

THE EFFECT OF CULTURAL ORIENTATION ON THE PURCHASING DECISIONS OF CONSUMERS: A CROSS CULTURAL COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Abstract

Background. Cultural values are important aspects of the self of consumers. As businesses have become more and more global, the cultural differences among consumers play an important role in the development of effective marketing and branding strategies. This is because the cross-cultural phenomenon occurs as a result of the diverse cultural components that exist among consumers and it is a significant factor that influences buying behaviour in consumer markets.

Research aims. The main objective of this study is to analyse the cultural orientation (cultural dimensions) of consumers in the Czech Republic and Ghana with reference to the different age groups and sex.

Methodology. The convenience sampling method was used to select respondents for the study. A total of 1253 respondents were selected from the Czech Republic and Ghana. There were 460 respondents from the Czech Republic and 793 respondents from Ghana. Data analysis was performed with inferential statistics.

Key findings. The study revealed that with regard to the first hypothesis there were no significant differences between three of the dependent variables and sex in the Czech Republic. The p-value for the analysis on power distance was 0.161, collectivism and individualism was 0.110, and long term orientation was 0.493. There were significant differences between sex and two of the dependent variables (masculinity and femininity and uncertainty avoidance). The p-value of the test of masculinity and femininity and sex was 0.000, while that of uncertainty avoidance and sex was 0.007. However, in Ghana, the results showed that there is no significant difference between sex and the cultural orientation of the respondents. The p-value recorded for all the five questions that access the cultural dimensions among consumers in Ghana were more than the significant level of 0.05. Concerning the second hypothesis, it was revealed that in the Czech Republic there was a statistical

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significance between the ages of the respondents and the cultural dimensions. The p-value of all the five cultural dimensions was less than the significant level of 0.05. In Ghana, there was no statistical significance between the ages of the respondents and the cultural dimensions of collectivism and individualism (p-value 0.230) and masculinity and femininity (p-value 0.728). However, there was statistical significance between the age of the respondents and 3 of the cultural dimensions, namely power distance (p-value 0.011), uncertainty avoidance (p-value 0.000), and long term orientation (p-value 0.000).

Conclusions. The study concludes that the cultural dimensions should be used as pre-predictors to determine how consumers differ or converge in their behaviour in different countries. This is how culture can serve the purpose in defining consumer behaviour and enable managers develop strategies for specific markets.

Keywords: cultural orientation, consumers, purchasing decisions, cultural dimensions.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Cultural values are important aspects of the self of consumers. As businesses have become more and more global, the cultural differences among consumers play an important role in the development of effective marketing and branding strategies. According to De Mooij (2004), in order for marketing practitioners to understand the behaviour of consumers in different countries, it is essential that they make a comparison of the national cultures to determine how they are different from, or similar to, each other before they implement their marketing strategies. This is because a cross-cultural phenomenon occurs as a result of the diverse cultural components that exist among consumers and it is a significant factor that influences buying behaviour in consumer markets. The cultural differences lead to the differences or similarities in the responses of consumers and these differences and similarities are reflected in terms of their age, sex, and income level (Herrmann & Heitmann, 2006). In spite of how a firm sells products or offers its services in another country; the branding strategy will be influenced by the cultural setting of the country and/or region of interest. Accordingly, there are suggestions among practitioners that managers of firms should adequately understand the differences in culture before deciding on the kind of products or services to put out in the market and the marketing activities and branding strategies that are developed to support such products and services (Herrmann & Heitmann, 2006).

Recently, there has been a number of studies into the comparison of cultures and cultural differences in different sectors and industries (Kim, Forsythe & Gu, 2002; Sokling, 2004). Some of these studies made comparisons between the differences in culture and its effect on the values, preferences, wants, needs, and buying behaviour of consumers. Kim, Forsythe and Gu (2002) asserted that the cultural values, needs, and behaviour of consumers in different cultural environments tend to influence their decision to choose brands, which eventually determine their level of brand loyalty. The research by Kim, Forsythe and Gu (2002) did not investigate how a company should implement the branding strategy of a specific brand according to the cultural values and characteristics of consumers. Also, their study included two countries from the Asian region where the cultural contexts are similar to some extent. This research compares two countries that are different to a large extent in their geographical location, consumer characteristics, and culture. Furthermore, although various researchers have developed models that define and explain culture and marketing strategy, not many of these models focus on branding strategy implementation in specific industries in different cultural environments. Hence, this research explores the cultural influences on brand management and how firms can develop and implement their branding strategies in a multicultural environment, with emphasis on the fast food industry.

Statement of the problem

The significant role of culture in international marketing paves the way for managerial skills and competencies that transcend across countries. As firms explore more opportunities in different countries, more consumers from different states are being integrated into the world markets; hence, it requires an understanding of culture as a multidimensional phenomenon that goes beyond just nationality (Srnlka, 2004). In today's business world, the differences that exist between countries tend to influence the marketing practices of multinational enterprises. Also, the influence of culture on consumers makes them perceive external stimulus from a different perspective. Hence, it has become necessary for enterprises to consider the impact of culture in the development of branding and marketing strategies to influence the consumption and purchasing habits of the consumers.

In the past, some international marketing practitioners envisaged the convergence of different cultures into a “one world culture” that would aid in the global standardisation of marketing activities (Levitt, 1983). However, this prediction has been an illusion due to the existence of many hard factors (such as age, sex, and income level) and cultural soft factors (values, perceptions) that continue to be a hindrance to international marketing and are continuously dealt with, using various adaptation or localisation strategies (Hermeking, 2005). Past research indicates that there is a strong influence by culture on the perceptions, actions, and values of the consumers (Chaplin & John, 2005; Escalas & Bettman, 2005; Muñiz & O’Guinn, 2001; Chow, Deng & Ho, 2000). Some other research studies also indicate that culture can influence marketing and advertising strategies of the firm and consumer buying habits (Simester, Hauser, Wernerfelt & Rust, 2000; Green, 1999; Grier & Brumbaugh, 1999). Specifically, the values of culture affect decisions with regards to product development, pricing, distributions, and communications (Lam & Lee, 2005).

Various studies have found strong differences in the behaviour of consumers with respect to their ages, sex, and income levels. For instance, Asamoah (2010); Chovancová, De Alwis, Samarakoon, and Guo (2010) found that loyalty to brands and the evaluation of brands is influenced strongly by the ages and sex of consumers. Also, Asamoah, Chovancová, De Alwis, Samarakoon, and Guo (2011) found strong differences between the motivation to buy branded items and the sex and age of consumers. Furthermore, risk aversion and social demonstration varied significantly among consumers of different ages and sex in different cultural orientations in Africa, Europe, and Asia (Asamoah *et al.*, 2011). In spite of the fact that consumers patronise similar products and services, their motivation for buying vary largely depending on the extent of influence and differences in personalities as determined by a person’s cultural orientation as well as their age, sex, and income level (Chovancová *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, this research analyses the behaviour of consumers in the fast food industry using the examples of the Czech Republic and Ghana as a comparative case study. Further, it explores how culture influences consumer behaviour and how firms can develop branding strategies and adequately manage them to increase their competitiveness in the global marketplace.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to analyse the cultural orientation (cultural dimensions) of consumers in the Czech Republic and Ghana with reference to the different age groups and sex.

Literature review and formulation of a hypothesis

Doole and Lowe (2008) assert that the value of culture satisfies the need for societal order, direction, and guidance. Culture sets the standards that are shared by significant members of a society which in turn set the rules for operating by firms in that society and its market. In the view of Doole and Lowe (2008), culture is not something that people get by the mere fact of being the citizens of a country or something inherent in us from birth, rather, it is something individuals learn as they grow in their immediate environment. When there are similarities in the environment, it tends to provide similar experiences and opportunities, which eventually shape and direct behaviour (Cui & Ting, 2009). The behaviour of consumers is culture bound in that the decision to buy a particular product by a consumer is influenced by a number of factors, of which culture is a key factor (Hofstede, 1984). According to De Mooij (2004), there are three elements of culture. They are values, language, and consumer behaviours. The differences that exist among these elements result in the phenomenon of cross-culture (De Mooij, 2004). Some authors argue that the work of Hofstede (1984) holds a maximum potential as a methodology for cross-cultural analysis (Doole & Lowe, 2001). Hofstede (2001) developed a five cultural dimensional model of national cultures that helps in understanding the basic values. Hofstede and Usunier (1999) explain that national cultural value systems tend to be relatively stable over time. Consequently, the element of national culture can endure for a longer period and can be carried away from generation to generation.

Several researchers in the past discussed appropriate choice of dimensions for the conceptualization and operationalisation of culture (Steenkamp, 2001; Keillor & Hult, 1999; Schwartz, 1994; Smith, Dugan & Trompenaars, 1996; Inkeles & Levinson, 1969; Hofstede, 1984, 1991). Nonetheless, Hofstede's cultural model is the most widely used in various disciplines, for example sociology, management

studies, and psychology (Steenkamp, 2001; Sondergaard, 1994). The dimensions of culture proposed by Hofstede have also been applied in global marketing, advertising, global branding as well as studies in consumer behaviour (De Mooij, 2004). Hofstede's model has been used in explaining differences in the concepts of self, personality, and identity, which consequently explains variations in branding strategy and communications (De Mooij, 2010). Geert Hofstede introduced a five cultural dimension framework and allotted indexes on each to countries. Further, he linked the dimensions with political, economic, geographic, and demographical aspects of a society (Kale & Barnes, 1992), an attribute unparalleled by other cultural models and frameworks. Therefore, the model by Hofstede is considered to be the most conclusive and vigorous in terms of the number of cultures that were sampled and studied (Smith, Dugan & Trompenaars, 1996).

The five dimensions are low/high power distance, individualism/collectivism, low/high uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/femininity, and short/long term orientation. In recent times, there has been development of alternative models for cross-cultural analyses by several researchers (Schwartz, 1994; Maznevski & Di Stefano, 1995; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman & Gupta, 2004; Trompenaars, 1993). The original study by Hofstede was mainly descriptive and the main result was a set of cultural scores that describes the cultures of nations. A comparison of Hofstede's dimensions of culture with other cultural theories shows a high level of convergence. These other theories tend to emanate from Hofstede's original model and have a high level of relationship that tends to support the conceptual as well as theoretical significance of Hofstede's framework, hence, justifying the use of his dimensions in cross cultural research studies. In the view of Christie, Kwon, Stoeberl, and Baumhart (2003), "to facilitate cross-cultural comparisons, one needs to operationalize culture and identify aspects or dimensions common to all cultures, particularly in the area of business". The cultural dimensions developed by Hofstede have been validated persistently over time; hence, the operationalisation of cultures by Hofstede is widely accepted and it is the norm used in research and studies in international marketing (Dawar, Parker & Price, 1996; Christie *et al.*, 2003; Engel, Blackwell & Miniard, 1995; Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001; Sondergaard, 1994). Hofstede's cultural dimensions are able to provide explanations of the many differences in the patterns of consumption of products by consumers.

The main reason for the widespread adoption of the classification of culture by Hofstede is the large number of countries that were measured as well as the simplicity of the dimensions used, which tend to be straightforward and appealing to both academic researchers and practitioners in business. Furthermore, none of the recent cultural models have been developed for analysing consumer behaviour, therefore, the manifestations of culture that are relevant to analysing consumer behaviour have to be inferred, selected, and interpreted. Hofstede's cultural dimensions are relevant in international marketing mainly because it describes national values not only in the context of business but also for the general daily behaviour of people. As companies strive to adapt their products and services to local preferences and habits in international markets, there is a need to understand the specificity of individual markets and Hofstede's cultural dimension provides the framework for such an understanding. Within the context of cultural analysis by Hofstede, De Mooij (2004) further provides an elaboration of the various psychological and sociological variations in human behaviour. They include the concept of self, personality, group influence, motivation, emotion, perception, and information processing. According to De Mooij (2004), these aspects of human behaviour are observed in all of the five attributes of culture indicated by Hofstede.

Individualism vs. collectivism

Individualism–collectivism explains the relationship that exists among individuals in a society. The differences in individualism and collectivism can be described as “people looking after themselves and their immediate family only, versus people belonging to in-groups that look after them in exchange for loyalty” (van Gelder, 2003). In a high individualistic society, there is a large level of individual freedom and a display of loose integration. Low individualism societies show tight integration. Individualism–collectivism describes the relationships individuals have in each culture. In individualistic cultures, one's identity is in his or her person (De Mooij, 2011). People in such cultures have an “I”-conscious and the self-actualisation is significant. Individualistic cultures tend to be more universalistic and usually assume that their values are applicable to the whole world. Moreover, they are low-context communication cultures with explicit verbal communication. On the other hand, in collectivistic cultures,

people are “we”-conscious. In such cultures a person’s identity is based on the social system of which they are members and there is a lot of importance placed on avoiding loss of face.

Collectivistic cultures are high-context communication cultures, and they tend to have an indirect style of communication. In the sales process in individualistic cultures, the various agents involved endeavour to get to closing of the sales deal very fast, while in collectivistic cultures, the building of relationships and trust between the various agents precedes the actual sales. This difference is manifested in the different roles of advertising and other strategies for marketing communication: either for persuasion or for creating trust. Also, in collectivist cultures, advertisement portrays collective experience while advertisement in individualist cultures emphasizes the ability to save time and money (Marcus & Gould, 2001).

In Hofstede’s collectivistic cultures, the social needs of belonging and prestige aspect of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs can be seen as affiliation, admiration, and status which tend to be the main forces that drive consumer behaviour. The high level of interdependence among people in a collectivist culture makes them have a lesser personal affection to material objects and a greater attachment to human beings. According to Kotler, Armstrong, Saunder, and Wong (1999), the influence by others plays an important role in the decision making processes of consumers. In collectivist cultures, buyers have the habit of consulting other people with regards to new product or brand and seek their advice before making a decision. Hence, the decision to purchase by a buyer could also be influenced by the attitude expressed by others. Consumers can also be influenced culturally, i.e. value, behaviour, and preferences from family or other institutions or socially, i.e. by a small group like family or membership group.

Power distance

Power distance index (PDI) refers to the way societies deal with inequalities among its members. According to Hofstede (1991), it is the extent to which less powerful members of a society accept and expect that there is an unequal distribution of power. In any given society, people tend to have unequal physical and intellectual capacities and some societies allow these to grow into inequalities especially in terms of power and wealth. However, some other societies de-emphasize these

inequalities and try to bridge the gap among its members. According to Hofstede (1984), in high power distance societies, differences in power are expected to translate into visible differences in status. In some cultures, the decision to purchase is normally based on the utilitarian attribute of the product such as the physical characteristics as well as the price to quality ratio (Schutte & Ciarlante, 1998).

There are some consumers who are price conscious when buying items for personal use. Such consumers regard their own identity within the context of their society. This makes them not to want to depart from socially acceptable norms, even in private, thus encouraging conformist consumption. This dimension of culture reflects the results of power inequality and authority relations in a society. In a high power distance culture, a person's social status must be clear so that others can accord them with appropriate respect; hence global brands serve that purpose (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010). In cultures with a large power distance, each person has their rightful place in a social hierarchy. Hence, the concept of a rightful place is relevant to understanding the role of global brands. Power distance explains the level of hierarchy in a society. A society with a high power distance has a hierarchical order with vertically stratified power positions existing to create lots of power status. In large power distanced cultures, it is significant to display the status to others. Research has shown that consumers in high power-distanced cultures enjoy the status quo and are therefore reluctant to accept or adopt or appreciate new products (Van den Bulte & Stremersch, 2004; Yenyurt & Townsend, 2003).

Uncertainty avoidance

The uncertainty avoidance index (UAI) is a reflection of how a society deals with uncertainties about the future – an essential part of human existence. Uncertainty avoidance is defined as “the extent to which people feel threatened by uncertainty and ambiguity and try to avoid these situations” (Hofstede, 1980). At one end, weak Uncertainty Avoidance cultures tend to socialize its members to accept and handle uncertainty. High Uncertainty Avoidance societies foster the need to try to beat the future. It refers to how much members of a society are anxious about the unknown and as a consequence attempt to cope with anxiety by minimising uncertainty. Cultures that have strong uncertainty avoidance tend to have rules and formality that structures

life. This leads to the desire and search for truth and a belief in experts' opinions. In societies that have high levels of uncertainty, there are more rules, procedures, and standards that enable individuals to avoid uncertainty and ambiguity.

People with high uncertainty avoidance tendencies are less open to change and innovation than people from low uncertainty avoidance cultures (Yaveroglu & Donthu, 2002; Yenyurt & Townsend, 2003). Consequently, the introduction of a new brand in such markets tends to be risky as its performance and use are more uncertain than already established products and brands. In cultures with strong uncertainty avoidance, there is a preference for explicit rules for issues concerning religion and food. In advertising products and services in markets with high uncertainty avoidance, emphasis should be laid on safety while advertising in other markets may focus on social image (Marcus & Gould, 2001). In a high uncertainty avoidance cultures, there is a passive attitude to health, hence people focus on purity in food and drink and using more medication. On the other hand, in low uncertainty avoidance cultures, people often have a more active attitude to health by focusing on fitness and sports (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2002; De Mooij, 2010).

Masculinity vs. femininity

Masculinity–femininity (MAS/FEM) deals with the degree to which societies subscribe to the typical stereotypes associated with males and females. According to De Mooij and Hofstede (2010), “the dominant values in a masculine society are achievement and success; the dominant values in a feminine society are caring for others and quality of life”. In a more “masculine” society, there is greater emphasis on wealth, success, ambition, material things, and achievement, while emphasis is placed on the greater value of people, care for others providing help to others, preserving the environment and equality in a more “feminine” society (Hofstede, 1980). Masculine values emphasise on money making and the quest of noticeable achievements. Such societies tend to have admiration for individual brilliance and they idolise success and achievement (Kale, 1983). In masculine societies, performance and achievement are vital; and they must be always demonstrated in the open, therefore status products from reputable brands are important to portray one's success (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2002; De Mooij, 2010).

On the one hand, promoting a product of a brand in a masculine society should be done in such a way as to portray that the product is better than all the others. On the other hand, in a feminine society, it is vital for the brand to promote a product that brings improvement in the lives of people (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010). A very significant aspect of this cultural dimension is role differentiation, which tends to be small in feminine societies and large in masculine societies. In masculine cultures, domestic work is less shared between a husband and wife than in feminine cultures. Men also do a lot more shopping for the household in feminine cultures. Data compiled by Eurostat (2002) indicates that a low level of masculinity explains a 52% of variance of the fraction of men who spend time on shopping activities. The characteristics of masculinity include the preference for assertiveness, achievement, and material success. This is in contrast with the femininity characteristics which place emphasis on relationships, modesty, and care for the weak (Hofstede, 1980).

Long-term orientation

Long-term orientation (LTO) refers to “the fostering of virtues oriented towards future rewards, in particular perseverance and thrift” (Hofstede, 2001). Long versus short term cultural orientation is “the extent to which a society exhibits a pragmatic future-orientated perspective rather than a conventional historic or short-term point of view” (De Mooij, 2003). The values in long-term orientation cultures include perseverance, consistency, ordering relationships by status, thrift, and having a sense of shame. On the other hand is short-term orientation, which includes personal steadiness and stability and respect for tradition. Here, focus is put on the pursuit of happiness rather than on pursuance of peace of mind. Long-term orientation implies investment in the future (De Mooij, 2010). People with high long-term orientation are loyal to specific brands unlike those from short-term orientation cultures. They like to stay with a specific brand and the probability of them switching brands is relatively low (De Mooij, 2010).

Research hypothesis

Based on the literature reviewed, the following hypotheses are formulated and tested:

H₁: There is significant difference between consumers (sex) in the Czech Republic and Ghana in terms of their cultural orientations (dimensions of culture).

H₂: There is significant difference between consumers (age) in the Czech Republic and Ghana in terms of their cultural orientations (dimensions of culture).

METHOD

This research determined the cultural orientation of both countries with respect to respondents buying behaviour and perception of fast food products and services. The cultural orientations are examined using the sex and age of respondents as independent variables. The questions that were asked were based on literature review of the cultural dimensions by Hofstede. The questions were asked contain Table 1.

Table 1. Research questions for assessing the cultural dimensions

No.	Question	Cultural dimension
1	For me fast food is consumed by the higher class in the society with extra money to spend. It is expensive for those with low incomes.	High <i>vs.</i> low power distance
2	For me, it is important to visit fast food outlets with my family, work colleagues, or friends than to go alone.	Individualism <i>vs.</i> collectivism
3	I will rather cook at home than buy fast food, because the family bond, care, and dependence are important to me.	Masculinity <i>vs.</i> Femininity
4	I am not sure about the ingredients used in the preparation of fast food, so I often hesitate when I have to buy from fast food outlets.	High <i>vs.</i> low uncertainty avoidance
5	When I buy from one fast food outlet, I stay with them and I do not like to change even if there are cheaper options offered by other fast food brands, because I will not like to take the risk of trying other brands.	Long- <i>vs.</i> short-term orientation

Source: authors compilation.

The respondents were asked to determine the extent to which they agree or disagree to the statements in table 5 on the 5 point Likert scale from Strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neither agree nor disagree (3), Agree (4), and Strongly agree (5). The analyses are

done in conformity with the sex and age of the respondents to provide solutions to hypothesis 1 and 2.

Descriptive information

The convenience sampling method was used to select respondents for the study. Descriptive statistics are used to present the demographic background (sex, age, income level, and citizenship) of the respondents. In all, there were a total of 1,253 respondents selected from the Czech Republic and Ghana. There were 460 respondents from the Czech Republic, representing approximately 36.7%, and 793 respondents from Ghana, representing approximately 63.3% of the total respondents. The Tables 2 and 3 provide the distribution of the respondents in the two countries according to their sex. Out of a total of 793 respondents selected from Ghana, 421 were females and 372 were males, whereas 236 females and 224 males representing a total of 460 respondents were selected from the Czech Republic.

Table 2. Sex of respondents from Czech Republic

Sex	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	224	48.7	48.7	48.7
Female	236	51.3	51.3	100.0
Total	460	100.0	100.0	

Source: Research Data 2015.

Table 3. Sex of respondents from Ghana

Sex	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	372	46.9	46.9	46.9
Female	421	53.1	53.1	100.0
Total	793	100.0	100.0	

Source: Research Data 2015.

Furthermore, the respondents were distributed for both the Czech Republic and Ghana based on their age groupings. In the Czech Republic, the distributions are as follows: 11–20 (109), 21–30 (171), 31–40 (57), 41–50 (76), and 51–60 (47). In Ghana, the numbers of respondents in the age groups are as follows: 11–20 (350), 21–30 (198), 31–40 (126),

41–50 (75), and 51–60 (44). The distributions of respondents with respect to the various age groupings are shown in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4. Ages of respondents from Czech Republic

Age range	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
11–20	109	23.7	23.7	23.7
21–30	171	37.2	37.2	60.9
31–40	57	12.4	12.4	73.3
41–50	76	16.5	16.5	89.8
51–60	47	10.2	10.2	100.0
Total	460	100.0	100.0	

Source: Research Data 2015.

Table 5. Ages of respondents from Ghana

Age range	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
11–20	350	44.1	44.1	44.1
21–30	198	25.0	25.0	69.1
31–40	126	15.9	15.9	85.0
41–50	75	9.5	9.5	94.5
51–60	44	5.5	5.5	100.0
Total	793	100.0	100.0	

Source: Research Data 2015.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following are the data analysis and results. The results are presented and discussed in relation to literature reviewed.

H_1 : There is significant difference between consumers (sex) in the Czech Republic and Ghana in terms of their cultural orientations (dimensions of culture).

Mann-Whitney U test – is used to find out if there are differences and compare the means to see where the differences exist. This is because; there are two sets of samples that are independent. The following is the results of the Mann-Whitney U test analysis of hypothesis 1 from the Czech Republic and Ghana.

Table 6. Summary of the significance level between sex and cultural dimension in the Czech Republic and Ghana

Description	Sex	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Fast food is consumed by the higher class in the society with extra money to spend.	Male	224	222.21	49774.00
	Female	236	238.37	56256.00
	Total	460		
It is important to visit fast food outlets with my family, work colleagues than to go alone.	Male	224	220.73	49444.50
	Female	236	239.77	56585.50
	Total	460		
I will rather cook at home than buy fast food.	Male	224	203.22	45521.50
	Female	236	256.39	60508.50
	Total	460		
I am not sure about the ingredients used in the preparation of fast food.	Male	224	213.87	47906.00
	Female	236	246.29	58124.00
	Total	460		
When I buy from one fast food outlet, I stay with them and I do not like to change.	Male	224	234.70	52572.00
	Female	236	226.52	53458.00
	Total	460		

Source: Research Data 2015.

Table 7. Test Statistics^a

	Fast food is consumed by the higher class in the society with extra money to spend	It is important to visit fast food outlets with my family, work colleagues than to go alone	I will rather cook at home than buy fast food	I am not sure about the ingredients used in the preparation of fast food	When I buy from one fast food outlet, I stay with them and I do not like to change
Mann-Whitney U	24574.000	24244.500	20321.500	22706.000	25492.000
Wilcoxon W	49774.000	49444.500	45521.500	47906.000	53458.000
Z	-1.401	-1.597	-4.478	-2.710	-0.685
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.161	0.110	0.000	0.007	0.493

^a Grouping Variable: Sex.

Source: Research Data 2015.

In the Czech Republic, there were no significant differences between three of the dependent variables and sex. The p-value for

the analysis on power distance was 0.161, collectivism and individualism was 0.110, and long term orientation was 0.493. These figures were more than the significant level of 0.05, hence, it can be concluded that in the Czech Republic, respondents do not differ with respect to sex and the cultural variables of power distance, long term orientation, and collectivism and individualism. There were significant differences between sex and two of the dependent variables (masculinity and femininity and uncertainty avoidance). The p-value of the test of masculinity and femininity and sex was 0.000, while that of uncertainty avoidance and sex was 0.007. These values were less than the significant level of 0.05. A comparison of the mean rank revealed that females (with a mean of 256.39) in the Czech Republic are more feministic than males (with a mean of 203.22). Hence, the hypothesis was partially confirmed for respondents in the Czech Republic.

Females usually prefer to cook at home rather than buying fast food compared to males. This is not surprising because of the traditional domestic role that women play in the Czech Republic. Eating out was more of a male attribute than a female attribute. Also, it was revealed that females scored high in uncertainty avoidance (mean of 246.29) than males (mean of 213.87). Past research shows that females are more risk averse than males (Byrnes, Miller & Schafer, 1999). The socialisation processes in society expect women to take less risk and embrace soft attributes like kindness, loving, and caring while men are expected to take risk and be aggressive. From this finding, it is realised that these expectations have not changed in the Czech Republic, hence, women do not take a lot of risk. As indicated by Hofstede (1984) such women prefer predictability, stability, and they are usually resistant to change and exhibit discomfort with the unknown. Hence, it makes them resistant to change from one fast food brand they are used to, to another new brand (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). For such women, the most useful way to handle risk is by buying brands that are reputable or well-known, especially those brands that they have had favourable past experiences with (Aaker, 1991; Levy, 1959).

However, in Ghana, the results showed that there is no significant difference between sex and the cultural orientation of the respondents. The p-value recorded for all the five questions that access the cultural dimensions among consumers in Ghana were more than the

significant level of 0.05. The p-values recorded are as follows: power distance was 0.284, collectivism and individualism 0.542, masculinity and femininity 0.287, uncertainty avoidance 0.734, and long term orientation 0.675. Therefore, the hypothesis was not supported for respondents in Ghana. This trend could be attributed to the increase in the levels of income of the middle class, the weakening of family bond due to busy work schedules, the rapid change in the roles of women in the Ghanaian society, less interest placed on risk factors in fast food consumption due to the prestige and the desire to belong and the willingness to change and try different products due to the presence of fast food outlets of different sizes in the market (competition) and the attractiveness of the marketing mix packages that are offered by these firms.

H₂: There is significant difference between consumers (age) in the Czech Republic and Ghana in terms of their cultural orientations (dimensions of culture).

Since there were more than two groups of the independent variables and more than two dependent variables and also there was one independent variable with two or more levels, the Kruskal Wallis test was used to test the hypothesis.

Table 8. Summary of the significance level between age and cultural dimension in the Czech Republic and Ghana

Description	Ages of consumers	N	Mean Rank
Fast food is consumed by the higher class in the society with extra money to spend.	11–20	109	218.28
	21–30	171	247.24
	31–40	57	265.84
	41–50	76	186.97
	51–60	47	225.46
	Total	460	
It is important to visit fast food outlets with my family, work colleagues than to go alone.	11–20	109	239.51
	21–30	171	199.07
	31–40	57	232.71
	41–50	76	256.93
	51–60	47	278.52
	Total	460	

Description	Ages of consumers	N	Mean Rank
I will rather cook at home than buy fast food.	11–20	109	204.63
	21–30	171	232.39
	31–40	57	277.56
	41–50	76	245.76
	51–60	47	201.87
	Total	460	
I am not sure about the ingredients used in the preparation of fast food.	11–20	109	178.07
	21–30	171	205.13
	31–40	57	243.54
	41–50	76	292.47
	51–60	47	328.37
	Total	460	
When I buy from one fast food outlet, I stay with them and I do not like to change.	11–20	109	232.97
	21–30	171	256.57
	31–40	57	270.35
	41–50	76	157.96
	51–60	47	198.89
	Total	460	

Source: Research Data 2015.

Table 9. Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Fast food is consumed by the higher class in the society with extra money to spend	It is important to visit fast food outlets with my family, work colleagues than to go alone	I will rather cook at home than buy fast food	I am not sure about the ingredients used in the preparation of fast food	When I buy from one fast food outlet, I stay with them and I do not like to change
Chi-Square	18.331	20.806	15.803	70.626	39.965
df	4	4	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	0.001	0.000	0.003	0.000	0.000

^a Kruskal Wallis Test.

^b Grouping Variable: ages of consumers.

Source: Research Data 2015.

In the Czech Republic, the research revealed a statistical significance between the ages of the respondents and the cultural dimensions. The p-value of all the five cultural dimensions was less than the significant

level of 0.05. Therefore, the hypothesis is confirmed for all the cultural dimensions in the Czech Republic. In terms of power distance, it was revealed that it was highest among respondents between the ages of 31–40 (mean rank 265.84) and lowest among respondents between the age group 41–50 (mean rank 186.97). The rest of the mean ranks are shown in descending order as follows: age group 21–30 (mean rank 247.24), 51–60 (mean rank 225.46), and 11–20 (mean rank 218.28).

Furthermore, it was revealed that the respondents between the ages of 51–60 (mean rank 278.52) preferred to visit fast food outlets with their family and work colleagues, hence exhibiting high collectivism tendencies. The respondents between the ages of 21–30 recorded the lowest mean rank, i.e. 199.07, hence demonstrating a high level of individualism followed by age group 31–40 (mean rank 232.71), 11–20 (mean rank 239.51), and 41–50 (mean rank 256.93). Like Chavadi and Kokatnur (2008) indicated, consumers above 35 years prefer to eat with friends and family members than alone and the intensity of this collective feeling tends to increase with age. Also, the research showed that the respondents between the ages of 51–60 (mean rank 201.87) and 11–20 (mean rank 204.63) least preferred to cook at home, hence, demonstrating the highest level of masculinity. For those between the ages of 51–60, it was mainly because they usually have other people to cook for them. But for those between the ages of 11–20, the main reason for not cooking at home was due to the lack of time and the convenience of eating out. Respondents between the ages of 31–40 (mean rank 277.56) demonstrated the highest level of femininity. The rest of the age groups mean ranks were moderate, thus, 21–30 (mean rank 232.39) and 41–50 (mean rank 245.76).

With regards to uncertainty avoidance, the research found that this attribute varied directly with age, meaning that, the higher the age of consumers, the higher the uncertainty avoidance level. The mean ranks are indicated from lowest to the highest as follows: 11–20 (mean rank 178.07), 21–30 (mean rank 205.13), 31–40 (mean rank 243.54), 41–50 (mean rank 292.47), and 51–60 (mean rank 328.37). Young people do like to take a lot of risk mainly because they are more adventurous and they have fewer responsibilities. However, like Mittal and Kamakura (2001) explained, as they get older, their tendency to go through mental deliberations to access the risk exposure increases. They become risk averse because they are aware of the impact their decision will have on other people who depend on them. Moreover, with regards to long

term orientation, the study found that the respondents between the ages of 31–40 years (mean rank 270.35), who are usually workers are loyal to fast food brands due to the high tendency of long term orientation. This was followed by the respondents between the ages of 21–30 (mean rank 256.57) and age group 11–20 (mean rank 232.97). Short term oriented respondents, thus those who are less loyal to fast food brands were those between the age groups of 51–60 (mean rank 198.89) and 41–50 (mean rank 157.96). It can be concluded that older people are short-term oriented than younger people.

However, in Ghana, there was no statistical significance between the ages of the respondents and the cultural dimensions of collectivism and individualism (p-value 0.230) and masculinity and femininity (p-value 0.728) given a significant level of 0.05. Respondents of all ages consider it important to visit fast food outlets with their friends and close relations than to go alone. This means that the collectivism attribute of the Ghanaian society is still strong for different consumers, irrespective of their age. Furthermore, the age of the respondents was not important in predicting their level of appreciating feminine or masculine roles. According to the findings of Hofstede (1984), there are strong feministic tendencies in West African countries of which Ghana is one. Hence, it was not surprising that the respondents of different ages did not differ much in the masculinity and femininity variable.

However, there was statistical significance between the age of the respondents and 3 of the cultural dimensions, namely power distance (p-value 0.011), uncertainty avoidance (p-value 0.000), and long term orientation (p-value 0.000) given a significant level of 0.05. The mean ranks showed that there were differences in terms of power distance. The perception of fast food being associated with the higher class in society was demonstrated by younger respondents, thus, age group 11–20 (mean rank 410.09) and 21–30 (mean rank 418.77). The mean rank for the respondents between ages 31–40 and 41–50 were quite similar, thus 367.45 and 380.28 respectively. However, the respondents between the age group of 51–60 with a mean rank 308.03 demonstrated a low power distance. Also, uncertainty avoidance to a large extent varied directly with age. That is to say that the older a person, the higher the uncertainty avoidance ranks and *vice versa* (Mittal & Kamakura, 2001). This finding was similar to that of the Czech Republic. The mean ranks for the respondents are as follows: 11–20 (mean rank 386.63), 21–30 (mean rank 360.00), 31–40 (mean

rank 404.06), 41–50 (mean rank 421.83), and 51–60 (mean rank 583.40). There were also differences in long term orientation, although the scores did not follow a particular trend. The least loyal consumers with short term orientation were the respondents between the age group of 11–20. Such consumers like to explore so they tend to change from one fast food outlet to another depending on how attractive or otherwise the firms' marketing mix is, especially, price and promotion. The respondents from the age group of 51–60 were also short-term oriented. Long-term oriented consumers were between the ages 31–40 (mean rank 480.26). This was followed by the age group of 21–30 and 41–50 with a mean rank 446.58, and 411.49 respectively. Hence, it can be concluded that the hypothesis was partially confirmed for respondents in Ghana.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that because of its importance, the dimensions of culture should be used as pre-predictors to determine how consumers differ or converge in their behaviour in different countries. This is how culture can serve the purpose of defining consumer behaviour and enable managers develop strategies for specific markets. This research contributes to the viability of current and potential fast food firms in their expansion strategies into different countries as it provides an analysis of the salient aspects of fast food branding that are relevant to consumers. Further, the study brings out relevant elements for the development of branding strategies to influence consumer perception and purchasing behaviour. The research provides a practical, proactive, and result oriented analysis that will enable managers to understand the intricacies involved in branding in the global fast food industry and decrease the use of "trial and error" when entering into unfamiliar markets, so as to augment their strategies in international markets, thus making the culture the focal point for the development of marketing strategies. This research examined new trends in cross cultural brand management and consumer behaviour in the fast food industry. Furthermore, this research was conducted in two countries with vast differences in terms of their cultural orientations; hence, it is embedded in a cross cultural environment. Therefore, the conclusions and findings are considered relevant in international business practices.

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WPŁYW ORIENTACJI KULTUROWEJ NA DECYZJE ZAKUPOWE KONSUMENTÓW: MIĘDZYKULTUROWE BADANIE PORÓWNAWCZE

Abstrakt

Tło badań. Wartości kulturowe są ważnymi aspektami jaźni konsumentów. W miarę, jak firmy stają się coraz bardziej globalne, różnice kulturowe pomiędzy konsumentami odgrywają ważną rolę w rozwoju skutecznych strategii marketingowych i brandingowych. Dzieje się tak, ponieważ międzykulturowy fenomen występuje w wyniku zróżnicowanych składników kulturowych, jakie istnieją pomiędzy konsumentami, i jest to istotny czynnik mający wpływ na zachowanie na rynkach konsumenckich.

Cel badań. Głównym celem tego opracowania jest analiza orientacji kulturowej (wymiarów kulturowych) konsumentów w Republice Czeskiej i Ghanie w odniesieniu do różnych grup wiekowych i płci.

Metodologia. Zastosowano metodę doboru przypadkowego w celu wyselekcjonowania respondentów dla tego badania. Wybrano łącznie 1253 respondentów z Republiki Czeskiej i Ghany. Z Republiki Czeskiej było to 460 respondentów, a z Ghany 793 respondentów. Analiza danych została przeprowadzona przy pomocy statystyki konkluzyjnej.

Kluczowe wnioski. Badanie pokazało, że w odniesieniu do pierwszej hipotezy nie było istotnych różnic pomiędzy trzema zmiennymi zależnymi oraz płcią w Republice Czeskiej. P-wartość dla analizy dystansu władzy wyniosła 0.161, kolektywizm i indywidualizm wyniósł 0.110, a orientacja długoterminowa – 0.493. Istotne różnice zaobserwowano pomiędzy płcią a dwiema zależnymi zmiennymi (męskość i kobiecość oraz unikanie niepewności). P-wartość dla próby męskości i kobiecości oraz płci wyniosła 0.000, podczas gdy ta dotycząca unikania niepewności – 0.007. Jednakże w Ghanie wyniki wykazały, że nie istnieje istotna różnica pomiędzy płcią a orientacją kulturową respondentów. P-wartości zarejestrowane dla wszystkich pięciu pytań, które dotyczyły wymiarów kulturowych pomiędzy konsumentami, w Ghanie były wyższe niż poziom istotności wynoszący 0.05. Co się tyczy drugiej hipotezy, odkryto, że w Republice Czeskiej istnieje poziom istotności pomiędzy wiekiem respondentów a wymiarami kulturowymi. P-wartość wszystkich pięciu wymiarów kulturowych była niższa niż poziom istotności wynoszący 0.05. W Ghanie nie odnotowano poziomu istotności pomiędzy wiekiem respondentów a wymiarami kulturowymi kolektywizmu i indywidualizmu (p-wartość 0.230) oraz męskości i kobiecości (p-wartość 0.728). Poziom istotności był jednak pomiędzy wiekiem respondentów a trzema wymiarami kulturowymi, tj. dystansem władzy (p-wartość 0.011), unikaniem niepewności (p-wartość 0.000) oraz orientacją długoterminową (p-wartość 0.000).

Wnioski. Badanie wskazuje, iż wymiary kulturowe powinny być używane jako wstępne czynniki prognostyczne w celu ustalenia, jak różnią się konsumenci lub upodabniają się do siebie w swoim zachowaniu w różnych krajach. To właśnie w ten sposób kultura może posłużyć do określenia zachowania konsumentów i umożliwić menedżerom opracowanie strategii dla konkretnych rynków.

Słowa kluczowe: orientacja kulturowa, konsumenci, decyzje zakupowe, wymiary kulturowe.