statement "Only purchase foreign products not found domestically," while the rest agreed (Black, Coloreds and Indians). For the statement which highlighted the idea of domestically produced foreign products, White, Indian and Colored participants disagreed while Black participants moderately agreed.

The results in the Appendix show that, among the four groups, Black respondents provided the most ethnocentric responses. This supports the findings of a study carried out in Australia that revealed that members of the dominant culture showed relatively high levels of CE as compared to members of the cultural minority (Zarkada-Fraser and Fraser, 2002). A study conducted in South Africa by Bevan-Dye, Garnett and de Klerk (2012, pp. 55-84) on 'generation Y' consumers and black South Africans found significant levels of ethnocentrism. The dominant ethnicity has been found to be more ethnocentric. H3 was therefore rejected as varied responses were provided in response to the CETSCALE statements. In other words, ethnocentric tendencies are not the same amongst the different ethnicities.

4.1.3. Gender. Responses show that male participants agreed with six of the CETSCALE statements, while more variances were seen amongst female responses (see Appendix). Female participants agreed with four statements (see Appendix) and disagreed with three. Based on the Chi-square test (Table 11) the responses put forward by respondents were the same across the gender categories, that is, the responses put forward by male respondents were relatively similar to those put forward by their female counterparts. The Pearson Chi-square test (Table 9) revealed the existence of one significant relationship between the questions asked and the respondent's gender. As a result, the test showed that no significant statistical association exists between gender and CE therefore the H2 hypothesis was rejected.

4.1.4. Education. Based on the responses put forward in Figure 2, the respondents display a preference for South African products and a willingness to forgo cheaper foreign product options for a more expensive local option. The same participants also share in the belief that only products not found locally should be imported. According to the Chi-square test (Table 11) the responses put forward by participants are similar across categories of education. In accordance with the Pearson's Chi-square test (Table 9) the association between education and ethnocentrism was not found to be statistically significant, which supports the argument of Saffu and Walker (2005) and Nguyen et al. (2008). As a result H4 was rejected as no significant statistical association was identified between CE and education.

5. Managerial implications

Companies should continue to recognize the strength of the South African consumers' tendency to favour domestic products. Emphasis should be placed on promoting and advertising the idea of local brands. International companies should continue to explore the idea of establishing domestic links for their brands in order for them to better tap into the South African market. The study reveals that ethnocentric tendencies have a far reaching implication on purchasing behavior of both conspicuous and non-conspicuous product purchases.

Companies should work more closely with the Proudly SA organization to promote the Proudly South African brand. According to Hoskisson et al. (2000) institutions such as Proudly SA provide the directions that structure human interactions and in this case, such an institution finds itself in a unique position capable of structuring consumer and brand interactions. According to Habib and Bentley (2008), the national identity is an amalgamation of all other identities bridging the gap between

individuals with different identities. This could then help to reduce the ethnocentric diversity between the different ethnic groups.

6. Academic implications

The study is a pioneering undertaking in the analysis of South African consumer behavior. Although it may be seen as a spin-off from other ethnocentrism studies within the country, the study is the first to analyze the concept of consumer ethnocentrism in the KwaZulu-Natal province. It is also the first to study the effects of ethnocentrism in all four major racial groups within South Africa. This therefore provides greater insight into the behavior of consumers within South Africa.

7. Limitations

One of the major limitations to the study was our inability to obtain the desired sample size. The distribution of research participants was skewed in favor Black South Africans under the age of thirty-five. All other racial groups made up less than 40% of the total sample. Although the sample may have been representative of the South African population, the sample contained smaller numbers of other racial groups (White, Colored and Indian) than of Blacks. The validity and reliability of the findings could have been improved had more respondents from the racial minorities been surveyed.

8. Directions for future research

Only four demographic factors were considered, namely age, gender, education and ethnicity, where ethnicity (race) was the only moderating factor discovered to have a significant correlation with CE. It therefore follows that further research should be conducted to verify these findings. The research sample should also include sufficiently large numbers of participants from all ethnicities and racial groupings. The sample size should also contain equal numbers of male and female participants. Focus should also be placed on understanding the influence that other demographic characteristics may have on product selection. The relationships of CE and other socio-economic characteristics such as the income levels or marital status of consumers are potential areas for future research.

Conclusion

This study sets out to identify the presence of consumer ethnocentrism amongst South African consumers of convenience products, and to what extent this ethnocentrism differs according to the demographic factors of gender, age, education and ethnicity. The results have shown that ethnocentrism does exist amongst South African consumers of convenience products, but that gender, age and education do not differentiate between those who do, and those who do not, exhibit ethnocentric tendencies. However, ethnocentrism does differ amongst the different ethnic groups, with the Black group reflecting significantly more ethnocentric tendencies and the other ethnic groups reflecting significantly less ethnocentrism.

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Appendix

Table 1A. Mean responses per demographic variable per question

		SA brands only	Foreign purchase unpatriotic	Foreign brands hurt economy	Beside cost, I prefer domes-tic products	Only buy foreign products not found domestically	Only buy domes-tically produced foreign brands	Heavily tax foreign brands
Gender								
Male	N	242	244	250	249	250	248	250
	Mean	2.70	3.34	2.98	2.56	2.52	2.92	2.95
	SD	1.032	1.188	1.463	1.285	1.446	1.281	1.472
Female	N	222	221	224	224	222	223	224
	Mean	2.55	3.18	2.97	2.54	2.70	3.22	3.18
	SD	1.099	1.211	1.372	1.205	1.480	1.135	1.401
Total	N	464	465	474	473	472	471	474
	Mean	2.63	3.27	2.98	2.55	2.60	3.06	3.06
	SD	1.066	1.201	1.419	1.246	1.464	1.222	1.442
Age								
18-20	N	141	143	145	144	144	145	145
	Mean	2.72	3.23	2.97	2.53	2.61	3.23	3.39
	SD	1.078	1.208	1.507	1.223	1.565	1.159	1.356
21-35	N	254	253	257	257	256	254	257
	Mean	2.64	3.23	2.99	2.61	2.56	2.96	2.87
	SD	1.053	1.197	1.381	1.264	1.440	1.261	1.469
36-50	N	54	54	56	56	56	56	56
	Mean	2.43	3.44	2.86	2.23	2.68	3.04	3.14
	SD	1.126	1.192	1.368	1.221	1.363	1.190	1.394
51-65	N	15	15	16	16	16	16	16
	Mean	2.40	3.53	3.25	2.75	2.94	3.25	2.81
	SD	.910	1.246	1.483	1.183	1.289	1.183	1.471
Total	N	464	465	474	473	472	471	474
	Mean	2.63	3.27	2.98	2.55	2.60	3.06	3.06
	SD	1.066	1.201	1.419	1.246	1.464	1.222	1.442
Level of education								
Primary	N	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	Mean	2.33	3.00	3.00	2.67	3.33	3.00	1.33
	SD	.577	2.000	1.000	1.155	1.155	1.000	.577
High School	N	212	214	220	219	218	218	220
	Mean	2.63	3.25	2.96	2.56	2.64	3.11	3.29
	SD	1.060	1.203	1.469	1.230	1.488	1.237	1.413

Table 1A (cont.). Mean responses per demographic variable per question

		SA brands only	Foreign purchase unpatriotic	Foreign brands hurt economy	Beside cost, I prefer domes-tic products	Only buy foreign products not found domestically	Only buy domes-tically produced foreign brands	Heavily tax foreign brands
Diploma	N	85	83	84	84	84	83	84
	Mean	2.59	3.29	3.02	2.56	2.65	2.94	2.80
	SD	.992	1.283	1.414	1.311	1.517	1.086	1.495
Degree	N	110	111	111	111	111	111	111
	Mean	2.63	3.16	2.87	2.47	2.42	3.05	2.93
	SD	1.082	1.108	1.342	1.278	1.411	1.253	1.432
Postgrad-uate	N	54	54	56	56	56	56	56
	Mean	2.72	3.52	3.18	2.64	2.71	3.05	2.93
	SD	1.204	1.209	1.416	1.182	1.411	1.327	1.386
Total	N	464	465	474	473	472	471	474
	Mean	2.63	3.27	2.98	2.55	2.60	3.06	3.06
	SD	1.066	1.201	1.419	1.246	1.464	1.222	1.442
Ethnicity								
Black	N	310	310	312	312	310	309	312
	Mean	2.52	3.24	2.92	2.41	2.52	2.93	2.84
	SD	1.093	1.217	1.483	1.290	1.515	1.279	1.477
White	N	49	49	50	50	50	50	50
	Mean	2.94	3.51	3.38	2.96	3.04	3.34	3.62
	SD	.899	1.120	1.210	1.049	1.245	1.189	1.176
Colored	N	53	54	54	53	54	54	54
	Mean	2.81	3.09	2.85	2.75	2.67	3.31	3.52
	SD	1.110	1.217	1.265	1.175	1.454	.987	1.161
Indian	N	52	52	58	58	58	58	58
	Mean	2.85	3.40	3.03	2.74	2.60	3.26	3.36
	SD	.894	1.142	1.337	1.117	1.324	1.052	1.435
Total	N	464	465	474	473	472	471	474
	Mean	2.63	3.27	2.98	2.55	2.60	3.06	3.06
	SD	1.066	1.201	1.419	1.246	1.464	1.222	1.442