MEXICAN AMERICANS: AN ECONOMICALLY SIGNIFICANT ETHNIC MARKET SEGMENT

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the North Texas State University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

Richard Wayne Ferguson, B. B. A., M. B. A.
Denton, Texas
December, 1972
The area of ethnic market segmentation has received little attention from practitioners or academicians of marketing since most minority groups immigrating to the United States have gradually assimilated the cultural norms and values, and thus the market behavior, of the American society as a whole. Preliminary investigation, however, indicates that Mexican Americans are an exception.

To discover whether Mexican Americans represent a true ethnic market segment of economic significance, this study examines and analyzes several aspects. First, to determine whether Mexican Americans represent a true ethnic segment, the following aspects of their cultural norms, perceptions, and values are investigated: their distinct and unique identity, the continuity and consistency of their adoption and use, and the degree of their influence. Second, to determine whether Mexican Americans constitute an ethnic market segment, grocery shopping behavioral patterns are examined. Third, to ascertain whether Mexican Americans represent a substantial ethnic market segment in terms of the number of consumers and the amount of money spent, relevant demographic and socioeconomic characteristics are presented and analyzed. Fourth, the impact of an
economically significant ethnic market segment on marketers and marketing institutions is assessed.

Due to the nature of this study, emphasis is placed on the collection of primary data, which has been obtained through personal interviews with 115 consumer respondents and eighteen grocery store owners and managers. Secondary data, gathered from reports of the Bureau of the Census, various periodicals, journals, and books, are used to establish cultural, demographic, and socioeconomic trends.

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter I introduces the nature, purpose, hypotheses, and research methodology of the study. Chapter II, based on secondary data, examines the cultural and ethnic environment and demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of Mexican Americans to determine the extent to which Mexican Americans are a definable segment of the population, whose market behavior might be influenced by cultural forces. Chapter III, after presenting a demographic and socioeconomic description of the survey's respondents, analyzes the findings of the personal interviews with Mexican-American consumers regarding their grocery shopping behavioral patterns and substantiates the economic significance of this market segment in terms of the amount of money spent for grocery products. Chapter IV analyzes the marketing practices of grocery stores in Mexican-American communities and the extent to which these marketing practices are influenced by the grocery store managers'
perception of Mexican-American grocery shopping patterns, as ascertained through personal interviews with grocery store managers or owners. Chapter V presents conclusions of this research study, inherent implications for marketers and marketing institutions, and recommendations regarding optimal product and marketing strategies, which would result in optimal efficiency of marketing expenditures.

Based on the findings of this research study, it is concluded that Mexican Americans represent an economically significant ethnic market segment. Consequently, if the full market potential is to be realized, marketers must make appropriate adjustments in the development of product and marketing strategies, in the operation of marketing institutions, and in the performance of marketing functions to meet the unique needs and preferences of the Mexican-American market segment.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES ........................................ vii

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION ........................................ 1

Nature of the Problem
Purpose of the Study
Definitions
Hypotheses
Research Methodology
Limitations of the Research

II. CULTURAL, DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE MARKET BEHAVIOR OF MEXICAN AMERICANS .......... 15

The Cultural and Ethnic Environment
Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics
Summary

III. AN ANALYSIS OF MEXICAN-AMERICANS' GROCERY BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS IN RELATIONSHIP TO DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS .................. 49

Descriptive Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics of Household
Grocery Shopping Characteristics and Behavior of Mexican Americans
Summary

IV. AN ANALYSIS OF THE MARKETING PRACTICES OF GROCERY STORES IN MEXICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITIES ............. 83

Grocery Store Sampling Procedure
Analysis of Grocery Store Operations in Mexican-American Communities
Summary
V. CONCLUSIONS

Mexican Americans: A True Ethnic Segment
Marketing Strategy Implications
Influence on Performance of Marketing Functions

APPENDICES

BIBLIOGRAPHY
### LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Mexican Immigrants Entering the United States</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Respondents Using Spanish or English with Their Children by Income and Neighborhood Ethnicity, San Antonio, 1965-1966</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Spanish-American and Mexican-American Population as Variously Identified in Censuses of 1930 to 1960</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Spanish Surname Persons by Nativity Status in Texas, 1950 and 1960</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Crude Fertility Ratio in Texas</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Family Size in Texas as a Percentage of all Families in Each Population Group, 1960</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. Age Distribution for Urban Spanish Surname and Anglo Population in Texas and Fort Worth, 1960</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. Median Years of School Completed by Persons Twenty-five Years and Over</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX. Years of School Completed by Spanish Surname Persons Twenty-Five Years Old and Over in Fort Worth</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. Urban Family Income in 1959</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI. Selected Population and Housing Characteristics of Census Tracts with Predominantly Spanish Surname Population</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII. Geographical Distribution of Respondents</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIII. Composition of Respondents by Geographical Area</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIV. Family Size by Number of Household Members</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XV. Language Used Most Often in Conversation by Household Members</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVI.</td>
<td>Language Spoken in Home by Age Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVII.</td>
<td>Education of Adult Members in Household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVIII.</td>
<td>Monthly Family Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIX.</td>
<td>Frequency of Grocery Shopping Trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XX.</td>
<td>Utilization of Small Neighborhood Stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXI.</td>
<td>Members of Family Who Go Grocery Shopping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXII.</td>
<td>Importance of Price and Brand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXIII.</td>
<td>Weekly Amount Spent in Food Store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXIV.</td>
<td>Grocery Expenditure Compared to Monthly Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXV.</td>
<td>Grocery Expenditures Compared to Number of Household Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXVI.</td>
<td>The Years of Schooling of Those Who Paid for Groceries Compared to Amount Spent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXVII.</td>
<td>Grocery Expenditures Compared to Age Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXVIII.</td>
<td>Language Spoken in Home Compared to Distinctive Mexican-American Elements in Grocery Store</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During the past fifteen years, marketers have become increasingly aware of the importance and economic significance of market segmentation, an outgrowth of the evolution of the marketing concept. "Segmentation is based upon developments on the demand side of the market and represents a rational and more precise adjustment of product and marketing effort to consumer or user requirements."

Market segmentation consists of dividing the total, heterogeneous market for a product into several market segments, thereby achieving a degree of homogeneity. Consumer market segmentation can be achieved through several approaches. The most commonly used bases for segmentation are demographic factors, which include sex, age, marital status, size of family, ethnic and racial groups, degree of urbanization, geographic location, and household mobility, and socioeconomic factors, which include income, educational attainment, and occupation.

Although a market segment may be characterized by common demographic and socioeconomic factors, the ultimate criterion

---

of a market segment is that it shares common buyer characteristics and consumption patterns, which are significantly different from other market segments or from the total, heterogeneous market. Market segmentation thus enables marketers to devise and implement optimal product and marketing strategies and, consequently, realize optimal efficiency from their marketing expenditures.

Nature of the Problem

The area of ethnic market segmentation is one which has received little attention by practitioners or academicians of marketing. This is due primarily to the fact that most minority groups immigrating to the United States have, over a period of time, assimilated the norms and values, and thus the market behavior, of the American society as a whole. Preliminary investigation, however, indicates that Mexican Americans are an exception.

To be able to ascertain if Mexican Americans do represent a true ethnic market segment of economic significance, some basic fundamentals must be established. First, what constitutes a true ethnic segment? Second, what constitutes a significant ethnic market segment? Third, if a true ethnic market segment exists, what are the implications for marketers?

A true ethnic segment is a group of individuals who, in the socialization process, have internalized their own cultural norms and values. The ethnic segment's cultural norms, perceptions, and values are distinctly different from the
norms and values of the larger, more predominant society. The cultural symbols and the behavioral patterns, which are used to identify a true ethnic segment, are handed down from generation to generation. It is possible to identify these cultural characteristics because of the continuity and consistency in their adoption and use by the members of the ethnic segment. The primary cultural characteristics which mold the life style of an ethnic segment are the use of a common language; the importance of the family unit and of the role of the members within the family; the common attitudes, ideas, and beliefs of social order; the degree of urbanization; the orientation towards religion; and the types and kinds of food served in the home. When these distinct and unique cultural characteristics are observable and measurable and when they are found to be meaningfully different from those of society as a whole, it is concluded that a true ethnic segment does exist.

For an ethnic segment to be meaningful to marketers, in addition to the cohesiveness of its cultural norms and values, it must share common buyer characteristics and consumption patterns. The ethnic consumer's behavior in the marketplace must be significantly different from the buying patterns exhibited by the larger, more heterogeneous consumer group. The distinctive marketing characteristics of a true ethnic market segment can be identified by such factors as the types and quantities of goods purchased, the frequency of shopping
trips, the services desired, and the types of institutions which are patronized.

If a true ethnic market segment is to be significant to marketers, two other factors must be present. First, the market segment must be substantial in terms of the number of consumers and of the amount of money spent. Second, the impact that this market segment has on marketing processes must be measurable.

The existence of a substantial and measurable Mexican-American market segment will have far-reaching implications for marketers and marketing institutions in the effective and efficient performance of their various marketing functions. For example, areas such as product development and design, packaging, channels of distribution, market development and sales, location of retail outlets, advertising and sales promotion will be affected. In essence, appropriate adjustments in product and marketing strategies to meet the unique needs of the Mexican-American market segment will be necessitated if the marketer is to realize the full market potential of this market.

Purpose of the Study

The overall purpose of this study is to ascertain if Mexican Americans represent a true ethnic market segment of economic significance to marketers. To accomplish this purpose, several aspects must be examined and analyzed.
First, to determine if Mexican Americans represent a true ethnic segment, cultural norms, perceptions, and values will be investigated. Attention will be focused on the distinct and unique identity, the continuity and consistency of the adoption and use, and the degree of influence of these cultural characteristics.

Second, to test the validity of Mexican Americans' constituting an ethnic market segment, grocery-shopping behavioral patterns will be examined. Grocery products, more so than any other commodity, are purchased and consumed by consumers of all ages and of all income levels, located in all geographical locations. Classified as convenience goods with a high frequency of purchase, grocery products are considered as necessities. Because of these characteristics, grocery products represent a particularly appropriate commodity for this study.

Third, to ascertain if Mexican Americans represent a substantial ethnic market in terms of the number of consumers and the amount of money spent, relevant demographic and socio-economic factors will be presented and analyzed. As a base for this study, the data and analysis will concentrate on Mexican Americans in Texas.

Fourth, if Mexican Americans do represent a significant and substantial ethnic market segment, the impact of this market segment on marketers and marketing institutions must be assessed. The heart of this issue is the development and implementation of optimal product and marketing strategies and the achievement of optimal efficiency in the utilization
of marketing expenditures. Therefore, based on the conclusions of this study, appropriate recommendations will be made regarding the management and operation of marketing institutions, the development and implementation of product and marketing strategies, and the performance of marketing functions as they pertain to the market behavior of Mexican Americans located throughout the United States.

Definitions

In a dissertation such as this, ethnic terminology is of concern. Ethnic terms are frequently interpreted as implying value judgments and possible prejudices on the part of the researcher. To avoid any controversy, the neutral term "Mexican American" will be used. It is generally agreed that Mexican American refers to those Americans with a Mexican ethnic and cultural heritage. A legacy is usually transmitted through parents and grandparents rather than by actual familiarity with Mexico. Terms which will be avoided because of their suggestion of social, political, or economic evaluations include Chicano, Hispano, Mexican, Spanish American, and Latin American.

The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of Mexican Americans are frequently contrasted with those of "Anglos" in this study. The term "Anglo" refers to the white or Caucasian segment of the total population. The Anglo term excludes Mexican Americans who are classified by the Bureau of the Census as white persons with Spanish surnames.
Hypotheses

**Hypothesis I.**—A true ethnic market segment has significance for all levels of marketing.

**Hypothesis II.**—Mexican Americans in Texas constitute an economically significant, ethnic market segment. The validity of a Mexican-American market segment can be tested through a study of commonly shared cultural factors which influence family preferences and shopping patterns for grocery products.

**Hypothesis III.**—The establishment of Mexican Americans as an important, ethnic market segment for grocery products would influence the retail merchandising of grocery products with particular significance regarding the location of retail grocery stores, the product mix carried by these stores, and the advertising and sales promotion techniques used to reach this market segment.

**Hypothesis IV.**—To realize full market potential, the Mexican-American market segment, with its unique characteristics, must be taken into consideration because of its significance on the performance of the wholesaling function, whether performed by agricultural producers, by food manufacturers and processors, or by merchants or functional mercantile institutions. Ethnic considerations would require product differentiation and differentiation in the performance of marketing functions in order to achieve optimal marketing efficiency.
Research Methodology

The research undertaken for this study was both primary and secondary in nature. Secondary sources were used to establish demographic and socioeconomic trends. The principle secondary statistical data sources were the 1950 and 1960 *Persons of Spanish Surnames*, reports published by the Bureau of the Census from data compiled during the decennial censuses. Also included were publications of behavioral scientists who discussed the cohesive cultural factors which influence the market behavior of Mexican Americans. Conversations with members of the Fort Worth City Planning Department provided some insight regarding the changing trends in retail-store management and operation as well as the changing trends being witnessed in the care and maintenance of residential homes located in the recognized Mexican-American communities. Due to the nature of this study, emphasis was placed on the collection of primary data. Primary data were obtained through personal interviews with 115 consumer respondents and eighteen grocery-store owners and managers.

Consumer Surveys

The primary data for consumers were collected from Mexican Americans living in Fort Worth, Texas. This city was selected because its Mexican-American communities represented a homogeneous group of Mexican-American families from all socioeconomic levels normally associated with an urban community. From such a representative universe, a sample could
be selected which would describe typical, urban, Mexican-American families. In other words, these Fort Worth urban families would have characteristics similar to those of Mexican-American families living in other metropolitan areas in Texas as well as in metropolitan areas outside of Texas, such as Los Angeles, Phoenix, Denver, and Chicago.

Fort Worth has three distinct, Mexican-American communities. The names commonly used to describe these three communities are Northside, Southside, and Diamond Hill. The Northside community is the oldest and most well defined. Its boundaries are North Main on the east, Jacksboro Highway on the west, Twenty-Eighth Street on the north, and Northside Drive on the south. The Southside community is well established and the favorite neighborhood of the younger Mexican-American families, according to an official in Fort Worth's City Planning Department. The boundaries of this community are the North-South Freeway, Sixth Avenue, Capps, and Seminary Drive. The newest and most vaguely defined Mexican-American community is Diamond Hill. It is generally located northeast of the intersection of Decatur Avenue and Twenty-Eighth Street.

The better established Northside and Southside communities were selected to be the sample frame. The communities were systematically divided into geographic areas, each comprising six square city blocks. There were ninety-one designated areas, which were numbered consecutively. Based on judgment, it was decided that twenty-three areas, or 25 percent of the universe, should be sampled. Using a table of
random numbers, the twenty-three designated areas were randomly selected. From each designated area, five interviews were completed, normally from households located approximately in the center of the six-block area.

A questionnaire was developed and pretested by interviewing twenty-five Mexican-American families. As a result of the pretesting, the questionnaire was revised in order to eliminate ambiguities. After revision, it was reviewed by a highly qualified Mexican-American professor of sociology at North Texas State University. A few minor suggestions were made which were incorporated into the final questionnaire.

The interviewers were bilingual Mexican Americans. The interviewee was given the choice of answering the questionnaire either in Spanish or in English. A copy of the questionnaire is in Appendix A.

To insure that the respondent was familiar with stores in his neighborhood, a qualifying question was asked. The question was, "How long has your family lived in this general area of Fort Worth?" For the interview to continue, the family was required to have lived in the community for at least three months.

**Retail Institution Sample**

From the Yellow Pages in the 1972 Fort Worth Telephone Directory, a list of retail grocery stores in the trading areas of the Northside and Southside Mexican-American communities was compiled. The universe of stores was then divided
into three major groups: national or regional chain supermarkets, large independent supermarkets, and small single-line independent stores. In these two Mexican-American communities, there is a sufficient number of each of the three types of stores to assume that the average consumer normally has sufficient opportunity to become familiar with all types of stores.

After carefully studying the sample frame and the stores' geographical locations within each community, it was ascertained that the stores to be included in the sample should be chosen by judgment. Two criteria were used. First, stores were selected which had been mentioned by five consumer respondents as a place where they shop. Second, the stores were geographically distributed in the two communities and not concentrated in a single shopping center. These sample selection criteria minimized any bias.

The sample consisted of eighteen retail grocery stores. There were six national or regional chain supermarkets, four large independent supermarkets, and eight small single-line independent stores.

Personal interviews were conducted with the managers and/or owners of each of the eighteen grocery stores in the sample. The store interviews were conducted after all the consumer interviews had been completed so that the consumers' opinions of the store could be verified during the interviewing process. An open-end type of questionnaire was utilized. An example of the questionnaire is included in Appendix B.
This type of questionnaire permits flexibility in probing in order to obtain in-depth answers, and yet a structure is maintained which permits a reasonable amount of comparison between the interviews.

Generally, the grocery-store managers were cooperative in answering the questionnaire. However, it should be mentioned that a few interviewees gave an absolute minimum of answers to the questions. Their reserve in answering may have been due to their lack of personal knowledge about Mexican-American consumers or perhaps to the store's policy of being polite but conservative with an outside interviewer. When necessary, the information obtained from the store manager was supplemented by observation of the store's actual operation on several different days.

In summary, the selection technique of grocery stores to be included in the sample was one which optimized representativeness. Large national or regional chain supermarkets, large independent supermarkets, and small independent single-line stores were included. The sample stores were located in all parts of the two Mexican-American communities. The personal interviews conducted with the eighteen store owners and/or managers were informative. Management's perception of the shopping characteristics of Mexican-American consumers was investigated, and the degree to which marketing functions are adapted to the special needs of Mexican-American consumers was quantified.
Limitations of the Research

As is true of most research projects, there were inherent limitations in this research study. The limitations of this study were as follows:

1. No outside financial assistance was used in this study. Therefore, financial and time constraints restricted the respondents to a local area resulting in the selection of Fort Worth.

2. To investigate and prove or disprove the hypothesis that Mexican Americans constitute a true market segment, this study was limited to the grocery-buying patterns of Mexican Americans.

3. The special report, Persons of Spanish Surnames, compiled from the 1970 Census of Population was not available during the writing of this dissertation. An effort was made to obtain 1970 Spanish-surname data from computer-tape files, which are generally available before the release of the printed report. However, even these tape files were unavailable. Although some personnel who are familiar with the 1970 census data offered generalized opinions regarding changes in the Spanish-surname segment of the population, official statistical data on which to base reliable trends concerning Spanish-surname persons since 1960 was unavailable. Therefore, the secondary statistical data analyzed in this study were from the 1950 and 1960 reports titled Persons of Spanish Surnames.
4. The consumer questionnaire was pretested with twenty-five Mexican-American families and subsequently revised to eliminate ambiguities. Even though there was still the possibility of unintentional bias entering into the study, such bias is not considered sufficient to detract from the validity of the study.
CHAPTER II
CULTURAL, DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE MARKET BEHAVIOR OF MEXICAN AMERICANS

In the Southwest, and especially in Texas, persons identifying with the culture of Mexico have been a part of society since the earliest frontier days. This chapter examines historical demographic and socioeconomic data to determine the extent to which Mexican Americans are a definable segment of the population whose market behavior may be influenced by their cultural background. There are two major parts to this chapter. First, research studies and literature concerned with cultural and ethnic factors which shape and influence the behavioral patterns of Mexican Americans are examined. Second, relevant demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of Mexican Americans in Texas and Fort Worth are presented.

The Cultural and Ethnic Environment

In 1960, the Bureau of the Census reported that 14 per cent of the Spanish surname persons living in Texas were born in Mexico. This 14 per cent represented 199,139 permanent Mexican-American residents of Texas, who at one time had migrated from Mexico. A still larger group of Texas Mexican-American citizens in 1960 were first-generation Texans whose parents had been born in Mexico. The Spanish-surname persons...
whose parents were native to Mexico constituted 427,723 persons, or 31 per cent of the total Mexican population in Texas in 1960. These two categories constitute 45 per cent, or a population of 627,000, of the Spanish-surname persons who are legal, full-time residents of Texas and have either personal knowledge of or parentally instilled appreciation of the cultural and social values of Mexico.

Immigration

Even though there have been increased restrictions on the number of immigrants entering the United States, Mexico historically has been and continues to be one of the major countries of origin for immigrants. "Since 1900, nearly 1.4 million Mexican immigrants were admitted legally."2 As these people came to the United States, they brought with them the Mexican culture and mores. The successive waves of immigrants from Mexico and their tendency to move into established Mexican-American communities have contributed to the reinforcement and continuation of a cultural and ethnic value system oriented towards Mexico. Continuation of such a system is contrary to what has been observed regarding other minority groups. Generally in American history, immigrant minority groups such as those from Greece, Italy, and Germany have gradually lost their initial, strong group identity and values due to a diffusion process within the total population.

It should be noted that there has been some divergence of opinion regarding the degree to which Mexican Americans have maintained and perpetuated the cultural and ethnic value system of the older Mexican culture. Consequently, it is expedient to summarize what other researchers have said about immigration and its relevance in shaping cultural values which ultimately casts the framework of the typical Mexican Americans' consumer-behavioral pattern.

Until 1893, there were no reliable records kept on the number of Mexicans immigrating into the United States. Ruth S. Lamb said of these early years:

> Historical accounts as well as stories and folklore testify to substantial movements of people across the Mexican border long before such movements were controlled or measured. One of the early mass migrations occurred at the time the southwest territories were annexed to the United States. Large numbers of Mexicans from Sonora and other states in Mexico joined in the trek to the California Gold Rush. Farm workers, cowboys and shepherds came across a border that really existed only on paper, for the movement between the United States and Mexico was free, almost as if there were no border at all. The early immigrants came to a land that was once part of Mexico, to a land where they felt at home. In the later years of the nineteenth century, the migrations were still very informal and intermittent, though they were probably important in relation to the sparse population in the areas both north and south of the border. . . .

Even between 1893 and 1910, the statistics on the number of legal immigrants are only rough approximations, since this was still the period of the United States' "open door" immigration policy.

---

Since 1910, the U. S. Immigration Agency has maintained consistent records on the number of immigrants legally entering the United States. Table I details the large number of Mexican immigrants entering the United States with permanent visas from 1910 to 1968.

**TABLE I**

**MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS ENTERING THE UNITED STATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decade</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1910-1919</td>
<td>173,663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-1929</td>
<td>487,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-1939</td>
<td>27,937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-1949</td>
<td>54,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-1959</td>
<td>293,469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-1968</td>
<td>386,693</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Annual Reports of United States Department of Immigration and Naturalization Service.

The data in the above table indicate that significant numbers of Mexicans immigrated to the United States, especially during the 1920's, the 1950's, and the early 1960's. Of course, the number of illegal entries is impossible to estimate, for even today it is recognized that thousands still enter illegally in spite of tighter border security. Also, the figures do not include the number of temporary migrants under the bracero programs. The magnitude of the seasonal workers entering the United States was concisely discussed by Ernesto Galarzo, Herman Gallegos, and Julian Samora:

The total of permanent admissions in the last fifteen years (1950-1965) is over the half-million mark. The seasonal flows within this permanent migration cannot be ignored because they are
temporary. In 1965, despite the official demise of the bracero program, over 100,000 temporary contract laborers were admitted for seasonal employment. The Border Patrol continues to arrest so-called wetbacks at the rate of more than 40,000 a year. More than 60 million entrants are registered yearly under border crossing permits.

The importance of the large and continuing migration of persons from Mexico into the United States, with its impact on cultural reinforcement and ethnic identification, cannot be underestimated. With each new arrival, the customs, traditions, and mores of Mexico have been infused again and again into the life style of established Mexican-American communities here in the United States. For some persons, there tends to be an exclusiveness in the life style found in most Mexican-American communities. One group of people who want a continuation of the existing community cultural patterns are the recent immigrants.

There seems to be little doubt that the Mexican-American colonies as such will persist for generations to come. They are sustained not only by the ethnic exclusiveness of those city-born Mexican Americans who choose to remain in them, but by their continued functions as receiving areas for newcomers to the city. In the Southwest there seems little chance that they will shrink to the attenuated ethnic "downtowns" that have characterized Eastern and Middlewestern cities—a few ethnic groceries, candle shops, and so on.

---

4 Ernesto Galarza, Herman Gallegos, and Julian Samora, Mexican Americans in the Southwest (Santa Barbara, California, 1969), p. 15.

Spanish Language

There are many ways to analyze the importance of culture. A study of the influence that a particular culture has upon market behavior should consider the extent to which values are retained or the ways that ethnic identification is transmitted throughout the society. It must be acknowledged at the outset that a definitive statement on the cultural and value systems of Mexican Americans is beyond the scope of this study. Although it is recognized that generalizations can be very misleading, it is the purpose of this section to summarize the findings of recognized authorities regarding the degree to which the Mexican-American culture tends to influence behavioral patterns and, consequently, market behavior. While there are always exceptions, the primary direction of these authoritative findings should be sufficient either to prove or to confound one of the hypotheses of this study.

A cultural pattern that is universally recognized by all authorities is the persistent usage of the Spanish language by a vast majority of all Mexican Americans. In November, 1969, the Bureau of the Census undertook a special research study to measure the social and economic status of all persons who identify themselves as being of Spanish origin. In the Bureau's news release of this study, it was reported:

Although persons of Spanish origin constituted only one-twentieth of the total population of the United States, they accounted for about one-fifth of those who reported a mother tongue other than English, and approximately one-half of all persons reporting a language other than English usually spoken in the home. The expectation that persons
of second, third, or later generations of immigrant stock will be less likely to speak a foreign language in their home than the foreign born is confirmed by the survey results; 81 per cent of the foreign born and 64 per cent of the native population reported Spanish as the language spoken in the home.  

It must be emphasized that the Bureau of the Census reported that almost two-thirds of the first, second, and third generations continued to use Spanish as the language spoken in the home as of November, 1969.

Joan W. Moore, a highly respected authority on Mexican Americans, discussed the continued use of Spanish in the following passages:

No foreign language has been so persistently retained and is as likely to survive in this country as Spanish. This remarkable "language loyalty," or persistence, is attributable primarily to the Mexican Americans, according to a recent and extensive survey of language loyalty in the United States. [Reference to Language Loyalty in the United States, Joshua Fishman, Editor, 1966.] Surveys show that most Mexican Americans in Los Angeles, San Antonio, and Albuquerque are bilingual in Spanish and English. Some speak no English, and a small proportion speak no Spanish. . . . Most of those speaking Spanish in Los Angeles and San Antonio were either Mexican-born or have Mexican-born parents. The special loyalty of Mexican Americans, however, appears when we see what a large proportion of Spanish speakers there are among new Mexican descendants of seventeenth century settlers and among third or more generation Mexicans in the border towns and in the more isolated areas of the other states. Mexican Americans speak Spanish not only to communicate with foreign-born relatives but habitually and as a matter of tradition through many generations. Why is this so?

Part of the answer lies in the special history of the isolated Mexican Americans of these special areas. Even today a visitor entering a small town

---

in south Texas (Presidio, Rio Grande City, etc.) will hear Spanish rather than English as the normal language in the streets and shops. The few Anglos in many such towns are oftentimes also bilingual. Learning Spanish in these places is essential for social and economic survival, just as learning English is essential for Mexicans nearly anywhere else in the United States. . . .

When Mexicans leave these villages and rural areas for the large cities they bring with them their language patterns. Thus the new arrival coming to Albuquerque from the northern part of New Mexico is as handicapped in English as the "greenhorn" fresh from Tijuana. Most southwestern cities have such a steady influx of Spanish-speaking new arrivals. If the new arrivals choose to live in the barrio they will find retail stores, gas stations, and banks with clerks who speak Spanish by preference. . . .

Just as with some other ethnic groups in transition, the use of Spanish carries great symbolic meaning. This symbolism began from the time of the earliest contacts between Mexicans and Anglos. . . .

Thus the right to speak Spanish means, symbolically, a certain inalienable right guaranteed to a conquered people. This symbol has gained in significance because the right to speak Spanish had been so suppressed by the public school system. . . .

We can only say that the speaking of Spanish persists. It persists partly because of the isolation of many Mexican Americans. . . . Any reasonable discussion of the persistence of Spanish must recognize immediately that any attribution of goodness or badness to the persistence of Spanish depends upon the interests of the observer. Mexican American scholars bewail the disappearance of Spanish "by force" in the public school systems of the Southwest. And yet the outstanding failure of the same school system, according to educators, is that enough Spanish persists to damage the accomplishments of many Mexican American school pupils. As a practical consequence, school districts throughout the Southwest are experimenting with bilingual education. Moreover, the Chicano movement with its emphasis on ethnic self-awareness
may contribute to a resurgence of the use of Spanish among young middle-class people. . . . 7

A typical discussion of the persistent usage of the Spanish language has been provided by Neal Justin.

The most obvious identifying characteristic of the Mexican-Americans is their language.

The use of the Spanish language by the Mexican-Americans has played a definite role in the isolation and discrimination of these people by the Anglos. The preservation of the Spanish language has been interpreted by the dominant groups as "a persistent symbol and instrument of isolation." While the Anglo tends to consider the use of Spanish as an indication of foreignness, the Mexican-Americans consider it a symbol of their unity and loyalty to La Raza. 8

Recognition by researchers of the persistent usage of the Spanish language goes back to the earliest sociological studies. Writing in 1946, Ruth D. Tuck said, "There are three areas in which culture survival seems to be strongest: language, food habits and family life." 9

Based on a study conducted in 1965 and 1966, Leo Grebler, Joan W. Moore, and Ralph Guzman concluded:

As we expected, many people in both the Los Angeles and San Antonio samples were bilingual. . . .

More respondents were comfortable in Spanish than in English; 84 percent of the Los Angeles sample and 91 percent of the San Antonio sample could get along comfortably in English. . . .


At least some fluency in Spanish characterizes most of the respondents at all income levels. By contrast, almost half of the low-income Angelenos and even more in San Antonio have trouble with English. Linguistic competence—especially in English—varies by income within neighborhoods of similar ethnic composition. . . .10

The study conducted by Grebler, Moore, and Guzman showed that a vast majority of Mexicans in San Antonio converse in Spanish with their children. As shown in Table II, some degree of the Spanish language is used as a means of communication between adults and children in 91 to 96 per cent of the low-income families and in 77 to 91 per cent of the medium-income families. This extensive usage of the Spanish language in San Antonio is very similar to the usage of the Spanish language among Mexican American families in Fort Worth, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

TABLE II

RESPONDENTS USING SPANISH OR ENGLISH WITH THEIR CHILDREN BY INCOME AND NEIGHBORHOOD ETHNICITY, SAN ANTONIO, 1965-1966

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Spanish All or Most</th>
<th>English All or Most</th>
<th>Both</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>San Antonio</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frontier</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Income</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Income</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colony</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Income</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Income</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Based on the findings of research studies conducted by recognized authorities and reported in this section, it is evident that the Spanish language has been and will continue to be used actively by the majority of Mexican Americans. Obviously, most Mexican Americans are able to speak English, at least on an elementary level. However, it is the Spanish language that serves as the means by which many Mexican Americans achieve identity within their own culture. Therefore, marketers who wish to establish an identity or achieve optimum communication with the Mexican-American community in an effort to achieve optimal marketing effectiveness and efficiency must recognize the importance of being able to communicate in "their language," which is, of course, Spanish.

**Other Cultural Characteristics**

There are other cultural values that also tend to influence the behavioral patterns of Mexican Americans. Although these cultural traits are difficult to quantify as to their precise bearing on market behavior, they are significant factors of which the marketer must be aware and which he must study in order to determine their influence on his particular operation.

The first such cultural characteristic is that "Mexican Americans are significantly lacking in feelings of personal control (fatalism) and concern with delay of gratification (future orientation) when compared to their Anglo peers."

---

As expressed by William Madsen:

Acceptance and appreciation of things as they are constitute primary values of La Raza. Because God, rather than man, is viewed as controlling events, the Latin lacks the future orientation of the Anglo and his passion for planning ahead. Many Mexican-Americans would consider it presumptive to try to plan for tomorrow because human beings are merely servants of God and it is He who plans the future. The Latin lives for today instead of creating a blueprint for the future. He is dedicated to living the moment to its fullest in the roles assigned to him by God.12

Another cultural characteristic is intense loyalty and devotion to the family. Although stresses and strains are beginning to affect the Mexican-American family in the urban society, the family's well-being remains a very important consideration for all members of the family. It is not unusual to find that the Mexican-American family has been expanded to include various relatives. In fact, a high degree of clannishness has been observed among all Mexican Americans, as noted by Joan W. Moore:

Clannishness is an important defense for a poor and unskilled population in a demanding, indifferent, or hostile environment. Some of this attitude is a natural consequence of Mexican familism: a network of obligations was extremely important in the past among Mexican Americans and is important even today. In some ways the ethnic collectivity, that is, all Mexicans, functions as a more elaborate extension of the family. One is born into being Mexican and cannot escape the collective fate of all Mexicans... .

For some ethnic groups there have appeared in-group terms referring to ethnic solidarity. The terms describe the sense of peoplehood, of a

common history, of a sharing of common perceptions and preferences about the social world. . . . For Mexican Americans the term is la raza. The word can be narrowly translated as "race," but its implications are far more complex than that among Mexican Americans and indeed among Latin Americans generally. . . .13

Members of Mexican-American families have well-defined roles. The oldest male in the family is the dominant and ruling figure in the family, while the females are submissive. "The old command the young and the males command the females. Latin society rests firmly on a foundation of family solidarity and the concept of male superiority."14 Munro S. Edmonson has summarized the roles of the man and wife in a typical Mexican-American family:

All members of the family think of the man as the head of the family, and he himself is preoccupied with maintaining his own concept of his importance as family leader. He is judged by the way he provides for his family, but his decisions are not considered to be subjects for criticism by the rest of the family. The woman is not expected to interfere with masculine activities or participate in them. She is judged on the basis of her industriousness, frugality, and ability to care for children.15

The importance of the man's role in the Mexican-American culture must be carefully noted by marketers who must never inadvertently insult or degrade the manliness of the male customer. Basically the man's role is to "make his life a

---

13 Moore, *Mexican Americans*, p. 133.
living validation of the assumption that the man is stronger, more reliable and more intelligent than the female. . . . Weakness is looked down on in all spheres of male activity." 

Unique cultural factors are prevalent, pervasive, and persistent and are continually reinforced in Mexican-American communities. As important influential forces in determining the behavioral patterns of Mexican Americans, these unique cultural characteristics demand careful analysis and appropriate action on the part of marketers.

Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics

The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics discussed in this section were derived from secondary data. The majority of the data presented were compiled from the special report Persons of Spanish Surname which was a part of both the 1950 and the 1960 Census of Population and Housing. Supplemental data were obtained from periodic reports published by the Bureau of the Census and from studies published by recognized researchers.

Bureau of the Census Identification of Mexican Americans

Statistical data are limited to the 1950 and 1960 Census of Population and Housing because of changes in the official Census of the Bureau definition of the term Mexican American. Traditionally, the United States census statistics focused on those foreign stock in the white population. Consistent with

16 Madsen, Mexican-Americans of South Texas, p. 19.
this objective, before 1930, the census data on persons of Mexican descent were limited to counts of those born in Mexico and those of Mexican or mixed parentage. It was recognized that this approach underenumerated the Mexican-American segment of the population.

In the 1930 census, the definition was broadened for Mexican American to include the native born of native parentage as well as the foreign stock. The Bureau of the Census added the new classification "Mexican" to the "Other Races" category, which also included Negro, Oriental, and Indian. This new classification made it evident that Mexicans were not considered white. The data compiled under the new "Mexican" classification were later recognized by the Census Bureau as giving a "gross under-count" and also evoked "unfavorable reaction" from the Mexican Government and the United States Department of State. 17

In 1940, the Bureau of the Census changed the Mexican-American identification to that of mother tongue, which is that language other than English that is spoken in earliest childhood. The information was obtained from a 5 per cent sample of the general population. However, the published data were recognized as being of questionable value, especially among Mexican-American natives of native parentage. 18


18Ibid.
The Mexican-American identification adopted in 1950, and used in 1960 with very minor modification, was "Spanish surname." Using the identification of Spanish surname, Mexican Americans were now classified as "white persons of Spanish surnames." The list of Spanish surnames used by the census enumerators consisted of approximately 7,000 names. The utilization of such a comprehensive list of Spanish surnames is "probably as good as any that can be devised for broad statistical purposes." Because of the lack of consistency in defining Mexican Americans over the years, only the data from the 1950 and 1960 censuses can be used for systematic comparisons.

Population Trends

Mexican Americans living in Texas constitute a major segment of all Mexican Americans living in the entire United States. A historical reason for Mexicans' moving into Texas during early frontier days was that Mexico ruled and militarily controlled the more inhabitable area in the Texas territory. After Texas' independence had been won and statehood had been obtained, migrating to Texas remained a goal for many people living in Mexico due to greater economic opportunity and escape from internal strife. With a long, common geographical border, which could generally be crossed

---


with a minimum of interference, the Mexican-American population in the State of Texas became a significant segment of all Mexican Americans living in the United States from the mid-1800's until the early 1900's.

Concentrated in the five Southwestern states of Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas is 89 per cent of all Mexican Americans in the United States, according to the 1960 Census of Population. Of those 3,464,999 Mexican Americans living in the five southwestern states, the Texas Mexican-American population totalled 1,417,810, or an impressive 40.9 per cent. Historically, Mexican Americans living in the State of Texas have represented a significant portion of all Mexican Americans in the United States, as shown in Table III.

TABLE III

SPANISH-AMERICANS AND MEXICAN-AMERICAN POPULATION AS VARIOUSLY IDENTIFIED IN CENSUSES OF 1930 TO 1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total of Five Southwestern States</th>
<th>Total in Texas</th>
<th>Texas as Per Cent of Five States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>1,282,883</td>
<td>683,681</td>
<td>53.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>1,570,740</td>
<td>738,440</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>2,281,710</td>
<td>1,027,455</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>3,464,999</td>
<td>1,417,810</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1960 U.S. Census of Population PC(2)-1B, Table A.

A second perspective used to illustrate the trends of the Mexican-American population in Texas has been to observe the percentage of the State's total population which they represent. As tabulated by the Bureau of the Census in 1940, Mexican Americans represented 11.5 per cent of the State's total population of 6,414,824 persons. By 1950, the Spanish-surname segment had increased to 13.4 per cent of Texas's population. The 1960 Census reported a total State-of-Texas population of 9,579,677 persons, of which 1,417,810, or 14.8 per cent, were of Spanish surname.

The rate of growth from 1950 to 1960 is another barometer of the changing importance of Mexican Americans in Texas. The total population in Texas increased 24 per cent from the 1950 to the 1960 census. During the same period, the Bureau of the Census reported that Spanish-surname persons living in Texas had increased 38 per cent.

Since the consumer survey and the interviews with retail-grocery-store managers for this study were conducted in Fort Worth, the changes which have taken place in Fort Worth's Mexican-American population must be noted. In 1950, there were 8,139 persons with Spanish surnames living in Fort Worth, while the 1960 census reported a population of 16,322 Spanish-surname persons. The increase from 1950 to 1960 represents 101 per cent. Fort Worth's Mexican-American population represented 85 per cent of Tarrant County's total Mexican-American population of 19,373 in 1960. In summary, Fort Worth has a large population of Mexican Americans, with
a growth rate almost three times that for all Mexican Americans in Texas during the ten-year period from 1950 to 1960.

Nativity Status

The rapidly increasing Mexican-American population in Texas, and especially in Fort Worth, raises the question of whether the increase is due to larger family sizes or immigration. In Texas, and also in Fort Worth, the largest percentage of Spanish-surname people were native-born. Although immigration was a contributing factor, the major factor in the population increase of Mexican Americans was the high birth rate in both the native- and foreign-parentage categories. These trends are summarized in Table IV.

TABLE IV

SPANISH SURNAME PERSONS BY NATIVITY STATUS IN TEXAS, 1950 AND 1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nativity Status</th>
<th>1950</th>
<th>1960</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native of Native Parentage</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
<td>54.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native of Foreign Parentage</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
<td>31.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born in Mexico</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1960 U.S. Census of Population, PC(2)-1B, Table 1; 1950 U.S. Census of Population, PE No. 30, Table 5.

The available census data for Fort Worth showed that in 1950 the number of Spanish-surname people born in Mexico was
1,421, whereas in 1960, it was 1,592 persons. Expressing the
born-in-Mexico as a percentage of Fort Worth's Mexican-American
population, it was 17.5 per cent in 1950, decreasing to 9.8
per cent in 1960.

The salient point of this nativity-status analysis has
been the fact that the major population growth rate has been
among the first-, second-, and third-generation Mexican Amer-
icans. Although in past years immigration from Mexico con-
tributed significantly significantly to the expansion of the
total Mexican-American population, by 1960 the importance of
the immigration influence had decreased. In recent years,
the native-born segment has been the fastest growing segment
of the Mexican-American population.

The rapid Mexican-American population increase has been
due to their high rate of fertility. The most revealing sta-
tistic relating to fertility is that there are 4.7 persons
per Spanish-surname household in contrast to 3.4 persons per
household for all families. Another measure is the crude-
fertility ratio, which is the number of children under five,
divided by the number of women aged fifteen to forty-nine,
multiplied by 1,000. As shown in Table V, the crude-fertility
rate in Texas is much higher for Spanish-surname persons than
for other racial segments of the population. Also of interest
is the observation that there was a very high fertility rate
for the Spanish-surname group of women from ages forty-five
to forty-nine in contrast to the virtual rate of zero for
Anglo women in this same age group. As defined in Chapter I,
the term "Anglo" means the white or caucasian segment of the total population. The term "Anglo" excludes Mexican Americans, which the Bureau of the Census classifies as white persons with Spanish surnames.

TABLE V
CRUDE FERTILITY RATIO IN TEXAS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>1950</th>
<th>1960</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spanish surname</td>
<td>691</td>
<td>745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-white</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>543</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The substantially higher fertility ratio in all age groups of Spanish-surname women means larger sized families. When the analysis was expanded beyond simply showing the median family size of 4.7 persons per household, the tendency for larger sized families was even more evident. For example, 37.1 per cent of Mexican-American families have six or more persons, whereas only 9.9 per cent, or one-fourth as many, of the Anglo families are that large, as shown in Table VI. The tendency for Mexican Americans to have larger sized families than Anglos held consistent whether they were
urban, rural-non-farm, or rural-farm families. The larger average-family size for Mexican Americans suggests that their expenditures for goods and services would tend to be somewhat different from that of the average Anglo family.

**TABLE VI**

**FAMILY SIZE IN TEXAS AS A PERCENTAGE OF ALL FAMILIES IN EACH POPULATION GROUP, 1960**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Group</th>
<th>Number of Persons in Family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish surname</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1960 U.S. Census of Population, Vol. 1, Part 45, Table 110; PC(2)-1B, Table 5.

**Age Composition**

One of the most distinctive characteristics of the Mexican-American population is its low median age. The median age for Spanish-surname persons in Texas in 1960 was nearly twelve years lower than that for Anglo persons, whereas in Fort Worth the median age for Spanish-surname persons was about eleven years lower than that for Anglo persons. With the previous reference to Mexican-Americans' large family size, it is not surprising to observe the fact that children under fifteen years of age accounted for 46.5 per cent of the Mexican Americans in Texas and 39.7 per cent of the Mexican-American population in Fort Worth. These percentages contrast sharply with the percentages for Anglo
children under fifteen years of age, which represented 33.1 per cent of the Anglo population in Texas and 28.7 per cent of the Anglo population in Fort Worth (see Table VII). The importance of this observation is that children less than fifteen years old are dependent upon their parents for the necessities of life. Historically, Mexican Americans have had low family incomes. Thus, with the larger number of dependent children, the modest family income must be divided into even smaller per capita allocations. The marketer realizes the low income status of the Mexican-American family. However, he must also appreciate the fact that the typical Mexican-American family must provide more necessities to more persons than the Anglo low income family.

**Educational Attainment**

In a society which is technologically oriented, education is the means by which individuals adapt their skills to take advantage of new economic opportunities created by advancing technology. The low educational attainment of Mexican Americans restricts their income level and, thus, their buying behavioral patterns as consumers. The purpose of this section is to put into perspective the great disparity in education between Mexican Americans and Anglos.

The fact that Mexican Americans have lagged behind in educational attainment has been documented in many reports
### TABLE VII

**AGE DISTRIBUTION FOR URBAN SPANISH-SURNAME AND ANGLO POPULATION IN TEXAS AND FOR WORTH, 1960**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Texas Spanish Surname</th>
<th>Texas Anglo</th>
<th>Fort Worth Spanish Surname</th>
<th>Fort Worth Anglo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-74</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 years and over</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1960 U.S. Census of Population, PC(2)-1B, Tables 2 and 13; and No. 45, Table 20 and 23.
in the past years. The Census data showing the extreme difference in the median number of school years completed by Spanish-surname persons in Texas and in Fort Worth in comparison with their Anglo counterpart is exhibited in Table VIII.

TABLE VIII
MEDIAN YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED BY PERSONS TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AND OVER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Group</th>
<th>1950</th>
<th>1960</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Texas:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish surname</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Worth:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish surname</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The educational gap between Mexican Americans and Anglos appears to be closing. There is evidence that current enrollment figures for Mexican Americans are almost equal to those of Anglos. This is a logical corollary to


the goal of all Mexican-American groups for higher educational achievement.24

The long-term prospects of Mexican Americans' achieving higher educational attainment is encouraging, although some problems still exist, such as excessive drop-out rates, inequality for rural children, and the large number of poorly educated adults. The short-term outlook is for the educational barrier to continue to restrict economic opportunities for Mexican Americans and, consequently, their activity in the marketplace.

In Fort Worth, the median number of school years completed by Mexican Americans was higher than the average for the whole State. However, when the education achieved by those persons twenty-five years and older is detailed, as in Table IX, the relatively low level of educational achievement in this urbanized city is very apparent.

Income

The historical conception has been that many Mexican Americans were low-income, agricultural workers. As Joan Moore has stated it:

The Mexican Americans are particularly unfortunate: they are a poverty-stricken provincial population; they have very few national or regional spokesmen; and they have been confounded for years in the public mind with the migrant farm laborers, a mistake that tends to keep them out of public view. . . .25


25 Moore, Mexican Americans, p. 29.
TABLE IX
YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED BY SPANISH SURNAME PERSONS
TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OLD AND OVER IN FORT WORTH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of School Completed</th>
<th>1950</th>
<th>1960</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No School Years Completed:</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary: 1 to 4 years</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 7 years</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 years</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School: 1 to 3 years</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College: 1 to 3 years</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 years or more</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1960 U.S. Census of Population, PC(2)-1B, Table 13; 1950 U.S. Census of Population, PE No. 3C, Table 8.

In recent years there has been some occupational upgrad-ing for a majority of the Mexican-American workers. However, the median family income for Spanish-surname families in 1959 was approximately 60 per cent of the average Anglo family income in Texas. In Fort Worth, the median annual income for a Mexican-American family was $4,574, some $1,387 higher than the State average for Mexican-American families. Even with this improvement, the median annual income for the average Mexican-American family in Fort Worth was $1,010 less than the median annual income for an Anglo family in Fort Worth.

Viewed from another perspective, 25 per cent of the Mexican-American families in Fort Worth earned less than
$3,000 annually, which is the governmental criterion for poverty, whereas 47 per cent of the Mexican-American families in Texas earned an annual income of less than $3,000. The data used in this analysis are shown in Table X.

TABLE X
URBAN FAMILY INCOME IN 1959

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Spanish Surname</th>
<th>Texas</th>
<th>Fort Worth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1,000 to $2,999</td>
<td>$3,000 to $4,999</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3,000 to $4,999</td>
<td>$5,000 to $6,999</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000 to $6,999</td>
<td>$7,000 to $9,999</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$7,000 to $9,999</td>
<td>$10,000 and over</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under $1,000</td>
<td>$10,000 and over</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 and over</td>
<td>$10,000 and over</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Median Income:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish Surname</th>
<th>Texas</th>
<th>Fort Worth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Surname</td>
<td>$3,187</td>
<td>$4,574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>$6,133</td>
<td>$5,584</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


"For population groups with great divergence in family size, the income per person in the family is especially relevant as an indicator of differential restraints on consumption."

---

26 Grebler, Moore, and Guzman, The Mexican American People, p. 183.
The income-per-person data show that Mexican-American families in both Fort Worth and Texas earn approximately one-third as much as Anglo families. For example, Fort Worth's income per person for Mexican Americans is $701 in contrast to $1,743 for Anglos; for Texas, it is $629 in contrast to $1,772 for Anglos.

The effects of family size on per capita income are not limited to the poor. Large differentials in the median size of Spanish surname and all other families extend over the whole range of incomes. Hence, one would expect consumption levels of the more well-to-do, as well as the poor Mexican Americans, to reflect constraints resulting from the typically larger number of persons in the family.27

Neighborhood Patterns of Mexican Americans in Fort Worth

The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics discussed thus far have focused on Mexican Americans in Fort Worth and in Texas in an effort to determine whether they have distinctive characteristics that would support the hypothesis that these Mexican Americans constitute a true ethnic market segment. The analysis now turns to those Mexican Americans residing in Fort Worth with a statistical description of the neighborhood communities in which they live.

An analysis of neighborhood housing patterns is important to all marketers. For a manufacturer or wholesaler, this information is necessary in order to optimize distribution.

27Ibid., p. 185.
systems. For a retailer, neighborhood patterns influence the location of retail stores, as well as specific marketing strategies, such as product mix or promotional activities, needed to maximize the store's profit contribution.

The secondary data used in this analysis were obtained from the special Census Tract report for Fort Worth, which was published as a part of the 1960 *Census of Population and Housing*. In 1960, the Bureau of the Census enumerated data for eighty-three census tracts in Fort Worth.

The general neighborhood communities of Mexican Americans in Fort Worth can be described as the Northside community and the Southside community. Of the 16,322 Spanish-surname persons who lived in Fort Worth in 1960, almost 70 per cent lived in these two reasonably well defined communities. Furthermore, this approximate 70 per cent, which represented 10,981 persons, lived in only seventeen of the eighty-three census tracts in Fort Worth.

An analysis of the degree to which Mexican-American communities are concentrated should also include an overview of the quality of housing located in these neighborhoods. It was anticipated that the housing of Mexican-American families would be generally older, less adequate and of lower value due to their low average income. To gain a more detailed perspective, Table XI shows selected housing characteristics of predominantly Mexican-American neighborhoods in relationship to data for the City of Fort Worth. For example, the median value of owner-occupied homes in the City of Fort Worth
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>City of Fort Worth</th>
<th>2B</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>5A</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>45C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Median Family Income</strong></td>
<td>$5,484</td>
<td>$4,107</td>
<td>$3,474</td>
<td>$4,157</td>
<td>$5,161</td>
<td>$3,790</td>
<td>$2,589</td>
<td>$4,701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tenure Status:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Occupied</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter Occupied</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Condition:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deteriorating</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dilapidated</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Median Value:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Occupied</td>
<td>$8,500</td>
<td>$5,000-</td>
<td>$5,000-</td>
<td>$5,000-</td>
<td>$7,400</td>
<td>$5,500</td>
<td>$5,000-</td>
<td>$5,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Median Rent:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter Occupied</td>
<td>$ 64</td>
<td>$ 55</td>
<td>$ 51</td>
<td>$ 58</td>
<td>$ 63</td>
<td>$ 54</td>
<td>$ 36</td>
<td>$ 55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

was $8,500 in comparison with the median value of $5,000 for homes in six of the seven census tracts which are predominantly populated by Mexican Americans. The condition-of-housing category shows the same trend. In Fort Worth, 81 per cent of the homes were classified as being sound, with only 50 to 60 per cent of the homes classified as being sound in six of the seven census tracts whose population was predominantly Mexican Americans.

This analysis of demographic and socioeconomic data for Mexican Americans included only the salient points which tend to have the most influence on the life style of Mexican-American consumers. The overall objective was to ascertain if the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of Mexican Americans were unique, resulting in a different life-style from that of Anglos.

Summary

This chapter has presented both a review of current literature and secondary statistical data which clearly substantiates the fact that Mexican Americans represent a substantial and definable population segment whose behavioral patterns are significantly influenced by cultural forces. In the first part of the chapter, the cultural factors that influence behavioral patterns of Mexican Americans were presented and analyzed. The second part of the chapter presented a statistical profile, including both demographic and socioeconomic factors, for Mexican Americans in Texas and in Fort Worth.
The first part of this chapter reviewed current literature to determine the importance of Mexican-American cultural forces. First, it was documented that the continuing large numbers of Mexican immigrants reinforces ethnic identification through the continuous infusion of cultural customs, traditions, and mores. Second, it was established that the continued heavy reliance on the Spanish language serves as the common thread that continually binds together the members of the Mexican-American community. Third, Mexican-Americans' fatalistic attitudes and their lack of future orientation was noted. Fourth, it was observed that the cultural concept of taking care of one's own family tends to expand into the more complex concept of taking care of one's own neighborhood and nationality. Fifth, the well-defined roles of members of Mexican-American families was stressed, with the male considered as being the dominant member of the society. It is clearly evident that Mexican Americans possess distinctive behavioral patterns which are influenced and shaped by their unique cultural characteristics, which are prevalent, pervasive, persistent and which are continually reinforced.

The demographic and socioeconomic data were compiled from the Bureau of the Census reports Persons of Spanish Surname for 1950 and 1960. When contrasted with the average Anglo segment of the urban population, the Mexican Americans have demographic and socioeconomic characteristics that are frequently used to establish a market segment classification. It was observed that the Mexican-American population has
increased at a much faster rate than the Anglo segment. The Mexican-Americans' family is typically much larger than the Anglo family. Both the median age and the age composition of Mexican Americans showed them to be younger and, by necessity, more oriented toward the large number of dependent children in each family. The statistical data also revealed a tendency for Mexican Americans, due to their low educational attainment, low levels of income, and strong family orientation, to be less mobile in society than are their Anglo counterpart. Consequently, the Mexican-American communities are well defined and tend to be concentrated. Because of the low level of family income, communities are located in areas with older, less expensive homes. These demographic and socioeconomic characteristics furnish sufficient evidence to support the contention that Mexican Americans living in Texas, and especially in an urban area like Fort Worth, have distinctive and definable characteristics.
CHAPTER III

AN ANALYSIS OF MEXICAN-AMERICANS' GROCERY SHOPPING BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS IN RELATIONSHIP TO DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

To ascertain if Mexican Americans represent a true ethnic market segment of economic significance to marketers, the purpose of this chapter is multi-faceted. First, demographic and socioeconomic factors descriptive of the consumer sample will be presented. Second, to test the validity of Mexican-Americans' constituting an ethnic market segment, grocery-shopping behavioral patterns will be described and analyzed. Third, to ascertain if Mexican Americans represent a substantial ethnic market in terms of the amount of money spent, relevant demographic and socioeconomic factors will be presented and analyzed.

To obtain this information, personal interviews were conducted with 115 Mexican-American households in Fort Worth, Texas, during the spring of 1972. The interviews were conducted in either English or Spanish, depending upon the preference of the respondent. After the purpose of the survey was explained by the bilingual interviewer, virtually all Mexican-American respondents were cooperative. Only three households refused to grant the interview.
Descriptive Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics of Households

Geographic Distribution of Respondents

The consumer sample of 115 Mexican-American households was drawn from the Northside and the Southside communities of Fort Worth. To assure a representative sample, this sample was designed to include sixty-four households, or 56.5 per cent of the sample, from the Northside community and fifty-one households, or 43.5 per cent of the sample, from the Southside community, as shown in Table XII. This percentage distribution of Mexican-American consumer households between the Northside and the Southside communities approximates the distribution of the aggregate household population of the two Mexican-American communities.

TABLE XII
GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Per Cent of Respondents in Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northside</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southside</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Composition of Consumer Sample

Having clearly established in Chapter II that the female is primarily responsible for grocery shopping and the preparation of family meals, the sample design was weighted in favor of wives of Mexican-American household heads. However, to
ascertain the familiarity of male household heads with grocery-shopping behavioral patterns in their household, male household heads were also included in the sample. To assure representativeness of the sample composition, the number of female and male respondents from the Northside community was approximately equal to the number of female and male respondents from the Southside community, based on a percentage of the aggregate population in these Mexican-American communities. The distribution of male and female respondents by geographical location is shown in Table XIII.

**TABLE XIII**

COMPOSITION OF RESPONDENTS BY GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Northside</th>
<th>Southside</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Per Cent Of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In most consumer surveys, the age of the respondents is an important factor. However, in light of the findings presented in Chapter II, the head of the Mexican-American household, regardless of age, is responsible for providing for the family's needs. Because of this cultural factor, age of the respondent was not considered significant in this study. The significant factor was that the respondent was either the wife of the household head or the household head.
Family Size

Based on this survey the median family size of Mexican Americans living in Fort Worth was 5.2 persons per household, as determined from the statistics regarding family size by number of household members tabulated in Table XIV. The median family size of all Mexican Americans in Texas in 1960 was 4.7 persons. The Anglo median family size in Texas in 1960 was 3.4. The data show that Mexican-American families in Fort Worth must feed approximately two more persons per household than does the average Anglo family. Having to feed additional persons per household suggests that a Mexican-American family would tend to spend a larger percentage of its income for grocery products than would an Anglo family with a similar income.

**TABLE XIV**

**FAMILY SIZE BY NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Household Members</th>
<th>Total Number of Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10+</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The composition of the Mexican-American households which were surveyed gives insight as to the diversity of age groups within the household and thus suggests the diversity of food products purchased by the household. For example, in one of the southside households, the family consisted of eleven members including the parents, seven children, a married daughter, and a grandmother. In another household there were the parents with four minor children, plus a married son, his wife, and one child. Of the 115 households surveyed, there were twenty-two extended families, which had grandparents, nieces, nephews, and divorced or married daughters residing in the home. The marketer must be aware of the diverse age groups that may constitute a Mexican-American household. This diversity in ages, in addition to the number of household members for which groceries must be purchased, indicates that the types of items bought will be diversified.

**Language Used Most Often**

From the survey data it was ascertained that the majority of Mexican Americans use the Spanish language extensively. Eighty-three per cent of Mexican-American families are either bilingual or use Spanish exclusively in conversation in the home, as shown in Table XV.

Analysis of the survey data shows that Spanish only is spoken by the very young families, in their twenties, or by the older families, over fifty years of age. English only is spoken in the thirty-to-forty years of age grouping.
TABLE XV

LANGUAGE USED MOST OFTEN IN CONVERSATION
BY HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Used</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per Cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Only</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Only</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This analysis is shown in Table XVI. This study did not investigate the motivation of the various age groups for the use of one language in preference to the other. However, from other research studies, indications are that the reason the younger groups stress Spanish is to achieve nationalistic identification. The older families rely upon Spanish due to their lack of knowledge of the English language. Therefore, the marketer must be aware of the bilingual situation that exists in a Mexican-American community and be prepared to cope with a bilingual market segment.

Managers of grocery stores serving the Northside and the Southside Mexican-American communities should be aware that 33 per cent of their present or potential clientele speak Spanish only, as shown in Table XV, and that this significant percentage is relatively representative of all age groups, with only a few exceptions, as shown in Table XVI.
### TABLE XVI

**LANGUAGE SPOKEN IN HOME BY AGE GROUP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Spanish Only</th>
<th>English Only</th>
<th>Both</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-55</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-65</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66 and over</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This information conclusively indicates that provisions should be made to facilitate the shopping of Mexican Americans in grocery stores serving their communities.

**Education of Respondents**

It was established in Chapter II that Mexican Americans have achieved minimal educational levels. The educational level of both the husband and the wife in each household, which is tabulated in Table XVII, shows that the Mexican-American adults in Fort Worth have the same educational trend as has been noted previously in other studies.
TABLE XVII
EDUCATION OF ADULT MEMBERS IN HOUSEHOLDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No School Years</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 1-6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 7-9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 10-12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College or Advanced School</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The median educational level achieved was the equivalent of Junior High School, or the seventh-through-ninth grade levels. This relatively low level of education would suggest that Mexican Americans need to have product information presented to them in a straightforward manner. The use of subtle meanings in advertising and promotions may not have an impact on this consumer group. It should be noted by the marketer that twenty-three adults, or 10 per cent of the household heads and their wives, reported no education. In addition to the fifty-one adults reporting an educational level of less than six years, twelve adults reported "don't know," which may be an indication of an absolute minimal amount of education. In essence, seventy-four adults, or approximately 34 per cent of the household heads and their wives, would find it difficult to read and comprehend marketing messages,
especially those in English. One inference to be drawn from this information is the need for clarity and simplicity in all advertising and promotional literature. A second inference is the need for understandability of branding and labeling.

**Monthly Income**

Historically, Mexican Americans have been classified as being predominantly in the low-income category, as is confirmed by this survey. The median monthly income level for Mexican-American households in Fort Worth falls in the $400-$500 range, as summarized in Table XVIII. Although 20 percent of the respondents' households reported a monthly income between $400 and $500, it should be noted that 38 percent of the respondents' households reported a monthly income of less than $400.

**TABLE XVIII**

MONTHLY FAMILY INCOME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Number of Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under $250</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$251-$400</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$401-$500</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$501-$625</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$626-$833</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$834 and Over</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on comparison with annual income of Spanish-surname persons in the 1960 Census of Population, it was concluded that income data had been reliably reported by the respondents in this survey. Although the interviewer asked the monthly income of all family members who were employed, it is recognized that some respondents may have failed to include income from members who were working part-time. The interviewer also asked about the receipt of welfare payments and food stamps. However, only two of the respondents indicated the receipt of these types of income supplements. The non-reporting of this type of income may be attributed to the stigma which is attached in the Mexican-American community to the receipt of such payments. Any bias in the reporting of income was not considered serious enough to jeopardize the inference that the grocery expenditures for a typical Mexican-American family are a significant part of their monthly income.

Grocery Shopping Characteristics and Behavior of Mexican Americans

The survey investigated the patterns and preferences of Mexican Americans as they shopped for grocery products. The results which are presented suggest that Mexican-American consumers do exhibit behavior which is unique and distinctively different in certain aspects. Primarily, they are ethnically oriented to favor a store that reinforces the Mexican-American consumers' cultural identification. In the following analysis
of the survey data, an effort was made to identify the basic grocery-shopping characteristics of the Mexican-American consumer.

**Shopping Days**

Respondents were asked on which day or days of the week they did the majority of their grocery shopping. In some interviews it was necessary to phrase the question to ask on which day of the week they spent the most money at the grocery store. The survey data revealed that Friday and Saturday are the days of the week when 82 per cent of the Mexican Americans make their largest grocery purchases. Based on comments of the respondents, Friday and Saturday are the days when the majority of Mexican Americans purchase the staple and bulk items needed for the week.

**Frequency of Grocery-Shopping Trips**

Respondents were asked how often they went to the grocery store during the week in order to make any size of purchase. The pattern, which is apparent from Table XIX, is one of many trips to the grocery store for the majority of Mexican-American families. It is significant to note that 52 per cent of the respondents reported making several trips to the grocery store during the week, and 16 per cent of the respondents reported making daily trips to the grocery store.

The seventy-eight respondents who went to the store daily or several times a week reflect a shopping characteristic which has been traditional in Spanish culture. A member
TABLE XIX

FREQUENCY OF GROCERY SHOPPING TRIPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Number of Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several Times a Week</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a Week</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every Two Weeks</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a Month</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

of the family, normally the wife, went to the store daily to purchase those few items needed for that day. This was especially true for families of day laborers who bought day by day with whatever income had been earned and was available for grocery items. Also, it should be noted that originally the wife needed to purchase daily fresh meat or produce because of the lack of refrigeration in the home. In spite of an increase in the availability of refrigeration in the home, the survey clearly shows that Mexican Americans now living in Fort Worth continue this custom of going to the store frequently in order to purchase small amounts of needed items. In addition to buying meat and fresh produce for the evening meal, they purchase other items frequently, such as sweet breads, milk, and eggs. Frequent trips to the grocery store have traditionally served as a social outlet for the wife. This continues to be true today. This daily
grocery-shopping pattern is a carry over from the public market days of Old Mexico.

**Utilization of Small Neighborhood Stores**

With 78 per cent of the respondents going to the grocery store daily or several times a week, as shown in Table XIX, and with 71 per cent of the respondents patronizing the small neighborhood store, as shown in Table XX, the survey data conclusively show that small neighborhood stores are an integral part of the average Mexican-American shopping pattern. The small neighborhood stores located in Fort Worth are individually owned and can be characterized as small, single-line grocery stores, with a limited selection and variety of items. The primary patronage motive of these stores is their convenient location.

**TABLE XX**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Utilization</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fact that Mexican Americans make many shopping trips during the week points out the importance of these neighborhood stores. When only a few items are to be purchased, it is more convenient to secure them from the corner store. It
is even possible to have the children in the family go to the store to pick up the few necessary items. However, other significant reasons for shopping at the small neighborhood stores are the friendliness of the owner, the store owner's ability to converse in Spanish, and the confidence that the children will not be overcharged if they are sent to buy grocery items. Based on observation, it was concluded that the small neighborhood stores in the Mexican-American community have survived because of their convenient location and because of their close identification with the cultural aspects of the Mexican-American community. An illustration of this identification was the ability of all small-store owners to speak Spanish.

**Mode of Transportation to Grocery Store**

In an urban community it would be anticipated that the majority of shoppers would use the family car as a means of commuting to the grocery store. In this study, the data revealed that of the 115 respondents, seventy-four, or 64 per cent of the respondents, used the car as their primary means of transportation. What is especially significant is that thirty-nine respondents, or 34 per cent of the sample, indicated that they walked to the store. Only 2 per cent of the respondents used the bus or taxi as a means of transportation to the grocery store. This large percentage of Mexican-American customers walk to the grocery store because of the unavailability of a car, the convenient access to a supermarket or a corner grocery store, the inadequacy of bus transportation, or the high expense of taxi transportation.
In summary, a car, when available, is relied upon by Mexican-American shoppers primarily for the purchase of large quantities of staple items or when shopping occurs at a store outside of the immediate neighborhood. However, in the event that a car is unavailable and a supermarket is conveniently located to the Mexican-American community, the wife and/or older children will make several trips to the store during the week in order to purchase their staple items. In addition, the Mexican-American shoppers, with or without the availability of a car, will make supplemental shopping trips to the grocery store during the week. The marketer should give serious consideration to the packaging of many grocery items in smaller quantities for the convenience of these frequent Mexican-American shoppers who may walk to the store. Since there will be almost daily contact with many of his customers, the grocer may find it expedient to change in-store promotions more often. Also, the simple service of "double bagging" in order to avoid torn bags will be appreciated by those customers who have walked to the store.

Members of Family Who Go Grocery Shopping

The participants in a grocery shopping trip give insight into the complex role playing which occurs during these trips. The data clearly show the dominant position played by the wife in the purchase of grocery products. Ninety-eight per cent of the respondents reported that the wife actively participates in the weekly purchase of groceries.
Table XXI presents the data regarding members of the family who go grocery shopping.

**TABLE XXI**

MEMBERS OF FAMILY WHO GO GROCERY SHOPPING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Members</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife Only</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband Only</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Only</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife With Husband</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife With Children</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife, Husband, Children</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife With Others</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The traditional role of the wife in the Mexican-American culture has been that of mother and supervisor of domestic tasks. The preparation of meals has been her responsibility, as has been the purchase of food items for their meals. The survey data demonstrate conclusively that the Mexican-American wife's role is still one of being involved actively in the grocery purchasing and meal preparation.

The wife was in the company of someone else from her immediate family 75 per cent of the time when she went shopping. The wife and husband went to the store together 35 per cent of the time. These statistics suggest that grocery-shopping trips perhaps have two functions. In addition to
the function of obtaining the necessary food items, grocery shopping fulfills something of a social function. This implies that the store's environment is important. Also, the Mexican-American husband whose culture dictates the importance of maintaining a strong image of male dominance needs to feel "comfortable" and to feel that his male ego will not be jeopardized or diminished while in the grocery store.

**Means of Paying for Grocery Purchases**

Cash is the primary means of paying for groceries. This cash in many instances is obtained by cashing payroll checks at the cashier's office. Personal checks are rarely used to obtain cash for use in the grocery store. From a sample of 115 respondents, 106 respondents reported that they paid cash. Only five respondents reported the use of food stamps. Credit or a combination of cash and food stamps were reported as a means of paying for groceries by four respondents.

Even though many of the respondents interviewed are eligible for food stamps due to their low income, only five respondents reported their use. Either the respondents really did not use food stamps or they did not wish to admit to the interviewer that they used them.

Most grocery stores do not give credit. The only respondents reporting the use of credit had family members who either owned or managed food stores, and credit was extended to them as a family courtesy.
Importance of Spanish-Speaking Personnel
In the Grocery Store Patronized

A very strong aspect of the grocery-shopping process that can be attributed to ethnic considerations is that of preferring stores whose employees can effectively communicate with the shoppers. In previously presented data, it was noted that Spanish was spoken exclusively in the home by 33 per cent of the respondents. These respondents would be expected to seek out stores whose employees are from the same ethnic group or who have the ability to converse in Spanish.

A store's image is projected to a particular market segment by the profile of the employees of that store. For example, the employees' ability to speak Spanish appears to be important to the Mexican-American shopper. This observation is based upon responses to two questions which were asked of the respondents. First, survey responses indicated that 80 per cent of the respondents who use Spanish extensively in their home seek out stores whose employees also speak Spanish. A second question asked how important it was that the manager of the store or the store's butcher spoke Spanish. Sixty-one respondents, or 53 per cent, said that it was important to them that the manager speak Spanish. The manager's being able to speak Spanish is relatively unimportant because most customers do not ever deal directly with the manager. However, it is very important that the butcher be able to converse with shoppers in Spanish. Eighty-two respondents, or
74 per cent, indicated that they preferred a store where the butcher could speak Spanish. Since meat is a significant part of the Mexican-American's food budget, it is logical that the Mexican-American shopper prefers a store where he thinks he is getting value for his meat purchases, where he has the ability to converse easily with the butcher, and where he is confident that the butcher is sympathetic toward the ethnic-oriented purchases. The preceding analysis suggests that the ability of a store's employees, particularly the butcher, to speak Spanish is an important consideration and ethnic motivation to the Mexican-American shopper.

**Importance of Price and Brand**

For retailers and manufacturers of convenience goods, a major consideration in planning their marketing strategy revolves around the concept of whether to use competitive prices or brand-loyalty appeals. Both concepts have been used successfully. Table XXII summarizes the answers received from Mexican Americans as to whether price or brand was most important in selecting their grocery items.

The data show that forty-six respondents indicated that price was their main consideration. The response to price was closely followed by thirty-seven respondents who said that brand was most important. The relatively equal distribution of responses between the importance of price and of brand is suggestive of the character of the Mexican-American shopper. First, reasons for being motivated by price must
TABLE XXII
IMPORTANCE OF PRICE AND BRAND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Price Versus Brand</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Price is Most Important</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand is Most Important</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both Equally Important</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

be considered. The low-average income and the large average-size family dictate that the maximum amount of food be obtained for each dollar spent. Price appeals satisfy the need for economy. Second, the importance of brand loyalty must be considered. The lower educational level of most Mexican Americans and their continued reliance on the Spanish language makes them extremely brand conscious once they have found a product that meets their needs and is of a consistent quality.

**Weekly Amount Spent in Food Store**

Respondents were asked how much money they spent during a normal week for grocery items. In some interviews the respondent could not give a typical or average weekly expenditure. They were then asked how much they spent the last time they bought a week's supply of groceries. For this study it was assumed that this weekly grocery expenditure was representative of a normal weekly expenditure. The weekly amount spent in food stores is summarized in Table XXIII.
TABLE XXIII

WEEKLY AMOUNT SPENT IN FOOD STORE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Per Cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20 or Under</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$21-$31</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$31-$41</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$41-$60</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$61 and Over</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The median amount spent for groceries per week by Mexican-American families was $33. In spite of their low income, 56 per cent of the respondents spent more than $30 per week for groceries. The salient point of the data presented in Table XXIII is the relatively large amount of weekly purchases which Mexican Americans make in a grocery store. In the preceding section it was noted that 106 respondents, or 92 per cent of the sample, paid cash for their grocery purchases. Thus, Mexican-American families in reality are a market segment that does spend a significant amount of cash each week in the local grocery store.

Grocery Expenditure Compared to Monthly Income

From the preceding data it was ascertained that the median amount spent per week for groceries is $33 by Mexican-American families. The variance in grocery expenditures is
is determined by the monthly income and by the number of persons in the household.

The data in Table XXIV relate grocery expenditures to monthly income. General observation of the data suggests that it follows Engles Laws, which state that as income rises the percentage which is spent on food declines. From the relatively low income of the majority of respondents, it can be concluded that a relatively high percentage of their income is spent for food in addition to an incremental percentage for non-food items, such as shampoo or cigarettes, purchased at the grocery store. The data compiled in this study clearly demonstrate that a major share of income is spent in grocery stores.

**TABLE XXIV**

GROCERY EXPENDITURE COMPARED TO MONTHLY INCOME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monthly Income</th>
<th>Weekly Amount Spent on Groceries</th>
<th>$20 or Less</th>
<th>$21-$30</th>
<th>$31-$40</th>
<th>$41-$60</th>
<th>$61 and Over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$250 and Less</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$251-$400</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$401-$500</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$501-$625</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$626-$833</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$834 and Over</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the above data calculations were made as to the percentage of income which was spent at the grocery store. The significant factor is the indicated trend rather than the absolute percentage. For example, using the mean of $325 for the $251-400 income category and the mean of $30 for weekly expenditures, or $120 per month, 37 per cent of the income was spent for grocery-store items. For the other five monthly income categories, the mean per cent of the income spent for grocery-store items was 68 per cent, 29 per cent, 22 per cent, 19 per cent, and 15 per cent respectively.

It is recognized that there is probably some small degree of bias in both the income figures and the weekly amount spent on groceries. However, for this study the general tendency is the significant factor. The observed tendency is that, on the average, 35 per cent of the Mexican-American's income is spent in grocery stores. It can be inferred that for the typical family such a large expenditure has to be carefully deliberated. The deliberation considers not only the quantity and quality of items purchased, but also the emotional satisfaction to be gained from shopping at a particular store. The point being established is that the marketer must be aware of the significant portion of Mexican-American income which is being spent for grocery items. Furthermore, the marketer must recognize that goods and services which reassure the Mexican-American shopper that he is making the correct decision obviously contribute to satisfied, loyal customers.
Grocery Expenditures Compared to Number of Household Members

It would be anticipated that as the family size increased, there would also be an increase in the amount spent on groceries. The survey data confirmed this anticipated observation, as shown in Table XXV.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number in Household</th>
<th>Weekly Amount Spent on Groceries</th>
<th>$20 or Less</th>
<th>$21-$30</th>
<th>$31-$40</th>
<th>$41-$60</th>
<th>$61 and Over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 and Over</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the survey data an approximation of the average amount of money spent per member in the household was determined. Disregarding the extremes of the distribution, the majority of the 115 respondents reported that they spent between $6.50 to $8.00 per week on grocery items for each
member of the household. It is reasonable to assume that children are probably on the lower end of the scale and adults on the higher end. Regardless of the divergence, the important point is that retail grocers should realize that in their trade area each Mexican American represents a potential sale each week of $6.50 to $8.00. The fallacy in the assumption that Mexican Americans do not represent economically significant customers because of their low income is pointed out by this analysis.

The Years of Schooling of Those Who Paid for Groceries Compared to Amount Spent

As pointed out previously, the amount of money spent for groceries is approximately 30-35 per cent of the family income. It can be anticipated that the person who actually pays for the grocery purchases realizes the importance of the amount of cash which is given to the check-out clerk at the grocery store. Even though the purchase of groceries is a frequent occurrence, there is an emotional sensitivity to the spending of a large percentage of the family budget. There is a need for the person paying for the grocery purchase to feel assured that there has been value received for the money spent. Also, it can be assumed that those customers with less education would perhaps need, to some degree, more assurance of the honesty and accuracy of the transaction. Table XXVI shows the education of the adult in the household who normally pays for the purchases and the average amount spent per week.
The median educational level was 7-9 years, with thirty-four respondents falling into this level of education. Some thirty-seven respondents reported 0-6 years of education. Seventy-one respondents ranging from 0-9 years of schooling reported weekly grocery purchases in all categories, with the central tendency being centered around $31-40 spent each week. The point of this particular analysis has been to demonstrate that relatively poorly educated customers are spending relatively large and personally significant amounts of money in the grocery store.

The marketer should realize this fact and adopt policies and procedures which give assurance and credibility to the idea that the customer is being fairly charged for his purchases and that the money transaction is accurate. Of course, such practices could be beneficial to all customers regardless
of their educational level or their cultural background. However, in the case of Mexican Americans, such things as bilingual check-out clerks who count the change in Spanish rather than English could help to establish an image of credibility and honesty.

There are marketing functions other than just the money transactions which are influenced by the educational level of the respondents. One such function is the type and style of promotional materials used. Earlier in this report, the predominant usage of the Spanish language was established. The heavy reliance on Spanish and the limited socialization skills gained through education implies that marketing messages must be carefully composed and presented in order to achieve optimum comprehension among Mexican-American customers. Heavy reliance on the Spanish language and low educational attainment also influence the branding and labeling of products.

**Grocery Expenditures Compared to Age Groups**

Age of the adults in a household suggests the stage in the family's life cycle with its corresponding product-usage patterns. In Table XXVII, the age category represents the mean age of the man and wife in the household. In those households with only one adult, the age of that adult determined the appropriate category. The four age categories that were established correspond to the major segments in a typical life-cycle pattern. The twenty-five-year-and-under
### TABLE XXVII
GROCERY EXPENDITURES COMPARED TO AGE GROUPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Weekly Grocery Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$20 or Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Years and Less</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-40</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-55</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 and Over</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

category is characterized as having either no children or children of pre-school age. The twenty-six-to-forty age bracket represents the prime years for maximum family size, with children ranging in age from pre-school to high school teenagers. The third age bracket of forty-one to fifty-five consists of a family structure of primarily teenagers. In the fourth category, the family size is declining because of children getting married and the parents approaching retirement. The market potential for grocery items will vary according to the family's stage in the life cycle.

The younger Mexican-American families in this sample spend less than $30 per week in a grocery store. This is primarily because of their small family size. The earlier discussion of the younger age group's need to identify strongly with the Mexican culture implies the prevalent
usage of Mexican oriented food products. The marketer must realize that these younger adults are looking for indications that the store's management recognizes and respects them as unique individuals. One simple way to give this recognition is by stocking some specialized food items which are used in the preparation of traditional Mexican meals.

The family in the second age group, which is increasing in number, represents a significant market potential for the retailer. In this age group, 80 per cent spend $21-$40 per week at the grocery store, with a median expenditure of $34 per week. It was characteristic for small children to accompany their mother to the store. The marketer should realize that this type of family is spending a significant amount of money in his store, and he must be able to cope with problems which tend to arise because of the presence of many small children in the store at the same time. In essence, the marketer must provide both the goods desired by the mother who is doing the shopping and a comfortable environment for the whole family.

The third age group is characterized as a family with children, several of whom are teenagers. Typically, the family spends a very large amount of money for groceries because of the increased amount of food consumed by active teenagers. The average amount spent per week is approximately $40, which represents a very large market potential for the retailer.
Finally, as the children reach maturity, the actual family size begins decreasing. Correspondingly, its expenditure for grocery products edges downward. On the average, families in this age group spend about $30 per week, although the data shows there was great diversity.

**Language Spoken in Home Compared to Distinctive Mexican-American Elements in Grocery Store**

The strongest and most prevalent ethnic factor among Mexican Americans is their use of Spanish in the home. As discussed earlier in this study, 50 per cent of the respondents spoke both Spanish and English in the home, and 33 per cent spoke only Spanish.

Table XXVIII isolates several elements in the profile of a favorite grocery store and relates these elements to the language spoken in the home. Elements were selected which obviously are tied to the life style of Mexican Americans.

Consumers who speak only Spanish in the home favor, without exception, a store that appeals to or reinforces their ethnic background. Those who speak both languages also exhibit a very strong tendency to prefer a store that identifies with their cultural background. For example, 84 per cent of those who speak both Spanish and English indicated that it was "very important" for the grocery store at which they shopped to cater to the desires of Mexican Americans. In summary, this particular analysis stresses the fact that consumers who are identifying with the Mexican
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distinctive Elements</th>
<th>Spanish Only</th>
<th></th>
<th>English Only</th>
<th></th>
<th>Both</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Little Important</td>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Little Important</td>
<td>Very Important</td>
<td>Little Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cater to Desires of Mexican Americans</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Tomatoes, Lettuce, Vegetables</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety of Spices and Seasonings</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
culture, as indicated by their use of Spanish in the home, prefer to shop at a store which has available those products and which exhibits those images which are similar to and complimentary to their ethnic background.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to analyze the demographic characteristics of Mexican Americans living in Fort Worth and their shopping behavior patterns for grocery products. The analysis was drawn from data collected from personal interviews with 115 Mexican Americans living in two well established Mexican-American communities of Fort Worth during the spring of 1972. Because of the relatively large sample size and the sample-selection process, the results are considered to be representative.

The Mexican-American respondents in this survey were shown to represent all age groups, income levels, family sizes and educational attainment levels. Demographic characteristics of the respondents in this study were very similar to the demographic data published by the Bureau of the Census. Generally, the characteristics of Mexican-American consumers are meaningfully different from the typical urban Anglo consumer. The Mexican-American's average family size was 5.2 persons as opposed to 3.4 persons for the Anglo. Average annual income of Mexican-American families was $4,500, approximately 20 per cent less than that for Anglo families. For various reasons, the Mexican American has a minimal education,
with an average educational attainment equivalent to Junior High School. Although some Mexican Americans who have had many of the benefits of our society were included in the survey, the majority could be characterized as being socially and economically depressed.

Through an analysis of various facets of Mexican-American shopping patterns such as the frequency of grocery shopping trips, utilization of small neighborhood stores, mode of transportation to the grocery store, members of the family who shop for groceries, means of payment for grocery items, the importance of Spanish-speaking personnel in the stores patronized, and the importance of brand and price, there was sufficient evidence to conclude that Mexican-American customers are strongly influenced by their cultural factors and do indeed represent a true ethnic market segment.

To substantiate that Mexican Americans do represent an economically significant ethnic market segment, this survey showed that the median amount spent for groceries per week by Mexican-American families was $33. In spite of their low income, 56 per cent of the respondents spent more than $30 per week for groceries. More specifically, the majority of the respondents in this study reported an expenditure range between $6.50 to $8.00 per week on grocery items for each member of the household. Based on population statistics gathered in 1960, as reported in Chapter II, there were 16,322 Mexican Americans living in Fort Worth. Multiplying this twelve-year figure, which has substantially increased
during the intervening years, by the weekly amount of $6.50 to $8.00 spent in 1972 per person on grocery items, an annual grocery item expenditure ranging from $5.5 million to $6.8 million is derived. Based on these figures, it is evident that Mexican Americans represent an economically significant market segment for grocery stores.
CHAPTER IV

AN ANALYSIS OF THE MARKETING PRACTICES OF GROCERY STORES IN MEXICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

To ascertain grocery-store managers' perceptions of Mexican-American grocery-shopping patterns and the extent to which these perceptions influence current marketing practices, personal interviews were conducted with eighteen managers of retail grocery stores serving the Northside and the Southside Mexican-American communities. This information was gathered for descriptive, analytical, and comparative purposes. To assess the effectiveness of various marketing strategies, the current marketing practices of national or regional chain supermarkets, of large independent supermarkets, and of small independent, single-line grocery stores were compared and contrasted. When possible, a comparison was made between the manager's and the consumers' view of the grocery store.

Grocery Store Sampling Procedure

The sampling procedure for grocery stores was fully discussed in Chapter I. In brief, the retail grocery stores located in the Northside and the Southside Mexican-American communities were divided into three major groups: large national or regional chain supermarkets, large independent
supermarkets, and small independent, single-line stores. The sample was comprised of eighteen retail grocery stores, chosen on the basis of consumers' recognition of these stores and their geographical distribution. Included in the sample were six national or regional chain supermarkets, four large independent supermarkets, and eight small independent, single-line stores. Personal interviews were conducted with each of the eighteen store owners and/or managers through the use of an open-end questionnaire. Management's perception of the shopping characteristics of Mexican-American consumers was investigated, and the degree to which marketing functions are adapted to the special needs of Mexican-American consumers was analyzed.

Analysis of Grocery Store Operations in Mexican-American Communities

Physical Characteristics of the Retail Grocery Stores

The physical characteristics of a retail grocery store are indicative of management's perception of the needs and expectations of present and potential customers as well as management's authority and capability to be flexible and adaptable. As a strong and vital selling instrument, the retail grocery store must represent an inviting, attractive, and pleasant place in which to shop; the store's merchandising fixtures and layout must facilitate ease of movement within the store, and adequate space must be provided for selling and sales-supporting activities.
All six chain supermarkets averaged about 20,000 square feet in size. However, the age of the chain supermarkets varied greatly. Two of the chain supermarkets were built more than twenty years ago. For reference, these two chain supermarkets will be referred to as CS-1 and CS-2. They have not been recently modernized in terms of lighting, gondolas, or refrigerated display cases. Although adequate in terms of physical facilities, neither the interior nor the exterior appearance of these two stores were as attractive as the other four chain supermarkets which have been built in the past five to ten years. The much older age of CS-1 and CS-2 was also evident in the inadequacy and inaccessibility of their off-street parking facility. The parking facilities at CS-1 and CS-2 had space for 30-35 cars and had only two marked entry-and-exit ramps. In contrast, the four newer chain stores had parking facilities for 80-100 cars and had at least four entry-and-exit ramps.

The four newer chain supermarkets, coded as CS-3, CS-4, CS-5, and CS-6, can be characterized as having the most current motif and physical amenities. In addition to extensive use of color and intensive light for highlight purposes, the merchandising fixtures and layout of these four stores facilitated ease of movement within the store, and adequate space was provided for selling and sales-supporting activities.

It was noted that the chain which operated stores CS-3 and CS-4 in the Northside community and in the Southside community had merchandise layouts identical to those of
stores serving primarily Anglos. In contrast, the chain which operated stores CS-5 and CS-6 had altered their merchandise layouts to appeal to the needs and expectations of their Mexican-American customers. For example, in CS-5, grocery products which catered particularly to Mexican-American customers were displayed in a prominently located, free-standing merchandise gondola, approximately seven feet square. In CS-6, the merchandise layout of produce had been designed and enlarged to emphasize items frequently purchased by Mexican-American customers.

The second major group of stores included in this study was large independently-owned supermarkets. These four full-line independent supermarkets were designated as IS-7, IS-8, IS-9, and IS-10. These four stores ranged in size from 12,000 to 18,000 square feet. In contrast to the four modern chain supermarkets described earlier, the four independent supermarkets are located in buildings which are about twenty years old. The four independent supermarkets can be characterized as lacking the amenities associated with the newer chain supermarkets.

The IS-7 store was the largest store in the sample in terms of square footage. In the same building, but in a separate section from the grocery items, was a section containing Spanish-language books and records, moderately priced clothing, health-care items, and ice cream cones for five cents each. The gondolas were adequate but were not of the latest design. Lighting in the store was adequate. The
meat cases were of the enclosed type, containing pre-cut but not pre-packaged meats. Check-cashing facilities were available. The check-out counters were adequate, although some congestion could be expected during peak shopping hours. The store's overall appearance was neat and orderly, yet rather dull. In terms of general facilities, the IS-9 store was very similar to the IS-7 store.

The other two large independent stores in this survey, IS-8 and IS-10, can be classified as older and less attractive in general appearance than the other two independent supermarkets. In addition, space for selling and sales-supporting activities was inadequate, and the congested merchandise layout because of narrow aisles prohibited ease of movement throughout the two stores.

The eight small neighborhood, single-line grocery stores tended to have similar physical facilities. The square footage within the stores ranged from 600 square feet to approximately 1,500 square feet, resulting in restricted space for selling and sales-supporting activities. The general appearance of these eight stores would have to be classified as deteriorating, but serviceable.

In summary, a survey of the physical characteristics of the eighteen stores in this study illustrates the sharp divergence among the stores regarding physical attractiveness, ease of movement within the store, and adequacy of space for selling and sales-supporting activities. Four of the chain supermarkets were modern and attractive, whereas in contrast
the large independent supermarkets and the small independent, single-line grocery stores were older and less appealing. Ease of movement within the store was severely restricted only in the IS-8 and IS-10 stores, although it was somewhat restricted in the small, independent grocery stores because of their store size.

Sufficient space for selling and sales-supporting activities was observed only in the chain supermarkets and in two of the large independent supermarkets, IS-7 and IS-9. For emphasis, it must be restated that the physical characteristics of a retail grocery store are indicative of its management's perception of the needs and expectations of present and potential customers as well as of its management's authority and capability to be flexible and adaptable. Other aspects of the grocery stores' operations must be examined before deriving any conclusions regarding the store's effectiveness and efficiency in serving their market segment.

Profile of Store Personnel

Part of the individualized service that can be given to Mexican-American shoppers is to have personnel in the store with whom they can identify. The store managers were asked which of their store personnel were fluent in the Spanish language. The purpose of this question was to obtain an impression of the degree to which a Mexican-American customer could identify with each store because of the availability and assistance of Spanish-speaking personnel.
Four categories of employees were established. These were check-out clerks, meat-market personnel, produce supervisor, and check-cashing personnel. None of the six chain supermarkets reported having either check-cashing personnel or produce supervisors who could speak Spanish. Only two chain supermarkets, CS-5 and CS-6, reported that "at least one" of the meat-market personnel spoke Spanish. All six chain supermarkets had employed Spanish-speaking personnel as check-out clerks, although the number of Spanish-speaking check-out clerks available to Mexican-American customers varied from store to store and from time to time. For example, the CS-3 store reported that one out of five regular check-out clerks spoke Spanish in contrast to the CS-5 supermarket which reported having four full-time Spanish-speaking check-out clerks.

All of the independent supermarkets reported having some Spanish-speaking employees in various areas of the store's operations. The IS-7 store has Spanish-speaking employees in all areas of the store. At the IS-7 store, all regular full-time check-out cashiers spoke Spanish. The owner said that it was important for the check-out clerks to be bilingual because "most customers could not add too good and they felt like they were being treated honestly when they were dealing with one of their own." Also, two of the four butchers at the IS-7 store spoke fluent Spanish. The Spanish-speaking produce supervisor was an "employee who really knew what the customers liked." A Spanish-speaking
employee worked in the office for check-cashing purposes. In essence, in all areas of operation of the IS-7 store, there were employees who spoke Spanish.

At the other three independent supermarkets, IS-8, IS-9, and IS-10, there was a minimal number of Spanish-speaking personnel in those areas where there is maximum consumer contact. Primarily, Spanish-speaking personnel were employed as check-out clerks. Only in IS-9 was a Spanish-speaking butcher employed. Neither the check-cashing personnel or the produce supervisor spoke Spanish in these three stores.

In the eight small independent, single-line grocery stores included in this survey, the owner, perhaps with the assistance of his wife or a part-time employee, is responsible for all of the store's operations. Being the principal employee in the store, the owner was asked if he was fluent in Spanish. Of the eight independent, single-line grocery stores, three were owned and operated by Mexican Americans, and three were owned and operated by Anglos who were fluent in Spanish. The managers of only two of the small single-line stores said that they could not converse in Spanish.

In reviewing the employment of Spanish-speaking personnel as a means of projecting a store image which identifies with Mexican Americans living in the trade area of the store, it is significant to note that only one store, IS-7, had fully implemented this marketing practice. Based on the consumer survey, the Mexican-American customers were aware of and appreciative of the large number of Spanish-speaking
personnel available at IS-7 store. Both the chain supermarkets and the other independent supermarkets used only one or two Spanish-speaking employees as check-out clerks. In four of the ten supermarkets a Spanish-speaking butcher was employed. Considered as a group, the single-line, independent grocery stores offer the consumer more opportunity to converse in Spanish than do any of the chain or independent supermarkets, with the exception of IS-7. It is this marketing practice of providing Mexican-American customers with Spanish-speaking personnel that contributes to the successful operation of IS-7 and the small neighborhood stores.

**Grocery Product Offering**

The grocery-store managers included in this survey were asked a series of questions regarding their store's overall merchandising practices which were undertaken for the express purpose of appealing to the Mexican American. One significant question inquired about the store's grocery-product offering in regard to the size, variety, and selection of particular items preferred by Mexican Americans. The answer to this question clearly showed that some retail grocery stores in the Northside and the Southside communities are sensitive to the needs and preferences of Mexican Americans, whereas other retail stores choose to ignore the special needs of this large segment of their customers. Managers of the chain supermarkets offer an interesting contrast. For example, one manager remarked, "the brands and types of
products are controlled by the home office." Therefore, he could not stock the items he really wanted. On the other hand, two managers of another chain organization indicated that they had items which their "local customers" wanted—items which would not be found at their other stores.

The product which was cited by both chain and independent supermarket managers as being stocked primarily for the Mexican American was beans, generally pinto beans. The CS-1, CS-2, CS-3, and CS-4 stores stocked beans in the one-, five-, and ten-pound bag sizes. The CS-5 store on the Northside had the most extensive selection of beans. This store also had twenty-pound bags and one-hundred-pound bulk bags from which the customer could select the exact amount of beans he wished to buy. The CS-6 store on the Southside had twenty-pound bags of beans but none in bulk form.

It should be observed that beans are purchased by all low-income groups, not just the Mexican Americans. However, because beans are generally thought to be a staple item when Mexican food dishes are prepared, and because Mexican Americans are frequent purchasers of beans, the statements by the CS-1, CS-2, CS-3, and CS-4 store managers that their stocking of beans was especially for the Mexican American was probably referring to the size of the packages of beans. A more accurate interpretation of these particular managers' answers was that Mexican Americans are very frequent purchasers of larger-size packages of beans. Therefore, the store has to restock these package sizes of beans more frequently.
In catering to product needs and preferences of Mexican Americans, the product offering in four of the chain supermarkets was almost identical. These four stores CS-1, CS-2, CS-3, and CS-4 had the identical amount of shelf space, twenty-five linear feet, devoted to items such as tostado shells, soft tortillas, jalapeno peppers, and cans of refried beans, rice, and enchiladas. These four stores exclusively stocked those items which are distributed by a local jobber who handles products from Jiminez Brands, Incorporated, a food processing firm located in Fort Worth. Obviously with the limited amount of shelf space, the assortment of package sizes and the types of packaged grocery items used in cooking Mexican food dishes was limited in these four chain supermarkets.

As was their product selection in packaged grocery items, the meat departments in these same chain supermarkets, CS-1, CS-2, CS-3, and CS-4, was also virtually identical.

The CS-1 and CS-2 stores' meat departments were self-service. The manager of CS-2 commented that they had just the normal "cuts of meat, pork and chickens available." The CS-3 and CS-4 stores had slightly larger self-service meat departments than CS-1 or CS-2, but the same selection of meats was available. The CS-3 and the CS-4 stores had some inexpensive cuts of meat, such as tongue and large packages of stew meat, but these would appeal to any low-income type of shopper. The only slight variation in the meat departments of these four chain supermarkets was that the CS-3
and the CS-4 stores had on display five packages of tripe, a type of meat product which is used in cooking Mexican-type stews. Thus, the CS-1, CS-2, CS-3, and CS-4 stores stocked only those items which could be found in any full-line supermarket, regardless of the trade area served by that store.

In contrast to the product offering of the immediately preceding four chain supermarkets are the two supermarkets, CS-5 and CS-6, which are part of the same regional chain. Generally, the CS-5 store can be characterized as being the more progressive and innovative of the two stores in terms of the variety and selection of items stocked for Mexican Americans. Therefore, the following discussion will concentrate on the CS-5 store.

When asked if there were any items which were especially stocked for Mexican Americans in the CS-5 store, the manager was able to give many specific examples. In addition to all package sizes of beans, including one-hundred-pound bulk bags of beans, there was flour in sizes up to twenty-five-pound bags, cornmeal in fifteen-pound bags, and bulk shortening in twenty-five- and ten-pound cans. Bags of corn husks used in the making of tamales were stocked. In the canned goods area there were gallon-sized cans of jalapeno peppers, which had been processed in Mexico and were distributed by a wholesaler in San Antonio. Also, gallon cans of hominy, refried beans, and Spanish rice were on the shelves. Produce, which was stocked for Mexican-American customers, included fresh jalapeno peppers, Mexican squash, and hardshell papaya.
Also, fresh tomatoes had been given a large and prominent area in the produce section.

The meat department in CS-5 was self-service, although it had been arranged in such a way that it would be easy to ask for and receive the assistance of some of the meat market personnel. The CS-5 manager also pointed out that they devote a great deal of their counter space to the less expensive standard grades of meat and to "economy" cuts of meat such as pot roasts or ground beef. The CS-5 manager indicated that in those chain stores serving primarily Anglo consumers, the meat market sold only choice or prime grades of meat and featured cuts such as sirloin steak and fancy types of roasts. Specialty items noted in the CS-5 meat market were fresh pork heads, menudo, Mexican sausage, cracklings, and large three-pound packages of sausages. In the frozen foods area there were two specialty items, black chili and wiener snack rolls. However, the manager noted that Mexican Americans seldom purchase any other frozen food items. The bakery section contained some Mexican-style sweet breads, a pastry product with a slight sweet taste served either during the meal or as dessert. Also, there was a section of taco shells, tostados, and soft-tortilla products.

In the spices and seasoning section, there were many of the Jiminez-brand products which had been observed in the other chain supermarkets. However, the CS-5 store had a much more extensive display and variety of spices. For
example, there were cans of Mole en Pasta that had been canned in Mexico, special types of Mexican chocolate, enchilada cheese, spicy dips processed by Sunset Foods of California, and several varieties of dried shrimp. The CS-5 store also devoted approximately fifteen feet of shelf space to various sizes of religious candles, which the manager indicated were bought all year long. Thus, the CS-5 store was the most adaptive of the six chain supermarkets in terms of stocking items which would satisfy the needs of Mexican-American consumers from the standpoint both of large size packages and of products unique to the cultural preferences of Mexican Americans.

Managers of the four large independent supermarkets were asked if their perception of the Mexican Americans' grocery-shopping patterns influenced their product offering. This was true for the IS-7 and IS-9 stores but was not true for the IS-8 and IS-10 stores that carried the traditional product offering found in grocery stores serving primarily Anglo customers.

The IS-7 and IS-9 stores had large displays of oversized packages of beans, rice, flour, cornmeal, shortening, lard, salt, and hominy. The jalapeno peppers were available fresh in the produce area and also in gallon-sized cans. These two stores had staple items ranging from the smaller five-pound size to the economy-size twenty-five-pound bag. Beans were also available in the bulk. The manager of IS-7 remarked that there was no real saving between beans in bulk and the more handy ten-pound-size bag. However, the
older Mexican-American housewife preferred the bulk beans. In addition to the staple items mentioned above, these two stores also stocked gallon-can sizes of beef enchiladas, tomato sauce, and pork and beans.

The meat departments of the IS-7 and IS-9 stores had very few pre-packaged meats. The majority of their meat cases were of the enclosed type serviced from the rear by the butcher. In addition to the standard cuts of meat, there were specialized items such as tripe, goat, whole steer head, pig ears, tongue, hot sausage, and fresh dressed coon. The meat market was staffed by four persons, two of whom were fluent in Spanish. The grade of meat sold by these two stores was divided between choice grade and standard grade. Because of the longer cooking time of many meat dishes prepared by Mexican Americans, the grade of meat tends to be of less importance, especially when there is a recognizable saving by the customers between the two grades. Based on judgment, the variety and selection of the meat departments in these two stores was a major contributing factor to the IS-7 and IS-9 stores' overall success and favorable reputation.

In both IS-7 and IS-9, the produce departments were well stocked with fresh vegetables normally found in any typical store. In addition to these items, the IS-7 and IS-9 stores stocked commodities such as black beans, fresh jalapenos, Turma squash, chili poblano peppers, chili cascabel, and many avocados. In the produce department, there were corn husks for making tamales and herbs which are used for
medicinal purposes. These corn husks and herbs had been packaged in Mexico and their package labels were printed in Spanish. The managers of IS-7 and IS-9 indicated that most of these items were obtained from a small wagon distributor out of San Antonio.

A wide variety of spices was sold in both stores. The owner of IS-9 said that Mexican Americans are "very particular about their spices." The Jiminez brand was prominently displayed. There were spices individually bagged in the IS-9 store in addition to the branded spice packages. Canned peppers of several varieties were stocked in addition to the cans of traditional jalapeno peppers.

In addition to food items, the IS-7 store carried a very wide selection of religious candles. It was reported that candles are a favorite item the year around, with a very large volume of sales during the Christmas and Easter seasons. The candle display was in a high-traffic area of the store and was displayed for impulse buying. The managers said that the candles were always in stock because of the demand of their Mexican-American customers.

The eight small independent, single-line retailers were conservative in their merchandising practices. Because of their small selling area, the variety of brands and package sizes were limited. Large sizes of canned goods or bagged items were not stocked. Seven stores had some type of meat counter. The average linear footage of the meat case was eight feet. Relatively inexpensive cuts of meat and
lower-cost items such as whole chickens and ground beef were available. The manager was always the butcher. During the interviewing process, it was noted that the meat purchases of Mexican-American housewives in these small neighborhood stores were always less than two dollars, and the quantity purchased was evidence that the amount of meat was sufficient for only one meal.

The variety of produce items available from the small store was very restricted, although all eight independent single-line stores sold at least a few produce items. The most consistently sold items were lettuce, tomatoes, and lemons. The overall quality of the produce items in the small stores was judged to be less than that observed in the larger stores. This lower quality of the produce items was a result of the small grocery store owners' having to buy in small quantities from cash-and-carry-type wholesalers whose prices are higher than the wholesaler prices paid by the larger stores for similar quality items. To compensate for the higher wholesale prices, the small grocery store owner buys lower-quality produce items, with a correspondingly lower wholesale price, thus permitting the small store to have retail prices approximately equal to the retail prices of top quality items at the large supermarkets. The customers of the small stores accept the lower grade produce items because of the convenience and personal attention afforded by the small neighborhood store.
In contrast to the large supermarkets, the smaller single-line grocery stores seem to feature a higher percentage of non-food items and even of non-grocery-store types of activity. Four of the stores had displays of clothing, in addition to magazine racks and novelty items, that would typically be bought on impulse. All eight stores had displays of proprietary-type drugs. Other types of merchandising activities observed exclusively in the small single-line grocery stores were the existence of small eating facilities or carry-out food services. At SL-13 they had homemade chili and tamales to go and a small room with pin-ball machines. In the rear area of SL-18 there was a small restaurant which advertises that it serves Menudo, a specialty Mexican dish. SL-11 provides curb service for those regular customers who know that a honk of their car horn would summon the owner out to their car. It is known that non-food items have a larger margin of profit than do food items. Also, six of the eight single-line stores had prominent displays of imported beer. Therefore, the eight single-line retailers in this study have adapted their merchandising practices to their Mexican-American customers.

**Brand and Pricing Practices**

The eighteen grocery store managers were questioned as to the importance of brand names as contrasted to price from the Mexican-American consumers' perspective. Six of the
supermarket managers said that brand names and prices were of equal importance to the Mexican-American consumer.

The manager of IS-7 pointed out numerous canned and packaged goods which catered to the Mexican-American customers' needs and preferences and noted that there was strong brand loyalty. He stressed the importance of brand loyalty regardless of whether the brand name was Spanish originating from a Mexican manufacturer, producer, or processor, a Spanish brand name adapted by an American manufacturer, producer, or processor, or an English brand name promoted by an American manufacturer, producer, or processor. In other words, brand loyalty, which is a measure of consistent quality, was more important to his Mexican-American customers than the small price differential. In agreement with the perception of the IS-7 manager, the supermarket manager at IS-9 also commented that brand loyalty was significant for his Mexican-American customers. He remarked, "they can't read too good and so when they find something they like, they stay with it."

The manager of CS-5 noted a very strong brand loyalty to chili powder. According to this manager, Gebhardt is the preferred brand. Even with a price differential of over forty cents, the Mexican-American customers still buy Gebhardt's Chili Powder and ignore the brand which is on special.

In contrast to the viewpoints of the preceding managers, the managers of IS-8 and IS-10 reported that price was more
important because of the need for economy in feeding large families.

A number of managers mentioned that there are several products which the Mexican American buys the year around, regardless of the price. Generally, these products were tomatoes, lettuce, peppers, and ground meat. These managers indicated that they always try to keep on hand a large supply of these items, especially tomatoes and lettuce, even though their off-season prices cause them to be very expensive and a significant percentage of an average Mexican-American family's food budget. This particular aspect of Mexican-Americans' market behavior is a result of their culture which dictates that certain types of food be served the year around, and the preparation of these foods requires the use of items like lettuce and tomatoes. In contrast, Anglo families tend to greatly reduce the purchase of food items when their prices drastically increase because of seasonal factors.

An attempt was made to determine the extent to which the store managers were perceptive to the Mexican-American consumers' sensitivity to brands and prices and whether this knowledge influenced the stores' promotional practices. Generally speaking, of the eighteen stores in this sample, only the owners of IS-7 use their knowledge to influence any of the in-store promotions or mass-media advertising.

From the survey findings, it is obvious that there is not a consensus of opinion among grocery store managers as to whether Mexican-American consumers consider brand or
price to be more important. The only consistent observation was that Mexican-Americans continue to buy certain fresh produce items the year around regardless of price. It must be noted, however, that since these fresh produce items are not branded, the conclusion cannot be drawn that price is more important than brand.

The validity of the responses of the majority of the grocery store managers in this survey is questionable. CS-5, IS-7 and IS-9 did cater to their Mexican-American customers through their product offering, and thus their observations regarding the strength of brand loyalty over price can be considered reliable.

Because of the limited product variety in the small independent, single-line stores, it was not possible to ascertain whether brand loyalty or price played the dominant role. In other words, there was not a sufficient variety of brands for comparative purposes.

The response of the manager of IS-10 that his Mexican-American customers considered price to be more important than brand loyalty, and the responses of the remaining six supermarket managers that price and brand loyalty were of equal importance are questionable as to their validity. This is because of the fact that these stores make no effort in their product offering to cater to the needs and preferences of their Mexican-American customers and, therefore, are not in a position to make objective comparative observations.
Advertising Practices

To acquaint potential customers with a store's location and its facilities and to reinforce the store's image in the minds of its present customers, advertising is a valuable marketing tool. Because of the diversity in the nature of the stores and the type of ownership structure, advertising policies and practices will naturally differ.

Because of centralized control the chain supermarkets primarily use newspapers and, to a limited extent, television as a means of communicating their advertising messages to present and potential customers. These advertising messages are tailored to advertise the chain as a whole. In other words these advertisements lack an individualized approach and, thus, are unable to appeal to specific market segments, such as the Mexican Americans. Furthermore, the chain stores do not distribute in-store or out-of-store promotional circulars, and their point-of-purchase display advertisements use the English language exclusively. In essence, the chain supermarkets make no effort to communicate with their Mexican-American customers through advertising materials.

Because of their limited market size and their limited product offering, it is not financially expedient for the small independent, single-line grocery store to use mass advertising. Point-of-purchase advertising results from the small physical size of the store.

Because of each of the large independent supermarket's autonomous ownership, the promotional practices were very
dissimilar. All four stores used the daily newspapers in Fort Worth, and the advertising message was always in English. In addition, the IS-7 store has printed and delivered 8,500 circulars each week. Although the majority of these circulars are in English, there are some Spanish-worded advertisements. In these circulars, it is a standard practice to feature several items that are favorite items of most Mexican Americans. To some degree Spanish-speaking radio stations in Fort Worth have been used by IS-7 for advertising. The owners of IS-7 thought that their Spanish language radio advertising had been successful in communicating their store's image to the Mexican-American population in Fort Worth.

The investigation of the use of Spanish language point-of-purchase material revealed that IS-7 words about 25 percent of their point-of-purchase posters in Spanish, especially those noting the weekly specials in the circular. The IS-9 store reported that it had "tried it a few times," and "now use it occasionally in their meat market." Neither IS-8 or IS-10 use this type of promotional material.

In summarizing the use of the Spanish language either in mass-media advertising or in point-of-purchase material, it was observed that two of the large independent supermarkets are slightly more innovative in this area than are the chain stores which use only the English-language medium for advertising purposes. Of all the stores, IS-7 is the most innovative in the use of all types of advertising messages aimed directly to the Mexican-American customer. The owners
of IS-7 did not have any marketing research data to justify quantitatively their confidence in the use of Spanish-language advertisements in their weekly circulars, in the Spanish radio stations, or in their point-of-purchase material. However, based on the consumers' responses in this study, the IS-7 store's advertising strategy was obviously successful because it was the only store named as having regular customers from both the Northside and Southside communities.

**The Practice of Accepting Food Stamps**

All eighteen store managers stated in the interviews that extensive use was made of food stamps by Mexican-American customers. In fact, the managers of the six chain supermarkets and the four independent supermarkets indicated that their store accepted food stamps and that the Mexican-American customers are frequent users of food stamps. In sharp contrast to these managers' statements regarding food stamps were the responses given by the 115 Mexican-American families, where only five families reported that they used food stamps.

The services offered by the eight independent single-line grocery stores were much more restricted than those observed in the supermarkets. Four of the single-line grocery stores accepted food stamps, and the other four did not. The reasons given for not accepting food stamps were, "They are too much trouble," or "They are only spending a couple of dollars so they don't mind paying cash." Some of the smaller stores did not accept food stamps because the store
is undercapitalized, and food stamps do not represent an immediate cash inflow.

The implication of the responses to this question is that Mexican Americans, due to pride, do not like to publicly admit using food stamps. Therefore, the grocery store must make it known, without being offensive, that food stamps are accepted. The consumers should be made as psychologically comfortable as possible when it is necessary for them to use food stamps.

Check-Cashing Practice

All of the chain supermarkets and the independent supermarkets included in this study have facilities for cashing personal and payroll checks. When asked if Mexican Americans utilize these check-cashing facilities, all of the chain and independent supermarket managers replied in the affirmative. The managers of CS-5, CS-6, and IS-9 stores indicated that when the family came shopping on Friday or Saturday, the husband in most instances cashed his payroll check and used part of the money to pay for the weekly supply of groceries.

The owner of IS-7 said that he thinks customer loyalty can be strengthened by a liberal check-cashing policy, which does not include a check-cashing fee. The general attitude expressed by the manager of the IS-7 store about providing check-cashing facilities was voiced by the managers of the other supermarkets, although they were somewhat more conservative in terms of cashing personal checks. In other
words, most supermarket managers required that check-cashing customers have a credit identification card on file. Also, only payroll checks from recognized companies were cashed.

Checks were cashed in six of the eight single-line independent grocery stores for their regular customers. The two small stores which did not cash checks were SI-10, the smallest and probably most undercapitalized store in the survey, and SI-12, which said they had "just never made it a practice."

**Composition of Customers**

Store managers were asked during the personal interviews to estimate the composition of their store's customers. The chain supermarket which had the highest percentage of Mexican-American customers is located in the Northside community. The specific percentages of Mexican-American customers for each chain supermarket were: CS-1, 80 per cent; CS-2, 50 per cent; CS-3, 40 per cent; CS-4, 65 per cent; CS-5, 60 per cent; and CS-6, 45 per cent. In all six chain supermarkets, Mexican Americans represented a significant share of the total number of customers. For independent supermarkets, the percentage of Mexican-American customers is approximately the same percentage as that observed in chain supermarkets. Mexican-American customers represented the following percentages: IS-7, 75 per cent; IS-8, 50 per cent; IS-9, 60 per cent; and IS-10, 50 per cent. The eight owners of the small single-line independent grocery stores indicated that their percentage of Mexican-American customers ranged from 50 per cent to
90 per cent. The owners and/or managers of the eighteen stores in this study recognized that a majority of their customers were Mexican Americans.

Shopping Days

The managers of the eighteen stores confirmed the findings of the consumer survey that Mexican-American wives shop at least three or four times a week. In contrast, the managers estimated that the typical Anglo customer is in the store only once or twice a week. The managers recognized that the frequent shopping trips of Mexican-American customers are a result of two factors. First, the shopping trips provide for the wife a social outlet which is a reflection of the Mexican-American culture. Second, frequent grocery shopping trips are necessary to match available money with items needed to prepare daily meals. This perception of Mexican-Americans' shopping pattern had no influence on the current marketing practices of the retail grocery stores included in this survey.

Average Amount Spent Per Week

When asked to estimate the amount spent per week for groceries, the six chain supermarket managers and four independent supermarket managers indicated that it largely depended on the size of the family. Typical comments were, "The larger the family, the more they spend," or "They like to eat, so they will spend just as much as they can afford." These ten store managers estimated that the younger family
spends about $20-25 per week and that the older and larger families average $30-40 per week. However, two of the independent supermarket managers estimated that in their stores weekly expenditures greater than $50 is not uncommon. The management of IS-7 inferred that because of its reputation, some of their Mexican-American customers travel ten to twenty miles to shop at their store. When customers travel such a long distance, they buy groceries for a week or more, and a grocery bill of $60-80 is not uncommon. From these managers' comments, the average amount spent per week by Mexican-American customers is in the $25-40 range which is in line with the $33 average weekly expenditure for groceries derived from the consumer survey. It is evident that the ten store managers are well aware of the Mexican-Americans' economic contribution to their store's sales volume.

Summary

Accurate perceptions of the special needs and preferences of Mexican Americans varied among the eighteen grocery store managers interviewed. Demonstrating varying degrees of perceptiveness were CS-5, CS-6, IS-7, IS-9, and the small single-line stores. The CS-5, CS-6, IS-7, and IS-9 stores had clearly adapted their product offering to the needs and preferences of their Mexican-American customers. To further facilitate the grocery shopping process of their Mexican-American customers, the IS-7 and IS-9 stores extensively employed Spanish-speaking personnel. The CS-5 and CS-6
stores employed Spanish-speaking personnel to a lesser extent. Six of the eight small independent, single-line grocery store managers were fluent in Spanish. In adapting advertising to the needs of their Mexican-American customers, the IS-7 store was by far more adaptive and innovative through its use of advertising on Spanish-speaking radio stations, its use of the Spanish language in circulars and point-of-purchase display materials, and its extensive usage of the Fort Worth daily newspapers. The IS-9 store attempted to appeal to its Mexican-American customers through newspaper advertising and through use of the Spanish language in some of its point-of-purchase display material.

In general, the majority of the grocery store managers interviewed in this study either did not perceive or chose to ignore the unique needs and preferences of their Mexican-American customers. The evidence that has been presented clearly substantiates this position. In six of ten large chain or independent supermarkets there was no demonstration that marketing practices are being implemented in order to appeal more directly to the cultural and ethnic background of the typical Mexican American now living in Fort Worth. There was no indication that the six supermarkets plan to make any changes in their marketing practices. The chain supermarkets, CS-2 and CS-3, tend to be conservative due to centralized control by management. Evidently they want to maintain a neutral store image in terms of identifying with
any particular market segment. The small, independent single-line neighborhood stores are limited in both managerial expertise and capital strength. Therefore, these types of stores will continue unchanged as long as convenience and some degree of personal attention are important to the customers who live in the immediate vicinity of a small neighborhood store.
Marketers have found the concept of market segmentation to be extremely beneficial in the planning of their product and marketing strategies. The area of ethnic market segmentation, however, has received little attention by practitioners or academicians of marketing because of the gradual assimilation of norms and values and, consequently, of the marketing behavior of the American society as a whole by immigrating minority groups. Such has not been the case with Mexican Americans.

**Mexican Americans: A True Ethnic Segment**

The conclusion of this study was that Mexican Americans are a true ethnic segment. This conclusion was based on an analysis of those cultural characteristics and a life style that had their earliest beginning in the culture of Mexico and is perpetuated today by the complex concept of "La Raza Unida," which translated literally means "The One Race."

At the outset it can be stated that the Mexican-American's cultural identification pattern deviates from the traditional cycle observed in many other minority groups. Generally by the second generation, a minority group has become assimilated into the overall society and has lost the strong
group identity which was so evident with the first immigrants. However, young Mexican Americans, even after the third generation, still strongly identify with the cultural characteristics of "Mexicans in America," because it gives them group identity just as it did their parents and grandparents.

As proved by the research data presented, the establishment of Mexican Americans as a true ethnic segment is most conclusively illustrated by their measurable cultural characteristics. It must be noted that each cultural characteristic tends to reinforce the others and thus perpetuates rather than diminishes the desirability of ethnic identification. Contributing to and reinforcing cultural uniqueness and strong ethnic identification has been the continuation of immigration from Mexico. These new immigrants, whether they are to become permanent residents or are only seasonal workers, bring with them the mores and values of Old Mexico. These immigrants always settle in the established Mexican-American communities, thus constantly reminding their neighbors of the cultural norms and values of Mexico.

The predominating cultural factor substantiating the fact that Mexican Americans represent a true ethnic segment is the tenacity with which the Spanish language is still used. Without question, the Spanish language is the common thread that binds the Mexican-American community together. As proof, census data reported that 64 per cent of the native-born Mexican Americans continue to use Spanish, and in 115 personal interviews in Fort Worth, 83 per cent of
the respondents reported that they used Spanish in the home. Continued usage of the Spanish language is a means of identification and a means of achieving exclusiveness. Thus, every time that Spanish is used between Mexican Americans, it forcefully reinforces their cultural and ethnic identification.

The Mexican-Americans' concept of the structure and responsibilities of the family is a second distinctive cultural characteristic. The stress of urbanized society has radically changed the Anglo family structure in recent years. Although these stresses are beginning to affect the Mexican-American families, the needs of the family are still the center of focus for all family members. Culture dictates that the oldest male is the dominant figure in the family, whereas the female is submissive. The male's responsibilities are to provide the livelihood for his family and to make major decisions, whereas the wife's responsibility is to rear the children and organize the resources within the home, such as grocery shopping and preparing the meals. The family takes care of its own. When necessary, grandparents or relatives move in with the family, and responsibility for them is shared by all members. There are several implications of this type of family structure. First, the family's life style maintains pretty much the status quo because traditions are passed down through the family. Second, family structure tends to restrict geographic mobility. Thus, fewer Mexican Americans move away from their established communities.
A third distinctive cultural characteristic is the Mexican-American's attitudes and beliefs on social order. Two basic attitudes which are distinctive prevail among Mexican Americans. These two attitudes are their desire for immediate gratification and a sense of having no control over future events. These two factors are exactly opposite to the frame of reference held by the majority of Anglos and, therefore, cause the Mexican-American system of values or motivation to be different from that of the typical Anglo.

Mexican Americans: A True Ethnic Market Segment

Based upon the preceding unique cultural characteristics, Mexican Americans were identified as a true ethnic segment. To fully justify the establishment of a true ethnic market segment, the Mexican-American ethnic group must also share common buyer characteristics and consumption patterns which are significantly different from other market segments or from the total heterogeneous market. To test the validity of Mexican Americans' constituting a true ethnic market segment, grocery shopping behavioral patterns were examined, as was explained in Chapter I. For reemphasis and for purpose of continuity, it should be noted again that grocery products, more so than any other commodity, are purchased and consumed by consumers of all ages and of all income levels, located in all geographical locations. Classified as convenience goods with a high frequency of purchase, grocery products are considered as necessities. Because
of these characteristics, grocery products represented a particularly appropriate commodity for this study.

Based on the data compiled from personal interviews with Mexican Americans and with grocery-store managers in Fort Worth, it is concluded that Mexican-American consumers do exhibit distinctive marketing behavior in the purchasing of grocery items. First, Mexican-Americans' preferences for food items differ significantly from those of Anglos. Standard grades of meat which do not cook apart are necessary for many Mexican dishes which require a long cooking process, such as soups, stews, and enchiladas. Other special Mexican dishes require pablano peppers, enchilada cheese, mole paste, corn husks, and spices such as comino seeds, pure ground chili, and whole or ground dried shrimp. Tripe, hard-shelled papaya, black chili, and green pickled serrano peppers, as well as Mexican chocolate and sweet breads, are also favorite Mexican-American foods.

Second, Mexican Americans exhibit a definite preference for the size of packages in which food items are available. The wife who walks to the grocery store several times a week to buy food items necessary only for that day's meals, prefers to buy in small quantities which are easily carried home. In purchasing staple items which are used frequently, the Mexican-American shopper prefers to buy in large quantities, such as gallon cans of shortening, gallon cans of jalapeno peppers, and ten-to-twenty-pound bags of beans and rice.
A third unique grocery purchasing characteristic of Mexican Americans is their purchase of lettuce and tomatoes throughout the year, regardless of price fluctuations. This is explained by their daily use of lettuce and tomatoes with special Mexican dishes.

In addition to unique grocery purchasing characteristics, this study also conclusively proves that Mexican Americans have a strong preference for the grocery stores which they patronize. Mexican Americans prefer to shop at grocery stores which cater to their ethnic market segment. As discussed in Chapter IV, convenience of location is an important factor for the wife who makes frequent trips to the grocery store during the week. Spanish-speaking personnel is not only desirable, but essential in many areas of the store's operation to facilitate the grocery-shopping process since a large majority of Mexican Americans continue to use the Spanish language to a large degree. Furthermore, Mexican Americans prefer a grocery store which stocks in desired package sizes those grocery items needed to prepare and complement special Mexican dishes. Since the Mexican American continuously searches for cultural identification and reinforcement, the grocery stores which Mexican Americans patronize play a vital role.

The distinctive market behavior of Mexican Americans in their grocery-shopping process, which was demonstrated in this study, unequivocally establishes the fact that Mexican Americans represent an ethnic market segment. Because of
the representative nature of the sample used in this study, it is concluded that these patterns of marketing behavior are characteristic of all Mexican Americans living in any metropolitan area.

Significance of Mexican-American Market Segment

Further substantiating the significance of the Mexican-American market segment is its meaningful portion of Texas' total population and its high growth rate. According to the 1960 Census of Population, there were 1,417,810 Spanish-surname persons living in the State of Texas, representing 15 per cent of the State's total population, and 16,322 Spanish-surname persons living in Fort Worth. More current statistics are available from the Cabinet Committee on Spanish-Speaking Americans, which estimated that in 1969 Mexican Americans represented 23 per cent of Texas' total population and 5 per cent of the nation's total population.

Between 1950 and 1960, according to data from the Bureau of the Census, the Mexican-American population segment increased 38 per cent in the State of Texas as compared to a 24 per cent increase in the growth rate for Texas' total population. In the urban area of Fort Worth, the rate of growth during the same ten-year period was 101 per cent.

In addition to the Mexican Americans in Texas, large groups of Mexican Americans are located in California, Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado. The Bureau of the Census reported that in 1960, 3.5 million Mexican Americans were
living in these five Southwestern states. The Cabinet Committee on Spanish-Speaking Americans estimated unofficially that in 1969 the population in these five Southwestern states exceeded five million. From the perspective of major metropolitan areas, Mexican Americans represent a substantial portion of the population not only in the Texas metropolitan areas of San Antonio, El Paso, Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, and Lubbock, but also in other metropolitan areas such as Kansas City, Chicago, Detroit, and New York.

Taking into consideration their significant population size, their meaningful portion of the population in Southwestern states and in large metropolitan areas throughout the nation, and their impressive growth rate, the importance of the Mexican-American market segment to marketers is unquestionable.

Not only is the Mexican-American market segment significant in terms of numbers of customers, but it is also significant in terms of the amount of money spent. The average Mexican-American family spends approximately $33 per week for grocery products. The weekly amount of money spent for grocery items per person in the household ranges from $6.50 to $8.00. In an urban area such as Fort Worth, the Mexican-American market segment represents to grocery stores an annual sales volume potential of at least $5.5 to $6.8 million. Projecting this annual sales volume potential to a state-wide level, an expenditure of at least $500 million for grocery products is derived. With such a high population
growth rate, these figures are grossly underestimated since they are based on 1960 Bureau of the Census population figures and 1972 weekly grocery product expenditures per person.

With this significant expenditure for grocery products and with a rapidly increasing population, it is obvious that the Mexican-American market segment is immensely important to marketers of food products in the State of Texas. Based on the representative nature of this sample, this conclusion will also hold true for marketers of food products in other Southwestern states and for marketers of food products in large metropolitan areas throughout the nation.

Marketing Strategy Implications

In recognizing the importance of the Mexican-American market segment on food items, marketing management must examine the marketing policies and strategies of its marketing institutions to determine if they are optimally serving the food needs and preferences of this important segment. The marketing institutions involved range all the way from the manufacturer or processor to the local retailer.

Changes instigated by marketing management in order to better serve the Mexican-American market segment will be most visible in the marketing strategies and policies of the local grocery store located in the Mexican-American community. From the survey of eighteen grocery stores serving the Mexican-American community, it was concluded that it was not whether the store was chain or independent, or large versus small
which caused it to serve comprehensively the needs and preferences of the Mexican-American community. Grocery stores in all categories varied in the degree to which they successfully fulfilled the unique needs of their Mexican-American market segment. It was concluded that the factor responsible for the degree of success of a particular store was its individual marketing strategies and how those strategies were adapted to recognize and meet the distinctive needs of the Mexican-American consumer within its trade area.

The conclusion that an individual store's marketing strategy needs to be adaptive conveys several implications to the retailer serving a predominantly Mexican-American community. The first marketing strategy implication concerns the grocery store's location within the Mexican-American community. Convenience is the key factor. Because many wives walk to the store daily or several times a week to pick up a few items, a convenient location is one which is located in close proximity to immediate housing areas.

The second strategy implication concerns the store's design and layout. Both the exterior and interior design must relate to the Mexican-American's cultural background, thus making the Mexican-American shopper feel "comfortable" or at ease in that particular store. The use of a Spanish motif accented with bright colors is appropriate. Also, the store's layout should be comprehensible to Mexican-American shoppers. Specialty items for the Mexican-American shopper should be grouped together in a highly visible area designated...
by its Mexican decor. This special section should include items such as economy-sized cans or bags of rice, beans, peppers, tomato sauce, lard, special spices, and condiments. This concentration of Mexican-American oriented products facilitates the grocery-shopping process of the Mexican-American customer. A centralized area for Mexican-American products also makes Spanish language point-of-purchase promotions more effective.

The third implication for marketing strategy concerns the product mix of the store. Earlier in this chapter it was comprehensively discussed that Mexican-Americans prefer certain types of products and buy certain items in larger-than-average quantities. The store must expand its product mix to include these special items. Of equal importance, the store must increase the variety of package sizes for some food items. A store has a fixed amount of shelf space; therefore, these necessary adjustments in the breadth and depth of items stocked for Mexican-Americans will make it necessary to reduce some of the traditional items stocked in a store serving primarily Anglo customers. The items to be reduced will be the more expensive frozen-food items, dietary products, and "luxury" foods such as snack items, desserts, candies, or gourmet foods. Also, additional shelf space or more frequent stocking is necessary for some items, which are stocked by all grocery stores but which are in heavier demand by Mexican-American customers. These grocery products in frequent demand by Mexican-American customers include beans, rice,
tomatoes, lettuce, corn, ground beef, sausage, milk, and
eggs. These changes in the product mix of a store will
affect only 5 to 10 per cent of the grocery store's total
product offering. However, this realignment of the product
mix will create an image of the store as one that caters to
the desires of the Mexican-American shopper.

The fourth implication for marketing strategy deals with
the store's pricing strategy. Generally, the Mexican-American
customer has to stretch the amount spent on groceries to feed
his larger family. Therefore, economy is important. Since
the store's long-run profitability must be maintained, the
pricing strategy must be one of minimum markup, combined with
a realization of the need for a near optimum stock turnover,
which will be achieved through an appropriate product offering.

The fifth implication for marketing strategy has to do
with the practices of labeling and branding. In some in-
stances the labeling and branding decisions are completely
out of the control of the retailer. However, where possible,
the retailer should have labels and brands which are under-
standable, meaningful and useful to the Mexican-American
shopper. Cooking instructions or recipes in both English
and Spanish must be included on all labels. In some in-
stances it may be possible to have the brand name in both
languages, one on each side of the package. The proper use
of color and design or pictures should be considered as one
way to project a favorable image to a Mexican-American
shopper, even though the entire label is in English.
Change is also needed in point-of-purchase displays. It has been observed that point-of-purchase displays were often in both English and Spanish in the more successful stores oriented to the Mexican Americans. In those situations where the product was uniquely oriented to the Mexican-American market, the point-of-purchase display was exclusively in Spanish. Basically there is a great deal of interrelatedness between the marketing strategy adopted for labeling, branding, and point-of-purchase displays.

The final area concerned with changes needed in marketing strategy in order to better serve the Mexican-American consumer has to do with services offered by the retailer. Only two different types of service are mentioned, but they are indicative of those often-overlooked elements which make a real difference in the mind of the consumer. First, sturdy carry-out bags are needed since the Mexican-American wife frequently walks to the store to make small daily purchases. A torn bag with a few dollars of spilled groceries may seem like a matter of small concern, but to the wife whose evening meal has been jeopardized, it is a negative reflection on the store. Second, grocery stores serving Mexican-American market segments must be prepared and willing to cash payroll checks. With payday frequently on Friday, it is logical to assume that the weekly paycheck will be used to pay for the staple items purchased on Friday night or Saturday. The grocery store which willingly cashes these checks without
embarrassment to the person endorsing the check will find a significant portion of that check spent in the store.

The preceding implications dealt with different aspects of the retailer's marketing strategy. The conclusion that Mexican Americans do have distinctive buying patterns and product preferences also carries implications for the marketing strategies of wholesalers, manufacturers or processors, and producers. There are many types of wholesalers most of whom serve a particular geographic market with a set commodity offering. As a result of gradual changes in the market, especially of the goods needed in one or two stores in a whole chain of stores, the wholesaler may not be aware of new sales opportunities or of the need for a new product line. In essence, the implication of the conclusion of this study is that the wholesaler must be more aggressive in accurately analyzing the existing or changing product mix needed by his retail store customers. In fact, it may be the retailer who will seek out the wholesaler who specializes in grocery items preferred by Mexican Americans. Whether the awareness of the Mexican-American market segment comes from within the wholesaler's organization or from outside, the important thing is that the wholesaler must begin making those changes in his product mix which will adequately serve the needs of his retail store customers and their ultimate consumers.

Not only must manufacturers stay abreast of changing market compositions, but they must become more knowledgeable
regarding the specific needs and preferences of particular market segments. In particular, manufacturers must recognize and appreciate the distinctive Mexican-American market segment and implement appropriate strategies regarding channels of distribution, branding and labeling, and national, regional, or local advertising. Specifically, manufacturers of canned or packaged goods which appeal to the Mexican-American market segment must select channels of distribution which will efficiently and effectively distribute their products to the desired target market. Furthermore, branding, labeling, and advertising must be tailored to communicate effectively the manufacturer's message regarding his product to the Mexican-American shopper. Otherwise, optimal marketing efforts cannot be achieved.

Ideally, the processor of Mexican-American food items would seek out wholesalers or retailers who are wanting to serve more effectively Mexican-American communities. Such an effort on the part of the processor is unlikely because of the expense and time involved in calling on these individual stores. In the case of many specialty Mexican food items, the processors are quite small and do not have the manpower needed for such a marketing effort. To overcome their limited marketing capabilities, the processors should seek out the services of food brokers with offices in those metropolitan areas with a large Mexican-American population. A food broker is the processor's representative in the metropolitan area. Because of the broker's expert knowledge of
grocery wholesalers and chain store buyers in that area, the processor gains market representation.

Optimum market representation for food processors is especially important to the economy of the State since Texas is a major producer of many of the agricultural products which are a major part of the Mexican-American's daily diet and for which Mexican Americans have expressed definite preference. Mexican Americans are a major year-around consumer of tomatoes and lettuce; and in Texas in 1970, the wholesale value of the tomato crop was $5.9 million and $3.4 million for the lettuce crop. Beans, especially pinto beans, are a daily item in most Mexican-American families' diet, and beans worth over $365,000 at wholesale market value were grown in Texas last year. Onions and peppers are also important to the Mexican American. In 1970, Texas wholesale producers sold $27 million worth of onions, and the general category of green peppers was valued at $5.8 million. Mexican Americans consume large amounts of these Texas-grown products; and as food marketing institutions adapt to the needs and preferences of Mexican-American consumers, these changes are expected to have a favorable impact on Texas agricultural producers in terms of greater efficiency in the distribution process. Thus, the implication from this study for the processors is that they cannot afford to call only on the major buying offices of the larger offices of the larger chain stores. Where possible, their products must be placed with food brokers who do have the expertise to get the processor's
product stocked in those individual stores which are presently serving Mexican-American market segments or in stores that are experiencing a rapid change in the composition of their trade area to include significant proportions of Mexican Americans.

Influence on Performance of Marketing Functions

In addition to requiring changes in the strategies of marketing institutions, the conclusion that Mexican Americans represent a true and distinctive market segment also influences the performance of specific marketing functions. The marketing functions which are most directly affected are those of buying, selling, transportation, and marketing information and research. These functions will be discussed from the retailer's perspective because of the recognition that a Mexican-American market segment has a more direct and immediate impact on this particular middleman.

The first conclusion for the buying function is that the retailer who wants to serve efficiently his Mexican-American market segment will have to seek out those wholesalers and processors who carry the needed products and brands. It is probable that the wholesalers and processors will be small specialty houses not presently doing business with the retailer. The retailer can locate these suppliers in cities such as San Antonio, El Paso, or Brownsville. There are also some suppliers in Mexico who are now capable of doing some exporting. The retailer must be careful in specifying the
quantity and quality of goods he will need from the wholesaler or processor in order that an optimum wholesale price can be obtained. The retailer must keep in mind the importance of economy to the average Mexican-American shopper, and, of course, a minimum wholesale price is a prerequisite to an economical retail price. A final consideration in the buying function is for the retailer to buy his products from wholesalers and/or processors who actively promote their products or at least have a cooperative advertising program. Participation by the wholesaler or processor in the advertising program insures the retailer of greater product recognition and probable acceptance.

The second marketing function which is affected is the selling function. The selling function is composed of three elements, and the retailer must make certain that they complement one another. The first element is personal selling. Although a retail supermarket is generally considered to be self-service, there are three areas in the store which give some opportunity for personal selling. These areas are the meat department, the produce section, and, to a limited extent, the checkout counter. The retailer who is serving the Mexican-American community must insure that personnel in these three areas are bilingual and can be easily approached by the consumer who needs to ask for information or advice about a particular commodity.

The second element is point-of-purchase displays. The retailer must have some of the point-of-purchase material in
both English and Spanish. For those Mexican-American shoppers who prefer Spanish, the information is easily ascertainable. Even for those who are fluent in English, the bilingual posters will project a positive image of the store's recognition of the individuality of the Mexican-American community.

The third element in the selling function which the retailer must tailor to fit the needs of each store concerns the use of advertising. Generally, advertisements must be placed with those media which effectively reach the Mexican-American market, and even more specifically the Mexican Americans in the trade area served by the store. In all major metropolitan areas there are Spanish-language newspapers being circulated, and there are Spanish-language radio stations. Advertising is expensive, and only when sales are increased is the expenditure worthwhile. Chain stores should use an advertising agency which is a specialist in the Mexican-American market and let this agency produce and place the Spanish-language mats for all stores serving a predominantly Mexican-American community. Several independents may find it possible to form a cooperative effort in order to develop and place Spanish-language advertising. For both the chain stores and the independent stores, advertisements that more effectively reach the Mexican-American market will be beneficial. It is logical to conclude that with careful coordination the retailer can adapt the three elements of
the selling function in order to achieve more profitable sales from the Mexican-American consumer.

The third marketing function with which the retailer must be concerned is that of transportation. Even though the Mexican-American segment is a relatively significant market, it is fairly small and geographically concentrated in comparison to the large mass Anglo market. Therefore, commodities from the processor to the wholesaler or from the wholesaler to the retailer must be efficiently combined in order to achieve transportation economies. These economies are very important because they directly affect the cost of the product to the retailer and to the ultimate consumer. Basically it is concluded that there will have to be combined shipments and shared warehousing costs in order to reduce transportation costs to a minimum level.

The fourth and final marketing function that the retailer must adopt as a part of his overall strategy to serve the Mexican-American community is the marketing information and research function. Fundamentally, better information on the market serves the needs of the retailer, wholesaler and processor. Therefore, ideally, there should be a sharing of the data acquisition cost. The types of basic data needed for each specific store's trading area include size of market, income, product preferences, brand preferences, shopping patterns, seasonality of special items, and the response to advertisements. Much of this data can be compiled inexpensively by analyzing inventory records for product movement
and the rate of turnover and by observing Mexican-American shopping patterns and preferences within the grocery store. Another inexpensive technique for gathering valuable information is an adaptation of the old suggestion-box concept. As the customer pays for the items purchased, the bilingual checkout clerk hands the customer a form, explaining that the store wants to know if there are any Mexican food items which the customer did not find, but which he would like to see stocked on a regular basis. This form could be returned to the prominently displayed suggestion box at the customer's convenience. In special cases the expense of an in-depth consumer survey conducted by a marketing research agency is justified. The primary conclusion is that marketers need marketing information and research data on which to base intelligent marketing strategy decisions regarding the Mexican-American market.

The conclusions presented in this chapter have been relating the implications of the Mexican-American market segment to marketers and making appropriate recommendations regarding the operations of those marketing institutions and the performance of those marketing functions which relate to the marketing of grocery products. However, the implications of this study are not limited to grocery products. Other industries, such as the entertainment-products industry, the clothing industry, or the furniture industry, should be more aware of the Mexican-American market segment because of its
distinctive preferences for these industries' products. In conclusion, appropriate adjustments in product and marketing strategies to meet the unique needs and preferences of the Mexican-American market segment are necessitated if marketers are to realize the full market potential of these markets.
APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN PERSONAL HOUSEHOLD INTERVIEWS
CONSUMER QUESTIONNAIRE

A. Interviewee is: Wife___; Husband___.

B. How long has your family lived in this general area of Fort Worth? ____________.

(If more than 3 months, continue the interview.)

Since you are familiar with this general area of Fort Worth, would you please answer a few questions regarding your grocery-shopping habits?

1. How often are groceries bought for your family?
   Daily___; Several times a week___; Once a week___;
   Every two weeks___; Once a month___.

2. Which day(s) of the week are groceries generally bought for your family? (circle)

3. Who frequently accompanies you on your shopping trip?
   Wife___; Husband___; Children___; Others (specify)___.

4. When you go shopping do you shop at small neighborhood stores? Yes___; No___.

5. At which grocery stores do you make your buys?
   Name and Location: ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

6. How do you get to the grocery store?
   Walk___; Car___; Bus___; Taxi___.
7. How are grocery buys paid for?
   Cash or Check_; Credit_; Food Stamp_.
   If cash, who pays the grocer for your family's grocery items? Wife_; Husband_; Children_.

8. What is the average weekly amount spent for groceries for your family? $_______.

9. Do some of the people who work in your favorite store speak Spanish? Yes__; No___.

10. In choosing a grocery item, which is most important? Price__ or Brand__.

11. For your family, who has the greatest influence in the selection of grocery items? Wife__; Husband__; Children__; Others (specify)___________.

12. Why do you LIKE shopping at your favorite grocery store?
   Name and Location of Store: ____________________________
   Comments: _________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________

13. What is it that you DISLIKE about certain stores?
   Comments: _________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________
14. How important are the following things to you in choosing a grocery store where you would shop all the time?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Little Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Favorite brands stocked</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly people work there</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety of goods offered</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish spoken by manager</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cater to Mexican-American tastes and preferences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish spoken by butcher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of meat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of lettuce, tomatoes, and fruits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check-cashing service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety of spices and seasonings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising is in Spanish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INFORMATION ABOUT THE FAMILY:

15. How many children are at home? _____

16. Do any grandparents or other relatives live with you?
   Yes____; No____.
   If yes, how many such persons live with you? __________.

17. What is the approximate age of the family?
   Husband____; Wife____.

18. What was the highest grade in school completed?
   Husband____; Wife____.

19. What language is spoken most in the home?
   English____; Spanish____; Both languages are used____.

20. What is the family's average monthly income? $________.
APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE USED IN RETAIL GROCERY STORE INTERVIEWS
RETAIL GROCERY STORE MANAGER QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How long have you been in a management position in this store? _____ Years; _____ Months.

2. What percentage of your regular customers are:
   Anglo_____%; Negro_____%; Mexican American_____%?

3. In your opinion, do Mexican-American customers shop at the same store week after week regardless of specials? (In other words, how strong is their store loyalty?)

4. Approximately how much does the typical Mexican-American family spend on groceries per week? $_____. Food Stamp_____.

5. Do you feel that the Mexican-American customer is more sensitive to Brand_____; Price_____; or Both_____

6. Are there any brands which you have stocked especially for your Mexican-American customers?

7. Are there any products in your store which Mexican Americans would buy in spite of a slightly higher price because of their strong preference for this particular product?
8. Do you stock any items in the following categories primarily because of the demand by Mexican Americans?
- Fresh Meats
- Frozen Foods
- Fresh Produce
- Canned Vegetables
- Bulk or Large Bagged Items such as Rice, Beans, Flour
- Bread or Bakery Items
- Spices or Seasonings
- Others

9. Do any of your following employees converse with customers in Spanish?
- Check-out Clerks: Yes; No
- Produce Supervisor: Yes; No
- Butcher: Yes; No
- Check-cashing Person: Yes; No

10. Are you making any plans to change your operations in order to appeal more directly to these people?

11. In your opinion, why do you think the Mexican Americans living in this area of Fort Worth shop at your store rather than at another grocery store?
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Galaza, Ernesto, Mexican Americans in the Southwest, Santa Barbara, California, McNally and Loftin, 1970.

Galaza, Ernesto, Herman Galligos and Julian Samora, Mexican Americans in the Southwest, Santa Barbara, California, McNally and Loftin, 1969.


Tuck, Ruth, Not With the Fist, New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1946.


Articles


Burnhill, James, "The Mexican People in the Southwest," Political Affairs, XXXII (September, 1953), 43-52.


Castilla, Rene, "Brown is One Color," Now, (February 1, 1972).


"The Mexican American," The Economist, CLVI (June 18, 1949), 1139-1140.


"The Other Texans," Look, XVII (October 8, 1963), 68-70.


Samora, Julian, "Educational Status of a Minority," Theory and Practice, II (June, 1963), 144-150.


Reports


Fogel, Walter, *Education and Income of Mexican Americans in the Southwest*, Mexican American Study Project, Advance Report 1, Los Angeles, Division of Research, Graduate School of Business, University of California, 1965.


Unpublished Materials


Government Publications: Federal


