

## Igorot teacher education students: Their ethnocentric acuity and manifestations

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### **Abstract**

Ethnic groups share a high degree of loyalty and adhere closely to basic institutions like the family, religion, and language, thus usually rallying behind a person or an object to which they give their allegiance to bring out loyalty and adhere to a common heritage thereby developing ethnocentrism which means judging others or events based on one's own culture. This paper primarily focused on ethnocentrism paving the way to a better understanding of various cultures which may serve as an effective tool in the educative process. This study which used the descriptive design involved the Igorot students (Ibaloi, Kalanguya, and Kankanaey) enrolled under the College of Teacher Education of the Nueva Vizcaya State University- Bambang Campus, in the school year 2014-2015. The data which were gathered through a questionnaire and analyzed using the 0.05 level of significance, divulged that most of the respondents were born in Sta. Fe, Nueva Vizcaya, Kalanguya in ethnicity, and Roman Catholic in religion, have a high level of agreement on the indicators of ethnocentrism, and with a moderate degree of manifestation of ethnocentrism. Family orientation ranks as the most influential on ethnocentrism followed by environment, media, members of the tribe, and peers correspondingly. This study prompted better perspectives on balanced ethnocentrism and cultural relativism; lessened manifestation of ethnocentrism; respect for other cultures and more efficient interaction to bring about a better and more harmonious relationship among learners.

**Keywords:** culture, college of teacher education, ethnocentric acuity and manifestations, Igorot, teacher education students

## **Igorot teacher education students: Their ethnocentric acuity and manifestations**

### **1. Introduction**

The Philippines consists of more or less seven thousand (7000) islands inhabited by different groups of people, each one having a distinct culture of his own – language, folkways, beliefs, customs, traditions and values. The minority group of people or ethnic groups, now preferably called indigenous people are likewise scattered in the whole archipelago. An ethnic group is a category of people who are distinct because of cultural characteristics which have been handed down from generation to generation. It is a group that shares a common cultural tradition and a sense of identity. These cultural characteristics refer to language, religion, geographic location, nationality along with distinct customs.

Ethnocentrism is a nearby universal syndrome of attitudes and behaviors. The attitudes include seeing one's own group (the in-group) as virtuous and superior and an out-group as contemptible and inferior. The attitudes also include seeing one's own standards of value as universal. The behaviors associates with ethnocentrism are cooperative relations with the in-group and absence of cooperative relations with the out-group (Levine, 1992 as cited by Axelrod et al., 2003). Membership in an ethnic group is typically evaluated in terms of one or more observable characteristics, such as language, accent, physical features or religion that are regarded as indicating common descent (Kurzman et al., 2001). Ethnocentrism has been implicated not only in ethnic conflict and war, but also consumes choice and voting. In short, ethnocentrism can be in-group favoritism or out-group hostility. Ethnocentrism behavior is defined as cooperation with one's own group, and non-cooperation toward members of other groups. Ethnocentric behavior can emerge from a simple evolutionary model of local competition between individual, without any explicit difference between the evolutionary process for dealing with members of one's own group and the evolutionary process for dealing with members of other groups.

According to Lin and Rances (2003), while ethnocentrism might potentially bring about positive outcome such as patriotism and willingness to sacrifice for one's own group, its negative consequences are obvious in intercultural communication, because individuals with a high level of ethnocentrism tend to misperceive people from other groups and degree of ethnocentrism also creates social distance in interaction among people from different cultures, which makes cross-cultural communication dysfunctional (Gudykunst & Kim 2002). The same authors explain that cultural relativism is the opposite of ethnocentrism. The former views culture as the result of people's attempt to do what is good for them – each group's solutions to the task of survival are as valid as those of others; the latter is the belief that one's own cultured represents the only true and good way and therefore, his own culture is the best. Nonetheless, ethnocentrism has an important and essential function in a society – it develops nationalism and love of country.

The Igorots belong to one of the ethnic groups found in Luzon, but some of them have migrated to Nueva Vizcaya, specifically in Kayapa, Kasibu, Santa Fe and others established their homes in most barangays in the municipalities of Aritao, Dupax del; Sur, and Dupaxdel Norte. They are grouped as Ibalois, Kalanguya and Kankanaey. Embarking on the above concepts and related literatures, the researchers have decided to come-up on this action research with the purpose to define the essence of ethnocentrism among the Igorot students of the College of Teacher Education in Nueva Vizcaya State University – Bambang campus during the second semester, school year 2014-2015.

#### *1.1 Objectives of the Study*

In the College of Teacher Education of the Nueva Vizcaya State University (Bambang campus), there is a good number of Igorot students coming from the three sub-groups. This research intended to discover how these students perceive ethnocentrism, how they manifest ethnocentrism and the constructs that influence the

intensification of ethnocentrism. Specifically, it answered the following questions:

- What is the profile of the Igorot students in the College of Teacher Education in terms of birthplace, ethnic affiliation and religion?
- How do the respondents perceive ethnocentrism?
- To what degree do the respondents manifest ethnocentrism?
- How do the respondents evaluate the degree of influence that media, family orientation, members of the tribe, peers and environment have on ethnocentrism?

## 2. Research Methodology

This action research utilized the descriptive design, employing a four-part structured questionnaire as the main data gathering tool. This method was used since the study intended to describe certain phenomena, and it involved fact-finding or information gathering with analytical interpretation. Descriptive research, the most basic form of research involves the description of the forms, actions and changes overtime of the natural and non-natural phenomena, as well as the description of similarities with other phenomena (<http://openphd.blogspot.com/2012/01/purpose-of-descriptive-research.html>).

This undertaking was conducted at the Nueva Vizcaya State University, Bambang Campus, specifically at the College of Teacher Education. The College of Teacher Education is one of the four colleges of the University offering Bachelor in Elementary Education, Bachelor in Secondary Education and Bachelor in Industrial Education. The respondents were 60 Igorot students who were identified through simple random sampling, using the fishbowl technique. Research participants were not subjected to harm in any way whatsoever, rather respect for their dignity was prioritized. The protection of the privacy of research participants as well as an adequate level of confidentiality of the research data was ensured.

To gather data pertinent to the study, a four-part questionnaire was administered to the respondents. Part I elicited information about the respondents' profile, namely, birthplace, ethnic affiliation, and religion. Part II is the Ethnocentrism Scale, adopted from Neuliep and McCroskey (1997) which indicates the respondents' perceptions of ethnocentrism. Part III determines the ways on how the respondents manifest ethnocentricity, and Part IV indicates the influences that intensify ethnocentrism. The respondents were asked to indicate their respondents to every item based on the following scale:

- 4 - Strongly Agree
- 3 - Agree
- 2 - Disagree
- 1 - Strongly Disagree

For the qualitative and interpretive measurements, the range below was used

Degree of Manifestation	Rate	Ranges	Perception on Ethnocentrism
Always	4.00	3.25 – 4.00	Very High
Often	3.00	2.50 – 3.24	High
Sometimes	2.00	1.75 – 2.49	Moderate
Never	1.00	1.00 – 1.74	Low

Initially, the researchers sought permission from authorities concerned to conduct this study among the Igorot students in the College of Teacher Education. After permission was granted, the researchers prepared the research instrument and consulted some experts in research and statistics for their comments and suggestions. After incorporating their comments and suggestions, the respondents were identified and the instrument was

administered. After retrieving the instrument, the respondents' responses were tallied, scored, computed and treated statistically using frequency and percentage, mean, and correlation ratio.

### 3. Results and Discussions

#### 3.1 What is the profile of the respondents in terms of birthplace, ethnic affiliation, and religion?

To answer this problem, frequency and percentage were used; the results are presented in the succeeding tables.

**Table 1**

*Respondents' Profile according to Birthplace*

Birthplace	Frequency	Percentage
Kasibu	19	31.67
Sta. Fe	20	33.33
Kayapa	13	21.67
Dupax del Norte	4	6.67
Dupax del Sur	2	3.33
Quirino	2	3.33
Total	60	100.00

As reflected in the table, most of the respondents were born in Kasibu slating the frequency of 19 or a percentage share of 31.67%; some 20 or 33.33% of them were born in Sta. Fe; 13 or 21.67 in Kayapa; 4 or 6.67 percent in Dupaxdel Norte; and 2 or 3.33 percent in Dupax del Sur and Quirino. The results shown in table 1 justify that many of the Igorot teacher students of NVSU Bambang were born in Kasibu, Nueva Vizcaya, where large number of the Igorot population are dwelling. Meanwhile, respondents' classification along their ethnicity is shown in table 2. About 18 or 30 percent of the respondents belong to the Ibaloi ethnic group; 23 or 38.33 percent to the Kalanguya; and 19 or 31.67 percent are Kankanaey.

**Table 2**

*Respondents' Profile according to Ethnic Affiliation*

Ethnic Affiliation	Frequency	Percentage
Ibaloi	18	30.0
Kalanguya	23	38.33
Kankanaey	19	31.67
Total	60	100.00

The findings in table 2 may suggest that many of the Igorot teacher students of the CTE, NVSU Bambang are also affiliated with the Kalanguya ethnic group.

**Table 3**

*Respondents' Profile according to Religion.*

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Pentecost	8	13.33
Roman Catholic	23	38.33
Lutheran	17	28.33
Born Again	6	10.00
Baptist	3	5.00
Methodist	3	5.00
Total	60	100.00

The table shows that 23 or 38.33 percent of the respondents are Roman Catholics; 17 or 28.33 percent are Lutherans; 8 or 13.33 percent belong to the Pentecost Church; 6 or 10 percent are Born Again Christians; 3 or 5 percent each are Baptists and Methodists. This finding reflects the diversity of the Igorots in terms of religion.

### 3.2 How do the respondents perceive ethnocentrism?

To determine the respondents' perceptions of ethnocentrism, their reactions to each of the items in the Ethnocentrism Scale were recorded. Table 4 shows the results of the respondents' point-of-view benchmarking an overall mean of 2.99, which means that they have high perception on the concept of ethnocentrism. .

**Table 4**

*Respondents' Perceptions of Ethnocentrism*

Items	Mean	Remarks
Most other tribes are backward compared to my tribe.	2.45	Disagree
My tribe should be the role model for other tribes here in the region.	2.97	Agree
People from other tribes act strangely when they socialize with my tribe.	2.67	Agree
Lifestyle in other tribes is just as valid as those in my tribe.	2.88	Agree
Other tribes should try to be more like my tribe.	2.40	Disagree
I am not interested in the customs of other tribes.	1.75	Disagree
People in my tribe could learn a lot from other tribes.	3.03	Agree
Most people from other tribes just do not know what is good for them.	2.30	Disagree
I respect the values and customs of other tribes.	3.72	Strongly Agree
Other tribes are smart to look up to our tribe.	2.77	Agree
Most people would be happier if they lived like the people in my tribe.	2.68	Agree
I have many friends from different tribes.	3.43	Agree
People in my tribe have just about the best lifestyles of anywhere.	2.77	Agree
Lifestyles in other tribes are not as valid as those in my tribe.	2.50	Agree
I am very interested in the values and customs of other tribes.	3.25	Agree
I apply my values when judging people who belong to other tribes.	2.95	Agree
I see people who are similar to me as virtuous.	2.85	Agree
I do not cooperate with people from other tribe.	1.63	Disagree
Most people in my culture just do not know what is good for them.	1.63	Disagree
I do not trust people who do not belong to my tribe.	1.57	Disagree
I dislike interacting with people from different tribes.	1.40	Strongly Disagree
I have little respect for the customs of other tribes.	2.17	Disagree
Overall Mean	2.99	High

It can be gleaned from the table that the respondents "strongly agree" that they respect the values and customs of other tribes ( $\bar{x}=3.72$ ); They "agree" that their tribe should be the role model for other tribes here in the region ( $\bar{x}=2.97$ ); people from other tribes act strangely when they socialize with their tribe ( $\bar{x}=2.88$ ); people in their tribe could learn a lot from other tribes ( $\bar{x}=3.03$ ); other tribes are smart to look up to their tribe ( $\bar{x}=2.77$ ); most people would be happier if they lived like the people in their tribe ( $\bar{x}=2.68$ ); they have many friends from different tribes ( $\bar{x}=3.43$ ); people in their tribe have just about the best lifestyles of anywhere ( $\bar{x}=2.77$ ); lifestyles in other tribes are not valid as those in their tribe ( $\bar{x}=2.5$ ); they are very interested in the values and customs of

other tribes ( $\bar{x}=3.25$ ); they apply their values when judging people who belong to other tribes ( $\bar{x}=2.95$ ); and see people who are similar to them as virtuous ( $\bar{x}=2.85$ ). Meanwhile, they “disagree” that most other tribes are backward compared to their tribe ( $\bar{x}=2.45$ ); other tribes should try to be more like their tribe ( $\bar{x}=2.40$ ); are not interested in the customs of other tribes ( $\bar{x}=1.75$ ); most people from other tribes just do not know what is good for them ( $\bar{x}=2.30$ ); they do not cooperate with people from other tribe ( $\bar{x}=1.63$ ); most people in their culture just do not know what is good for them ( $\bar{x}=1.63$ ); they do not trust people who do not belong to their tribe ( $\bar{x}=1.57$ ); and have little respect for the customs of other tribes ( $\bar{x}=2.17$ ). They also “strongly disagree that they dislike interacting” with people from different tribes.

The overall mean of 2.99 indicates that the respondents have high degree of agreement on the items that indicate ethnocentrism. This means that the respondents have high regard of their tribe and consider themselves as superior over other tribes, although their responses to some items in the scale show that they are open to other cultures or they appreciate the cultures of others, such as “Lifestyle in other tribes is just as valid as those in my tribe”; “I am very interested in the values and customs of other tribes”, and the like. In other words, the respondents respect the customs, traditions, values, and lifestyles of other tribes, while they remain proud and live by their own culture. According to Chen and Starosta (2005) ethnocentrism teaches individuals to bond tightly with their group members and to feel proud of their own heritages by subjectively using their cultural standards as criteria for interpretation and judgments in intercultural communication. For culture to survive, a certain degree of ethnocentrism from its members is necessary. However, when ethnocentrism grows to a certain level, it will become a barrier for communication among people from different cultures. Ethnocentrism at a certain level leads persons to use their own group as the center of viewing things, which tends to develop prejudice by judging other groups as inferior to their own.

### 3.3 To what degree do the respondents manifest ethnocentrism?

To answer the question, the mean response to each item in the questionnaire was computed. The result appears in Table 5.

**Table 5**

*Respondents' Degree of Manifestation of Ethnocentrism*

Items	Mean	Remarks
I use my own dialect when speaking.	3.27	Often
I wear clothing printed with the nature of my tribe.	3.07	Often
I actively participate in all activities which involve my tribe.	3.38	Often
I prefer people within my tribe to be my peers.	2.60	Often
I tease those of other culture by throwing jokes ( <i>kantiaw</i> )	1.80	Sometimes
I judge other tribes using my tribe as standard.	1.63	Sometimes
I discriminate people in other tribes.	2.47	Sometimes
I respect people in my tribe than the other tribes.	2.38	Sometimes
I prefer songs sang in my dialect.	2.60	Often
I vote for politicians who belong to my tribe.	2.43	Sometimes
I argue with other tribes when they belittle my tribe.	2.53	Often
I do not socialize with people in other tribes.	1.98	Sometimes
In engaging in relationships, I prefer those who also belong to my tribe.	2.22	Sometimes

I do not talk to people of other tribes	2.00	Sometimes
I prefer teachers who belong to my tribe	1.95	Sometimes
Overall Mean	2.42	Moderate

As displayed in Table 5, the respondents moderately manifest ethnocentrism as indicated by the overall mean of 2.42. This means that they “often” use their own dialect when speaking ( $\bar{x}=3.27$ ); wear clothing printed with the nature of their tribe ( $\bar{x}=3.07$ ); actively participate in all activities which involve their tribe ( $\bar{x}=3.38$ ); prefer people within their tribe to be their peers ( $\bar{x}=2.60$ ); prefer songs sang in their dialect ( $\bar{x}=2.60$ ); and argue with other tribes when they belittle their tribes ( $\bar{x}=2.53$ ). The respondents also admit that they “sometimes” tease those of other cultures by throwing jokes ( $\bar{x}=1.80$ ); judge other tribes using their tribe as standard ( $\bar{x}=1.63$ ); discriminate people in other tribes ( $\bar{x}=2.47$ ); respect people in their tribe than the other tribes ( $\bar{x}=2.38$ ); vote for politicians who belong to their tribe ( $\bar{x}=2.43$ ); do not socialize with people in other tribes ( $\bar{x}=1.98$ ); prefer those who belong to their tribe when engaging in relationship ( $\bar{x}=2.22$ ); do not talk to people of other tribes ( $\bar{x}=2.00$ ); and prefer teachers who belong to their tribe ( $\bar{x}=1.95$ ).

The moderate manifestation of ethnocentrism among the respondents could be attributed to their level of education and exposure to an environment other than their own. While they show a sense of pride when they speak in their own dialect, wear clothing of their own prints and designs, participate in activities involving their tribe, mingle with peers of their own tribe, prefer songs in their own dialect, and defend their tribe when this is belittled by others, they, at times also demonstrate prejudices or bias for other tribes by “making *kantiaw*”, discriminate them, not socializing with them, among others. It can be inferred, however, that the moderate manifestation of ethnocentrism among the respondents due to their learning experiences and those in the outside world might lead to acceptance of cultural diversity or what Ronquillo et al. (1999) call cultural relativism. This means “there is an attempt to do what is good for them and that they believe each group’s solution to the tasks of survival are as valid as those of others. Lin and Rancer (2003) support these statements, saying that ethnocentrism might potentially bring about positive outcomes such as patriotism and willingness to sacrifice for one’s group. But with high level of ethnocentrism, there is a tendency to misperceive people from other groups and misinterpret their behavior, and create social distance in interaction among people from different cultures, which make cross-cultural communication dysfunctional. (Gudykunst & Kim, 2002).

### 3.4 How do the respondents evaluate the degree of influence that media family orientation, members of the tribe, peers, and environment have on ethnocentrism?

In order to answer this problem, the respondents were asked to evaluate the extent of influence that the constructs considered have on ethnocentrism, from very influential, influential, less influential, and no influence. The mean of their responses was computed, the result of which is shown in table 6.

**Table 6**

*Respondents’ Evaluation of the Degree of Influence according to Identified Constructs*

Influence	Mean	Remarks	Rank
Media	3.62	Very influential	3
Family Orientation	3.77	Very influential	1
Members of the tribe	3.52	Very influential	4
Peers	3.43	Influential	5
Environment	3.75	Very influential	2

As reflected in the table, family orientation emerged to be very influential in ethnocentrism – or the most influential with a mean of 3.77; followed by environment with 3.75; media with 3.62 and members of the tribe with 3.52, ranked second, third, and fourth, respectively. Peers surfaced to be influential with 3.43 and ranked fifth.

That family orientation ranks first as an influence upon ethnocentrism is best logical because attitudes and values spring from common life – the family. The family is the basic unit of the society where children learn their first lessons on positive attitudes and desirable values. Children are brought up according to what their parents believe in, what they do, and what they say. In other words, the parents are the role models in the family so that when their children grow up and move out to a newer and bigger environment, they can survive. So, the family orientation as regards ethnocentrism begins in the home. The feelings and attitudes that exist in the family are the same as those the children will believe and manifest.

These statements run parallel with the insight of Ronquillo et al. (1999) that in their early years, children take their lessons from their parents – their role models. They learn to see themselves in their parents' perspectives. In the process, they internalize their parents' values and attitudes incorporating them in their own personalities. The fundamental values of love, honesty, charity, hope, truth, fairness, respect for others and worship of God are learned in the family (Cueto et al, 2019). Parents attempt to teach their children what they believe is required for success later on in their lives.

Environment emerged as second very influential on ethnocentrism. Environment, which include school, community, church and the like exert great influence on ethnocentrism since, individuals are exposed to different attitudes and behaviors. For instance, people in the rural areas might be more ethnocentric than those in the urban areas. Individuals who are confined in their own group will naturally behave and live according to what they see in their own group. In contrast, those who live in urban areas are more exposed to the culture of others, hence they tend to adapt some of other's way of life. Those who are in school, for example are reoriented or introduced to other cultures, thus reducing their level of ethnocentrism.

According to Ronquillo et al. (1999), the school represents the formal process of transmitting the culture of the group. Formal training of the young for participation in the adult world is carried out by professional teachers. They provide guidance and skills in learning the culture of society but also the knowledge and skills preparatory to earning a living. The school prepares the individual to perform successfully different roles they have to assume as members of society. This includes teaching individuals the behavior acceptable in public life and public virtues like public service, patriotism, respect for authority and others.

Media ranked third as very influential on ethnocentrism. It could be that because different forms of media – T.V., radio, papers and gadgets of all sorts – are prevalent, people are abreast of new culture that they somehow appreciate or accept. So those who are exposed to media tend to be less ethnocentric than those who are not. To this, again Ronquillo et al. (1999) agree that mass media exert a very powerful influence in the socialization of the young. Ranking fourth as very influential are the members of the tribe. This means that if the members of the tribe are cohesive or loyal to one another, chances are they.

#### **4. Conclusions and Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that most of the respondents were born in Sta. Fe, Nueva Vizcaya, most of them are Kalanguya and Roman Catholics. Further, the respondents have high level of agreement on the indicators of ethnocentrism, as indicated by the overall mean of 2.99. Likewise, respondents' have a moderate degree of manifestation for ethnocentrism, as evidenced by the overall mean of 2.42. Finally, family orientation ranks as the most influential on ethnocentrism followed by environment, media, members of the tribe and peers in that order. All exert influence on the respondents' manifestation of ethnocentrism.

Since the respondents have high agreement on the indicators of ethnocentrism, that is, they believe in ethnocentrism, the advantages and disadvantages must be discussed thoroughly in class, especially in sociology or psychology classes and whenever appropriate so that there would be a balance of ethnocentrism and cultural relativism. More activities must be initiated and regularly undertaken to lessen the level of manifestation of ethnocentrism. In this modern world, being confined to one's own culture might become a barrier in reaching new horizons for improvement in one's life.



Since there are organizations in NVSU specifically for each indigenous group, their activities should be judiciously monitored in order that conflict between and among them is avoided. They should be encouraged to cooperate with one another, to respect each other's culture and to interact effectively to bring about a better, more harmonious relationship in the University. Future Researchers may dwell on the same concepts of the study however; they may consider other group of respondents and a larger research setting. Hence, they may also consider other factors that may influence people's point-of-view of ethnocentrism, which may validate or negate some findings of the study.

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