



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Journal of Business Research



Identity, culture, dispositions and behavior: A cross-national examination of globalization and culture change

Mark Cleveland ^{a,*}, José I. Rojas-Méndez ^{b,1}, Michel Laroche ^{c,2}, Nicolas Papadopoulos ^{d,3}

^a DAN Management and Organizational Studies, University of Western Ontario, 1151 Richmond Street, Social Science Centre, Room 4315, London, Ontario N6A 5C2, Canada

^b Eric Sprott School of Business, Carleton University, Dunton Tower 925, 1125 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1S, Canada

^c FRSC, John Molson School of Business, Concordia University, 1455 Boulevard de Maisonneuve West, MB-013-237, Montréal, Québec H3G 1M8, Canada

^d Eric Sprott School of Business, Carleton University, Dunton Tower 904, 1125 Colonel by Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5B8, Canada

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 1 April 2015

Received in revised form 1 June 2015

Accepted 1 August 2015

Available online xxxx

Keywords:

Globalization

Global consumer culture

National identity

Consumption

Multigroup analysis

Consumer attitudes

ABSTRACT

Culture is the principal explanation of consumer behavior disparities across countries, and so research on the impact of globalization on culture is essential. Comparing Chileans and Canadians, we examine the roles played by strength of national identity (NID) and acculturation to global consumer culture (AGCC) on consumption. These multifaceted cultural constructs are linked to 54 behaviors related to eight product categories, and two dispositions, consumer ethnocentrism (CET) and materialism (MAT). Multigroup SEM analysis confirms a chiefly invariant measurement model. A positive AGCC–MAT linkage is confirmed for both countries, whereas the identity to ethnocentrism link is positive only for Chileans. Four distinct acculturation patterns are manifest according to the combined effects of NID/AGCC on behaviors. These vary considerably across product categories and often between countries. Culture's impact on consumption behavior is greatest for food products—a culture-bound category—and weakest for appliances.

© 2015 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

International market segmentation (IMS) has long relied on secondary sources, such as Hofstede's (1991) cultural facets, and statistical information from OECD/UN publications (Papadopoulos & Martín, 2011). The convergence of many nations along socio-demographic descriptors has hastened due to globalization. Numerous product categories have also become globalized, as companies exploit production economies of scale and pursue other marketing efficiencies—based largely on the assumption that the rising tide of globalization means consumer differences worldwide are fading. Against this backdrop of amalgamation, however, there is evidence of rising sociocultural diversity within and across many countries, due directly to immigration and transient mobility but also indirectly via intercultural contact opportunities through global media. Moreover, acute globalization tendencies motivate some individuals to preserve cultural distinctions. The literature testifies to

the profound effect of culture across a gamut of consumer responses. As the lens through which consumers filter incoming information, culture subconsciously affects perceptions. Eliciting social norms, culture shapes priorities and steers behavioral expectations (Oswald, 1999).

Marketplace globalization propels firms to target consumer segments straddling borders, specifically those persons for whom places, people, and things hold shared meanings (Westjohn, Singh, & Magnusson, 2012). Effectual IMS requires a clear understanding of what, where, and how products should be sold around the world. As corporations extend their brands internationally, their primary challenge is to efficiently institute a market orientation across cultures. The firm may choose between identifying within- or between-country segments that can be served with a similar strategy. The chosen strategy must align with consumers' attitudes and values ensuing from the mingling of individual and cultural factors.

Scholars recognize that little is known about how consumers' identities, dispositions, and subsequent behaviors are affected by the permutation of geospatially-defined and de-territorialized cultural flows (Craig & Douglas, 2006). Rather than representing an endpoint (e.g., homogenization), globalization embodies a complex process of intertwined cultural movements. Thus, globalization does not specify the aftermaths: the changes and other responses of (particular) groups and their individual members to this process (Berry, 2008). Although globalization receives extensive press coverage, there is a dearth of empirical research on its impact upon consumers. Most culture-

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +1 519 661 2111x81464; fax: +1 519 850 2386.

E-mail addresses: mclevela@uwo.ca (M. Cleveland), jose_rojas@carleton.ca (J.I. Rojas-Méndez), laroche@jmsb.concordia.ca (M. Laroche), nicolas_papadopoulos@carleton.ca (N. Papadopoulos).

¹ Tel.: +1 613 520 2600x8014.

² Tel.: +1 514 848 2424x2942.

³ Tel.: +1 613 520 2600x2382.

change literature examines the experiences of minority groups. Globalization encourages the formation of transnational social spaces (Hannerz, 1990). Global consumer culture has become such an inescapable aspect of people's day-to-day life that it represents a "starting point for acculturation" (Berry, 2008; p. 332). We submit that majority populations are experiencing acculturation, perpetuated by active, first-hand (face-to-face), and passive, second-hand (e.g., media) forms of intercultural contact. The convergence of the forces of localization and globalization "...results in unique outcomes in different geographic areas and potentially leads to multiple identities" (Merz, He, & Alden, 2008, p. 169). Social psychologists assert that the need to belong is an entrenched, pervasive human motivation, and the grounds for understanding interpersonal behavior (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Social identity refers to the absorption of group characteristics into people's self-concept (Markus & Kitayama, 1991), and thus the degree to which the perspectives/norms of a given reference group impacts individuals' attitudes, behaviors, and lifestyles.

Comparative investigations of cultural adaptation are rare. The dynamic, multilayered quality of culture and its alteration by globalization requires IMS researchers to consider not only the global–local interaction, but to dissect how cultural combinations apply to behavioral contexts that are assumed to be converging worldwide versus those that support divergence (i.e., preservation/intensification of distinctions) or hybridization/transmutation. This research compares consumers living in North (Canada) and South (Chile) America, scrutinizing how national and global cultural influences—namely, strength of national identity (NID) and acculturation to global consumer culture (AGCC—apply to a range of consumption behaviors (Fig. 1), in relation to eight product groups, from culture-bound categories (e.g., foods) to products that tend to be standardized internationally (e.g., luxuries). We also consider AGCC/NID relationships to materialism and consumer ethnocentrism, two dispositions that are theoretically linked to the globalization of consumer markets. Potential transnational segments are identified based on levels of global acculturation.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. National identity

Systematically biasing the thoughts, feelings and actions of group members, social identity exerts a profound effect. Culture is a precursor to human thought and behavior, because it is instilled over time by socialization agents (Peñaloza & Gilly, 1999) and because individuals develop attitudes and behaviors that reinforce their identity (Westjohn et al., 2012). Across disciplines, social identity and related constructs are variously defined depending on the research focus, but generally refer to a group that shares certain characteristics (e.g., religion) within a broader context (Phinney & Ong, 2007). Identification with a national society forms part of an individual's collective identity. To permit

comparisons across borders, this research focuses on *national identity*, which Nakata and Sivakumar (2001) define as patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting derived from the common conventions and values of the national society. Identity constructs may be similarly relevant but expressed differently across individuals and cultures. Collectivities are composed of members that vary in the degree to which they identify with the group, subscribe to group values/norms, and perform group customs/activities (Berry, 2008). Therefore, the strength of NID is operationalized as a subjective and multifaceted construct, consisting of a perception of common ancestry; a sense of shared socio-cultural experiences, interactions, values, and norms; plus feelings of belongingness, pride in, and commitment towards a particular national group.

Research depicts NID and its related constructs as contextual: its salience and corresponding influence on behavior depends partly on the circumstances at hand. Insofar as consumption involves the expression of social affiliation (e.g., holidays), the accompanying products are culturally-bound.

2.2. Acculturation

The identifying aspects relevant to a particular cultural entity are adaptive to changes in social, economic, and political circumstances. Ethnicity, for example, is described as dynamic, being a function of past affiliations modified by present conditions (Phinney & Ong, 2007). Until the modern era, for most people, culture, ethnicity, and NID were unimportant: there was only being. The difference between cultures is largely irrelevant, until these cultures interact (Oswald, 1999). NID becomes concrete when contact occurs, and oftentimes is defined in relation to the other; e.g., Canadians' sense of identity is often reflexively in terms of what they are *not*: Americans. Acculturation describes adjustments and resistance arising from intercultural contact. Conventionally, the term depicts the modification occurring on the part of a less-dominant cultural group when coming into contact with a host, or more dominant cultural group.

The unidirectional perspective assumes that original cultural traits are gradually shed and replaced by those from the alternative group. Bidirectional acculturation models envision numerous patterns of adaptation. Critically, these approaches allow for multiculturalism. For example, immigrants can hold two identities simultaneously: an ethnic identity emanating from the home/minority culture, and a national identity reflecting membership in the broader society. Berry (2008) articulates four patterns according to how original and alternative cultural identities/characteristics intersect: *separation*, or *segregation*, describes the case when original cultural aspects are maintained while alternative aspects are disregarded or resisted; *assimilation* implies the opposite, where alternative characteristics progressively supersede original characteristics; *integration* entails the preservation of original cultural qualities with the adoption of alternative qualities—it implies

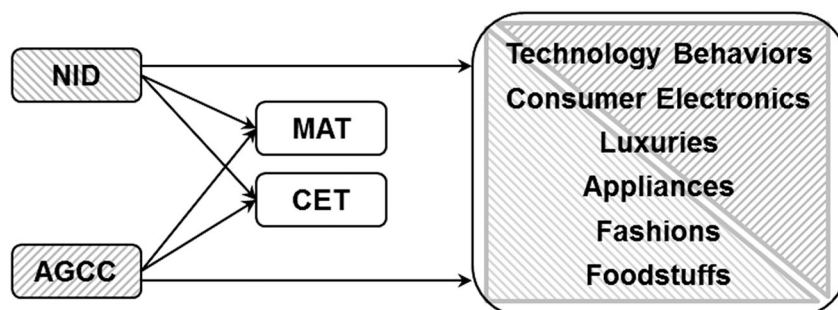


Fig. 1. Summary of relationships.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/10492715>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/10492715>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)