

INTERNATIONAL CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

A Literature Review of Empirical Research (1968-2004)

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Abstract

Using content analysis, the authors provide a review of empirical international consumer behavior literature with the purpose of assessing the scientific progress of this field and establishing direction for further research. Seventeen primary sources (105 articles) were evaluated. Fifty percent of the articles occurred during the last decade, most frequently in the International Marketing Review (13 %). Since 1995, the U.S. has remained the comparative country of interest (32 %) with recent focus on China (16 %), Japan (10 %) and South Korea (9 %). Cross-national comparisons of attitude and behavior dominated the chosen topics, tripling during the last decade (73% of studies), followed by increased interest in decision-making studies (21 %). Popular constructs included: attitudes toward the ad, behavioral intent and brand loyalty with culture typically implicitly studied. Some studies supported the cross-cultural validity of theoretical models (e.g. Spreng and Chiou, 2002) and others revealed new perspectives on the original theory (e.g. Maholtra and McCourt, 2001). Enhanced methodological rigor is evidenced through the inclusion of hypotheses or theory tests (over 50 % of studies since 1995) reliability testing (59 % of studies since 1995 versus 12 % prior) and validity testing (from 8 % during the first 25 years to 25 % during the past decade). However, reliability and validity results were typically uneven at best. Data collection methods continued to favor hand delivery of a survey instrument. Larger aggregated samples were attained more recently (75% of studies after 1995 had more than 250 respondents), yet sampling was typically unbalanced, based on convenience and sources of error went unchecked. Analytical techniques were increasingly sophisticated, yet research issues constrained some analyses. Accordingly, recommendations pertaining to domain scope, methodology and theoretical development are presented.

REFERENCES

- Maholtra, Naresh K. and J. Daniel McCourt (2001), "A cross-cultural comparison of behavioral intention models: Theoretical consideration and an empirical investigation," International Marketing Review, 18 (3), 235-264.
- Spreng, Richard A. and Jyh-shen Chiou, (2002) "A cross-cultural assessment of the satisfaction formation process," European Journal of Marketing, 36 (7/8), 829-840.