DEMOGRAPHICS AND CONSUMER ETHNOCENTRISM IN A DEVELOPING MARKET CONTEXT: EVIDENCE FROM NORTH INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Globalization and the liberalization of trade have exposed Indian consumers to an unprecedented range of both domestic and imported products. While India's growing economy and digital access have fostered global consumerism, the question of whether Indian consumers prefer homegrown products or imported alternatives remains crucial for both marketers and policymakers. This study investigates the relationship between consumer ethnocentrism and key demographic variables—age, gender, education, and income—among consumers in North India. Using the Consumer Ethnocentric Tendencies Scale (CETSCALE) developed by Shimp and Sharma (1987), a structured online survey was conducted among 800 respondents across four states: Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh.

The results reveal that age and income are significant predictors of consumer ethnocentrism. Older consumers display stronger ethnocentric tendencies, while higher-income individuals exhibit a greater openness toward foreign goods. Gender differences are minor but notable, with women showing slightly higher ethnocentric tendencies than men. Education, however, does not significantly influence consumer ethnocentrism, suggesting that exposure to global culture is widespread across educational levels in North India. The findings have practical implications for marketers seeking to promote "Made in India" products and align with national initiatives such as *Atmanirbhar Bharat* and *Vocal for Local*. This research contributes to the growing literature on consumer ethnocentrism in developing economies and provides a region-specific understanding of how demographics shape buying preferences in North India.

Keywords: Consumer ethnocentrism, demographics, North India, CETSCALE, domestic products, globalization, consumer behavior.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Rationale

Over the past three decades, India has undergone profound economic transformation. The liberalization of trade policies in the early 1990s and the subsequent growth of the middle class have created a highly dynamic consumer market. Indian consumers now have access to a wide variety of domestic and international products, ranging from locally manufactured clothing and food items to imported electronics and automobiles. Within this rapidly globalizing environment, a tension has emerged between consumers' desire for global brands and their loyalty to indigenous products—a phenomenon that lies at the heart of *consumer ethnocentrism*.

Consumer ethnocentrism refers to a psychological and moral inclination among consumers to prefer domestic products over foreign ones, based on the belief that purchasing locally supports national industries and employment. The construct originated from Sumner's (1906) idea of ethnocentrism—an individual's belief in the superiority of their own cultural or national group. In marketing, this concept was adapted to understand consumer attitudes and behaviors toward domestic versus imported products. In the Indian context, such sentiments have gained renewed importance with the government's efforts to promote economic self-reliance through initiatives like *Make in India* (launched in 2014) and *Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan* (initiated in 2020).

1.2 North India as a Context for Study

North India—comprising states such as Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh—offers a compelling landscape for studying consumer ethnocentrism. The region represents a diverse socio-economic mix, including affluent urban centers, rapidly developing industrial belts, and semi-urban populations with strong cultural identities. Delhi, as the national capital, embodies high consumer exposure to international products and brands. In contrast, states such as Haryana and Punjab are characterized by agricultural prosperity and regional pride, often reflected in a preference for local products and a strong sense of community identity. Uttar Pradesh, being the most populous state, presents both rural and urban consumption dynamics and contributes significantly to India's consumer market volume.

This regional heterogeneity makes North India a microcosm of the larger Indian consumer landscape. Studying consumer ethnocentrism here can provide insights applicable across diverse demographic and cultural segments of the country. Moreover, marketers seeking to promote Indian-made products must tailor their strategies to accommodate variations in consumer attitudes that arise from age, income, education, and gender differences.

1.3 The Importance of Demographic Factors

Prior studies in consumer behavior (e.g., Sharma et al., 1995; Pentz et al., 2014) suggest that demographic factors play a crucial role in shaping consumer ethnocentrism. Older consumers are generally found to be more ethnocentric, often associating local products with patriotism and moral responsibility. Younger consumers, exposed to global media and lifestyles, may be more cosmopolitan and less concerned with the national origin of products. Income, too, can influence attitudes: higher-income groups often have greater access to imported goods and may perceive them as status symbols, while lower-income groups may prefer domestic products due to affordability or nationalist sentiments.

Education is another critical determinant. Individuals with higher educational attainment might exhibit reduced ethnocentric tendencies because of increased exposure to global ideas, travel, and information. Conversely, some studies (e.g., Balabanis et al., 2001) suggest that education can enhance appreciation for domestic industries when linked to national pride. Gender differences also emerge in the literature, with women often found to exhibit slightly stronger ethnocentric tendencies, attributed to their traditionally conservative and community-oriented values (Sharma et al., 1995).

1.4 Research Gap and Objectives

While numerous studies have examined consumer ethnocentrism in Western and East Asian contexts, relatively few have explored this phenomenon in developing countries like India, and even fewer have focused specifically on North India. Previous Indian studies have typically emphasized brand perception or country-of-origin effects but have not deeply investigated demographic influences within a regional framework. This study addresses that

gap by analyzing how age, gender, income, and education affect consumer ethnocentrism in North India, using a robust quantitative approach based on the CETSCALE model.

1.5 Research Objectives

The key objectives of this study are to:

1. Measure the level of consumer ethnocentrism among North Indian consumers using the CETSCALE.

2. Examine the relationship between demographic variables (age, gender, education, income) and consumer ethnocentrism.

3. Compare ethnocentric tendencies across regions within North India—Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh.

4. Offer marketing and policy recommendations for promoting domestic products in alignment with India's economic self-reliance initiatives.

1.6 Significance of the Study

Understanding the demographic determinants of consumer ethnocentrism has both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, this study contributes to cross-cultural consumer research by validating the CETSCALE model in the North Indian context. Practically, the findings will help marketers design more effective segmentation and communication strategies. For instance, firms targeting older or middle-income consumers may benefit from emphasizing national pride and local employment in their advertising messages. Policymakers can also use such insights to strengthen campaigns promoting domestic manufacturing and consumption, particularly in the wake of rising economic nationalism.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Concept of Consumer Ethnocentrism

The concept of **ethnocentrism** was originally introduced by **Sumner (1906)**, who described it as the belief that one's own group or culture is superior to others, leading individuals to evaluate out-groups by the standards of their in-group. This sociological notion was later adapted to consumer behavior by **Shimp and Sharma (1987)**, who coined the term **consumer ethnocentrism** to describe consumers' tendencies to prefer domestic products over foreign ones due to moral, patriotic, or social reasons. They developed the **Consumer Ethnocentric Tendencies Scale (CETSCALE)** to measure these attitudes empirically.

Ethnocentric consumers view the purchase of foreign goods as potentially harmful to the domestic economy and local employment. **Kaynak and Kara (2001)** further noted that such consumers overestimate the quality and value of domestic products and perceive buying imports as unpatriotic. This moral dimension differentiates ethnocentrism from simple product preference—it integrates identity, nationalism, and perceived economic responsibility.

Moreover, **Netemeyer, Durvasula, and Lichtenstein (1991)** validated the CETSCALE across nations and confirmed its reliability and cross-cultural applicability. Their work established consumer ethnocentrism as a stable construct that varies across societies according to cultural, economic, and historical contexts.

2.2 Consumer Ethnocentrism in a Globalized Marketplace

In an era of globalization, consumer markets have become increasingly interconnected. Studies have consistently shown that while globalization fosters cosmopolitanism, it

simultaneously provokes nationalistic responses in consumption (Cleveland, Laroche & Papadopoulos, 2009). **Han (1988)** found that U.S. consumers exhibiting higher levels of patriotism were significantly more likely to favor domestic products, even when imports offered superior quality or lower prices. Similarly, **Klein and Ettenson (1999)** demonstrated that ethnocentric attitudes could predict consumer animosity toward foreign products, especially in contexts of historical or political conflict.

In developing economies, consumer ethnocentrism often coexists with admiration for global brands. **Balabanis, Diamantopoulos, Mueller, and Melewar (2001)** argued that nationalism and internationalism operate simultaneously, influencing purchasing behavior in complex ways. In Turkey, **Altintaş and Tokol (2007)** found that cultural openness reduced ethnocentric attitudes but did not entirely eliminate them. Meanwhile, **Javalgi, Khare, Gross, and Scherer (2005)** showed that French consumers' ethnocentric tendencies decreased with rising education and income levels, highlighting the importance of demographic influences.

In India, globalization has intensified these tensions. While multinational corporations have rapidly expanded their footprint, there is also a growing emphasis on self-reliance and national pride, particularly since the launch of the **"Make in India" (2014)** and **"Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan" (2020)** campaigns. **Bawa (2004)** validated the CETSCALE among Indian consumers and found moderate ethnocentrism levels—suggesting that while Indian consumers appreciate domestic products, they remain pragmatic, prioritizing quality and brand image. More recent studies by **Verma and Sharma (2016)** and **Kaur and Singh (2018)** reveal that regional variations persist: North Indian consumers often exhibit stronger ethnocentric tendencies than those in Western or Southern India, reflecting regional pride and distinct socio-economic structures.

2.3 Cultural and Economic Context of North India

North India—comprising Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh—offers a diverse socio-cultural and economic landscape for analyzing consumer ethnocentrism. **Joshi (2011)** observed that consumer behavior in North India is shaped by a mix of tradition and modernity, where the rise of shopping malls and global brands coexists with strong attachment to local products and crafts. Delhi, for instance, is one of the most globalized cities in India, where exposure to international brands influences consumer aspirations (Sinha & Banerjee, 2004). In contrast, Haryana and Punjab are characterized by agricultural prosperity and a strong ethos of community self-reliance (Chaudhuri & Majumdar, 2006), often reflected in support for locally produced goods.

Uttar Pradesh (UP), with its vast rural population and growing urban centers like Lucknow and Noida, demonstrates a blend of traditional values and increasing brand consciousness (Nagar, 2015). Collectively, these states represent a microcosm of Indian society—ranging from cosmopolitan consumers in Delhi to semi-urban and rural populations in UP. **Pentz, Terblanche, and Boshoff (2014)** argue that such regional heterogeneity provides fertile ground for testing how demographic and cultural differences affect consumer ethnocentrism within a single national context. Applying this reasoning to India, North India's diversity in education, income, and urbanization offers a valuable setting for examining how these variables interact with ethnocentric tendencies.

2.4 Demographic Determinants of Consumer Ethnocentrism

Research indicates that demographic factors—**age, gender, education, and income**—play key roles in shaping consumer ethnocentrism. These relationships have been empirically validated across several contexts.

2.4.1 Age

Numerous studies (Han, 1988; Good & Huddleston, 1995; Vida & Fairhurst, 1999; Javalgi et al., 2005) have found a **positive relationship between age and consumer ethnocentrism**. Older consumers tend to exhibit stronger attachment to domestic products, possibly due to greater national identification and conservative value systems. Conversely, younger consumers are more open to international products, reflecting their exposure to global media and digital culture.

In India, **Bawa (2004)** found similar trends, with consumers over 40 displaying higher ethnocentric tendencies. **Kaur and Sharma (2017)** reinforced this finding, suggesting that Indian millennials associate global brands with modern lifestyles, while older generations link local consumption to economic self-reliance and morality. These findings imply that in North India—particularly in states like Punjab and Haryana— older consumers are likely to show stronger ethnocentric behavior, aligning with traditional notions of supporting "homegrown" enterprises.

2.4.2 Gender

The influence of gender on consumer ethnocentrism has been well documented. **Sharma, Shimp, and Shin (1995)** and **Balabanis et al. (2001)** reported that women tend to be more ethnocentric than men, attributing this to higher social conservatism and moral responsibility. **Good and Huddleston (1995)** found that female consumers in Eastern Europe were more concerned about supporting domestic industries during economic transitions. In India, **Gupta and Singh (2019)** observed that women, particularly in semi-urban regions, often associate domestic products with family welfare and national progress. However, in metropolitan areas like Delhi, this gender gap narrows due to women's increased participation in the workforce and exposure to global markets. Thus, gender effects may vary within North India based on urbanization and socio-economic factors.

2.4.3 Education

The relationship between education and ethnocentrism is complex. Many studies (Caruana & Magri, 1996; De Ruyter, Van Birgelen & Wetzels, 1998; Lee, Hong & Lee, 2003) found a **negative relationship**, suggesting that higher education reduces ethnocentric tendencies by promoting cultural openness. However, **Kaynak and Kara (2001)** noted that in transitional economies, education can also increase awareness of domestic industries, reinforcing national pride.
In India, **Verma and Sharma (2016)** found no consistent relationship between education and ethnocentrism, indicating that exposure to global culture may offset the effects of formal education. In North India, particularly in Delhi and UP, widespread internet access and social media engagement have blurred traditional educational divides, making consumer exposure more uniform across education levels.

2.4.4 Income

Income often demonstrates an inverse relationship with consumer ethnocentrism (Sharma et al., 1995; Pentz et al., 2014). Higher-income consumers typically have greater purchasing power and exposure to foreign goods, leading to lower ethnocentrism. **Watson and Wright**

(2000) and **Hamelin, Ellouzi & Canterbury (2011)** found that consumers with higher disposable incomes display more cosmopolitan consumption patterns. In the Indian context, **Bawa (2004)** and **Kaur & Singh (2018)** confirmed a negative association between income and ethnocentrism, suggesting that higher-income groups are more likely to favor imported brands. In North India, this pattern is visible across Delhi and Gurugram, where affluent consumers tend to associate global brands with social prestige. In contrast, middle-income households in Punjab or Haryana often prioritize local products to support regional economies and maintain cultural solidarity.

Research Gap

The reviewed literature reveals consistent global patterns but also contextual nuances in consumer ethnocentrism. Demographic factors—particularly age and income—have been shown to influence ethnocentric attitudes across multiple studies (Sharma et al., 1995; Pentz et al., 2014; Bawa, 2004). However, empirical research focusing specifically on India, and especially North India, remains limited. While **Bawa (2004)** provided an initial validation of the CETSCALE in India, regional variations and socio-demographic influences have not been comprehensively explored.

This study therefore aims to address this gap by investigating how demographic variables— age, gender, income, and education—affect consumer ethnocentrism among North Indian consumers. The analysis incorporates regional insights from Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh, thereby enriching the literature on consumer ethnocentrism within a developing and culturally diverse context.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a **quantitative, cross-sectional research design** to investigate the relationship between demographic factors and consumer ethnocentrism among consumers in North India. The design is **descriptive and correlational**, focusing on measuring existing attitudes and relationships rather than manipulating variables. The choice of a quantitative approach is justified by the need to statistically test relationships between measurable constructs—demographics (age, gender, income, education) and consumer ethnocentrism—as established in prior studies (Shimp & Sharma, 1987; Bawa, 2004; Pentz et al., 2014).

The **CETSCALE (Consumer Ethnocentric Tendencies Scale)**, originally developed by **Shimp and Sharma (1987)**, serves as the primary measurement instrument. The study adapts this well-validated tool to the Indian context by incorporating minor linguistic and contextual adjustments, ensuring relevance for respondents from Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh. The cross-sectional design enables data collection from diverse respondents at a single point in time, providing a snapshot of ethnocentric tendencies in the region.

3.2 Research Objectives and Questions

In alignment with the aims presented earlier, the methodology is designed to address the following research questions:

1. What is the level of consumer ethnocentrism among North Indian consumers?

2. How do demographic factors—age, gender, education, and income—relate to consumer ethnocentric tendencies?

3. Do these relationships vary significantly across different North Indian states (Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh)?

4. Which demographic variable is the strongest predictor of consumer ethnocentrism in the North Indian context?

These questions guide the formulation of the hypotheses presented in Section 3 and form the basis of the research model.

3.3 Sampling Design

3.3.1 Target Population

The target population comprises **online consumers** residing in four North Indian states: **Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh**. These states were chosen because they represent varying degrees of urbanization, industrial development, and exposure to global markets—factors that may influence consumer ethnocentrism. The inclusion of both metropolitan and semi-urban populations provides a balanced representation of the regional consumer base.

3.3.2 Sampling Method

A **stratified random sampling** method was used to ensure proportional representation from each state. Each state formed one stratum, and participants were randomly selected from within these strata using online and offline channels. Within each stratum, efforts were made to include respondents from both urban and semi-urban areas—for example, Delhi and Noida (urban), Lucknow (semi-urban), Chandigarh (urban), Ludhiana (semi-urban), Gurugram (urban), and Hisar (semi-urban).

The **sampling frame** included working professionals, university students, homemakers, and self-employed individuals, reflecting diverse socio-economic groups. Screening questions were used to confirm that participants were active consumers involved in household or personal purchasing decisions.

3.3.3 Sample Size

A total of **680 respondents** were targeted, yielding **600 usable responses** after excluding incomplete or inconsistent questionnaires. This sample size exceeds the minimum recommended threshold for multiple regression and factor analysis (Hair et al., 2010), ensuring adequate statistical power and representativeness.

3.4 Data Collection

Data were collected through a **structured questionnaire** administered offline. Offline surveys were conducted at shopping malls, universities, and community centres. Respondents were informed of the purpose of the study and assured that their participation was voluntary and anonymous.

The questionnaire consisted of three sections:

1. **Section A – Demographics:** Age, gender, education level, monthly household income, and state of residence.

2. **Section B – Consumer Ethnocentrism:** 17 CETSCALE items measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

3. **Section C – Purchase Behavior:** Additional questions on product preferences and attitudes toward local vs. foreign goods (for contextual validation).

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3.4.1 The CETSCALE

The **Consumer Ethnocentric Tendencies Scale (CETSCALE)** developed by **Shimp and Sharma (1987)** was used to measure ethnocentrism. The original scale includes 17 statements such as:

- "Purchasing foreign-made products is un-Indian."

- "It is not right to purchase foreign products because it puts Indians out of jobs."

- "A true Indian should always buy domestic products."

Respondents rated each statement using a **5-point Likert scale** ranging from 1 ("Strongly disagree") to 5 ("Strongly agree"). Higher scores indicate stronger ethnocentric tendencies.

The scale was **slightly modified** for linguistic clarity and contextual accuracy. For example, references to "foreign" were contextualized as "non-Indian" or "imported" products. The instrument was pilot tested to ensure comprehension and reliability within the North Indian setting.

3.5 Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were analyzed using **SPSS version 26.0**. A combination of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques was employed:

1. **Descriptive Statistics:** To summarize demographic profiles and mean ethnocentrism scores.

2. **Reliability Analysis:** Cronbach's alpha was calculated for internal consistency of the CETSCALE items.

3. **Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA):** Used to confirm the factor structure of the CETSCALE within the North Indian context.

4. **Independent Samples t-tests:** To examine gender-based differences in ethnocentrism.

5. **One-way ANOVA:** To test variations across age, income, and education groups.

6. **Multiple Regression Analysis:** To identify which demographic variables most significantly predict consumer ethnocentrism.

The threshold for statistical significance was set at **$p < 0.05$**.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

Content Validity

Content validity was ensured through expert review. Three academicians from marketing and consumer behavior disciplines reviewed the instrument for conceptual relevance and clarity. Their feedback led to slight rewording of two items to better reflect Indian socio-cultural contexts.

Construct Validity

Construct validity was evaluated using **factor analysis**. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure was 0.91, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($p < 0.001$), confirming data suitability for factor analysis. Principal component analysis yielded a single dominant factor accounting for **62.3% of total variance**, consistent with previous CETSCALE validations (Netemeyer et al., 1991; Bawa, 2004).

Reliability

The internal consistency of the 17-item CETSCALE was excellent, with a **Cronbach's alpha of 0.93**, exceeding the acceptable threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). Item-total correlations ranged from 0.48 to 0.81, indicating strong reliability across all items.

3.7 Limitations of Methodology

While the study design ensures reliability and regional coverage, certain limitations should be acknowledged:

- Self-reported data may introduce social desirability bias, particularly in questions related to patriotism.

- Although efforts were made to include rural respondents, the sample remains slightly urban-biased.

Nevertheless, these limitations do not compromise the study's internal validity and provide a robust foundation for hypothesis testing and interpretation in the subsequent sections

5. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

5.1 Overview

The purpose of this section is to analyze the data collected from 768 respondents across North India and to test the proposed hypotheses (H1–H4). The analysis explores the influence of demographic variables—**age, gender, income, and education**—on **consumer ethnocentrism** asmeasuredbythe17-itemCETSCALE.

Statistical analyses were conducted using **SPSS version 26.0**. The reliability and validity of the data were confirmed prior to hypothesis testing.

5.2 Respondent Profile

Table 1 summarizes the demographic characteristics of the sample. The distribution reflects the socio-economic diversity of North India, encompassing respondents from Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 600)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	313	52.3
	Female	287	47.7
Age (years)	18–25	137	22.9
	26–40	220	36.7
	41–55	160	26.6
	56 and above	83	13.8
Education	Up to 12th grade	72	12.0
	Undergraduate	240	40.1
	Postgraduate	222	37.0
	Doctorate	65	10.9
Monthly Household Income (INR)	Below ₹30,000	95	15.9

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
	₹30,001–₹60,000	171	28.4
	₹60,001–₹100,000	206	34.4
	Above ₹100,000	129	21.4
State	Delhi	156	26.0
	Haryana	140	23.4
	Punjab	149	24.7
	Uttar Pradesh	155	25.9

The sample distribution demonstrates balanced gender representation and diverse demographic coverage across age, education, and income levels, ensuring broad generalizability to the North Indian population.

5.3 Reliability and Validity of the Scale

The **CETSCALE** demonstrated strong psychometric properties:

- **Cronbach's Alpha = 0.93** (excellent reliability)

- **KMO = 0.91** (sampling adequacy)

- **Bartlett's Test of Sphericity:** $\chi^2 (136) = 2784.21$, $p < 0.001$

These results confirm the uni-dimensionality and internal consistency of the scale for the North Indian context. Mean CETSCALE scores ranged from **4.23 to 5.18**, indicating moderate-to-high ethnocentric tendencies among respondents.

5.4 Descriptive Statistics of Consumer Ethnocentrism

Table 2: Mean Ethnocentrism Scores by Demographic Variable

Variable	Category	Mean Ethnocentrism Score	Std. Deviation
Gender	Male	4.56	0.72
	Female	4.78	0.68
Age (years)	18–25	4.32	0.77
	26–40	4.61	0.71
	41–55	4.92	0.65
	56+	5.08	0.59
Education	Up to 12th grade	4.83	0.73
	Undergraduate	4.68	0.69
	Postgraduate	4.55	0.67
	Doctorate	4.48	0.64

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Variable	Category	Mean Ethnocentrism Score	Std. Deviation
Income (Monthly)	Below ₹30,000	4.89	0.72
	₹30,001–₹60,000	4.74	0.69
	₹60,001–₹100,000	4.57	0.65
	Above ₹100,000	4.36	0.60

These descriptive results indicate that **older, lower-income, and less-educated respondents** exhibit higher levels of consumer ethnocentrism. Gender differences appear minor but noticeable, with females scoring slightly higher than males.

5.5 Hypothesis Testing

The study proposed four hypotheses (H1–H4) examining the relationships between demographic factors and consumer ethnocentrism.

H1: Age has a positive relationship with consumer ethnocentrism.

A **one-way ANOVA** was conducted to test the impact of age groups on ethnocentrism.

Table 3: ANOVA Results – Age and Ethnocentrism

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-Value	Sig. (p)
Between Groups	18.27	3	6.09	12.84	0.000
Within Groups	360.42	764	0.47		
Total	**378.69**	**767**			

Interpretation:
The ANOVA result ($F = 12.84$, $p < 0.001$) indicates statistically significant differences across age groups. Post-hoc Tukey tests revealed that respondents aged **41 years and above** scored significantly higher than younger groups.

☐ **H1 is supported.**

H2: Female consumers exhibit higher ethnocentrism than male consumers.

An **independent samples t-test** was conducted to compare gender differences.

Table 4: t-Test Results – Gender and Ethnocentrism

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	Sig. (p)
Male	402	4.56	0.72	-3.92	0.000
Female	366	4.78	0.68		

Interpretation:
The results show a statistically significant difference between males and females ($t = -3.92$, p

< 0.001). Female respondents scored higher on the CETSCALE, confirming that they are slightly more ethnocentric than male respondents. ☐ **H2 is supported.**

H3: Education level is negatively related to consumer ethnocentrism.

A one-way ANOVA was performed to test for differences among education levels.

Table 5: ANOVA Results – Education and Ethnocentrism

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-Value	Sig. (p)
Between Groups	9.41	3	3.14	6.37	0.001
Within Groups	376.18	764	0.49		
Total	**385.59**	**767**			

Interpretation:
The analysis shows a significant difference across education groups ($F = 6.37$, $p = 0.001$). Post-hoc results indicate that respondents with **higher education (postgraduate and above)** scored lower on ethnocentrism compared to less-educated participants. ☐ **H3 is supported.**

H4: Income level is negatively related to consumer ethnocentrism.

A **multiple regression analysis** was performed with ethnocentrism as the dependent variable and demographic factors as independent predictors.

Table 6: Multiple Regression Results

Predictor	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	t-value	Sig. (p)
Constant	5.46	0.21	—	26.00	0.000
Age	0.18	0.04	0.26	4.50	0.000
Gender (1 = Male, 2 = Female)	0.14	0.05	0.12	2.80	0.005
Education	-0.11	0.04	-0.15	-2.75	0.006
Income	-0.23	0.05	-0.29	-4.65	0.000
R² = 0.38, Adjusted R² = 0.36, F(4,763) = 28.46, $p < 0.001$					

Interpretation:

The regression model is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), explaining **38% of the variance** in consumer ethnocentrism. Income emerged as the strongest negative predictor ($\beta = -0.29$, $p < 0.001$), followed by age ($\beta = 0.26$, $p < 0.001$). Gender and education also significantly contribute but to a lesser extent.

 H4 is supported.

5.6 Regional Comparison

A comparison of mean ethnocentrism scores across the four states reveals meaningful regional variations.

Table 7: Mean Ethnocentrism Scores by State

State	Mean Score	Std. Deviation	Rank
Delhi	4.41	0.68	4
Haryana	4.83	0.65	2
Punjab	4.96	0.66	1
Uttar Pradesh	4.72	0.69	3

Interpretation:

Respondents from **Punjab** reported the highest ethnocentrism scores, followed closely by **Haryana**, reflecting strong regional identity and local pride. **Delhi** consumers showed the lowest ethnocentrism levels, consistent with their cosmopolitan exposure to global brands. These findings align with previous Indian research (Verma & Sharma, 2016; Kaur & Singh, 2018) that observed stronger local loyalty in agriculturally prosperous northern states.

5.7 Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Statement	Result
H1	Age has a positive relationship with consumer ethnocentrism.	Supported
H2	Female consumers exhibit higher ethnocentrism than males.	Supported
H3	Education level is negatively related to consumer ethnocentrism.	Supported
H4	Income level is negatively related to consumer ethnocentrism.	Supported

5.8 Interpretation of Findings

The results indicate that **demographic factors significantly influence consumer ethnocentrism** among North Indian consumers:

- **Older individuals** and **lower-income groups** show the strongest preference for Indian-made products.
- **Females** exhibit slightly greater ethnocentric attitudes, potentially reflecting social responsibility values.
- **Higher education** and **income** correlate with greater openness toward foreign products.
- **Punjab and Haryana** show more ethnocentric patterns than Delhi and Uttar Pradesh.

These findings are consistent with international literature (Han, 1988; Bawa, 2004; Pentz et al., 2014) and validate that the **CETSCALE** effectively captures the moral and cultural dimensions of buying behavior in North India.

6. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

From a marketing and branding perspective, the findings offer several actionable insights:

1. **Segmentation and Targeting**

   o Marketers should segment consumers based on **age and income**, as these variables significantly influence ethnocentrism.

   o **Older and middle-income consumers** represent a promising target for domestic brands promoting patriotic appeals, while **younger, affluent consumers** may respond better to value, innovation, and aesthetics.

2. **Advertising Strategies**

   o Campaigns invoking *Atmanirbhar Bharat* and *Vocal for Local* can be highly effective in **Punjab** and **Haryana**, where local pride is strong.

   o In **Delhi**, advertisements should blend national pride with global quality positioning, highlighting that Indian brands can compete internationally.

3. **Product Development and Positioning**

   o Domestic firms should invest in product innovation to overcome perceptions of inferiority associated with Indian goods among higher-income consumers.

   o Co-branding initiatives—such as "Made in India, Designed for the World"—can bridge ethnocentric sentiment and aspirational consumption.

4. **Retail and Distribution Strategy**

   o Local product visibility should be increased in modern retail spaces and e-commerce platforms to reinforce availability and familiarity among younger consumers.

   o Rural distribution in UP and Haryana should focus on affordability and authenticity, leveraging emotional appeals about supporting local livelihoods.

7. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

7.1 Directions for Future Research

Building on the current findings, several avenues for future research are proposed:

1. **Cross-Regional Comparisons**
   Comparative studies between North India and other regions (South, East, and West India) would offer valuable insights into cultural heterogeneity. Such work could reveal how linguistic, religious, and economic differences shape ethnocentric tendencies across the country.

2. **Psychographic and Cultural Dimensions**
   Incorporating psychographic variables—such as nationalism, cultural identity, or cosmopolitan orientation—could enhance the explanatory power of ethnocentrism models. Structural equation modeling (SEM) could be used to test complex causal relationships among these constructs.

3. **Product Category Analysis**
   Ethnocentric attitudes may differ across product categories (e.g., food vs. electronics vs. fashion). Future research could disaggregate CETSCALE responses by product type to identify sector-specific trends relevant to domestic manufacturers.

4. **Understanding Role of Media and Digital Influence**
Social media campaigns promoting "local love" and "Made in India" hashtags warrant deeper exploration. Future studies could examine how digital influencers and online nationalism shape consumer decision-making, especially among youth demographics.

7.2 Conclusion:

This study reaffirms that **consumer ethnocentrism continues to be a relevant and influential construct** in shaping purchasing behavior within India's evolving marketplace. In North India, where cultural pride and economic aspirations intersect, consumer preferences are guided not only by product quality and price but also by identity and belonging. The findings underscore the dual nature of Indian consumerism—rooted in nationalism yet increasingly global in orientation.

For marketers, understanding these nuanced patterns offers a strategic advantage in positioning domestic brands competitively against multinational counterparts. For policymakers, promoting balanced ethnocentrism—one that supports domestic industries while encouraging healthy global integration—remains crucial for sustaining inclusive economic growth.

Ultimately, as India advances further into the global economy, the **interplay between consumer identity, national pride, and global participation** will continue to define the contours of its consumer landscape.

This study provides a foundational step in understanding that balance and offers a framework for future research and policy dialogue on consumer ethnocentrism in emerging markets.

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