

MOVING INTERNATIONAL ADVERTISING RESEARCH FORWARD

A New Research Agenda

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ABSTRACT: In introducing the special issue on international advertising, this paper assesses progress made in international research. It begins with an examination of the content of international advertising papers published in the *Journal of Advertising* during the past ten years. The content of these more recent research articles is then compared to those that appeared earlier in the *Journal's* history. This paper also surveys four earlier reviews of the international advertising literature and assesses whether issues posed in the reviews have been adequately addressed. A new agenda for international advertising researchers is offered, consisting of eight research questions and some admonitions relating to data collection and collaboration among researchers. The contributions of papers in this issue are then detailed in the context of the proposed research agenda.

Writing in 1994, George M. Zinkhan observed that during the first 29 years of its publication, the *Journal of Advertising* published 29 papers on international advertising. These 29 papers represented more than 16% of the papers published in the *Journal*, a figure indicative of the importance that international advertising research had acquired. Zinkhan also noted that the vast majority of the papers published on international advertising had been conceptual as opposed to empirical, and that 7 of the 29 papers dealt with advertising in Europe, 5 were on Asia, 4 were written about developing nations, and 11 touched on the subject of global advertising in general.

A look at international advertising papers appearing in the *Journal of Advertising* over the past 10 years (September 1994 through the Summer 2004 issue) indicates that international topics have received even more attention than in the past. A total of 32 international advertising papers appeared over the 10-year period. This represents an average of 3.2 international articles per year, in comparison to an average of one per year over the *Journal's* first 29 years.

As shown in Table 1, simple content analysis also shows that more recent articles have employed a wide variety of methodologies. In contrast to most papers being conceptual in nature in earlier issues, only 9% of the *Journal of Advertising's* international articles published during the last ten years were conceptual in nature. While content analysis was the most common methodological approach, representing 34% of the

international studies, it was followed closely by experiments at 25%, and surveys at 22%. Two studies employed secondary data analysis (6%) and one used qualitative analysis (3%). Collectively, these results suggest that while conceptual studies were once the norm for international studies published in the *Journal of Advertising*, empirical studies now dominate, representing 88% of the total studies.

As shown in Table 2, in terms of the countries being studied, Asia has taken over as being the region examined by the most articles (44%), followed by Europe at 22%. This is not surprising, given the rapid growth of many East Asian economies in recent years and the especially fast growth of the world's most populous country, China. It is important to point out, however, that there is clear need to research both highly developed and developing economies from other regions. It is interesting to note that there is a lower proportion of studies that deal with general topics or multiple regions than was the case in the past. Although this is ironic in one sense, since globalization likely creates more data collection opportunities, it is likely driven by the higher proportion of empirical studies.

What does this content analysis of the past 10 years of international articles in the *Journal of Advertising* tell us? Clearly, it suggests that the field now fully recognizes the importance of international topics and that research on a variety of countries is valued. The findings also indicate a promising trend toward more empirical research and the use of more sophisticated analytical techniques on international topics. Although these findings do provide some insights, it is also important to look at whether research objectives that are important to the field as a whole are being met. This is the subject of the next section.

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TABLE 1
Method Used in *Journal of Advertising* International Advertising Papers (September 1994–Summer 2004)

Method	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Content analysis	11	34
Experiment	8	25
Survey	7	22
Conceptual	3	9
Secondary data analysis	2	6
Qualitative	1	3
Total	32	*99

* Numbers do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE 2
Countries Studied in *Journal of Advertising* International Advertising Papers (September 1994–Summer 2004)

Countries	Country or region studied	Percentage (%)
Asia	14	44
Europe	7	22
Developing countries/other countries*	7	22
Global in general/multiple countries	4	12
Total	32	100

* Dominican Republic, Israel, multiple Middle Eastern countries, Mexico (one each).

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS FACING INTERNATIONAL ADVERTISING RESEARCHERS

Since the 1980s, there have periodically been attempts to assess progress made in international advertising research and to outline some directions for future researchers. A summary of the key research questions posed by these articles is provided in Figure 1.

An early review of the literature on international advertising was conducted by Miracle (1984). Miracle looked in particular at contributions of international advertising research in four areas: theory, practice, public policy, and research methods. With regard to theory and methodological approaches used, he commented that international advertising research was "exceedingly underdeveloped" (p. 157). Miracle attributed this underdevelopment to a small number of scholars constituting the major contributors to the literature, as well as to a lack of programmatic and systematic research. Miracle noticed that rather than building on prior research, many international studies started from scratch, ignoring advances made by other studies.

A key conclusion of Miracle's 1984 article was that, as a discipline, international advertising had not yet reached the point where scientific generalizations based on conclusions of multiple studies could be made. As the author noted, the field began along the typical path of investigation through the sci-

entific method, starting with a general description of phenomena in the field, followed by a cataloguing of them on some consistent, sensible basis. This process was typically followed by attempts at hypothesis testing; generalizations were then made, and eventually analytical models were developed. As observed by Miracle, as of 1984, international advertising research seemed to be stuck in a period of haphazard investigation that was not yet allowing for many generalizations to be made.

In a 1991 article titled "Global Advertising: Issues and Practices," Sandra Moriarty and Thomas Duncan closely examined the direction of international advertising research. The authors observed that developing an appropriate definition of global advertising was important. They stressed that research was showing that there was a big "middle ground" between standardization and local adaptation, and that authors should begin conceptualizing global advertising versus local advertising as a continuum rather than as a dichotomy. They also indicated the need for more research regarding the effectiveness of global advertising and how its effectiveness should be evaluated. Moriarty and Duncan suggested that, up to that point in time, most scholars of advertising agreed that there were key advantages of "global brand power," but stressed that more research was needed to better understand what the advantages were.

The Moriarty and Duncan article argued that cultural convergence needed to be taken as a given, but the extent to which

FIGURE 1

A History of Papers Examining International Advertising Research Progress

Key Issues and Research Questions in International Advertising

Miracle (1984)

1. Too few scholars consistently studying international advertising.
2. A need for more systematic research that builds on prior studies. A related need to build analytical models based on generalizations that can be made from a body of research.
3. Need more comparative studies (i.e., studies that collect data in more than one country simultaneously).
4. More studies should use advanced methodological techniques such as those used in domestic research.
5. Theory development needs to be more rigorous. Need for theoretical bases that come from a broader set of fields, including communications, anthropology, political science, psycholinguistics, and sociolinguistics.

Moriarty and Duncan (1991)

1. What is a global advertising campaign? Does it need to use exactly the same executions everywhere? Is it still global if it has been translated?
2. How do we evaluate whether global advertising does, indeed, work?
3. What exactly does a brand with global awareness have that a brand without it does not? What exactly does global brand power mean?
4. How fast is cultural convergence happening and how far will it go? To what extent will European consumers become more alike? To what extent will global consumers become more alike?
5. To what degree and in what form will global media evolve?
6. To what extent do economic and political factors drive cultural convergence? To what extent can the political changes that have been occurring in some parts of the world be accounted for by the desire for a market economy? How will consumers in newly opened markets such as Eastern Europe respond to modern advertising? Will they be vulnerable to modern advertising techniques?

Zinkhan (1994)

1. With increasing globalization, are market forces enough to correct trade imbalances between nations or is government intervention required?
2. Which type of organization is more successful—global corporations or multinational corporations? Under what conditions does each prosper (or fail)?
3. What is the effect of government intervention on the wealth of nations? How does advertising contribute to the wealth of nations?
4. What special considerations need to be taken into account when exporting advertising practices from one nation (or culture) to another?
5. How can global brands be created and managed? What is the role of advertising in maintaining global brands?
6. What market entry strategies are likely to be the most successful, and what is the appropriate role for communication to play for each entry strategy?
7. With respect to communication, how can the areas of managerial practice and academic research be better merged and integrated?
8. What are the best ways to measure advertising phenomena and how can these ratings be used to maximize communication performance?
9. Which industries are most appropriate (and which are least appropriate) for applying advertising methods and principles?
10. Is there a predictable life cycle for advertising? That is, is there a natural evolution for advertising principles and practices?
11. What are the best ways to educate students and managers about international advertising?

Taylor (2002)

1. Too many descriptive studies of advertising content and not enough research on why various executional techniques are effective in specific markets.
2. A preoccupation with questions of whether campaigns should be standardized to the detriment of seeking answers for pragmatic execution across markets.
3. A lack of rigor in establishing equivalence in studies comparing data from multiple countries, both in terms of study design and data analysis.
4. A disturbing lack of knowledge about whether, and when, targeting segments that cut across national boundaries (i.e., intermarket segmentation) can be effective.
5. Not enough focus on control of international advertising campaigns, both in terms of who makes the decisions and the extent to which they are effectively implemented.

it would occur and facilitate global advertising deserved additional study. The authors observed that studies were showing that more global advertising was being conducted than

in the past, but suggested additional examination of how far into the future the trends would continue. They also pointed to the belief among some academicians and practitioners that

some market segments (e.g., young people, new mothers, business travelers, and computer users) cut across cultures.

Two other issues that Moriarty and Duncan felt were ripe for additional research were the future evolution of global media and the extent to which changes in political and economic systems lead to cultural convergence. They specifically suggested a need to examine whether consumers in countries that are newly converted to a free market system are particularly vulnerable to the persuasive techniques used in advertising.

In summary, at the time the Moriarty and Duncan article was written, many of the questions that needed to be answered related to what global advertising really was, and the extent to which its use might grow in the future. In addition, they called for a deeper understanding of the benefits of global advertising and the forces that might increase its importance in the future.

More recently, I have examined the state of international advertising research in an article titled "What Is Wrong with International Advertising Research?" (Taylor 2002). In this study, while I acknowledged that significant progress had been made in better understanding some international advertising issues, I argued that more could be done to produce managerially relevant research. I cited the presence of many descriptive studies that could provide the basis for more experimental research as an opportunity.

While I indicated that the methodological approaches being used had advanced, I noted that most surveys and experiments were not taking adequate measures to ensure data equivalence. I also cited a need for more knowledge on cross-market segmentation and when it can work, more study of control (client–agency) issues in planning strategy and execution, and more focus on the pragmatic aspects of standardization. With regard to standardization, I suggested that research had clearly shown that it was time to stop discussing a debate and instead focus on identifying which elements of advertising should be standardized and when they could be standardized.

AN ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS ON PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED ISSUES

With regard to issues identified by Miracle (1984), it is clear that considerable progress has been made. As demonstrated by Zou's paper in this special issue, there is little doubt that more scholars are studying international advertising than ever before. In addition, the past two decades have seen a dramatic increase in the number of studies comparing two or more countries. As evidenced by the content analysis results shown in Table 2, we can also conclude that more advanced methodologies are being applied to international advertising research. We can also safely state that theory has been applied to the studies more than in the past.

In spite of the advances that have been made, some of Miracle's points are well taken, even 20 years later. Although it can be said that there is more programmatic and systematic research than in the past, as shown in Zou's paper, there could be much more. In addition, while more theoretical bases have been applied (see Taylor and Johnson 2002), there is still a pressing need for stronger and more comprehensive theoretical models that are tested empirically. In terms of the process associated with the scientific method, we appear to be at a stage in which there are several topics for which prior research suggests generalizations can be made, although relatively few attempts to convert these generalizations into comprehensive theoretical models have been completed. If sufficient effort is expended, it would appear that the field of international advertising may be on the verge of theoretical breakthroughs.

The definitional questions raised by Moriarty and Duncan (1991) have largely been addressed (see Duncan and Ramaprasad 1995; Harris 1994; Onkvisit and Shaw 1999). It is now clear that many advertisers standardize general strategy while modifying executions and language as needed (Taylor and Johnson 2002). We also have a better sense that global advertising can work in at least some contexts, and know that, at a strategic level, multinational companies often use global advertising to build a uniform brand image (Duncan and Ramaprasad 1995; Tai 1997; Taylor 2002). There is also a general sense that global awareness can translate to brand equity, which should be viewed as a long-term asset for the company (see "The Top 100 Brands" 2004). However, Moriarty and Duncan's question of how to evaluate global advertising's effectiveness remains an important, yet underresearched question. Questions regarding the reasons for and extent of cultural convergence, as well as whether or how global media will grow further, are likely to linger indefinitely, because of the dynamic environment of international business. Nevertheless, research that helps identify trends on these issues remains valuable.

A look at some of Zinkhan's questions 10 years later also suggests that international advertising research has made progress, but there is a long way to go. The debate about whether global corporations or multinational corporations are more effective has become largely irrelevant, as there is now a consensus that standardization can be a valuable strategy in those instances where it is feasible (Taylor and Johnson 2002). Yet Zinkhan's question about special considerations that need to be taken into account when exporting advertising across cultures remains important, in that too few studies have systematically examined the factors associated with standardized advertising. Although a few papers, notably those by Laroche et al. (2001) and Saimee et al. (2003), have provided insight in this area, more work is still needed. We now know much more about creating and maintaining a global brand,

but more work is needed to help quantify the specific performance effects related to having a global brand.

In summary, it appears that international advertising has progressed over the last 20 years, though perhaps not as quickly as it could. In the following section, key research questions for the future, along with specific needs for advancing international research, are put forward.

THE NEW AGENDA: SOME KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Models of Standardization

Based on prior research findings, international advertising research is poised to advance to a new level. While international advertising has seen enormous debate on the standardization versus local adaptation issue, dating back even well before Levitt's (1983) article sparked controversy (e.g., Elinder 1965; Fatt 1967), it is now clear that the focus needs to move beyond which general approach is more desirable to look instead at the factors that allow for successful standardization of advertising. As a result, there is a need for research that empirically tests whether various factors that have been proposed will impact the ability to effectively standardize advertising. A model of when standardization is feasible and how it works would represent a major advance in the literature. Thus:

RQ1: What factors are correlated with firms' use of standardized advertising? Under what circumstances is standardization of (1) strategy, (2) executions, and (3) language appropriate?

Evaluating Global Advertising's Relation to Firm Performance

A consistent issue cited by both academics and practitioners is the need to look more closely at global advertising's impact on various measures of performance. Although the general international marketing literature has seen some strong studies of the relation between marketing strategy and strategic and financial performance (e.g., Cavusgil and Zou 1994; Zou and Cavusgil 2002), advertising studies have not been examining advertising's contribution to successful strategic performance or to bottom-line measures of performance, such as profitability. Frank Cuttita (2004), chief executive officer of the International Advertising Association, has specifically called for more research on global advertising's relation to return on investment (ROI). Clearly, models that look at the factors that contribute to improved performance would enhance knowledge.

RQ2: Is standardized advertising more effective than localized advertising in terms of traditional measures such as attitude toward the ad and attitude toward the brand? Does global

advertising help lead to improved ROI, and other measures of financial performance? Does it contribute to improved strategic performance?

Building Brand Equity in a Global Context

A related issue has to do with the underlying mechanism by which global advertising improves performance. In particular, it is worthwhile to examine the extent to which standardized advertising leads to the creation of a uniform brand image, and in turn, brand equity. As was suggested by Moriarty and Duncan (1991), we still need to know more about the process by which global brands are built. Based on prior literature, it would appear that a uniform brand image plays a key role in this process. While an ambitious goal, research on the measurement of advertising's contribution to global brand equity has the potential to make a major contribution to the literature.

RQ3: Does standardized advertising help to build a uniform brand image? How valuable is a uniform brand image to a company and does it contribute to brand equity? If a uniform brand image helps build brand equity, what are the mechanisms by which this happens?

Can Cross-National Market Segments Be Reached Effectively?

In spite of being an issue that is frequently discussed in textbooks and one that practitioners face, research on identifying and reaching market segments that cut across borders has been sparse. As noted by Hassan and Katsanis (1994), the 1980s and 1990s saw many anecdotal discussions of market segments that cut across cultures, such as the "global teen" segment or the "global elite" segment. There have also been a few attempts to use cluster analysis across markets based on values, but these have generally been driven by practitioners (e.g., Miller 1998; Shermach 1995) and little is known about the efficacy of these approaches. One recent paper by ter Hofstede, Steenkamp, and Wedel (1999) did examine cross-market segmentation of the yogurt market in Europe, but such research has been rare, leading to only limited knowledge of how to identify cross-market segments and whether such segmentation schemes are effective. A survey of multinational advertisers examining whether they use cross-market segmentations, how segments are identified, and the extent to which they have found cross-market segmentation would provide new insight.

RQ4: To what extent are global advertisers able to reach cross-market segments? How do they identify segments and how do they reach them? Can cross-market segmentation be effective on a large scale?

Examining the Effectiveness of Specific Executional Techniques Cross-Culturally

As was noted by Zinkhan (1994), much traditional research in international marketing was conceptual in nature. While there has been a move beyond conceptual papers, it is still the case that much international advertising research is descriptive in nature. The large number of content analyses of advertising on variables such as information content, use of comparisons, appeal type, and so forth, should be built on. These studies are somewhat limited in that they describe existing phenomena rather than testing what is effective with consumers. Yet they can be viewed as a useful base of studies from which to develop hypotheses. Once a sufficient number of studies of one executional variable is conducted, meta-analysis can be a valuable tool that can help us to make generalizations. This was the case in Abernethy and Franke's (1996) meta-analysis of the information content of advertising.

Experimental research on various executional variables in different countries is needed to better understand which advertising techniques are effective. If cultural aspects are used as a basis for hypotheses, such studies can be useful both in building theory on culture's impact on advertising and in providing guidance for practitioners (e.g., Taylor, Miracle, and Wilson 1997). Studies following the approach used by Stewart and Furse (1986), that is, systematically analyzing the effectiveness of a wide array of executional techniques, would be ideal. In the absence of such large-scale analyses, even experiments examining a single executional variable in multiple markets help to gradually build knowledge.

RQ5: Which executional techniques are effective in which countries, and why are they effective? Can culture help to explain differences in the effectiveness of various executional techniques?

Development of a General Theory of Culture's Impact on Advertising

In general, more insight into the influence of culture on international advertising practices is needed. As mentioned above, more research on how cultural similarities and differences impact advertising is needed. Although an impressive number of studies have examined the impact of culture on advertising in some way, we are still lacking a usable comprehensive theoretical framework on its role in advertising. Zinkhan (1994) indicated that Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions appeared to provide a useful framework for looking at international advertising. While the Hofstede dimensions represent an important breakthrough and have been effectively used to provide some insight, that study was based on work-related values in one company, which places some limitations

on what it can tell us about advertising. New attempts at validating cultural dimensions that are relevant to advertising would be worthwhile.

Another promising avenue to build on in terms of culture and advertising is deMooij's (1999) value paradoxes concept. deMooij argues that paradoxical values are found in most cultures and that they are frequently present in advertising. According to deMooij, there is a distinction between what is "desirable" in terms of social norms and what is "desired" in terms of individuals' choices. This may lead advertising to reflect values that appear to conflict with a society's traditional values. It has been suggested that this may be particularly true in countries that have experienced rapid economic development. In the Far East, for example, consumption of many goods and services may sometimes conflict with certain traditional values. This may create a complex situation for advertisers in these markets. Cultural values may also affect advertising regulation. Clearly, more research on advertising regulation is needed, and insight based on cultural and other factors is needed.

Whether it is through building on Hofstede's framework, DeMooij's notion of value paradoxes, or on some other perspectives, it is clear that a more generalizable theory of the impact of culture on advertising is needed.

RQ6: How does culture influence advertising? Which cultural dimensions are especially relevant to advertising and what opportunities and constraints do they impose on advertisers? Does culture influence advertising regulation?

More Insight on Client–Agency Relationships in a Global Context, Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC), and New Media

In an era of agency consolidation that has seen conglomerates such as WPP Group, Omnicom and Interpublic, along with Dentsu, gain a larger share of the global advertising market, it is timely to pay more attention to the client–agency relationship. WPP's recent acquisition of Grey Global Group added another major name to a group that already includes J. Walter Thompson, Oglivy and Mather, Young and Rubicam, and Cordiant (Brady 2004). While the advertising industry has consolidated, there has been a simultaneous trend toward large corporations wanting to implement a global strategy.

Of particular interest are which party controls strategic planning for advertising and IMC in general. As far back as 1995, in a survey of advertising agencies, Duncan and Ramaprasad observed that there was increasingly more pressure to standardize advertising than in the past. While conglomerates are better equipped to implement standardized programs than in the past, the interesting question is the extent to which the agency's advice influences the conglomerate's strategy.

With advertisers operating in multiple countries with different media environments, it is important to study how agencies work with advertisers to overcome such challenges. With today's focus being on the larger context of IMC as opposed to simply advertising, research examining the extent to which agencies help global corporations choose or implement the optimal mix of IMC components is needed.

With new media such as the Internet and mobile communications being at an early stage of development, it is also useful to conduct research on whether agencies help clients understand the benefits and drawbacks of such media in various countries. More knowledge of the effectiveness of new media in various markets and countries at various levels of economic development is also a general research need.

RQ7: How do clients and agencies interact in planning the client's IMC communications strategy? Are agencies instrumental in helping clients overcome differences in research and media environments? Are agencies instrumental in communicating the benefits and drawbacks of new media to clients?

RQ8: What factors influence the effectiveness of new media in various markets? Are various new media global in nature, or are their effectiveness influenced by economic development level and cultural and other factors?

SOME GENERAL COMMENTS ON RESEARCH IN INTERNATIONAL ADVERTISING

International advertising research has reached the point where greater attention to some methodological issues is needed. One pressing need is for more emphasis to be placed on data equivalence. Another is for cross-national studies that examine the impact of culture to actually measure how the respondents stand on the cultural dimensions investigated. In addition to these methodological concerns, some general issues identified by prior reviews remain of concern. These concerns are detailed below.

The Need for More Focus on Equivalence of Data

Even today, some published cross-national studies make little or no effort to ensure that respondents to a survey or experimental participants respond to equivalent instruments. Increasingly, many studies are taking measures to ensure instrument equivalence before data are collected, such as using a translation/backtranslation process (e.g., Craig and Douglas 2000; Miracle 1988). More is known about translation processes than used to be the case, however, and even backtranslations may not be perfect (see Taylor 2003). A recent book by Harkness et al. (2003) points to the importance of choosing an appropriate translation team and following

additional assessment procedures prior to collecting data.

Perhaps even more pressing is the need for advertising studies to use available measures to assess equivalence after data have been collected. Building on the work of Andrews, Durvasula, and Netemeyer (1994) and others, Steenkamp and Baumgartner (1998) identified techniques based on confirmatory factor analysis for assessing configural, scalar, and metric equivalence of data collected in two countries. In this issue, Ewing, Salzberger, and Sinkovics recommend an alternative means of assessing equivalence based on the application of classical theory. While it is possible to debate which of these techniques is optimal, what is clear is that international advertising research needs to apply one of these post hoc techniques to assess data equivalence. Doing so allows researchers to identify and drop items that are not equivalent.

Need to Measure Cultural Dimensions

Many research efforts explore the impact of a cultural difference on advertising in two or more countries. For the most part, these studies have relied on prior literature or have contended, for example, that one country is more collectivistic than another. Seldom have researchers actually measured where the actual respondents to their study fall on the cultural dimension in question. In experimental research in particular, there is no good reason for this, since scales to measure the cultural dimensions of interest (e.g., individualism versus collectivism) are typically available. Measuring these dimensions has the advantage of providing a "manipulation check" on the cultural dimension. It also allows researchers to assess how different the respondents were on the cultural dimension in question. Collecting data on cultural dimensions is especially important in an era when many believe that at least some level of cultural convergence is taking place. Samples including students or businesspeople in particular may not always be adequately representative in terms of cultural dimensions.

More Interaction—Cross-National, Across Disciplines, and Among Academics and Practitioners

To move the international advertising field forward, it is clear that there is a pressing need for more collaboration among scholars and between academics and practitioners. To fully address some of the research questions posed above, large data sets collected across many countries are needed. Increased collaboration from scholars from different countries, and perhaps larger teams of researchers working on large-scale studies may help to collect larger data sets. Cross-national collaboration also remains valuable in terms of its potential for a deeper understanding of cultural issues and the ability to integrate different theoretical perspectives. In terms of theoretical perspectives, it is clear that the international advertising litera-

ture could benefit from more collaboration between scholars from communications/business backgrounds and those from disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, psychology, linguistics, and other fields. Finally, in the dynamic environment that today's advertisers face, it is vitally important that academics keep abreast of topics of interest to practitioners. Such collaboration is important in uncovering research findings that are useful to managers.

More Testing of Existing Theories in Cross-Cultural Contexts and the Creation of New Theoretical Perspectives

While some studies have tested well-established theories in the marketing and advertising literature (e.g., the theory of reasoned action; the Elaboration Likelihood Model), there is a need for more studies examining the cross-cultural generalizability of such theories. If greater collaboration between scholars from different countries takes place, it is likely that either modification of existing theories or new theoretical perspectives will arise. As international advertising has considerable room for growth in terms of theory development, testing of existing theories and the creation of new theories are needed.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF PAPERS IN THIS ISSUE

The seven papers in this issue, along with two others published in the December 2004 issue (Choi and Miracle; Rotfeld, Jevons, and Powell) were selected from a total of 52 papers submitted to the special issue. Each of these papers makes a unique contribution to the literature. The Choi and Miracle study uses an experimental methodology to examine the role of culture in determining the effectiveness of comparative advertising in the United States and South Korea. The authors show that individual-level self-construals in terms of a specific cultural dimension (in this case, collectivism), mediate the influence of country culture on advertising effectiveness. The study contributes both in terms of a better understanding of the factors that effect a specific executional variable, and also demonstrates the importance of examining individual-level variables in cross-cultural research.

Using a qualitative methodology, Rotfeld, Jevons, and Powell identify both important commonalities and differences in the process by which media managers in Australia and the United States establish and implement standards to be used in reviewing advertising. The paper is important both in providing an understanding of the factors media vehicle managers consider in accepting and rejecting advertising, and in providing a theoretical framework that allows for a better understanding of these factors. From a public policy standpoint, the paper gives us a better understanding of the role of media vehicles' clearance standards in advertising regulation.

The lead paper in this issue, by Ewing, Salzberger, and Sinkovics, proposes an alternative to confirmatory factor analysis for assessing cross-cultural data equivalence. The approach recommended by the authors is based on Rasch measurement theory, which is then used to assess the scalar equivalence of an existing scale. Using a cross-cultural data set, the authors demonstrate how the Rasch technique uncovers some limitations of the scale that would not have been identified if traditional methodologies were used. The paper also provides a comparison of the pros and cons of the use of the Rasch technique versus confirmatory factor analysis, and comes down on the side of Rasch. The paper offers an important perspective on data equivalence, and given the central importance of establishing equivalence in international research, it should be of widespread interest.

Using an experimental methodology, Polyorat and Alden examine the impact of self-construal and need for cognition on the effectiveness of comparative advertising in the United States and Thailand. The use of need for cognition as a moderator between congruity of an ad with the individual's self-construal and measures of effectiveness provides a rich theoretical basis for understanding what helps to make comparative ads effective. Notably, the findings of this study are highly consistent with those of Choi and Miracle in that the importance of self-construal at the individual level is clearly established. This underscores the need to measure where individual respondents stand on a cultural dimension of interest.

Hung, Gu, and Tse examine which media are effective in reaching various segments of the Chinese consumer market, using secondary data from very large syndicated databases. Given the growing importance of China as a consumer market, the study is timely. This paper provides a nuanced look at which media are appropriate for targeting very diverse segments in a rapidly growing market, characterized by an increasing number of upscale consumers, but also large numbers of middle-class and low-income consumers. The study's finding—that media with the highest targetability are similar to those of other developed nations—is important in that it provides support for the notion that similar media strategies can be used to target upscale segments across the world.

In a comprehensive review of the literature on international services advertising, Marla Stafford clearly demonstrates that service advertising has been an underresearched topic. Given the large size of the service sector in developed economies, as well as its growth in emerging markets, Stafford's call for more research in the area of message strategy, standardization versus adaptation, professional services advertising, and media issues should be heeded by researchers.

In examining whether country-of-origin cues in advertising lead to automatic stereotypes being activated in the thoughts of consumers, Liu and Johnson draw heavily on

theory from psychology. The authors conducted an experiment in which the country of origin was manipulated and found evidence that participants did automatically activate stereotypes, and that these stereotypes affected product evaluations. The study is theoretically rich and also has managerial implications.

Zou's citation analysis of the post-1990 international advertising literature is revealing on multiple levels. First, it shows that some elite journals publish very few international advertising papers, while other leading outlets, such as the *Journal of Advertising* publish quite a few. The finding that only a limited number of authors have published more than two papers in the journals surveyed reinforces the need for more programmatic research to be done. Finally, the relatively modest citation counts for even some of the most cited international advertising articles suggests that research has not yet attained the level of visibility of research in some other marketing and advertising topics.

The final paper in the issue, by Zhou, Zhou, and Xue, is a content analysis of the visual aspects of Chinese and U.S. advertisements. While content analyses should be held to a high standard in the current research environment, this paper clearly meets the test by introducing a new framework for examining the visual imagery in advertising and then relating differences in Chinese and U.S. advertising back to cultural dimensions. The paper finds some interesting differences in the visuals used in advertising in these two major markets and gives future researchers much to build on.

I thank Russell Lacznik for asking me to edit this special issue and for his encouragement through the entire process. I would also like to give heartfelt thanks to those people who devoted their time and expertise to reviewing papers for this issue. I appreciate the authors for their patience and persistence in the review process, and am grateful to all who submitted papers. My only regret is that more of the submitted papers could not be included.

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