



Exploring the impact of shopper ethnicity through the path-to-purchase framework



Robert Paul Jones^{a,*}, Kerri M. Camp^b, Rodney C. Runyan^c

^a Department of Hospitality and Retail Management, College of Human Sciences, Texas Tech University, 1301 Akron Ave, HS HRM Room 601, Lubbock, TX 79415, USA

^b Department of Management and Marketing, Soules College of Business, The University of Texas at Tyler, 3900 University Blvd., Building, COB 312.05 Tyler, TX 75799, USA

^c College of Health Sciences, Sam Houston State University, 1900 Ave. I P.O. Box 2301, Huntsville, TX 77341, USA

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:
Shopper
Ethnicity
Purchase
Motivation
Subjective norms
Role

ABSTRACT

Ethnic cultural affiliation, well established in consumer literature as influential in decision making, is much less studied in shopper literature. This research examines key path-to-purchase framework (PtPF) elements; motivation, role, and subjective norms, and their impact among three major U.S. ethnic affiliations (African American, Caucasian, and Hispanic). Study one explores two PtPF phases, perceptual mapping and solution targeting, while a second study examines moderation through importance perception and social shopping situation. The study demonstrates significant differences in relationship between the populations. Those differences are also shown to be subject to significant variation under the influence of the moderating conditions.

1. Introduction

This research utilises the recently introduced path-to-purchase framework (PtPF) (Jones and Runyan, 2016) to examine three ethnic segments of the U.S. population, and the role of cultural orientation in influencing shopper purchase decisions (See Fig. 2). For clarity, a shopper is an individual engaged in the active acquisition of the product or service. More formally, a shopper may be defined as:

“Individuals participating in a particular part of the consumption process which requires active engagement in the pursuit of a targeted purchase solution for an identified occasion, which may or may not be for personal consumption” (Jones and Runyan, 2016, p. 785).

A shopper is engaged in a subset of consumer behaviours, which is path-to-purchase (P2P) for a specific occasion. P2P is initiated when the shopper identifies a specific purchase need which needs to be fulfilled, initiating “shopper mode” (Shankar et al., 2011). The P2P is an active process for the shopper and is driven by a specific occasion which binds the shopper to a completion target (Jones and Runyan, 2016). The engagement of the P2P results in purchase decision outcomes often different from the outcomes anticipated from consumer responses (Jones and Runyan, 2016). Consumers have long been defined as product/service end user (Engel et al., 1968), which is often not the case for shoppers. Shoppers often act as surrogates for the consumer (e.g.,

mother purchasing for other family members) during the procurement process (Shankar et al., 2011). Further, essential consumer experiences such as consumption, disposition, and reflection (Holbrook, 1987), are elements beyond the shopper experience which by definition ends at the point of purchase.

The extant consumer literature is replete with ethnicity research (Chin, 2001; Green, 1995; Saegert et al., 1985; Seock, 2009). However, recent shopper research (Shankar et al., 2011; Jones and Runyan, 2016) indicates that consumer findings may not be generalisable to shoppers. This raises a crucial gap in the literature that has serious ramifications for retailers and suppliers. It is the shopper, not the consumer, which makes the ultimate purchase decision (Newman et al., 2014). The volume of consumer research exploring ethnicity is an indication of its importance and therefore begs that research on shoppers be similarly explored. This is particularly pressing given the caveat that consumer findings do not necessarily generalise to the shopper. Therefore, this research aims to enhance the limited shopper specific literature exploring ethnicity and shopper outcomes. Particularly, this research is a comparative analysis of three U.S. ethnic groups: African American, Caucasian, and Hispanic (United States Census Bureau, 2010).

Literature specific to the shopper has investigated: shopper types (Wiese et al., 2015), unplanned purchases (Kollat and Willett, 1967), promotional flyers (Ziliani and Ieva, 2015), in-store displays (Huddleston et al., 2015), in-store experience (Xu-Priour and Cliquet, 2013), store format choice (Prasad and Aryasri, 2011; Jeong et al.,

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: robert.p.jones@ttu.edu (R.P. Jones), kcamp@uttyler.edu (K.M. Camp), rcr039@shsu.edu (R.C. Runyan).

2012), segmentation (Brun et al., 2013), risk assessments (Jones et al., 2015), and ethnocentricity and brand perceptions (Parsons et al., 2010). Despite this history, there is comparatively scant shopper research related to shopper behaviour, and particularly the influence of ethnic orientations (Shankar et al., 2011). Only recently has purchase need occasion, which initiates “shopper mode”, been recognised as the initiating point for the P2P (Jones and Runyan, 2016). The specificity of need occasion in P2P, reshapes shopping goals, alters shopper perceptions, often resulting in purchase outcomes different from anticipated consumer solutions (Bell et al., 2011). This may in part be due to the shopper acting to fulfil the needs of others (Shankar et al., 2011), as opposed to their personal use. Within the PtPF, role has been identified as an essential shopper element. The role shoppers play on the P2P, is shaped by their cultural influences (Jones and Runyan, 2016). However, examination of elements influential to the P2P outcomes is limited, particularly cultural and ethnic research examining their influence on the stages through which shoppers progress.

Some research defines culture as world views which separates one group from another, (Hofstede and Hofstede, 1991), while other research indicates in certain contexts different cultures can experience commonality (Jones et al., 2014). Cultural research exploring its influence on consumer role within service encounters (Solomon et al., 1985), has posited that role is a learned ritualised behaviour. Therefore, a shopper's unique cultural experiences may significantly affect the manner in which they identify purchase solutions. Exploring and comparing shopper cultural orientation influence on purchase intentions would greatly expand understanding and add value to the shopper literature.

Consumer ethnicity research has demonstrated significant effects on product, brand, store location/channel, and retailer selection (Stayman and Deshpande, 1989), and purchase decisions (Burton, 2000; D'Rozario and Yang, 2015; Donthu and Cherian, 1995). Consumer acculturation impacts decision making (D'Rozario and Yang, 2015; Eastlick and Lotz, 2000; Reardon et al., 1997), and influences the value-attitude-behaviour hierarchy (Shim and Eastlick, 1998). A conceptual framework for how cultural orientation may impact purchase intentions particularly relevant to this study can be found in Fig. 1.

2. Theoretical research framework and hypothesis development

This research explores an important gap in the shopper literature associated with ethnic and cultural influences by exploring three ethnic shopper segments within the US, using the recently introduced PtPF (Jones and Runyan, 2016) as the foundation (See Fig. 2 for the framework). Through the PtPF we examine how cultural orientation influences the antecedents to purchase intention of the shopper. While well explored in the consumer literature, little research has explored the influence of cultural orientation and ethnicity in the shopper literature. As the shopper is the ultimate purchaser it is essential that we better understand the role of ethnicity and cultural orientation in the decision process of the shopper. This is particularly relevant as the shopper engages in a role during the decision making process and the act of shopping itself (Jones and Runyan, 2016). These roles are subject to multiple cultural constructions which can influence the purchase outcome (Jafari and Visconti, 2015). The shopper is activated through “shopper mode”, a recognition of a need requiring a purchase solution for a specific occasion (Shankar et al., 2011). This stage in the PtPF, known as occasion driven need recognition (ODNR), is where the shopper begins to identify suitable purchase solutions, framed by the occasion for which it is needed. For this study, the ODNR stage of the framework is represented by the scenarios which define the situational and occasion elements associated with the purchase need. In order to have the respondent engage shopper mode, detailed scenarios provide the necessary information to influence how the shopper will frame their understanding of the occasion. We begin to test the framework using the next stage which is perceptual mapping of the occasion (PMoO)

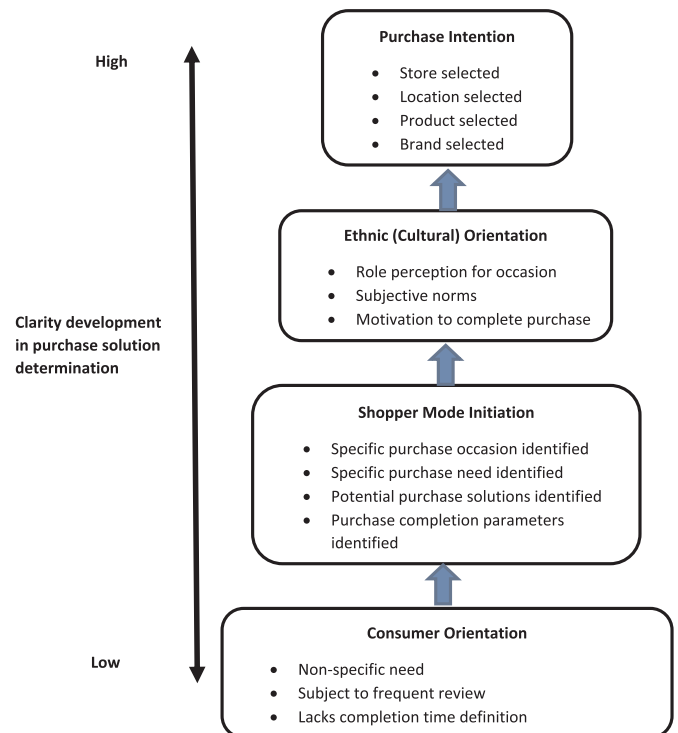


Fig. 1. Conceptual model of shopper purchase solution determination inclusive of ethnic cultural orientation.

(Jones and Runyan, 2016). The research model which can be seen in Fig. 2 demonstrates that we test all elements of this stage. During this stage of the PtPF, the shopper develops a clear understanding of the attributes salient to the product/service specific to the occasion for which it is required. The shopper also assesses during PMoO, their role relative to the occasion requiring the purchase, their motivation to complete the purchase and the subjective norms which may influence their purchase selection (Jones and Runyan, 2016). We will explore these elements of PMoO in more detail. Therefore, this stage is essential in determining how to approach the purchase decision and is where the most influence associated with ethnicity and/or cultural orientation will occur. Purchase solution targeting is the next stage of the framework and is represented in the model by purchase intention. In this stage we identify the specific elements (product, brand, retailer, channel/location) the shopper believes to be the best option related to their purchase completion. The remaining stages of the framework, purchase solution resolution and shopper experience appraisal, require a specific shopping experience to be engaged. As this research is scenario based they are beyond the scope of this research.

2.1. Role

In the PtPF shoppers engage a role (e.g., mother, sister, friend, wife, co-worker, etc.) associated with the need occasion, reflecting their cultural perspective relative to the purchase required. These perspectives may influence: role attitude, occasion participants, and social interactions (Van Lange et al., 2007). Shopper role attitude for the purchase need occasion is shaped by prior positive or negative social responses to purchases the shopper has made (Batra and Kahle, 2001). Positive shopper role attitude requires high levels of occasion specificity. This is necessary to mitigate negative social consequences that could result from the shopper making purchase decisions inappropriate for the occasion (Alexander, 2004).

According to consumer culture theory (Arnould and Thompson, 2005), consumers express specific social roles in purchase decisions and those purchases may support or expand self-satisfaction and self-

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/11032863>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/11032863>

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