

Issues and New Directions in Global Consumer Psychology

Durairaj Maheswaran

*Department of Marketing and International Business
New York University*

Sharon Shavitt

*Department of Advertising
University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign*

Although there is growing interest in cultural differences in consumer behavior, focused and systematic consumer research on the topic is still in its infancy. The conceptual and methodological issues that are central to conducting cross-cultural research, including selecting or blending emic and etic research approaches, achieving measurement equivalence, expanding the cultural constructs and geographical regions under investigation, and understanding mediating processes, are addressed. In the process, the progress that has been made in addressing these issues in consumer psychology is reviewed and a number of priorities for future research in this important domain are suggested.

It is well known that culture shapes consumer behavior. However, despite the recognition of its pivotal role, relatively little research in the domain of consumer behavior and marketing has examined the interaction of culture and consumer behavior. Published research in marketing that has incorporated data collected outside the United States has been limited (Winer, 1998). There are several reasons for the lack of inquiry into cultural variables in the consumer behavior context. The reasons range from methodological complexities to an ethnocentric belief that psychological principles are universal. The primary objective of this special issue is to examine some of these issues and offer some guidelines to facilitate scholarly inquiry in the cultural domain.

The increasing trend toward the globalization of business activities provides a compelling reason for understanding the cultural context of consumer behavior. As U.S. corporations continue to expand into China, Eastern Europe, and Russia, they are faced with the challenge of effectively communicating with consumers in these countries. However, most communication strategies are based on theoretical frameworks developed in the United States,

and it is not clear the extent to which consumers in other countries are similar to U.S. consumers. Also, the effectiveness of these strategies in other cultural contexts has not been investigated.

From a theoretical perspective, understanding culture is also important for developing conceptual frameworks that are generalizable across cultures. Unfortunately, many current theoretical frameworks are yet to be validated in other cultures. The lack of frameworks that are robust across cultures has severely limited the development of theory-based empirical work. The ongoing debate about the emic versus etic orientation of examining cultural differences has also stymied the comparison of findings across cultures. The emic proponents suggest that cultural research should be indigenous and must be conducted on the basis of culture-specific frameworks. In contrast, the etic researchers advocate the advantages of examining differences by using previously established universal frameworks as benchmarks. Thus, ambiguity about the right orientation has discouraged work in this domain. Finally, there is a lack of a network of indigenous scholars from other cultures who could systematically investigate and convincingly demonstrate culturally unique findings. In this model, U.S. scholars tend to recruit foreign scholars mainly for data collection purposes. Such vertical collaboration does not facilitate an exchange of new ideas that lead to additional insights or the wider dissemination of culture-specific findings in scholarly settings.

Requests for reprints should be sent to either Sharon Shavitt, Department of Advertising, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign, Urbana, IL 61801. E-mail: shavitt@uiuc.edu or Durairaj Maheswaran, Department of Marketing and International Business, New York University, 7–75 KMC, New York, NY 10012–1126. E-mail: dmaheswa@stern.nyu.edu

ISSUES IN CONDUCTING CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH

Although the field of cross-cultural consumer behavior is relatively new, it has great potential for developing interesting new insights in many domains of consumer behavior. Cultural research can help to validate our theoretical paradigms, enrich our current theorizing, and may even lead to new theories (Bagozzi, 1994). In the next several sections, we address the issues that are central to conducting cultural research and discuss several directions to advance our understanding of consumer behavior in a global context.

Research Orientation: Emic Versus Etic

A current debate in cultural psychology is about the right approach for conducting research across cultures. As noted earlier, the emic approach favors within-culture investigation, arguing that theorizing is culture-specific and should, therefore, be inductive. This orientation requires that a structure be identified during the analysis of the culture. In contrast, the etic approach advocates generalization and focuses on issues that are universal and common to all cultures. In this orientation, a theoretical structure is predetermined, and its validity is examined in multiple cultural contexts (Berry, 1989; Pike, 1954).

Berry (1989) suggested the following five-step process that may provide a basis for an integrated approach to studying cultural differences. The first step is to examine a research problem in one's own culture (Emic A) and develop a conceptual framework and a set of relevant instruments. The second step is to transport this conceptualization and measurement to examine the same issue in a similar manner in another culture (imposed etic). The third step is to enrich the imposed etic framework with unique aspects of the second culture (Emic B). The fourth step is to examine the two sets of findings for comparability. Finally, if these findings are not comparable, the two conceptualizations will be considered independent. However, if they are comparable, then the common set, termed as derived etic, will form the basis of a unified etic framework. This framework will then be subsequently tested by a similar process in other cultures. Thus, by repeating this sequence, a universal framework may be developed.

Studies in consumer behavior have examined both etic issues, such as the robustness of present theoretical models across cultures (Aaker & Maheswaran, 1997; Aaker & Williams, 1998), and emic issues, such as the historical factors driving animosity toward a nation (Klein, Ettenson, & Morris, 1998) and the linguistic characteristics affecting consumer cognition (Pan & Schmitt, 1996; Schmitt, Pan, & Tavassoli, 1994). Although there appears to be a definite bias toward the etic approach, researchers are aware of the need to integrate the emic aspects of the research context. Several studies report pretesting of questionnaires or stimuli in other

cultures prior to the administration of materials in those cultures (e.g., Han & Shavitt, 1994). Such steps are necessary to enhance the validity of cross-cultural findings.

Both emic and etic approaches are valid and contribute to our understanding of consumer behavior in the global context. Emic and etic perspectives should not be viewed as rigid extremes, but as two points of view (Pike, 1954). We suggest that these points of view can converge and enrich cultural research. The critical issue is the relevance to the problem being studied. For example, if a manager wants to know whether a domestic advertising approach could be standardized in different countries, then an etic orientation would be appropriate. The objective in this scenario would be to examine the efficacy of a predetermined framework in multiple settings. In contrast, if a manager is interested in developing an optimal advertising execution for a specific country, then an emic orientation would be appropriate. The objective in this situation would be to determine the preference of consumers for various execution strategies and to select the strategy that is culturally the most appropriate.

Measurement: Achieving Equivalence

One of the often-cited problems in the interpretation of cross-cultural differences is the lack of comparability of testing methods (Bond & Smith, 1996). Indeed, achieving such comparability can seem like a daunting task, considering that over 50 types of equivalence have been discussed in the literature (for an excellent review, see Johnson, 1998). Hui and Triandis (1985) suggested that cross-cultural comparability can be achieved by establishing compatibility across cultures on four key categories of equivalence. *Conceptual or functional equivalence* refers to similar antecedent-consequent relationships across cultures. The concept being tested should be meaningful in the cultures being examined and understood the same way by the respondents. For example, the measurement of "corporate image" may not have relevance in a country such as Russia where, until recently, companies did not advertise their products. *Construct operationalization equivalence* refers to cultural compatibility in measurement procedures. For example, conducting focus groups in the United States may be effective for developing or refining hypotheses (but see Schlosser & Shavitt, 1999), but not at all appropriate in Japan. This is because the Japanese are less likely to disagree with or contradict each other in a public, formal setting in the presence of strangers. *Item equivalence* ensures that the instruments used in the research, such as scales, are similar. For example, attempting to measure ethnocentrism in Holland by using an item that refers to the desire to purchase locally made automobiles may not be meaningful. Finally, *scalar equivalence* is a function of similar metric measurements. Equivalence in metric measurement is important because consumers in different countries have been shown to respond differently to scales. For example, respondents in the United

States are more likely to use the extreme ends of the scale, whereas Chinese responses tend to be clustered around the midpoint (Douglas & Craig, 1995). To ensure that the findings across cultures can be meaningfully compared and integrated into a universal framework, it is desirable to achieve all four types of equivalence.

In the marketing context, several strategies can be employed by researchers to improve the comparability on these dimensions. Conceptual equivalence can be enhanced by explicitly testing the research concepts in different cultures, using open-ended questionnaires or depth interviews with respondents. Such exploratory research would provide insights into the variations in conceptualization across cultures that may be incorporated into the research design. Construct operationalization equivalence can be enhanced by using culturally compatible procedures. Mail intercepts may not be appreciated in some cultures where respondents are less comfortable talking to strangers. Thought verbalizations may not be appropriate in some Middle Eastern and African countries where consumers are either less verbal or less used to elaborate listing of their thoughts. Item equivalence can be increased by using an inductive method of developing scales. Free associations to concepts and depth interviews may highlight relevant dimensions. Also, the translation of the items needs to be as accurate as possible to ensure item equivalence. Brislin (1980) proposed several methods, such as back translation and de-centering, to ensure translation accuracy. Finally, extensive pretesting also needs to be done on the set of items being featured. Metric or scalar equivalence can be achieved by obtaining feedback on scale response patterns from multinational or indigenous research agencies that conduct consumer surveys on a regular basis.

Several statistical techniques can be used to address these equivalence issues as well. Hui and Triandis (1985) developed a normative model that incorporates the use of the following equivalence strategies. Construct equivalence may be addressed by examining the comparability of the internal structure of the construct in different cultures. The most often used methods are factor analysis, multidimensional scaling, maximum likelihood estimation, and comparison of covariance structures. Item equivalence can be enhanced by using the item–response–theory method that uses item parameters based on internal estimation rather than external criteria (see Lord, 1980). Response–pattern method, based on examining the similarity of order rankings of items across cultures, can also be used to test item equivalence. Scalar equivalence can be examined by comparing the regression parameters of the constructs across cultures (see Poortinga, 1975). A common metric may be developed with the transcultural method, which uses factor analysis on the responses from representatives of the different cultures (see Cattell, 1957).

The methodological complexities of doing research across cultures may appear daunting, but researchers should, nonetheless, be cognizant of the issues involved. Attempts should be made to ensure equivalence at least in some levels. The

current research prototype is an etic experiment that uses instruments developed in the United States to collect data in another country. The questionnaires are translated to address the language issues. Some studies use statistical techniques to establish construct and scalar equivalence. Although such an approach is helpful, using some of the above techniques wherever possible may considerably increase the validity of the findings.

Constructs: Expanding the Set of Cultural Dimensions

The constructs of *individualism* and *collectivism* represent the most broadly used dimensions of cultural variability for cross-cultural comparison (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988). In individualistic cultures, people tend to prefer independent relationships to others and to subordinate the goals of their in-groups to their own personal goals. In collectivistic cultures, in contrast, individuals tend to prefer interdependent relationships to others and to subordinate their personal goals to those of their in-groups (Hofstede, 1980). A very large body of research in psychology has demonstrated the many implications of individualism–collectivism, and related distinctions, for social perception and social behavior (see Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989, 1995).

In consumer-relevant domains as well, comparisons between individualistic and collectivistic societies have pointed to sharp distinctions in the content of advertising appeals (e.g., Alden, Hoyer, & Lee, 1993; Han & Shavitt, 1994; Hong, Muderrisoglu, & Zinkhan, 1987; Kim & Markus, 1999), the processing and persuasiveness of advertising appeals (e.g., Aaker & Maheswaran, 1997; Aaker & Williams, 1998; Han & Shavitt, 1994; Zhang & Gelb, 1996), and the determinants of consumers' purchase intentions (Lee & Green, 1991). These studies make it clear that the distinction between individualistic and collectivistic societies is crucial to the cross-cultural understanding of consumer behavior. Indeed, whereas the 1980s were labeled the decade of individualism–collectivism in cross-cultural psychology (Kagitçibasi, 1994), this also represents the dominant construct in cross-cultural consumer research in the 1990s.

The articles in this special issue reflect this dominant approach. Each of them focuses, implicitly or explicitly, on the contrast between one or more Eastern–collectivist–interdependent societies and one or more Western–individualist–independent societies. These studies offer further evidence that this existing cultural classification has fundamental implications for consumption-related outcomes. Still, it seems fair to ask: What other cultural categories deserve attention as independent variables in our research?

Within the framework of individualism–collectivism, Triandis and Gelfand (1998; see also Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gelfand, 1995) recently introduced a further distinction between societies that are *horizontal* (valuing

equality) and those that are *vertical* (emphasizing hierarchy). These authors suggested that in vertical, individualist societies (VI; e.g., United States, Great Britain, France), people tend to be concerned with improving their individual status and with distinguishing themselves from others via competition. In contrast, in horizontal, individualist societies (HI; e.g., Sweden, Norway, Australia), where people prefer to view themselves as equal to others in status, the focus is on expressing one's uniqueness and self-reliance. In vertical, collectivist societies (VC; e.g., Japan, Korea, India), people focus on enhancing the status of their in-groups in competition with out-groups, even when that entails sacrificing their own personal goals. In horizontal, collectivist societies (HC; exemplified historically by the Israeli kibbutz), the focus is on sociability and interdependence with others in an egalitarian context.

When such distinctions are taken into account, however, it becomes apparent that the societies chosen to represent individualistic–collectivistic cultural syndromes in consumer research have almost exclusively been vertically oriented. Specifically, the modal comparisons are between the United States (VI) and any of a number of Pacific Rim countries or India (VC). It may be argued, therefore, that much of what is known about individualism–collectivism in consumer behavior reflects vertical forms of these syndromes and may not generalize, for example, to comparisons between Sweden (HI) and Israel (HC) or other sets of horizontal cultures. As an example, conformity in product choice may be a tendency specific to VC cultures, in which deference to authority and to in-group wishes is stressed. Much lower levels of conformity may be observed in HC cultures, which emphasize sociability but not deference (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). Thus, for instance, it would be difficult to ascribe any observed differences in consumers' conformity between Japan (VC) and the United States (VI) solely to individualism–collectivism because differences between Israel (HC) and the United States (VI) may be much smaller. Similarly, the use and acceptance of advertisements appealing to personal status and self-enhancement may differ as much between the United States (VI) and Denmark (HI), both individualistic societies, as between the United States (VI) and Korea (VC). This is because self-enhancement appeals may be judged to be in poor taste in the self-reliant, yet egalitarian societies of Scandinavia (Nelson, 1997), whereas they may be rejected for being too self-focused in Korea (Han & Shavitt, 1994).

In addition to these distinctions, numerous other cultural dimensions deserve further attention in consumer research. For instance, in addition to individualism–collectivism, Hofstede (1980) derived three other dimensions of cultural variation in his large-scale study of work values: *power distance* (acceptance of power inequality in organizations), *uncertainty avoidance* (the degree of tolerance for ambiguity or uncertainty about the future), and *masculinity/femininity* (preference for achievement and assertiveness vs. modesty and nurturing relationships). Also, Schwartz's extensive re-

search (e.g., 1994) validated 10 motivationally distinct types of values, and although their structure appears consistent with the individualism–collectivism and horizontal–vertical typology as well as with some of Hofstede's dimensions, they appear to offer a more detailed and comprehensive basis for classification.

A focus on these relatively less explored dimensions as independent variables may allow for broadening the range of outcomes beyond those currently investigated. For instance, Wiles, Wiles, and Tjernlund's (1996) analysis of magazine advertising in the United States and Sweden focused on the depiction of individualistic values and, thus, revealed strong similarities across these individualistic cultures. However, Nelson (1997) observed that key differences in the gender roles depicted by male versus female models in this same data set were consistent with United States–Swedish differences in masculinity.

Uncertainty avoidance has been conceptualized as a syndrome related to anxiety, rule orientation, need for security, and deference to experts (Hofstede, 1980). As such, one might speculate that the level of uncertainty avoidance in a culture will predict the tendency for advertisements to use fear appeals or appeals to safety and security, and the tendency for ads to employ expert spokespersons. Differences along this cultural dimension may also predict the level of public support in the society for strict regulation of marketers and advertisers. Moreover, patterns in the diffusion of product innovations, particularly innovations whose purchase entails a degree of risk, may vary with the level of uncertainty avoidance in a society.

The main point here is that these relatively unexplored dimensions of cultural comparison have multiple implications for advertising and marketing processes. Attention to a broader set of cultural dimensions will not only expand the range of independent variables in our research, but will also prompt consideration of cultural consequences hitherto unexamined in cross-cultural studies.

New cultural dimensions that more directly address consumption patterns and priorities would also be a welcome addition to the available cultural paradigms. It is worth noting that indexes of consumer choice have been used successfully as measures of cultural syndromes or cultural orientation by cross-cultural psychologists (e.g., Triandis, Chen, & Chan, 1998; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998, Study 2). In such measures, respondents are asked to report which factors are most likely to influence their selections in a number of arenas, including the purchase of new clothing, vacations, art objects, and so on. Recent research suggests a greater validity to such "scenario measures" relative to more standard value-rating or ranking measures of cultural orientation (Peng, Nisbett, & Wong, 1997). From a consumer psychologist's perspective, it is noteworthy that consumer choices, which normally represent the dependent variable in our research, are validly used as an independent variable in the prediction of more basic social perceptions.

Understanding Mediating Processes

Cross-cultural psychologists frequently point out that direct measurement of cultural orientation is preferable to using nations as the sole independent variable representing culture (e.g., Schwartz, 1994). It goes without saying that nations differ in a variety of ways in addition to culture and that these uncontrolled differences complicate the attribution of observed national differences to cultural forces. Fortunately, recent years have witnessed a proliferation of cultural orientation measures, including allocentrism–idiocentrism (Triandis, Leung, Villareal, & Clack, 1985), independent and interdependent self-construals (Singelis, 1994), and horizontal and vertical individualism and collectivism (Triandis et al., 1998). Such measures enable researchers to gain greater insight into the psychocultural mediators responsible for the effects they observe.

In this special issue, one of the articles, by Wang, Bristol, Mowen, and Chakraborty, illustrates this point. Wang et al. report evidence from U.S. and Chinese consumers that individual differences in separateness–connectedness self-schema mediate the effects of culture as well as the effects of gender on advertising persuasiveness. These findings not only add to a growing literature on self-construal as a mediator of between-culture differences (e.g., Brockner & Chen, 1996; Singelis, 1994), the authors' dimensional analysis of the separateness–connectedness self-schema further demonstrates that distinct dimensions of separateness–connectedness mediate the effects of culture, as opposed to the effects of gender, on responses to advertising.

Research on the information-processing mediators of cultural differences can also provide important insights. To date, however, only a few studies have addressed such processes in the consumer domain. Some have investigated information-processing variables via cognitive response techniques (e.g., Aaker & Maheswaran, 1997; Aaker & Williams, 1998; Alden, Stayman, & Hoyer, 1994; Shavitt, Nelson, & Yuan, 1997). The article by Aaker and Sengupta in this issue demonstrates the value of such process-oriented cultural research. Their three experiments provide robust evidence that, whereas members of both U.S. and Chinese cultures resolve incongruities in the product information they receive, they tend to do so in different ways. As discussed in the following, these types of studies can provide useful information about the generality of existing cognitive-process models, as well as demonstrating important cultural distinctions in the weighting of informational inputs.

Investigation of the variables that moderate cross-cultural differences can also provide information about mediating processes. For instance, product differences represent an important category of moderating factors. Evidence indicates that cultural differences in the persuasiveness of individualistic versus collectivistic advertising appeals emerge more strongly for socially visible and shared products than for other products (Han & Shavitt, 1994; Zhang & Gelb, 1996).

Products that are less likely to be shared with or visible to others afford greater flexibility in the benefits that members of the culture may seek—for example, promoting individualistic benefits for unshared products will appeal to both collectivists and individualists. This suggests that cross-cultural differences in the persuasiveness of appeals represents a case-specific responsiveness to culturally valued benefits when those benefits are relevant to the way in which the product is typically consumed.

OBJECTIVES OF CROSS-CULTURAL CONSUMER RESEARCH

In Search of the Universal

The most common objective for cross-cultural research on consumer behavior appears to be generalization. Several studies have attempted to generalize existing theoretical frameworks to different cultural settings. They have reported commonalities and differences across cultures that have led to an enriching of our frameworks. For example, Aaker and Maheswaran (1997) examined the applicability of dual-process models of persuasion (Chaiken, 1980; Petty & Cacioppo, 1979) in a Chinese culture and concluded that the model can be used to understand consumer behavior in Hong Kong. However, they found that although motivation had similar effects on processing and persuasion, the relative weight given to different cues varied across cultures. In this special issue, Bagozzi, Wong, Abe, and Bergami report on the efficacy of the Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) in four countries: the United States, China, Italy, and Japan. By using a fast-food patronage decision context, they found that the effects of attitudes, subjective norms, and past behavior on intentions are greater for Americans than Italians, Chinese, or Japanese. Also in this special issue, an article by Lee finds support for a conceptual replication of Triandis's (1994) model of subjective culture and social-behavior relationships. The model was empirically tested in five countries: Singapore, Korea, Hong Kong, Australia, and the United States. The data at the cultural level and the individual difference level (i.e., idiocentrism and allocentrism) support the etic nature of the model. These studies represent an important step in examining the generality of many theoretical frameworks developed primarily in the United States.

Establishing Uniqueness

In addition to generalizations, theoretical frameworks also need to capture unique cultural insights from other cultures. Some studies have attempted to investigate culture-specific behavior patterns. Klein et al. (1998) examined whether the animosity associated with the Japanese occupation of China influences Chinese consumers' inclination to buy Japanese

products. They found that in China, the social animosity toward Japan extends to the avoidance of products from Japan. Research by Schmitt et al. (Pan & Schmitt, 1996; Schmitt et al., 1994) focuses on linguistic differences between Chinese and English languages and demonstrates that such differences systematically influence cognitive activity. These studies provide specific insights on how language development influences culture.

In this special issue, the article by Batra, Ramaswamy, Alden, Steenkamp, and Ramachander also addresses issues specific to a culture. They examine country-of-origin product attitudes among Indian consumers and conclude that “foreignness” is favorably viewed by Indian consumers. Moreover, this attitude is more pronounced among consumers who admire the lifestyles of economically developed countries.

These sorts of studies offer unique insights into cultural variations and add considerably to our understanding of the distinctiveness of cultures. Culture-specific insights can extend and perhaps change our understanding of human behavior. Many indigenous concepts, such as *guanxi* (connections) in China, have already been identified (e.g., Xin & Pearce, 1996) and may make a major contribution to consumer behavior. Several indigenous scholars abroad have been studying their cultures and have developed frameworks that may add to our understanding of those cultures (e.g., Gergen, Gulerce, Lock, & Misra, 1996). Collaborations with them on the conceptualizations underlying cultural research may prove productive.

Extending the Geographical Coverage

Research is also needed to examine consumer behavior issues in a much larger geographical context than is typically done. As noted earlier, most cultural research conducted outside the United States and Western Europe has been primarily in the Far East. Perhaps this geographical focus evolved because of the accessibility of these cultures via graduate students. Future research should move beyond such a narrow geographical focus to other culturally rich and diverse countries in Eastern Europe, the Near East, Africa, and Latin America (see, e.g., Belk, 1988). It is surprising that very little research has examined Latin American consumers despite the growing importance of Hispanic consumers in the United States (Peñaloza, 1994).

Another neglected area concerns the unique cultural features of emerging markets. Evidence suggests that level of economic development influences the aspirations and goals of consumers (Sinha, 1994). However, we know very little about the influence of economic development on consumer behavior. Also, culture may influence the development of economic structure. Indeed, economic reforms often fail in emerging economies because they are not compatible with the local cultural norms. For example, the World Bank recently acknowledged that the strict budgetary reforms it pro-

posed for Indonesia were not suitable for that country because of the significant differences in business culture between the West and Indonesia. In addition, researchers addressing emerging market issues have often targeted urban consumers, and relatively little attention has been paid to rural consumers in those countries (Maheswaran, 1984). Rural consumers probably represent the more enduring cultural traditions of these emerging economies and may provide hitherto unexplored cultural perspectives on economic development.

Global Applications

Understanding the similarities and asymmetries in advertising across cultures may set the agenda for standardizing or customizing advertising appeals. It is likely that many types of advertising appeals, such as humor or fear, may be universal, but the executions may be culture specific. Various issues related to the efficacy of advertising executions also await investigation. For example, in the United States, comparative advertising is considered beneficial to consumers. It is thought to facilitate informed choice and wider disclosure of information. However, comparative advertising is prohibited by law in some countries, such as Thailand, or not widely practiced in other countries, such as Japan. The primary concern in these countries is the negative aspect of the comparison suggesting that one brand is not as good as a competing brand. However, recent research has shown that if the comparison is culturally compatible, by suggesting that two brands are equally good, then consumers in these countries may actually prefer comparative advertising (Maheswaran & Gurhan-Canli, 1998).

Similarly, Alden et al.'s (1993) research on humor has shown that culture influences the execution of humorous advertising. Alden et al. examined the content of humorous television advertising in four countries: Korea, Germany, Thailand, and the United States. They found that humorous advertising shares certain universal cognitive structures underlying the message. However, the specific content varies across cultures along major normative dimensions.

CONCLUSIONS

Although there is a growing awareness of the need to study cultural differences, both from a theoretical perspective as well as for practical applications, the field of consumer behavior is just beginning to make systematic progress in this direction. Progress has been made on a number of theoretical and methodological fronts. In this article, we outline the key research priorities that remain for future investigations.

The articles in this special issue focus attention on a number of these priorities—investigating cognitive processes that mediate the effects of culture on consumer responses, exploring the generality of existing theoretical frameworks in vari-

ous cultural settings, blending emic and etic perspectives, and establishing the distinctiveness of other cultures. It is hoped that the work presented in this issue will facilitate further scholarly inquiry in the cultural domain.

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The authors are listed alphabetically and contributed equally to this article.

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