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The future of ethnic marketing in a globalized world: Introduction to the special issue[☆]

1. Introduction

The tenth meeting of the *Royal Bank International Research Seminar* took place in Montreal (Canada), on September 24–26, 2015. The main topic of this tenth international research seminar was to explore future research developments among the key concepts of *ethnic marketing* and *global marketing strategy*. With the objective of extending the discussion on ethnic marketing generated by the contents of the book by Jamal, Peñaloza, and Laroche (2015), this seminar brought together in the congenial location of the Atwater Club (a private sports club) several international scholars interested in advancing knowledge of ethnic marketing, the global consumer culture and its impact on marketing strategy (Cleveland & Laroche, 2007). New perspectives are needed on the role of ethnic marketing in a changing world, where borders are losing their traditional protective function, markets are becoming more integrated, but at the same time some ethnic groups are reaffirming their identities. Marketers must now deal with the dual demands of globalized and localized marketing and communication programs. In addition, the increasing role of electronic and social media which transcend geography require the development of new theories and tools (Habibi, Laroche, & Richard, 2016). The emergence of social media and mobile marketing is creating exciting new opportunities in social commerce for global marketers as well for marketing researchers (Hajli, Shanmugam, Papagiannidis, Zahay-Blatz, & Richard, 2017; Laroche, Habibi, & Richard, 2013). Finally, more research is needed on the applications of big data analytics to further our understanding of online consumer behavior (Ahmad & Laroche, 2017), the digital divide, the development of cloud marketing (Fazli, Shirdastian, & Laroche, 2015), the internet of things, and the forthcoming information technology developments such as the various applications of RFID technology. I hope that this special issue will stimulate further research and participation in forthcoming seminars of the Royal Bank Distinguished Professorship. Please write to michel.laroche@concordia.ca for further information on these events.

The initial call for papers led to the selection of 28 presentations as a result of one round of double-blind reviews. These papers covered a variety of topics related to the main theme, including acculturation, global consumer culture, global marketing communication strategies, global consumer behavior, global service management issues, and new challenges in ethnic research. In terms of methodology, some authors used qualitative approaches, while others provided empirical tests of structural equations models. Finally, several cultural groups from many parts of world were the focus of the presentations.

2. Two exceptional plenary sessions

The first plenary speech was given by Amado Padilla (Stanford University, USA), a world renowned cross-cultural researcher who provided a most impressive and thoughtful overview and illustration of the new dynamics in ethnic research, focusing specifically on multiculturalism, technology, globalization, and millennials.

The second plenary speech was given by Lisa Peñaloza (Kedge Business School, France) who developed with brio the central theme of ethnic marketing, focusing on future opportunities and challenges in a globalized world.

Following the seminar, Lisa Peñaloza was kind enough to write a fascinating follow-up paper which was reviewed in a double-blind fashion as for the other selected papers. Her article entitled: *Ethnic marketing practice and research at the intersection of market and social development: A macro study of the past and present, with a look to the future* uses historical and ethnographic research methods in formulating a framework on ethnic minority marketing pertaining to Latinos/as in the U.S. as developed over time. She provides theoretical contributions to update the definitions of ethnic marketing and ethnic marketing research and provides thoughtful managerial recommendations. This article will be very helpful to all researchers and managers interested in the evolving scope and nature of ethnic marketing.

This special issue features *fourteen* articles that were selected after several rounds of additional full reviews and they cover four general and important themes.

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3. Acculturation and ethnic identity influences on marketing strategies

The first six papers provide several novel approaches to acculturation, ethnic identity, cultural orientation, ethnocentrism, contextual effects, and social inclusive marketing. They contribute important advances on the role of culture and culture change in developing global marketing strategies.

Dose, Walsh, Ruvio, and Segev (*Investigating links between cultural orientation and culture outcomes: Immigrants from the former Soviet Union to Israel and Germany*) examine the cultural orientation and consumer outcomes (i.e., unique products and fashion consciousness) of immigrants from the former Soviet Union who moved to Israel and Germany. They found key differences in the cultural orientations of immigrants to Israel and Germany, as well as different relational patterns between cultural orientation and their consumer behavior. This article provides a deeper understanding of the role of contextual factors, such as the immigration policy of the host society, on the acculturation of immigrants.

Khan, Pusaksrikit, and Lindridge (*Why some South Asian Muslims celebrate Christmas: Introducing 'acculturation trade-offs'*) explore how Muslims living in Britain use religiosity to mediate the act of celebrating Christmas. These interactions must be viewed from three perspectives: religious, cultural and market generated. Findings indicate that the respondents face tensions between their act of celebrating Christmas and their Islamic religious principles. They introduce the concept of 'acculturation trade-offs' which describes how people reject, compromise, or submerge themselves in others' behavior, based on an evaluation of the costs and benefits of engagement with the host society. This is another instance of the influence of contextual pressures.

Buhamra, Aurup, and Ferraz (*The effects of acculturation of Brazilians living in Canada on their pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors*) aim to identify the possible acculturation of sustainable attitudes and behaviors by ethnic groups in a developed country, namely Brazilians living in Canada. Through self-assessment, Brazilians in Canada compared their currently acquired attitudes and behaviors with those they had when they were living in Brazil. Findings revealed that, when in Brazil, their knowledge and their feelings were pro-environmental, but their behavior was not, and that their behavior changed after they moved to Canada. This finding shows that even when the willingness to adopt sustainable behaviors already exists, the lack of norms, laws and infrastructure influences the attitude-behavior gap, providing more instances of the influence of favorable contextual pressures.

El Banna, Papadopoulos, Murphy, Rojas-Méndez, and Rod (*Ethnic identity, consumer ethnocentrism, and purchase intentions among bi-cultural ethnic consumers: "Divided loyalties" or "dual allegiance"?*) investigate the concept of "dual ethnocentrism" among consumers who have an allegiance toward, or divided loyalties between, two countries: their country of origin ("home"), and the country where they live and work ("host"). Their analyses focus on the differences between the home- and host-related ethnocentrism and find that ethnocentric feelings and their effects vary depending on the country of reference. This suggests that ethnocentrism is a more complex construct than previously thought and this article advances our understanding of the relationship between ethnicity and ethnocentrism.

Kizgin, Jamal, and Richard (*Acculturation influences on ethnic consumers in a Western society: Culture-specific consumption of non-Western Turkish immigrants in the Netherlands*) surveyed 530 Turkish-Dutch respondents. Their findings underscore the significance of looking at domain-specific (public vs. private) acculturation attitudes and acculturation behaviors. Enculturation (acculturation) behaviors function as a mediator in the relationship between acculturation attitudes and consumption of food and entertainment products from the heritage (host) culture. This study is one of the first to investigate the simultaneous effects of acculturation attitudes and acculturation behaviors on the choice of consumer foods and entertainment products from the heritage and host cultures.

Licsandru and Cui (*Subjective social inclusion and socially inclusive marketing*) define the new construct of subjective social inclusion and develop the framework of inclusive marketing. Social inclusion comprises acceptance, belongingness, empowerment, equality and respect, and inclusive marketing explains the effects of multi-ethnic embedded communications on feelings of social inclusion by consumers, as well as the effects of ethnic self-referencing, ethnic self-awareness, ethnic self-identification and self-congruity. Their analysis shows that multi-ethnic embedded communications represent an effective means to more inclusive communication with ethnic consumers leading to consumer wellbeing and marketing effectiveness. This article proposes a research agenda of marketing to disadvantaged consumers, with implications for public policy.

4. Global consumer culture and the sharing economy across ethnic groups

In this section, three articles provide contributions to the growing stream of research on the global consumer culture, and on the new emerging topic of the sharing economy in cross-cultural contexts. They bring new dimensions to the general topic of the influence of culture and culture change on global marketing strategies.

Sobol, Cleveland, and Laroche (*Globalization, national identity, biculturalism, and consumer behavior: The case of Dutch consumers*) provide a longitudinal perspective on the presence, antecedents, and consequences of the global consumer culture (GCC) within the Netherlands, examining the interplay between the local and global cultures. While there is evidence that the Dutch are increasingly acculturating toward the GCC, the global and local cultural forces impact consumption behaviors consistently over time: Identification (NEID) positively correlates with the consumption of products bounded to local culture (e.g. local food and clothing), whereas the positive role of acculturation (AGCC) correlates with behaviors linked to global or foreign cultures (e.g. electronics and luxuries). The expanded nomological network looks at the relationships of AGCC and NEID to demographic/cultural precursors and dispositional outcomes.

Cleveland and Bartikowski (*Cultural antecedents of opinion leadership: Comparing Chinese at home and abroad*) study the role played by market mavens due to their marketplace knowledge and ability to persuade others. Normative pressures explain the influence of market mavens, and researchers should consider cultural values and social identity as antecedents to market mavenism. Vertical and horizontal dimensions of individualism-collectivism are related to ethnic identity and identification with the global consumer culture which, in turn, influences market mavenism. These relationships are studied for Chinese living in China (N = 502), and for those born in China but living in France (N = 229). Findings show that individualism-collectivism affects mavenism indirectly, through identification with the global consumer culture.

Habibi, Davidson, and Laroche (*Materialism and the sharing economy: A cross-cultural study of American and Indian consumers*) investigate the role of materialism in consumer participation in sharing-based programs of the sharing economy, and this, cross culturally. Unlike previous statements that materialism is not compatible with sharing, this article shows that under certain circumstances, materialism leads to greater participation in the sharing economy. This is true for both Americans and Indians, but the explanation is different for each group. For the Americans, this effect occurs for programs resembling sharing as they are not incompatible with ownership, but rather encourage materialistic consumers to look for transformative and hedonic experiences and improve their self-image and well-being. For the Indians, materialism leads to participation in the sharing-based programs because of the increased perceived utility it offers them. These findings provide useful implications for managers and practitioners who

intend to promote their sharing economy programs, as well as they open new avenues for researchers.

5. Social media and internet based marketing issues across ethnic cultures

The emerging research fields of digital and social media have applications in cross-cultural research, and two articles can be classified in that category, and provide new directions for researchers and practitioners.

Bartikowski, Laroche, Jamal, and Yang (*The digital divide and the well-being of minority and majority consumers: A multi-country investigation*) hypothesize that mobile- as compared to regular only-internet uses enhance consumers' perceptions of their personal economic situation, which, in turn, enhances their life satisfaction. Ethnic status (majority vs. minority) and national wealth (richer vs. poorer countries) provide boundary conditions for these effects. These hypotheses are tested with multi-level modeling and a large scale multinational dataset covering responses of more than 26,000 consumers and 21 countries. Findings show that perceived personal economic situation mediates the relationship between type of internet access (regular vs. mobile) and life satisfaction; the positive effects of mobile internet use are weaker for minority compared to majority consumers and stronger for consumers in poorer compared to richer countries. This article suggests a very fruitful area of investigation for both digital marketing researchers and practitioners.

Moriuchi and Takahashi (*An empirical investigation the factors motivating Japanese repeat online consumers to review their shopping experience online*) study consumers' willingness to review their shopping experience online, and the relationship between search attributes such as price, promotion and service, e-satisfaction and trust on their online supermarket purchase experiences. The findings support the previous studies that search attributes are determinants of consumers' e-satisfaction. In addition, e-satisfaction is related to e-trust. Interestingly, e-trust has a negative effect on the consumers' willingness to review their online experience. This article adds to our understanding of online reviews and in the context of the Japanese society.

6. Communication and consumption in cross-cultural contexts

The final three articles relate to the role of culture in cross-cultural communication and global consumption contexts.

Elliot, Jamal, and Cherian (*Artrepreneurship and experiential learning in ethnic markets*) advance the theoretical and instrumental understanding of cultural learning mechanisms adopted by ethnic artrepreneurs, a special kind of entrepreneurs. They used interview data with 16 ethnic artrepreneurs, and found that ethnic artrepreneurs have a form of learning that is cyclical in nature and consist of interconnecting stages. They rely on experiential learning theory to study labels and discuss some emerging themes in four stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. This article provides a mean to identify artrepreneurship as a strategic resource for marketing in various ethnic markets.

Minton, Spielmann, Kahle, and Kim (*Social desirability and sustainable consumption: A cross-cultural exploration*) examine the role of national culture and pragmatism as they relate to sustainable consumption. In their research, two types of social norms related to sustainable consumption (normative and self-enhancing) are examined across three countries (France, Japan, and the U.S.A.). They found that differences in consumption are due, in part, to the country's level of pragmatism (a cultural value). They also found that sustainable attitudes mediate the relationship between the level of national pragmatism and sustainable behaviors.

Strebinger, Klauser, Grant-Haye, and Guo (*Is multi-ethnic advertising a globally viable strategy for a western luxury car brand? A mixed-method cross-cultural study*) use qualitative interviews with 145 young consumers in Japan, China, Austria, and Canada (recent Japanese and Chinese immigrants, and Caucasian Canadians), and found that multi-ethnic advertising relates to “brand globalness” in ethnically homogeneous markets, and to “brand inclusiveness” in ethnically diverse markets. Consistent with Optimal-Distinctiveness Theory, ethnic-majority consumers in Japan and China prefer all-Caucasian advertisements over multi-ethnic advertisements for a western luxury car brand. However, Japanese and Chinese immigrants to Canada show a stronger appreciation for multi-ethnic advertising. A quantitative study among 370 Chinese consumers in China and Chinese immigrants to Canada supports these patterns and the mediating role of need for differentiation. This article advances our understanding of global advertising standardization by introducing global consistency in meaning and valence as the usefulness of a cue in globally standardized advertising.

7. Conclusion and kudos

By adding to the 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 global consumer behavior, the emerging global consumer culture, the exploding digital and social media environments and the emerging sharing economies. Some areas are well developed (e.g. global marketing communications), while others such as social media, social commerce, brand communities, and the sharing economy still require new developments (Habibi, Kim, & Laroche, 2016). More advances are needed in other aspects of marketing strategy, such as international branding and service issues dealing with language (Zhang, Laroche, & Richard, 2017), global pricing issues, global distribution issues, and so on. Also, researchers need to continue developing, testing and validating measurement instruments and consumer decision-making models that are invariant across cultures; finding new ways of studying the global consumer culture, including cosmopolitanism (Cleveland & Laroche, 2012); finding new frameworks to better understand the cultural impacts of the new electronic media and information technologies, and so on.

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