

**Recent Advances in Globalization, Culture and Marketing Strategy:
Introduction to the special issue**

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Abstract

This special issue of the *Journal of Business Research* features thirteen articles selected from the papers presented during the sixth meeting of the Royal Bank International Research Seminar which took place in Tokyo as part of the Global Marketing Conference, September 9-12, 2010, sponsored by the Korean Academy of Marketing Science and the Society for Marketing Advances. They cover topics related to globalization, cultural values, global consumer behavior, market segmentation, marketing strategies of emerging economies, consumer socialization, materialism, service quality, and government actions.

Key words: Globalization, culture, marketing strategy, cultural values, global consumer behavior

1. Introduction

This exceptional sixth meeting of the *Royal Bank International Research Seminar* took place in Tokyo, September 9-12, 2010. This is the first time this international research seminar took place outside of Montreal (Canada) since it was created in 2000. The main topic of this sixth international research seminar was to explore *recent advances in globalization, culture and marketing strategy*. This seminar was intended to bring together international scholars interested in advancing knowledge on the impact of globalization and culture on various aspects of marketing strategy. The role of culture in the consumer decision-making process is still an important area of research in light of the trends toward global markets and the global consumer culture (Cleveland and Laroche, 2007), thus the new emphasis on globalization, as well as the growth of services around the world (Uelstchy et al., 2007), and the increasing use of the internet which transcend geography (Mazaheri, Richard, and Laroche, 2011). We hope that this special issue will stimulate further research and participation in forthcoming seminars of the Royal Bank Distinguished Professorship. Please write to laroche@jmsb.concordia.ca for further information on these events.

The call for papers generated 67 submissions, which is a record for such a boutique seminar. A total of 32 papers were selected for oral presentations and 20 for poster presentations in Tokyo following one round of double-blind reviews. These papers covered a variety of topics related to the main theme, including product strategies, communication strategies, retail strategies, internet marketing, methodological considerations and corporate philanthropy. In terms of methodology, some authors used qualitative approaches, and others provided empirical tests of structural equations models. Several cultural groups were the focus of the papers, from the USA, Canada, China, Germany, South Korea and the U.K. to Taiwan, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, and Lebanon.

This special issue features 13 articles that were selected after several rounds of full reviews. They are described next based on the similarity of topics covered in the articles.

2. Globalization, culture and consumption

First, Cleveland, Laroche, and Hallab (*Globalization, culture, religion, and values: Comparing consumption patterns of Lebanese Muslims and Christians*) examine the relationships among acculturation to the global consumer culture (AGCC), Lebanese ethnic identity (LEID), religiosity, individual-level (Schwartz) and consumption-related values (materialism and consumer ethnocentrism, MAT/CET) and several consumption behaviors; and contrasting coexisting religious groups. A negative AGCC-LEID relationship exists for Muslims, whereas for Christians these two variables are independent. Common across groups, religiosity and CET positively associate with LEID, and materialism positively associates with AGCC. Other relationships are specific to religious groups. The AGCC-LEID relationship across different behaviors yields distinctive acculturation patterns.

Second, Cappellini and Yen (*Little emperors in the UK: acculturation and food over time*) investigate the acculturation process of Chinese students in the UK. A longitudinal study looked at how participants' social ties affected their food consumption. An interpretive study with focus groups finds that food consumption patterns of participants change over time in relation to their social ties. Three acculturation patterns are identified based on how ethnic and non-ethnic ties influence their acculturation process. Students with strong ethnic ties consume Chinese foods to maintain their ethnic identity and resist host culture foods. Students with weak ethnic ties consume Chinese foods to maintain their ethnic identity and global consumer culture

foods to resist the host culture. Participants with strong non-ethnic ties have a wider knowledge of host culture foods, but they do not consume it more than students with weak non-ethnic ties.

Third, Millan, De Pelsmacker and Wright (*Clothing consumption in two recent EU member states: A cross-cultural study*) investigate cross-cultural differences in East Europeans' consumer behavior, for which there is little knowledge. They address this gap by developing and testing hypotheses about cross-cultural variations in a number of clothing-related consumer behavior phenomena in two recent EU member states, i.e., the Czech Republic and Bulgaria. They found major differences in interests in clothing, preference for utilitarian, self-expressive and hedonic meanings of clothing artifacts, preference for famous brands, brand loyalty, and the importance of clothing attributes. This study brings new knowledge on clothing value-expressive symbolism and consumption and provides insights for marketers in developing effective marketing strategies.

Finally, Bu, Kim, and Son (*Is secure feeling really important for collectivist cultures? Self-regulation focused emotion in ethnic food consumption*) try to determine if an ethnic food restaurant is better off promoting culturally congruent emotions, or incongruent but context-specific emotions. Using self regulatory fit theory, they found that culturally congruent emotions lead to higher satisfaction. However, they also found a homogenization of promotional emotions in ethnic food consumption contexts across cultures. The moderating role of involvement on satisfaction provides a discussion on the interplay of local contexts and global content.

3. Globalization, culture and consumer behavior

First, Walsh and Bartikowski (*The effect of corporate social responsibility on customer outcomes: The moderating role of culture*) investigate the mediation of satisfaction in the relationships between on one hand corporate ability and corporate social responsibility and on the other word of mouth and loyalty intentions. They explore whether these relationships are equivalent between Germany and the USA. Using a sample of retail customers, the mediating role of satisfaction for both corporate associations is confirmed. Depending on the country, the relationships between corporate associations and behavioral outcomes experience partial or full mediation by satisfaction. The effects of corporate ability associations on satisfaction are stronger for U.S. than for German customers, while the effects of corporate social responsibility associations on satisfaction and behavioral outcomes are always stronger for German than for U.S. customers.

Second, Choi, Yoon, and Lacey (*Online game characters' influence on brand trust: Self-disclosure, group membership, and product type*) examine how an animated character appearing in an advergame affects trust toward the advertised brand. Two studies demonstrate that a highly self-disclosing game character increases the player's trust toward the brand if the game character claims to be an outgroup member, but the opposite is true if the character pretends to be an ingroup member. These effects are found only when advertised brands are for publicly consumed products, but they disappear when the brands are for private consumption. The findings are robust across two countries which vary in consumer familiarity with advergaming practices—the USA and South Korea.

Third, Elliot, Cherian, and Casakin (*Cultural metaphors: Enhancing global consumer pleasure in servicescapes*) study how cultural metaphors in ethnic servicescapes enhance consumer pleasure. Marketing researchers mainly explored how consumers respond to ambient conditions, functional layout and signs/symbols within servicescapes. However, few studied consumer pleasure in ethnic servicescapes or the use of cultural metaphors in servicescapes to

enhance pleasure. They introduce an additional dimension of pleasure named 'ethno-pleasure'. This dimension relates to the emotional responses to cultural metaphors in the servicescapes and is related to cultural self-construal. The three themes related to ethno-pleasure are symbolic, imaginary, and reviving experiences. The construct of ethno-pleasure and its sub-categories was supported by exploratory quantitative analyses. Their findings have implications for developing strategies for intra-national and international multi-cultural marketing.

Finally, Zhou, and Whitla (*How does negative celebrity publicity matter? The role of moral reputation*) explore reactions by consumers to negative celebrity publicity. Using the sociological analysis of morality, they propose that concerns with the moral norms of the celebrity's personal conduct (deontology) and the perceived wrongness of recent acts (teleology) have negative effects on celebrity endorsements. Using a sample of Asian consumers, they found that evaluation of the moral reputation shapes reactions to the poorly behaving celebrity and the endorsed brands. Thus moral reputation is an important link between the attribution process and reactions to negative celebrity publicity. The celebrity endorser's moral reputation should be incorporated into celebrity endorsement research. This captures a sociological process underlying consumer resistance to negative behavior by celebrities.

4. Globalization, culture and market segmentation

First, Wang, Ma, Jao, Hsu, and Lin (*What service features do senior tourists care in outbound group package tours: Taiwan vs. China*) develop scales for seniors' perceptions of group package tour service features (GPTSFs) in Taiwan and China. Qualitative research is used to generate sample items and a quantitative study to develop and validate the GPTSF scales. Findings from a survey of experienced senior tourists from Taiwan and China identify five important factors (i.e., tour leader and tour guide, restaurant, hotel, coach, and scenic spot) among seniors in Taiwan and three factors (i.e., pre-tour briefing, restaurant, and optional tour) among seniors in China. Based on these findings, travel agencies can adjust their offerings and make them flexible enough to react to environmental changes and varying consumer needs.

Second, Rojas-Méndez, Murphy, and Papadopoulos (*The U.S. brand personality: A Sino perspective*) apply the personality metaphor to the U.S. brand personality in China. They found that the U.S. brand personality is a multidimensional construct comprised of three dimensions, i.e., amicableness, resourcefulness, and self-centeredness. The Chinese perceptions of the U.S. brand personality are bipolar, i.e., the amicable and resourceful traits battle with the self-centered personality trait. This U.S. brand personality scale is a significant predictor of the behavioral intentions of the Chinese towards the U.S.

5. Globalization, culture, and green marketing

First, Bauer, Heinrich, and Schäfer (*More hype than substance? Investigating the impact of organic labels on global and local brands*) use in-depth interviews to identify four main purchasing motives for organic food in Germany: healthiness, hedonism, environmental friendliness, and food safety. Using two experiments, they found that the use of an organic label affects perceptions of global, local, and private brands with regard to their main purchasing motives. The positive effects of organic labeling are also found for purchase intentions and willingness to pay a price premium. Private brands are more adept at benefiting from the use of organic labels than global or local brands.

Second, Gao, Knight, Zhan, and Mather (*Guilt by association: consumer heuristic judgments of foreign brands during a food safety crisis in China*) study the factors that influence consumer responses during a product-harm crisis. They apply the concept of heuristic judgments and attribution theory to look at mistrust of non-contaminated but heuristically-associated foreign brands during the 2008 milk contamination crisis in China. Shared brand identity and investment or management links between a local brand and an imported brand expose the latter to guilt-by-association (GBA) effects. Judgments on the stability of the underlying causes of the domestic crisis moderate the transference of blame to foreign brands.

Third, Cho, Thyroff, Rapert, Park, and Lee (*To be or not to be green: Exploring individualism and collectivism as antecedents of environmental behavior*) capitalize on the long history of cultural orientation, examining the influence of individualism and collectivism as antecedents to perceived consumer effectiveness (PCE), environmental attitude, and environmental commitment. Utilizing cross-cultural data drawn from South Korea and the United States, the empirical results provide support for horizontal collectivism and vertical individualism as important influencers of perceived consumer effectiveness. In turn, PCE positively affects environmental attitude which results in pro-environmental commitment manifested in specific behavioral intentions.

6. Conclusion

By adding to the body of knowledge developed since the first Royal Bank International Research Seminar in 2001, these articles advance our understanding of the role of culture and culture change on the consumer decision-making process, the emerging global consumer culture, and the ensuing marketing strategies. Some areas like marketing communications are well developed, while others such as social media and brand communities are still awaiting new developments. More work is needed on other aspects of marketing strategy, such as international branding issues dealing with language (Richard and Toffoli, 2009), global pricing issues, global distribution issues (i.e. e-tailing and global services), global industrial and business-to-business issues, and so on. Also, researchers need to continue developing, testing and validating measurement instruments that are invariant across cultures; developing consumer decision-making models based on the SOR paradigm (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974) and the Schwartz Value System (Schwartz, 1999) that are invariant across cultures; finding new approaches to studying the global consumer culture, including cosmopolitanism (Cleveland, Laroche, and Papadopoulos, 2009), to better understand the cultural impacts of the Internet and so on.

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