

Exploring antecedents and consequences of consumer ethnocentrism: evidence from Asian immigrants in the US

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Abstract:

The US is a multicultural society due to its growing number of ethnic minorities. These ethnic populations have made intracultural studies more difficult because of the different senses of identity and degrees of acculturation the varied groups possess. The current study examined the impact of perceived ethnicity (Asian vs. Asian American) and acculturation level (low vs. high) on consumer ethnocentrism towards the country of immigration (the US) and its consequences with respect to Asian immigrants, the fastest growing minority in the US. One hundred and eighty-five responses from Asian immigrants were collected through a convenience sample from a university campus located in the southwest US as well as a snowball sampling technique. Results revealed that perceived ethnicity and acculturation play an important role in influencing Asian immigrants' ethnocentrism towards the US, which in turn affects their attitudes and behavioural intentions towards products made in the US. Implications and future research directions are suggested.

Keywords: consumer ethnocentrism | consumer studies | Asian immigrants

Article:

Introduction

The impact of global trade liberalization has presented not only considerable opportunities, but also many challenges for domestic and international firms. Cornwell and Drennan (2004) contended that consumer behaviour is affected 'by the interplay of and overlap of globalization and fragmentation forces' (p. 108), and globalization creates fragmentation (Vida et al., 2008). As such, the impact of globalization may have fuelled a strong individual sense of identity, which

consequently may have led one to question the appropriateness and effectiveness of the practice related to standardized marketing strategies by many multinational corporations. As Steenkamp (2001) states, firms should not overlook the importance of ethnic subcultures because they not only aid in preserving important patterns in the national culture, but they also develop their own distinct patterns of disposition and behaviour. Craig and Douglas (2006) also echo that intra cross-cultural studies have become more and more difficult because of different ethnic compositions overall. The US is a multicultural society because the nation's growth has been fuelled by ethnic minorities (Levy, 2009). Although extant studies have reported consumption differences amongst various major ethnic minorities in the US (Shim and Eastlick, 1998; Lee et al., 2002), research relative to consumption practices within one ethnic group (Asian immigrants) is relatively underexplored. In addition, scholars have also suggested that it makes little sense theoretically and practically to lump together Asians and Asian Americans as a single market; rather, both groups may possess different sets of consumption values, attitudes and behaviours (Ownbey and Horridge, 1997; Schumann et al., 2002).

Many studies have suggested the theoretical and practical importance of consumer ethnocentrism in understanding consumers' attitudes and behaviours towards in-group (home country) and out-group (foreign country) products (Grazin and Olsen, 1998; Kaynak and Kara, 2002; Wang and Chen, 2004; Poon et al., 2010). However, little research has investigated whether any difference exists with respect to the degree of consumer ethnocentrism amongst ethnic immigrants, especially Asian ethnic minorities, as this group has shown an exponential growth rate with considerable spending power in the US market thus capturing the interest of many marketers (Levy, 2009). Furthermore, the acculturation process may aid in explaining the consumption choices of these Asian immigrants through the concept of consumer ethnocentrism. To date, no known studies have been conducted to examine such issues with respect to Asian immigrants who have been exposed to host cultures. It is believed that such information may help us have a better understanding of the effects of consumer ethnocentrism on product evaluation (domestic vs. foreign) of Asian immigrant group.

Therefore, the overall purpose of this study is to broaden our understanding of factors that might influence the attitudes and behaviours of ethnic minorities (i.e. Asian immigrants) residing in the US. Specifically, two major aims of research questions to be addressed in this study are:

1. To determine how Asian immigrants' perceived ethnicity (Asian vs. Asian American) and acculturation levels influence their ethnocentrism towards the US; and
2. To examine the direct and indirect impact of Asian immigrants' ethnocentrism towards the US on their attitudes and behavioural intentions towards US-made products.

Theoretical framework

This study's conceptual framework is derived from two research streams: acculturation (Berry, 1980) and country-of-origin with an emphasis on consumer ethnocentrism and its impact on attitudes and behaviour (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). The former literature emphasizes the effect that exposure to a new environment has on an individual's values, which ultimately impact behaviour (Berry, 1980). The latter literature centres on the belief that purchasing foreign products is inappropriate and immoral (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). Combining these frameworks, this study's adapted model (see Fig. 1) suggests that the extent to which an Asian immigrant is ethnocentric towards American culture mediates the relationship between the degree to which the

consumer has adopted the host culture and their attitudes towards American-made products, which in turn influences behavioural intentions.

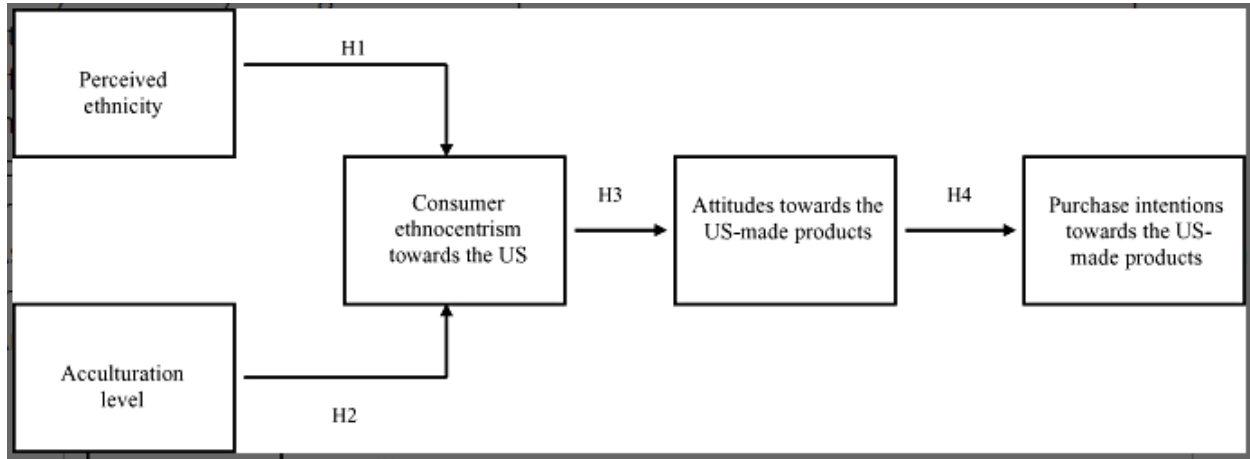


Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

Literature review and hypotheses development

Acculturation

The influence of culture is particularly important in ethnic consumption because the patterns of this consumption are closely related to cultural values, norms and behaviour (Berry, 1980). In other words, when individuals are exposed to a new cultural environment, they may change accordingly with respect to subjective components, non-material aspects such as norms, belief systems, laws and values as well as objective components and material aspects such as tools and food (Triandis et al., 1982). The opportunity to be exposed to elements of new cultures may facilitate a high degree of acculturation. In the current study, acculturation is defined as ‘the culture exchange that is initiated by the conjunction of two or more autonomous cultural systems . . . it may be the consequences of direct cultural transmission; it may be derived from non-cultural causes, such as ecological or demographic modifications induced by an impinging culture; it may be delayed, as with internal adjustments following the acceptance of alien traits or patterns, or it may be a reactive adaptation of traditional modes of life’ (Social Science Research Council, 1954, p. 774). As individuals acculturate, they adopt and are expected to modify mainstream cultures as a means of adaptation whilst retaining elements from their own culture (i.e. values, attitudes and norms) at the same time. According to Lee (1993), there are three fundamental elements involved in the acculturation process: culture, contact and change. Thus, when two cultures, one original and one new, come into contact with each other, some degree of cultural change is likely to occur via either confrontation, adaptation or a mixture of both. However, the nature and the duration of the contact will determine the degree of effect that contact has upon acculturation.

Penaloza (1994) has proposed a framework of consumer acculturation, stating that individual differences (i.e. demographic information, language, time of arrival, ethnic identity and environmental factors) are affected by two consumer acculturation agents such as family, friends, media, institutions (i.e. commercial, educational and religious) of both culture of origin and culture of immigration, which consequently will facilitate consumer acculturation processes (movement, translation and adaptation). As such, different acculturation processes may result in different

acculturation outcomes (assimilation, maintenance, resistance and segregation). Many immigrants may have assimilated in such a way where they adopt both subjective and objective components of their adopted culture. Meanwhile, these immigrants may want to maintain certain practices associated with their culture of origin. However, their attempt to continue identification with their culture of origin may cause resistance as they resent the pressure to submerge their original culture and take on new roles. Finally, immigrants may display segregation as they may avoid living and shopping in places associated with immigrant cultures. Thus, this model demonstrates that acculturation is a dynamic and complicated process that needs careful attention from marketers in order to effectively target to the ethnic minority (Schumann et al., 2002; Rajagopalan and Heitmeyer, 2005).

Cross-cultural scholars have commonly employed multiple items to assess consumer acculturation. These items are language proficiency, preference and use (Szapocznik et al., 1978; Deshpande et al., 1986; Gentry et al., 1995; Schumann et al., 2002); generation or length of stay (Lee and Um, 1992; Penaloza, 1994; Sekhom, 2007); type of ethnic food consumption and type of media exposure (Szapocznik et al., 1978; O'Guinn et al., 1986; Choi and Tamborini, 1988; Rajagopalan and Heitmeyer, 2005); self-identification (Bergier, 1986; Lee et al., 2002; Sekhom, 2007); and cultural identity (Gentry et al., 1995). These items have proven to contribute to the acculturation process.

Consumer ethnocentrism

The concept of ethnocentrism describes a general attitude in which an individual holds a strong belief and commitment/loyalty towards his/her own ethnic heritage (in-group) and evaluates other groups (out-groups) from the in-group's standpoint (Summer, 1906). Campbell and McCandless (1951) noted that ethnocentric persons express negative, stereotyped opinions and hostile attitudes towards out-groups and express positive opinions and supportive attitudes towards those who are in the same group. In addition, ethnocentric persons consider out-groups to be alien, unworthy or hostile and express negative reactions (attitude and behavior) towards out-groups (Ray and Lovejoy, 1986).

Later, Shimp and Sharma (1987) defined consumer ethnocentrism as 'the beliefs held by consumers about the appropriateness, indeed morality, of purchasing foreign made products' (p. 280) and developed a Consumer Ethnocentrism Scale (CETSCALE) to measure the construct of consumer ethnocentrism. Ethnocentric consumers are more likely to see their own groups as an 'in-group'. CETSCALE has been employed widely in domestic and cross-cultural settings and has revealed acceptable psychometric properties (Granzin and Olsen, 1998; Kaynak and Kara, 2002; Wang and Chen, 2004; Vida et al., 2008; Poon et al., 2010).

In addition, CETSCALE possesses predictive utility related to consumers' attitudes and behaviours associated with domestic vs. foreign-made products. A number of studies reveal that consumers' preferences towards domestic products are influenced by consumer ethnocentrism (e.g. Shimp and Sharma, 1987; Granzin and Olsen, 1998; Shoham and Brencic, 2003; Wang and Chen, 2004). Differences in product evaluations (domestic vs. foreign) may be partly due to ethnocentrism (Netemeyer et al., 1991; Kaynak and Kara, 2002; Rose et al., 2009). Wall and Heslop (1986) reported that morality plays an important role in determining consumers' purchase of domestic (Canada) products amongst Canadians. Empirical research also revealed that consumers who are highly ethnocentric towards their own country (e.g. Poland, Israel) show a negative preference towards foreign-made products (e.g. US, UK) (Marcoux et al., 1997; Rose

et al., 2009). Thus, those consumers who displayed a high level of ethnocentrism are more likely to exhibit more favourable attitudes towards domestic-made products than foreign-made products.

Hypotheses development

Ethnicity and consumer ethnocentrism

Bank (1981) suggests that ethnicity should be defined as the sharing of a common history, tradition and sense of peoplehood. Cross-cultural scholars have argued that the impact of ethnicity on consumers' belief systems should be examined because such belief systems may affect their attitudes and behaviours (Phinney, 1992; Shim and Eastlick, 1998; Kim and Kang, 2001; Lee et al., 2002; Rajagopalan and Heitmeyer, 2005). Deshpande et al. (1986) distinguish between objective and subjective views of how an individual perceives his or her own ethnicity – whether it belongs to one group or another. An objective view of one's perceived ethnicity is determined by parental heritage and/or last name, whilst a subjective view reflects attributions made by the person about oneself. Deshpande et al. (1986) state that one's perceived ethnicity may be an effective predictor of one's behaviour. Previous cross-cultural studies have examined the differences amongst Asian immigrants residing in the US within each category [(e.g. Chinese vs. Japanese; Lee and Um, 1992; Kang and Kim, 1998; Kim and Kang, 2001; Schumann et al., 2002)]. No known study has investigated whether any differences related to ethnocentric tendencies towards the US (the individual's immigrant culture) exist between those who, whilst living in the US, perceive themselves as either Asian or Asian American. It is expected that amongst Asian immigrants residing in the US, consumer ethnocentric tendencies towards the US (in-group) may be more pronounced amongst those who view themselves as Asian American than those who view themselves as Asian. Thus:

H1: Amongst Asian immigrants residing in the US, Asian Americans will display higher consumer ethnocentric tendencies towards the US than Asians.

Acculturation and consumer ethnocentrism

Seelye and Brewer (1970) argued that 'acculturation to a social group other than one's original in-group involves recognition of new value systems sometimes unfamiliar or contradictory to those of the new socialization group . . . thus . . . acculturation should be inversely related to ethnocentrism or the degree of commitment to a prior group' (p. 147). They found that Americans living in Guatemala who felt more secure living there tended to reduce their commitment towards their original in-group (i.e. US). In addition, Wallendorf and Reilly (1983) also argued that individuals with high level of uncertainty about their identity may attempt to adopt components of their host culture (e.g. material symbols) in order to create an in-group feeling. For ethnocentric consumers, they are more likely to see their own groups as an 'in-group'. Therefore, as immigrants increase their identity with the culture they have emigrated to, strong beliefs and feelings of commitment towards the country of immigration (in-group) will be likely because they may want to be considered as 'good Americans' and prove their 'Americanism'. Hence,

H2: Amongst Asian immigrants residing in the US, those with high degree of acculturation will display higher consumer ethnocentric tendencies towards the US than those with a lower degree of acculturation.

Consumer ethnocentrism and attitudes and behaviours towards domestic-made products

Consumer ethnocentrism may provide a sense of identity and belonging that acts as a guideline for attitudes and purchasing behaviours, which are acceptable to one's in-group. Findings reveal that consumers' positive evaluations towards domestic products are influenced by consumer ethnocentrism (e.g. Granzin and Olsen, 1998; Shoham and Brencic, 2003; Wang and Chen, 2004). Differences in product evaluations (domestic vs. foreign) may be due partly to ethnocentrism (Wall and Heslop, 1986; Netemeyer et al., 1991; Marcoux et al., 1997; Kaynak and Kara, 2002; Rose et al., 2009). Therefore, Asian immigrants who are more affiliated with the culture they have emigrated to may possess higher levels of consumer ethnocentrism towards their adopted country, resulting in more positive attitudes towards products manufactured in that country as compared with other groups. Therefore,

H3: Amongst Asian immigrants residing in the US, their consumer ethnocentric tendencies towards the US will be positively related to their attitudes towards products manufactured by the country to which they emigrated.

A consumer's attitude towards a product is a function of his or her evaluations of the products' attributes. Several studies have revealed the positive relationship between consumers' attitudes towards domestic-made products and their purchasing behaviours (Marcoux et al., 1997; Kim and Pysarchik, 2000; Shoham and Brencic, 2003; Poon et al., 2010). For example, Marcoux et al. (1997) revealed that Polish consumers who scaled high on patriotism tended to purchase Polish-made products as compared with others. That is, purchasing their own ethnic-made products revealed feelings of national pride (Botschen and Hemetsberger, 1998). Poon et al. (2010) also found that Asian immigrants living in Australia with high level of consumer ethnocentrism to Australia were likely to exhibit a favourable preference towards buying Australian-made products. Thus,

H4: Amongst Asian immigrants residing in the US, their attitude towards products manufactured by their adopted country will be positively related to their intentions to purchase products manufactured by the country to which they emigrated.

Methodology

Instrument development

A focus group of 10 Asian immigrants was conducted to determine product categories and brand names that they were most familiar with. As a result, an automobile was selected in this study with seven different brand names such as Ford, Toyota, Hyundai, Honda, Daewoo, Pontiac, Suzuki and Chevrolet. Then, questions pertaining to respondents' selections of domestic- (US) and foreign- (Non-US) made automobiles were included. The final questionnaire consists of four sections. The first section, which includes 17 statements pertaining to consumer ethnocentrism towards the US,

was adapted from Shimp and Sharma's (1987) consumer ethnocentric tendencies (CETSCALE). This scale was measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale anchored by 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree. In the second section, 17 different statements assessing consumer acculturation were adapted from Szapocznik et al. (1978), Bergier (1986), Lee and Um (1992), Donthu and Cherian (1994) and Gentry et al. (1995). The acculturation scale consists of three statements pertaining to language preference and use at home and with friends; four statements concerning the type of ethnic foods eaten and media exposure such as music, magazine and television; one statement related to the selection of one's spouse or fiancé as related to ethnicity; one statement pertaining to the way they wish to celebrate the wedding; three statements assessing self-identification; four statements dealing with cultural identification and pride; and one question about generational status (e.g. First generation indicates you were born in your country of ethnic origin; Second generation – you were born in the US, but either of your parents were born in the country of your ethnic origin; Third generation – you were born in the US, both of your parents were born in the US, and all grandparents were born in the country of your ethnic origin and so on). All statements related to language preference and use at home and with friends; the type of ethnic food consumed and media exposure such as music, magazine and television; consideration of spouse or fiancé related to ethnicity and wedding celebration plans were measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = 'My own ethnicity', to 5 = 'American'. Statements pertaining to self-identification and cultural identification and pride were also measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = 'strongly disagree', to 5 = 'strongly agree'. Prior to producing acculturation scores, responses related to self-identification and cultural identity and pride were reversed. Last, the question about generational status was measured using a categorical measure.

In the next section, participants were asked to indicate brand names that they think are domestically made (US) and foreign-made (Non-US) automobiles (they could apply as many categories as desired). Information in this section was employed as a screening section to assess participants' knowledge about brand names of automobiles associated with either US- or foreign-made brands. The fourth section includes five statements capturing consumers' attitudes towards US-made automobiles (i.e. workmanship, reputation, manoeuvrability, quality and durability). Two statements concerning participants' familiarity towards US automobile brands were adapted from Parameswaran and Yaprak (1987) and Han and Terpstra (1988), and three statements assessing consumers' intentions to purchase were adapted from Lee (1993) and Shimp and Sharma (1987). All statements were measured based on 7-point Likert-type scales, anchored by 1 = strongly disagree and by 7 = strongly agree. The last section includes questions related to participants' demographic information such as gender, age, annual household income, marital status and generational status. For ethnicity, participants were asked to choose whether they perceived themselves as Asian or Asian American (1 = Asian and 2 = Asian American).

Data collection and participants' characteristics

The population of interest for this study was Asian immigrants living in the US. The study was conducted within a moderately large metropolitan area of the south-western US. Given the limited access to an Asian immigrant population in this geographical area, a convenience sample was employed, recruited partly from the university campus. A snowball sampling technique was also employed to overcome the limited access to an Asian population. As a result, a total of 185 responses were gathered in the current study.

Table 1 displays the demographic characteristics of participants. Of 185 participants, 45% were females and 55% were males. Approximately 62% were between 18 and 26 years old. Almost 53% had an annual household income higher than \$70 000. In terms of the ethnicity of participants, 53% considered themselves Asian whilst 47% viewed themselves as Asian American. In terms of marital status, the majority was single (74%), followed by married (20%) and separated (1.6%) respectively. Finally, about 50% identified as First generation; 25% were Second generation; 12% were third generation; 6% were Fourth generation; and 1% was Fifth generation.

Table 1. Participants' characteristics (n = 185)

Demographic variables	n	%
Gender		
Male	101	54.60
Female	84	45.41
No response	0	0
Age		
Annual household income		
<\$30,000	17	9.19
\$30,000–\$70 000	67	36.22
>\$70,000	98	52.97
No response	3	1.62
Ethnicity		
Asian	97	52.43
Asian American	88	47.57
No response	0	0
Marital status		
Single	136	73.51
Married	39	20.08
Divorced	1	0.55
Separated	3	1.62
No response	6	3.24
Generational status		
First (you were born in your country of ethnic origin)	89	48.11
Second (you were born in the US but either your parents were born in the country of your ethnic origin)	46	24.87
Third (you were born in the US; both of your parents were born in the US and all grandparents were born in the country of your ethnic origin)	23	12.43
Fourth (you and your parents were born in the US and at least one grandparents were born in the country of your ethnic origin)	12	6.49
Fifth (you, your parents and all grandparents were born in the US)	2	1.08
No response	13	7.03

Results

Descriptive statistics and reliability

Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix of model constructs are reported in Table 2. The means of all model constructs ranged from 2.32 (purchase intentions towards US-made products) to 3.11 (attitudes towards US-made products); however, ethnicity ($M = 1.14$) was measured based on a categorical scale. The standard deviation ranged from 0.50 (ethnicity) to 1.22 (purchase intentions towards US-made products), indicating substantial variances in the responses. The correlation coefficients ranged from -0.10 to 0.46 . A closer examination of the correlation between main variables showed a positive relationship between ethnicity and consumer ethnocentrism towards the US ($r = 0.46$) and between acculturation level and consumer ethnocentrism towards the US ($r = 0.16$). Furthermore, a positive relationship was found between consumer ethnocentrism towards the US and immigrants' attitudes towards US-made products ($r = 0.22$). Moreover, consumers' attitudes towards US-made products and their purchase intentions towards US-made products seem to be positively related to one another ($r = 0.29$). Overall, all correlation coefficients provide an initial support for all hypothesized relationships proposed in the current study. All variables' Cronbach alpha coefficients (i.e. reliability) examined in the study revealed high level of internal consistency: alpha ranged from 0.86 (acculturation) to 0.96 (purchase intentions towards the US-made products) (Nunnally, 1978).

Hypotheses testing

Hypotheses 1 and 2: examining the effects of ethnicity and acculturation level on consumer ethnocentrism towards the US

Prior to examining hypotheses 1 and 2 using analysis of variance (ANOVA) with ethnicity and acculturation level as independent variables and consumer ethnocentrism towards the US as dependent variable, an acculturation index was constructed based on all thirteen statements used to assess acculturation level. Next, median split technique was employed to categorize Asian immigrants into either a low or high level of acculturation. That is, those with acculturation scores less than or equal to the median were classified as 'low', and those with acculturation scores higher than the median were classified as 'high'.

ANOVA results regarding the effects of ethnicity and acculturation level on consumer ethnocentrism towards the US showed a significant main effect on ethnicity factor for consumer ethnocentrism towards the US ($F_{1,184} = 35.86, P < 0.001$) and acculturation level ($F_{1,184} = 4.28, P < 0.05$; see Table 3). However, no interaction effect of ethnicity and acculturation level was found for consumer ethnocentrism towards the US. A post hoc mean comparison related to main effects of ethnicity and acculturation level was further conducted; the results showed that Asian Americans displayed a significantly higher level of consumer ethnocentric tendencies towards the US than Asian consumers ($M_{\text{Asian American}} = 3.21$ vs. $M_{\text{Asian}} = 2.23$). Likewise, those with high level of acculturation displayed significantly higher levels of consumer ethnocentric tendencies towards the US than those with low acculturation levels ($M_{\text{High Acculturated}} = 3.02$ vs. $M_{\text{Low Acculturated}} = 2.38$). Thus, H1 and H2 were supported.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics, correlations and reliability

	Mean	Std.	Correlations					Reliability
			1	2	3	4	5	
1. Ethnicity (1 item)	1.48	0.50	1.00					N/A
2. Acculturation (17 items)	3.03	0.62	0.44***	1.00				0.86
3. Consumer ethnocentrism towards the US (17 items)	2.70	1.06	0.46***	0.16*	1.00			0.96
4. Attitudes towards domestic-made products (5 items)	3.11	0.83	0.14	0.08	0.22**	1.00		0.88
5. Purchase intentions towards domestic-made products (2 items)	2.32	1.22	-0.10	0.09	0.09	0.29***	1.00	0.96

* $P < 0.05$; ** $P < 0.01$; *** $P < 0.001$. N/A, not applicable.

Table 3. ANOVA of Asian immigrants' ethnocentrism towards the US for Asian and Asian Americans and for low and high acculturation level

Factor	Mean	F	Significance
Ethnicity		35.86	<0.001
Asian	2.23		
Asian American	3.21		
Acculturation level		4.28	<0.05
Low	2.38		
High	3.02		
Interaction (ethnicity × acculturation level)		1.28	>0.05
Low-acculturated Asian	2.16		
High-acculturated Asian	2.43		
Low-acculturated Asian American	3.19		
High-acculturated Asian American	3.26		

Although no interaction effect between ethnicity and acculturation was found, the comparison amongst the four groups was interesting. That is, highly acculturated Asian Americans revealed the highest level of consumer ethnocentric tendencies towards the US, followed by Asian Americans with low levels of acculturation, highly acculturated Asians and Asians with low levels of acculturation ($M_{\text{High Acculturated Asian American}} = 3.26$; $M_{\text{Low Acculturated Asian American}} = 3.19$; $M_{\text{High Acculturated Asian}} = 2.43$; $M_{\text{Low Acculturated Asian}} = 2.16$, respectively; see Fig. 2 for an interaction plot).

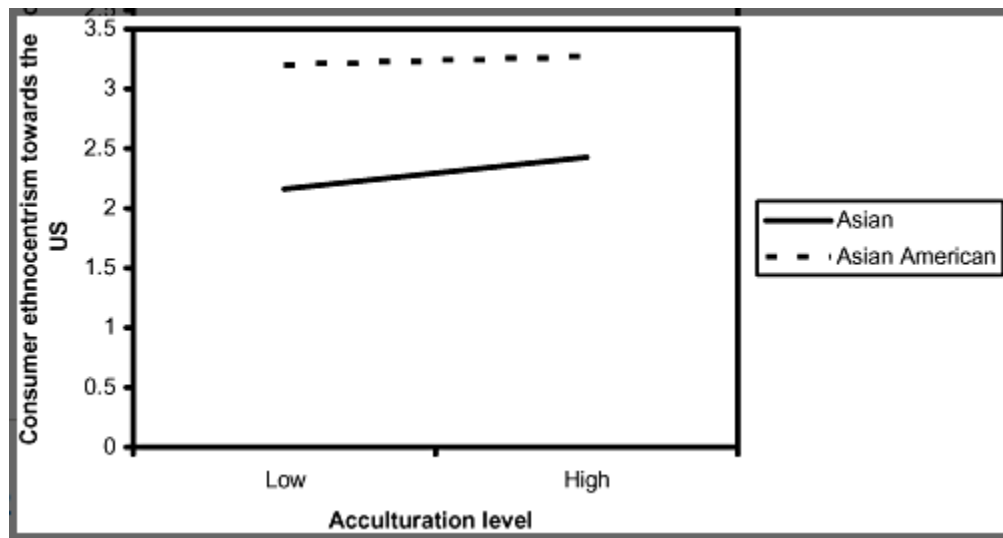


Figure 2. Ethnicity and acculturation interaction on Asian immigrants' ethnocentrism towards the US.

Hypotheses 3 and 4: examining the relationships amongst consumer ethnocentrism towards the US, attitudes and purchase intentions towards US-made products

In examining hypotheses 3 and 4, two different single regression analyses were performed. The first single regression model employed consumers' attitudes towards US-made products as a dependent variable and consumer ethnocentrism towards the US as an independent variable. Results revealed that Asian immigrants' ethnocentric tendencies towards the US ($\beta = 0.18$, t -value = 2.90, $P < 0.01$) were significantly related to their attitudes towards US-made products ($F_{1,165} = 10.15$, $P < 0.001$; $R^2 = 0.1198$) thus lending support for H3.

The second single regression mode employed consumers' purchase intention towards US-made products as a dependent variable and their attitudes towards the US-made products as an independent variable. Results revealed that Asian immigrants' attitudes towards US-made products ($\beta = 0.43$, t -value = 3.84, $P < 0.001$) were significantly related to their purchase intentions towards US-made products ($F_{1,166} = 14.72$, $P < 0.001$; $R^2 = 0.1315$) thus accepting H4.

Discussion and conclusions

The current study is amongst the first that explores the impact of perceived ethnicity and level of acculturation of Asian immigrants on their ethnocentrism towards the US as well as their attitudes and behavioural intentions towards US-made products. The findings of the study provide two

major contributions to the literature on country of origin effect. First, the inclusion of perceived ethnicity (Asian vs. Asian American) and level of acculturation to consumer ethnocentrism provide depth to conceptual arguments and empirical support on antecedents of consumer ethnocentrism towards the adopted country of ethnic minorities. These minorities may have attempted to be a part of mainstream culture via an expression of certain belief of supporting and buying products made by mainstream culture. Second, the replication study of the impact of consumer ethnocentrism on attitudes and behavioural intentions with Asian immigrants appears to support basic theoretical premises about consumer ethnocentrism and its effect on attitudes and behaviour (Shimp and Sharma, 1987; Netemeyer et al., 1991; Marcoux et al., 1997; Kaynak and Kara, 2002; Wang and Chen, 2004; Rose et al., 2009).

As expected, results revealed that Asian Americans are more likely to exhibit higher degree of ethnocentric tendencies towards the country they have emigrated to (i.e. the US) than their Asian counterparts. Such results lend support for previous studies relative to the importance of the effect of perceived ethnicity it may have on an individual's belief system (Deshpande et al., 1986; Phinney, 1992; Shim and Eastlick, 1998; Lee et al., 2002; Poon et al., 2010) about appropriateness and morality in purchasing products. Furthermore, results also revealed that highly acculturated groups of Asian immigrants possess higher degrees of ethnocentric tendencies towards the country they have emigrated to than groups of Asian immigrants with low acculturation levels. As previous scholars (Seelye and Brewer, 1970; Wallendorf and Reilly, 1983; Penaloza, 1994; Rajagopalan and Heitmeyer, 2005) stated, these immigrants may possess high degrees of uncertainty when living in their adopted country. Thus, one way to make themselves feel secure is to take on certain beliefs and norms from their adopted culture, attempting to acculturate to mainstream culture. As a result, these highly acculturated Asian immigrants may want to be accepted by mainstream culture as 'good Americans' as a part of coping behaviour, resulting in less of an ability to hold their original in-group commitment (Asia); however, they may be more prone to commit to their new mainstream in-group (the US).

Although an interaction effect between perceived ethnicity and acculturation level was not found significant in the ANOVA results, as might be anticipated, an interesting pattern emerged. That is, highly acculturated Asian Americans stood apart from other groups in that they manifested the highest scores on consumer ethnocentric tendencies towards the US. Likewise, Asians with low levels of acculturation displayed the lowest scores on consumer ethnocentric tendencies towards the US, whereas the other two groups (i.e. Asian Americans with low levels of acculturation and highly acculturated Asians) fell in between. The study's results confirmed perceived ethnicity and acculturation as important factors to consider when developing advertising campaigns that emphasize ethnocentric messages. In addition, the findings reinforce the notion that marketers should consider Asian immigrants as a separate entity (Asians vs. Asian Americans) if they want their strategies to be effective when developing marketing messages geared towards the former ethnic segment (Kim and Kang, 2001; Schumann et al., 2002).

Moreover, the study's findings support the extant research in that Asian immigrants' ethnocentric tendencies towards the US positively influenced their attitudes towards US-made products, which in turn positively affected their purchase intentions (Shimp and Sharma, 1987; Netemeyer et al., 1991; Marcoux et al., 1997; Granzin and Olsen, 1998; Wang and Chen, 2004). That is, those Asian immigrants who possess feelings of appropriateness and morality in purchasing US-made products are likely to have favourable attitudes or preferences towards the US-made products. Such favourable attitudes are likely to increase their intentions to purchase that product. Thus, the replication related to these interrelationships has successfully proved the

applicability of such variables and their relationships with respect to Asian immigrants residing in the US. When developing marketing campaigns marketers may need to focus on ethnocentric themes that may create a strong impact on Asian immigrants. This may subsequently influence certain feelings such as a feeling of buying American-made products, causing these Asian immigrants who are somewhat 'Americanized' to express a feeling of ethnocentrism towards the US, subsequently affecting their attitudes and behavioural intentions towards US-made products.

Limitation and future research direction

Although the current study has addressed its initial hypotheses, there are some areas that are worthy of future investigation. One potential area of research is to enhance the sample size and to include other ethnic minority groups to examine whether any differences may exist in their ethnocentrism towards the US. As scores relating to consumer ethnocentrism towards the US were less than 4.0 (the midpoint) out of 7.0 across four groups of these Asian immigrants, it is necessary to include other ethnic groups to enhance our understanding of consumer ethnocentrism towards the country of immigration (the US). Another potential area of research is to include other types of products to establish the stability of the present findings through replication. Next, other constructs (i.e. nationalism) may need further investigation amongst ethnic minorities living in the US to provide more insightful findings. Finally, longitudinal projects may offer benefits for future research.

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