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MRC Unsolicited Research Grant Scheme:

An Evaluation of the Degree of Consumer Ethnocentrism in Mauritius

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With globalisation, Mauritian consumers are being increasingly exposed to foreign products and are faced with a variety of choices. This study aimed at evaluating the degree of consumer ethnocentrism among the Mauritian consumers. The CETSCALE, an instrument which has been developed to measure consumer ethnocentrism in the USA (Shimp and Sharma, 1987), has not been validated in developing country environments (Kaynak and Kara, 2002).

The study aims at validating the CETSCALE in the Mauritian context. The study also examined the influence of demographic and lifestyle variables on the level of consumer ethnocentrism. Along the same line of thought, this study also aimed at examining whether consumer ethnocentrism affected the perceptions of Mauritians towards imported products versus domestic products and at investigating whether the country of origin impacts on several dimensions of the product, such as quality, value for money, status and esteem among others.

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire, designed following a thorough review of the literature on consumer ethnocentrism. The sample consisted of Mauritian consumers. The personal and telephone interview techniques were used for the administration of the questionnaires. Data were collected from 204 consumers over a two-months period from February to March 2007.

Findings revealed that the CETSCALE instrument developed by Shimp and Sharma (1987) was applicable to Mauritius and that Mauritians were not highly ethnocentric as regards the purchase of "foreign" or "Mauritian" products. Almost all of the hypotheses put forward were adequately supported. The study finally concludes with the implications of the empirical results. Suggestions are then made regarding both the limitations of the present study and areas for future research.