

PhD Defense Sarah De Meulenaer – Faculty of Applied Economics

“Cross-cultural differences in consumer responses to marketing communications and branding.”

Date: 27 April 2016

Venue: University of Antwerp - Promotiezaal Grauwzusters - Lange Sint-Annastraat 7 - 2000 Antwerp

Time: 5:00 PM

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Principal investigator: Prof. Nathalie Dens

Co-principal investigator: Prof. Patrick De Pelsmacker

Short description: PhD defense Sarah De Meulenaer - Faculty of Applied Economics

Abstract

This dissertation investigates the effects of cultural values on consumer responses to marketing communication efforts. Cultural values are widely accepted as crucial drivers of consumer behaviour and consumption choices. Based on five empirical studies, Sarah De Meulenaer explores which executional advertising techniques are effective in which cultural groups and countries and why. The overall research question of the dissertation is: what is the moderating role of cultural values on how individuals respond to different forms of marketing communication.

In Chapter 2, Sarah De Meulenaer looks into which of four cues, a brand name, a brand logo, a spokesperson, or advertising copy, is most important in increasing perceived brand globalness. Two moderators are added: product category involvement and consumer culture. The spokesperson and the brand logo determine perceived brand globalness more strongly for a low-involvement product and global-oriented individuals, whereas the brand name is more important for a high-involvement product and local-oriented individuals.

Chapter 3 investigates the moderating influence of uncertainty avoidance, anxiety in general life, and chance belief locus of control on the processing of a health risk fear appeals. The results indicate that uncertainty avoidance and anxiety in general life have a moderating effect.

Chapter 4 explores the relationship between perceived spokesperson credibility and message compliance. The results indicate that perceived efficacy and threat mediate this relationship. This mechanism is further moderated by the degree of power distance and uncertainty avoidance.

Chapter 5 explores the moderating influence of four cultural variables, i.e., Hofstede's masculinity, Hofstede's power distance, GLOBE's assertiveness values and feminine role orientation, on consumer responses to gender role stereotyping in advertising. The results show that, in general, perceived stereotyping contributes positively to attitudes, and this effect is enhanced for more masculine, more power distant, more assertive and less feminine role oriented individuals.

Chapter 6 examines the effect of two framing techniques in a charity appeal, namely group belonging (in-group vs. out-group) and singularity of the models (individual vs. group). The moderating effects of six Schwartz values (i.e., self-enhancement, hedonism, openness to change, universalism, benevolence, conservation) are examined. Individualistic values lead to better outcomes when an individual model is depicted, while collectivistic values lead to better outcomes for the group. High self-enhancement and high benevolence individuals respond better to in-group members than out-group members in ads.