

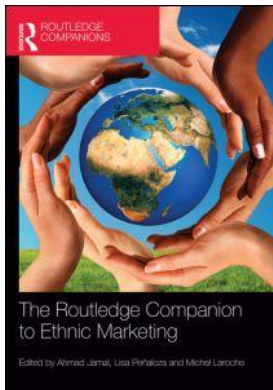
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Publisher: *Routledge*

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## **The Routledge Companion to Ethnic Marketing**

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### **Market segmentation by ethnicity**

Publication details

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780203080092.ch14>

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**Published online on: 24 Jun 2015**

**How to cite :-** Andrew Lindridge. 24 Jun 2015, *Market segmentation by ethnicity from: The Routledge Companion to Ethnic Marketing* Routledge

Accessed on: 31 Mar 2023

<https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780203080092.ch14>

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# Market segmentation by ethnicity

## Is it really feasible?

*Andrew Lindridge*

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### Introduction

Cultural, historical and social differences and similarities between and within ethnic groups present both an opportunity and difficulty for marketers. In this chapter we relate the topic of ethnicity to the marketing strategy of segmentation. This approach views the market as consisting of heterogeneous groups that can be identified and separated into homogeneous segments by their different needs and benefits sought. By identifying these differing segments, organizations can decide whether or not to target their resources at these segments in similar or different ways to achieve their marketing objectives.

Applying market segmentation to ethnic groups is not a recent marketing initiative. Indeed, by the early 1900s North American marketers were readily developing market segments based around ethnic differences aimed at encouraging assimilation into American society. For example, Halter (2000) notes how Jewish migrants to America were encouraged to cook and consume pastry-orientated foods symbolic of American culture. However, as these recipes often included the prohibited use of pork fat, the brand Crisco responded by launching a product that offered assimilating Jews a kosher vegetable-derived fat substitute.

Where initial market segmentation offerings encouraged ethnic group assimilation, by the 1970s a combination of commercial pressures and environmental changes led to the market encouraging ethnic group differences. The origins of this change partially lied in the demise of the mass market and consumers seeking different products required new, alternative, markets to sustain mass production and deliver profitability. Ethnicity and its related differences offered such a market, resulting in organizations using market segmentation to reach differing ethnic groups. Complimenting this market change were various socio-political changes. First, the introduction of legislation by various countries supported and encouraged ethnic equality. For example, the Ethnic Heritage Act (1974) in the USA supported funding initiatives that encouraged ethnic group distinctiveness through protecting their cultures and histories. Second, the 1960s and 70s witnessed an increased politicization of ethnic groups. As Halter (2000) notes, the late 1960s in America witnessed a political outburst of oppressed ethnic groups starting with the Black Nationalism, followed by the American Indian movement and Chicano militancy; movements that demanded recognition and self-determination within a White dominated society.

By the twenty-first century, the allure of market segmentation by ethnicity had become a mainstream part of marketing education, practice and research. Yet this allure is was not without its critics. Fennell *et al.* (1992), in a scathing review entitled 'Do Hispanics Constitute a Market Segment?', argued that many market segmentation variables applied to the Latino market, such as brand loyalty, were not valid. Instead what marketers were effectively undertaking was product differentiation. Product differentiation relies upon increasing product attractiveness for the target audience by adding value to the consumer experience and/or distinguishing the product from its competitors. The relationship between product differentiation and market segmentation is problematic owing to their inherent similarities (Dickson and Ginter 1997).

We can understand these similarities through the 2012 announcement by Proctor and Gamble that its 'Gain' washing detergent brand had become its twenty-third brand to generate annual sales revenue of US\$1 billion. While this was a remarkable achievement in its own right, the fact that the brand is solely sold in North America made this result even more outstanding. Originally introduced in 1969 as an enzyme-driven stain removing detergent, its increasing sales success ensured it became America's second best-selling detergent. As Kevin Burke, P&G Laundry Marketing Director (PR Newswire 2012) noted:

Gain consumers demonstrate an extraordinary passion for the brand. We work hard to understand our Gain consumers and work even harder to deliver the amazing scent experience they find in Gain. That's the secret to Gain's remarkable growth.

While there may be many reasons for Gain's success, perhaps the biggest reason can be attributed to Gain deliberately targeting African American and Latino market segments through targeted promotions. However, the use of English and Spanish narratives on the packaging also suggests that Gain is using an undifferentiated approach to ethnic differences within the market by ignoring ethnic differences between English and Spanish speakers. To what extent then is Gain's increasing popularity attributable to market segmenting ethnicity or simply undertaking effective product differentiation?

The answer to this question lies within market segmentation principals and their applicability to ethnic groups and forms the remainder of this chapter. In reviewing the feasibility of market segmenting ethnic groups we take a traditional, managerial perspective. (For those wanting an alternative perspective to ethnic market segmenting, such as using cultural frames, Visconti and Hughes [2011] offer a satisfying read). We begin by reviewing the market segmentation criteria, discussing the appropriateness of various market segmentation variables. This is followed by a discussion on the need to consider acculturation in ethnic groups' market segmentation. We then conclude with the key steps marketing managers should follow for successful ethnic market segmentation.

## The market segment process

Dickson and Ginter (1987), in a seminal paper on market segmentation, lamented the continued inability of marketing academics and practitioners to specifically define with clarity what market segmentation is. Taking a historical perspective, they argued that market segmentation is identifiable with differing consumer groups having differing needs and levels of demand. These segments are characterized as having minimal within-group differences, in contrast to other segments. As each segment has differing needs and demand levels, organizations can allocate their marketing resources more effectively. By segmenting the market, organizations are able to

satisfy segment needs by becoming more market orientated (Albert 2003; Freytag and Clarke 2001) and competitive (Wong and Saunders 1993).

To undertake market segmentation a number of criteria need to be satisfied. These and other relevant issues regarding ethnicity and market segmentation are summarized in [Table 14.1](#) (Dibb *et al.* 2006; Lancaster and Massingham 2001; Kotler and Armstrong 2008).

If an organization is satisfied that an ethnic group can be segmented using the previous criteria, it must then decide how to proceed. There are four groups of variables that an organization can use to segment ethnic groups: demographic, geographic, psychographic and behavioural. Each of these market segmentation variables, as we shall see, offer opportunities and limitations to segmenting ethnic groups.

### **Demographic variables**

Demographic variables represent the most obvious approach to market segmenting ethnic groups. Indeed, Dibb *et al.*'s (2006) classification of ethnicity and race, within this category, reflects a widely held perspective of their relevance to market segmentation (for example: Donthu and Cherian 1994; Cui 1997; Jamal 2003). Yet using ethnicity and race as marketing segmentation variables is problematic.

The term 'race' is widely used, and sometimes inconsistently, to categorize geographically separate populations (such as 'Africans'), a cultural group (such as 'Hindus') and nationality (such as 'German') (Singh 1997). Scientific advances in DNA analysis (for example, Hirschman and Panther-Yates 2008) have discredited the concept of race, with studies indicating greater racial differences within supposed racial groups (such as African) than between differing racial groups (Zuckerman 1990). Indeed the use of the term 'race' within cultural dialogues is politically problematic in Western societies (Molnar 1992) largely because racial categorizations are often determined by an external source (Betancourt and Lopez 1993). One external source would be an organization determining market segments based upon racial characteristics, which may be prone to accusations of racism (Wilk 2006). For example, racially categorizing all Far East Asians as a market segment of 'rice eaters' based upon higher rice consumption ignores important cultural differences. Furthermore, when we consider the earlier market segmentation criteria, measurability becomes an issue owing to its reliance on grouping individuals with differing needs into homogenous groups. For example, it is highly unlikely that all Far East Asians, as a racial group, share the same needs for a product, let alone the same religion or national identity. Instead, ethnicity as a market segmentation variable may be more appropriate.

The emergence of ethnicity arose from the belief that differences in humans should not be ascribed to racial categories, but instead ethnic categories (Huxley *et al.* 1935). The term ethnicity is derived from the Greek words 'ethnos' referring to a nation or a tribe, and 'ethnikos', referring to a national (Betancourt and Lopez 1993). These two words form the basis of typical definitions of ethnicity as a nation or a group who share one or all of the following shared variables: culture, nationality, language, religion or common descent. Alternative definitions of ethnicity locate the individual from a minority perspective and status. Researchers such as Weber (1968) and Venkatesh (1995) note that ethnicity is an ideologically fashioned term describing a group that is culturally or physically outside the dominant group.

Yet applying ethnicity to categorize and segment a market is problematic owing to such categorizations being imprecise and arbitrary 'social constructions rather than natural entities that are simply "out there" in the real world' (Waters and Eschbach 1995, p. 421). The need to categorize ethnic minorities by natural entities recognizes changes that may reflect wider societal changes,

Table 14.1 Market segmentation criteria and applicability to ethnic minority markets

Segmentation criteria	Relevance	Suitability of criteria for ethnic minorities
Measurability	Can the market segment be measured in terms of size, profitability, purchasing power and needs?	Applying measurability to ethnic groups is problematic owing to a lack of appropriate demographic information. For example, whilst Britain and the United States measure ethnicity, France does not. Information regarding purchasing power is often unavailable, resulting in speculation.
Differentiability	Market segment requires group homogeneity and notable differences when compared to other groups.	At simplistic level differences between various ethnic groups ensures differentiability. So, a British-born Indian would be expected to classify with this ethnic group and not with a British-White ethnic group. Differentiability, however, is problematic because it assumes that ethnic groups, such as British-born Indians, are similar. As we will explore later in this chapter, this is not necessarily true.
Accessibility	A market segment must be easily accessible allowing for cost-efficient distribution of the organization's product.	Ethnic groups, to varying extents, live in concentrated urban areas. This geographical concentration may ensure accessibility.
Exhaustiveness	Each customer can only be attributed to one market segment only.	The extent that an individual can be attributed solely to a segment based upon their ethnicity is problematic. Acculturation, as we discuss later in this chapter, in particular suggests that exhaustiveness may not be possible.
Stability	Organizations seek market segments that will not radically change or break up into smaller, less profitable segments.	Stability is problematic for market segmenting ethnic groups. If an ethnic minority market segment is determined by physical characteristics, such as skin colour, then these characteristics are unlikely to change for a millennium, ensuring market segment stability. However, when non-physical characteristics are considered, such as behaviour change arising from acculturation, then changes may result in ethnic market segments becoming unstable.
Profitability	A key marketing objective is maximizing an organization's profitability. Ethnic groups' market segment will only be relevant if it results in an appropriate return on investment on the resources invested in that market segment.	Whether an ethnic group's market segment is profitable is highly subjective. What is sufficiently profitable for one organization may not be for another. In some instances, ethnic groups may have a higher socio-economic status than others, but have a smaller population. Whether this group offers more profitability, as a market segment, than a poorer but larger ethnic group will be for individual organization's to decide.
Competition	Fewer competitors in a segment suggest a higher level of attractiveness for the organization. However, does fewer competitors indicate that the segment has not been previously identified, or because that segment offers little profitability?	What constitutes competition within an ethnic market segment may differ from other segments. For instance, a competitor in an ethnic market segment may be a local organization who understands the needs of that ethnic community. As we shall discuss later, in a study amongst Chinese Americans and White Americans, the former were more likely to shop at their local Chinese supermarket within their community than at a national supermarket chain.
Organizational capabilities	Does the organization have the capability and resources to satisfy the needs of the segment? If not then the organization should target other, more attractive, segments.	Targeting an ethnic group's market segment requires more than an organization's financial and human resources. The organization needs to ask itself whether it is open to understanding cultural and ethnic differences in a sensitive and empowering way. If it is incapable then the organization should perhaps look for alternative segments that match its capabilities.

such as differing education levels, geographical regions, generation of migration, and the size and composition of the ethnic community (Harrison *et al.* 1990). This argument then prohibits the use of ethnicity as a market segmentation variable using the stability criteria.

While organizations ideally should not use race and ethnicity as a segmentation variable it may still be relevant for some products. Products associated with religious beliefs or cultural festivals may still find some value in demographic segmentation. Foods specifically produced for religious festivals like Eid, or cultural ones such as Thanksgiving, may discover that consumer shared needs and values take precedence over ethnic differences.

### ***Geographic variables***

Differing geographic regions may result in differing needs and benefits sought from a product. At its most simplistic level, geographic regions are segmented according to population needs, such as India consuming skin lightening creams and European countries consuming sun tan lotion. Alternatively, differing ethnic groups' concentration in geographic regions, such as inner-cities, may offer small scale market segmentation opportunities. For instance, research indicates that many ethnic groups in the UK tend to experience lower levels of income, higher levels of unemployment and live in areas of higher socio-economic deprivation in inner-city areas (Clark and Drinkwater 2007; Modood *et al.* 1997). While poverty and its concentration in geographic areas may not initially appear to be an attractive market segmentation variable, it may offer some organizations a marketing opportunity.

Alternatively, countries and governments may actively create geographic areas that lend themselves to market segmentation of ethnic groups. For example, London's China Town based around Gerald Street arose partially from Chinese businesses locating there and local government's desire to develop a commercial and tourist attraction. Geographic concentration offers then opportunities for market segmentation measurability with segments potentially being of a substantial size, accessible because of their concentration and relatively stable (as ethnic minorities may choose to remain in a similar area), satisfying the earlier segmentation criteria.

### ***Psychographic variables***

Psychographic variables segment the market based upon differences regarding consumer lifestyles and/or ethnocentrism.

Consumer lifestyle refers to the activities, attitudes, opinions and values that an individual or a group identify with and is typically measured using the Activities, Interests, Opinions (AIO) Scale (Wells and Tigert 1977). An ethnic group that has differing AIO's will consume products for differing reasons, therefore constituting a separate market segment and warranting the attention of marketers. For example, African Americans are disproportionately more likely to suffer from smoking-related diseases than White Americans, even though they smoke less (HHS 1998). A difference attributed to African Americans differing AIO's leading to a higher tendency to smoke menthol cigarettes; a combination of tobacco mixed with mint oil (i.e. menthol), which anesthetizes the throat from the burning effect of inhalation. The reasons for these lifestyle differences and why they represent a psychographic segment lies in a combination of historical/cultural factors and savvy marketing by tobacco organizations.

The cultural/historical associations with menthol cigarettes and African Americans lies in the latter's history of poverty and their inability to purchase medicines. Menthol cigarettes were deliberately misclassified by the tobacco industry not as a tobacco-based product but instead,

owing to its anesthetic and cooling properties, as a cough suppressant (MentholKillsYou 2014). Poverty stricken African Americans in the 1920s unable to purchase expensive medicines were encouraged through marketing to positively view menthol cigarettes as a cheaper medicinal substitute. Smoking then served a medicinal need. Complimenting this deliberate misclassification of menthol cigarettes was the tobacco industry's classification of African Americans as a market segment. Cigarette brands such as B&W and Kool produced advertisements targeting African Americans located in poor socio-economic environments. For example, a study into Californian neighbourhoods with secondary schools found that as the proportion of African American secondary school students increased, this was accompanied by an increase in menthol cigarette advertising (Henriksen *et al.* 2011). In particular the Newport menthol cigarette brand was most likely to undertake promotional activities, including a lower selling price for a packet of cigarettes in these areas (Henriksen *et al.*). The effectiveness of using African Americans differing AIO's towards menthol cigarettes and tobacco organizations marketing activities is evident in Dauphinee *et al.*'s (2013) study revealing that African American youth are three times more likely to recognize the Newport menthol cigarette brand than youths from other ethnic groups.

Ethnic groups' relationship with food represents another important lifestyle difference to White society. For example, Delva, Johnston and O'Malley (2007), in a study among American youths, noted how non-White ethnic groups had a greater propensity for obesity. This lifestyle difference may be attributable to cultural differences, where higher body weight is not only associated with wealth but also femininity and sexual attractiveness (Ghannam 1997; Tovée *et al.* 2006). Consequently, Black ethnic groups drawn from Africa and the Caribbean tend to have more favourable attitudes towards body fat than their White counterparts (Furnham and Baguma 1994). While obesity may represent negative market segment variables for some ethnic groups, research also indicates some positive lifestyle variables. For instance, research has indicated that ethnic minorities tend to have healthier eating patterns compared to the White majority (Gibbens and Julian 2006; Sharma and Cruickshank 2001). A lifestyle difference that may be reflected in religious differences, such as Hindu religious doctrine discouraging meat consumption in favour of vegetarianism, among South Asians.

In contrast, ethnocentrism, which is associated with lifestyles, assesses the extent that an individual or their group judges, through comparing and contrasting, another culture or ethnic group. This judgment allows a group to define their own unique cultural identity (Andersen and Taylor 2006). From a marketing perspective, consumer ethnocentrism represents an individual and their group's attitudes and behaviours towards purchasing domestic versus foreign products (Shimp and Sharma 1987). Ethnocentrism, as a market segmentation tool, can be either encouraged directly by organizations or through socio-economic and cultural factors affecting consumers. An example of the former would be nationalistic marketing campaigns with products featuring labels stating 'Proudly made in America.'

Previous studies reflecting consumers' socio-economic and cultural factors support the use of lifestyle and ethnocentrism to segment a market, with two studies from Turkey illustrating their relevance. Researching the Turkish food market, Kavak and Gumusloulglu (2007) identified numerous ethnocentric market segments regarding food consumption. For example, when income was considered, the people in the segment with a higher income were more likely to be pro-Western (lifestyle) and less ethnocentric in their food consumption choices. In a similar study, Kucukemiroglu (1999) also identified differing market segments based upon lifestyle, with consumers belonging to the 'Liberals/trend setters' having lower ethnocentric tendencies, resulting in purchasing behaviours that were similar to consumers in Western societies.

In a rare study on ethnocentrism within a contrasting ethnic group, Goldberg (2012) studied the role of ethnocentrism among middle class Blacks living in South Africa – hence forth called ‘Black Diamonds’, a term used to describe South Africa’s fast-growing, affluent Black middle class consumer segment (Ndanga *et al.* 2010). This choice of population is interesting because Black Diamonds represent a small, but important, growing segment in a society where wealth is still predominately held by White South Africans. Unlike Kavak and Gumusloulgu (2007) and Kucukemiroglu’s (1999) studies in Turkey where higher levels of wealth equated to more Western centric behaviours, Goldberg’s results differ markedly. Instead, Goldberg argues that moderately high levels of ethnocentric behaviour are evident with a consumption preference for South African products over imports. Although Goldberg (2012) provides no explanation for the reasons for this, one possibility may lie in feelings of Black Nationalism arising from South Africa’s historical context of apartheid, with Black Diamonds asserting their new found socio-economic status, as a minority group, through identification with a Black South African identity.

The use of psychographic variables to market segment ethnic groups presents the recurring problem of within-group heterogeneity. Quite simply, individuals within an ethnic group will have differing AIO’s that will affect their consumer behaviour. Consequently, the marketer is once again faced with the problem of identifying sufficient similarities within an ethnic group to ensure the market segment meets the earlier stated criteria. Consequently, psychographic variables infer a high level of heterogeneity within and between ethnic groups that fail to address the earlier market segmentation criteria.

### ***Behaviouristic variables***

Behaviouristic variables segment the market by assessing levels of price sensitivity, brand loyalty, benefits sought and how the product is used.

Using price sensitivity to market segment an ethnic group is supported by research. In a study from the U.S., Latinos were found to be more sensitive to price increases in cigarettes than Whites were, suggesting that the higher the price the less likely they were to smoke (Myers *et al.* 2012), while a lower price for internet providers is likely to encourage greater uptake from ethnic minorities (Joshi *et al.* 2012). Ackerman and Tellis (2001), in their study on the relationship between ethnicity, culture and price sensitivity among American Chinese and Whites, found that American Chinese cultural needs to handle food prior to purchase created an affiliation not only with the need to shop in Chinese-owned stores, but also encouraged lower price offerings. The authors attribute this price difference to cultural differences with Chinese shoppers who, regardless of their affluence, are more willing to spend time undertaking searches for the lowest prices.

In a similar vein, brand loyalty may also offer a valuable means of market segmenting ethnic groups. For example, in 2006 the American research firm ‘Yankelovich’ declared that:

The ability to reach African Americans and Hispanic consumers in a way that truly strikes a chord and connects with their deep-seated cultural values and beliefs is critical . . . brands must show that they understand the ethnic consumer by crafting culturally appropriate and targeted messaging that speaks directly to them.

*(c.f. from Reyes 2006)*

Part of this understanding lies in the need for brands to reflect differing ethnic groups needs and identities. Indeed Yankelovich claim that 58 per cent of Latinos and 55 per cent of African



Americans were brand loyal and were less inclined to purchase private label brands. Using brand loyalty as a market segmentation variable is also supported by Rickard (1994), who noted that American Latinos and Asians were not only brand loyal but tended to purchase higher-priced brands than their White counterparts.

The extent that ethnic groups are brand loyal may depend on how strongly they identify with their own culture. In two similar studies – Donthu and Cherian (1994) researched Latino brand loyalty, while Podoshen (2006) investigated American Jewish brand loyalty towards automobiles – both researchers identified strength of ethnic affiliation to be important. For instance, Donthu and Cherian noted how Latinos who strongly identified with Latino culture would seek out Latino retailers, while remaining loyal to brands that their family and friends used. Similarly, Podoshen noted how American Jews who strongly identified with their Jewish culture tended to be more brand loyal than their counterparts who had a weaker Jewish identification. These findings suggest that brand loyalty among ethnic minorities should not be assumed, but instead considered as a sub-segment within the respective ethnic group's segment.

Benefits sought from consuming a product may also represent a means of segmenting ethnic groups. Health provides a good example, with many ethnic groups experiencing lactose intolerance (the natural occurring sugar found in milk and related products that cannot always be digested easily) (National Dairy Council 2011). Market offerings such as lactose-free dairy milk or non-dairy alternatives, such as soya or almond milk, effectively segment ethnic groups through health benefits.

A wider review of the literature on ethnic minorities and benefits sought returns to the issue of brands, ethnic identification and acculturation (discussed later). In two related studies, Wallendorf and Reilly (1983; 1984) undertook an analysis of Latino garbage (rubbish) to identify products purchases, noting how Latinos extensively consumed products identifiable with White American consumers. A consumer behaviour, they concluded, arose from the Latino sample identifying with, and attempting to acculturate into, American White culture. However, it should also be considered whether these participants were also expressing their own sense of modernism and/or social mobility embodied in American society and reflected in the consumption of particular brands.

Another benefit sought, and one that presents an attractive segmentation variable for prestige brands, is the concept of the collective self. The collective self can be defined as the 'need to gain a favourable evaluation from a reference group by fulfilling one's role in a reference group and achieving group goals' (Yamaguchi *et al.* 1995, p. 659). Inherently identifiable with collectivist cultures, such as those found in India, individuals within these cultural systems tend to have a stronger affiliation with a group to derive their sense of identity from (Wong and Ahuvia 1995), such as the family (Kitayama *et al.* 1997). Indeed, ethnic minority studies on Indian immigrants to Canada by Joy and Dholakia (1991) and Indians living in Britain by Lindridge and colleagues (Lindridge *et al.* 2004; Lindridge *et al.* 2005; Lindridge and Hogg 2006), noted how the Indian diaspora actively purchased brands that enhanced their collective self. However, these studies did not particularly look at acculturation's influence on these behaviours, and the extent this variable affected their sense of collective self remains unclear. However, the role of the collective self does offer an attractive means of market segmentation for prestigious brands that are dependent on exclusivity and wider public recognition as a means to increase their market share.

The final behaviouristic segmentation variable refers to how a product's consumption may represent a more global perspective, but also be reinterpreted and consumed by local communities to suit their specific needs (Ger, Kravets and Sandıkçı 2011). While research has tended not to investigate this area, sufficient anecdotal information is available to illustrate this variable.

For instance in the 1980s, Smith and Nephew, the then owners of the skin cream brand Nivea, noted as part of their regular monthly sales analysis disproportionate sales of Nivea hand cream in specific British cities. When this consumption pattern was repeated on a monthly basis, Smith and Nephew undertook market research to understand further these localized sales increases. The results indicated that the sales were attributable to African Caribbean's purchasing Nivea hand cream to use as an all-over body skin cream. Apparently Nivea hand cream was thicker and more suitable for African Caribbean skin than the standard Nivea or other competitors body cream products, which targeted a predominately White audience.

In a different but related example, the launch of Cola Turka in Turkey was attributable to opposition to Americanization of cultures and a need to develop a cola drink that represented and benefited Turkish society (*ibid.*). After initial commercial success, sales began to fall in response to the brand's Islamic associations, ensuring that loyal drinkers identified with both the brands Turkish and Islamic associations. Both examples, of how product usage can offer a means to market segment ethnic groups through behaviour variables satisfies the earlier segmentation criteria of being substantial and accessible.

### Market segmentation and the need to consider acculturation

The approaches to market segmenting ethnic groups discussed so far have relied upon a fundamental assumption – that the ethnic group being discussed represents a homogenous group who demonstrate similar behaviours. An assumption supported by the three segmentation criteria presented at the beginning of this chapter:

- Differentiability** a segment requires group homogeneity.
- Stability** the population forming the segment does not radically change over time.
- Exhaustiveness** a population can only be ascribed to one segment only.

Yet this assumption, along with these segmentation criteria, is unrealistic when we consider acculturation as a variable (Palumbo and Teich 2004). One of the oldest and still most relevant definitions of acculturation was given by the Social Science Research Council (1954, p. 974), who defined acculturation as:

Culture change that is initiated by the conjunction of two or more autonomous cultural systems. Acculturative change may be the consequence of direct cultural transmission; it may be derived from non-cultural causes, such as ecological or demographic modification induced by an impinging culture; it may be delayed, as with internal adjustments following upon the acceptance of alien traits or patterns; or it may be a reactive adaption of traditional modes of life. Its dynamics can be seen as the selective adaptation of values systems, the process of integration and differentiation, the generation of developmental sequences, and the operation of role determinants and personality factors.

Acculturation then generates changes among ethnic groups in three different ways:

- Behavioural** the types of clothes and foods bought and consumed, along with what cultural festivals are celebrated, for example, will begin to differ between and within ethnic groups and wider society.

- Affective** how emotions are demonstrated and experienced towards other people, communities and products will change. Ethnoconsumerism, as discussed earlier, may produce varying levels of emotional attachment towards products and brands from the ethnic minority's country of origin in contrast to their new society.
- Cognitive** language choice, between their ancestral and societal choices, has been shown to affect ethnic groups' beliefs and values in how they perceive a situation (Farb 1975).

We can illustrate these themes and the importance of acculturation to ethnic groups' market segmentation through a number of studies undertaken among the Latino market in the United States. O'Guinn and Faber (1986) noted how less acculturated Latinos, compared to those who were highly acculturated, were more brand loyal and price conscious. In a similar study IRI (2012) found that less acculturated Latinos, when compared to their highly acculturated counterparts, were less influenced by promotional sales (8 per cent compared to 52 per cent), demonstrated higher levels of ethnoconsumerism (27 per cent compared to 6 per cent) and were more likely to seek out bilingual signage on packaging (22 per cent compared to 6 per cent). The latter finding is supported by the Cheskin Research (cited from Malaghan 2003), which found that among 6,000 Latinos, 76 per cent favoured communicating in Spanish.

If varying levels of acculturation effect ethnic groups' consumer behaviours then instead of perceiving them as a homogenous market segment, we should perhaps view them as a collection of sub-segments. For example, Cheskin Research analyzed the 2002 Hispanic Opinion Tracker Study to segment the American Latino market by acculturation level identifying three segments: Latino Dominant (56 per cent), Bi-cultural (20 per cent) and English Dominant (23 per cent). In another report, using similar categories, Lokpez (2010) identified that Latinos, and, we argue, ethnic groups per se, can be segmented into three categories on the basis of how their acculturation affects their consumption:

#### *Unacculturated Latinos*

- Are Spanish-dominant (language)
- Have recently arrived in the United States
- Reside in neighbourhoods with a high density of Hispanics
- Conduct business in Spanish
- Rely on Spanish media
- Purchase products that are familiar – i.e. available in their homeland
- Practise Hispanic traditions

#### *Bi-cultural Latinos*

- Are bilingual
- Are born in the United States or have been in the country for several years
- Live in metropolitan areas
- Use English as their primary language for business
- Are comfortable with Spanish and English media
- Purchase products that are not exclusive or distinctive to Hispanic consumers
- Remain loyal to Hispanic traditions and customs

*Acculturated Latinos*

- Are English-dominant
- Are born in the United States or have been here for ten or more years
- Live in suburban areas
- Conduct business in English
- Prefer English media
- Have similar purchase behaviour as the general market
- Observe few or no Hispanic traditions

Classifying an ethnic minority group as ‘unacculturated, bicultural or acculturated’, while offering some value to the marketer, also makes a number of fundamental assumptions. First, Lokpez’s (2010) segment criteria fails to consider socio-economic and demographic criteria. For example, under the ‘acculturated’ segment the only demographic criterion given is propensity to speak English. To understand the relationship between these variables and the importance of acculturation to segmentation we need to return to the academic literature. Second, and most importantly, is the assumption that an individual’s ethnic identity and their acculturation are static.

Using Lokpez’s segment categorizations, an acculturated Latino would be expected to identify with the dominant American culture, effectively ignoring their Latino identity and associated behaviours; this is an acculturation proposition that is widely disputed within academic literature. For instance, Szapocznik *et al.*’s (1980) bi-directional acculturation model identifies an ethnic minority individual’s behaviours and identity with both their own ethnic and the dominant culture. Ethnic minority and dominant cultural behaviours and identities are not apparent on either side of a bi-directional scale, but instead represent dimensions that are interdependent and orthogonal of each other (Zak 1973; 1976). An individual can then identify with their ethnic culture or dominant culture, and demonstrate (or otherwise) behaviours reflective of their identity. In other words, an individual may identify themselves as a Latino but demonstrate behaviours indicative of American White society.

Developing Szapocznik *et al.*’s model further, Berry (1990; 1992; 1997) proposed a 2 x 2 matrix that categorized individuals into four distinct categories based upon the retention of their cultural identity and their behaviours relative to the dominant society. This comparison then produced four acculturation outcomes: (1) *integration*: the individual is equally interested in engaging with both their ethnic and dominant cultures, (2) *separation*: the individual rejects the dominant culture and accepts the ethnic culture, (3) *assimilation*: in contrast to the previous point, the individual rejects their ethnic culture in favour of the dominant culture and (4) *marginalization*: where both cultures are rejected.

Berry’s acculturation model offers an attractive proposition for market segmenting ethnic groups, recognizing that ethnic identity may not necessarily reflect acculturation related behaviours. Rudmin (2003) argued that those ethnic groups from a culture similar to the dominant culture were more likely to be reflected in Berry’s integrated categories, compared to those who are from less similar cultures. Indeed, in a study into Latino acculturation, Maldonado and Tansuhaj (2002) using Berry’s acculturation categories assessed their relevance in determining brand loyalty towards brands indicative of Latino and American culture. Indeed, they concluded that Berry’s acculturation categories did explain variances within Latinos brand loyalty. In particular, the individuals within the ‘assimilation’ category (identity and behaviour reflecting American society) demonstrated low ethnoconsumerist traits, with 73 per cent choosing U.S.

brands. In comparison, those individuals who demonstrated ‘separation’ were more ethnocentric, with only thirty-two per cent choosing American brands instead of a Latino brand. Of interest is the ‘integration’ category, where identities and behaviours were reflective of both their Latino and their American cultures, reflected in 48 per cent choosing U.S. and 52 per cent choosing Latino brands.

It should be noted that Maldonado and Tansuhaj make no mention of ‘marginalization’ as a category in their research (nor offer any explanation as to why). Indeed, the limited research into marginalized ethnic minorities does suggest the appropriateness of this category as an ethnic minority sub-segment. In a study undertaken by Lindridge, Dhillon and Shah (2005) among second-generation Punjabi Sikh alcoholics living in Britain, their findings noted how participants’ rejection of both their Sikh and British cultures was compensated through constructing an identity around alcoholism. Linked to this, and not mentioned in the paper, was how the local alcohol shops had effectively recognized this group as a sub-segment, among the wider Sikh community, offering these participants exclusive price discounts for larger quantities of alcohol purchases.

Maldonado and Tansuhaj further expand and contradict Lokpez’s (2010) acculturation categories by introducing generational differences into segment categorizations. While it may be assumed that being born in a country is more likely to result in ethnic groups becoming more ‘assimilated’ than say ‘separated’, this was not borne out by Maldonado and Tansuhaj. Once again applying Berry’s (1990; 1992; 1997) acculturation categories, they found that 34 per cent of individuals belonging to the ‘integrated’ and ‘separation’ categories were born in the United States. A finding that suggests that generational level should not be used as a segmentation measure, while supporting the use of Berry’s acculturation categories as a tool to market segment ethnic groups.

Berry’s acculturation model has been criticized by Turner, Oakes, Haslam and McGarty (1994) for assuming that acculturation categories represent static, fixed states. Instead they argue that ethnic groups and their members exist in a constant state of flux, often alternating in their positions regarding their cultural identity and related behaviours. Indeed, such behaviour is identifiable with Stayman and Deshpandé’s (1989) situational ethnicity, where the environmental context experienced by an individual with a different ethnicity to the majority adapts their consumer behaviour to conform. Developing this perspective further, Bhatia (2002) proposed the Dialogical Model of Acculturation, arguing that individuals from minority ethnic groups move continuously between opposing cultural values, while holding simultaneously positions of assimilation, marginalization and separation. Consequently the ethnic minority individual creates multiple identities depending on the situation and other individuals encountered (Phinney 1996). From a consumption perspective, Lindridge, Hogg and Shah (2004) noted how second-generation Indians living in Britain selectively used culturally value-laden consumption to assist them in constructing appropriate acculturated identities for the differing contexts encountered. Consequently, the Dialogical Model of Acculturation raises issues surrounding the segmentation criteria of ‘stability’. After all, if the ethnic group being segmented continuously shifts in how it perceives its own identity and behaviour, reflected in what they consume, then segmentation will have to be undertaken on a product by product basis.

The introduction of acculturation into our discussion on the feasibility of market segmentation among ethnic groups presents a challenge. By recognizing that acculturation ensures ethnic groups are not homogenous, we must recognize the need for sub-market segments. While Maldonado and Tansuhaj (2002) offer us a way forward, their reliance on Berry’s acculturation categories also assumes a level of in-group homogeneity, that situational ethnicity, encapsulated within the Dialogical Model of Acculturation, claims does not exist. How then should marketers market segment ethnic groups? We posit that the approach to undertake should accept the

need for sub-segments primarily based around acculturation. Acculturation variables such as language and media usage offer a means to initially categorize an ethnic group by their behaviours, with further investigation required to assess an individual's sense of ethnic identity. From here, organizations could then assess the extent and reasons why situational ethnicity may affect product consumption. Finally, once these acculturation categories have been determined, they could be applied to more traditional market segmentation approaches. For example, an ethnic minority sub-segment identifiable with Berry's 'separated' acculturation category may live in certain geographical areas, lending themselves to geographic segmentation.

### Resolving the market segmentation of ethnic groups

How, if at all, can ethnic groups be market segmented? Throughout this chapter various researchers have questioned fundamental assumptions about ethnic groups and their related consumption (for example, Furnham and Baguma 1994; Lindridge *et al.* 2004; 2005; 2006; Podoshen 2006). These assumptions have been based around ethnic groups representing a homogenous group, with cultural differences only being evident when compared to others. Yet as we have noted, acculturation recognizes cultural differences exist within ethnic groups. Considering this potential lack of group homogeneity among ethnic groups then acculturation may offer an appropriate approach to market segmentation.

Acculturation was identified as the interaction between two cultures, with ethnic minority individuals differing in their identification with their native and dominant culture. This identification may be relatively fixed (as suggested by Berry) or more fluid depending upon the context the individual encounters (as suggested by Bhatia). Yet these differences, as noted earlier, may be problematic for market segmentation. The question then arises 'How then can this dilemma be resolved?'

In resolving this dilemma it is important to recognize that some ethnic groups are not a homogenous group ensuring their market segmentation remains a challenge. While Maldonado and Tansuhaj (2002) offer us a way forward, their reliance on Berry's (1990; 1992; 1997) acculturation categories also assumes a level of in-group homogeneity that situational ethnicity, encapsulated within the Dialogical Model of Acculturation, claims does not exist. How then should marketers market segment ethnic groups? We posit that the approach to undertake should accept the need for sub-segments primarily based around acculturation. Acculturation variables (that space does not permit to discuss here) such as language and media usage, offer a means to initially categorize an ethnic minority group based upon their behaviour, with further investigation required to assess an individual's sense of ethnic identity. From here organizations could then assess the extent and reasons why situational ethnicity may affect how their product is consumed. Finally once these acculturation categories have been determined, these could be applied to more traditional market segmentation approaches. For example, an ethnic group's sub-segment that was identified under Berry's acculturation category as 'separated' may live in certain geographical areas, lending themselves to geographic segmentation.

At this point we can return to our earlier example of Gain washing powder – an example of effective market segmentation or product differentiation? The answer lies in the various targeted ethnic groups acculturation. For those consumers who can be identified as assimilated (whose identity and behaviours are similar to the dominant culture) we can identify Gain's use of Spanish on its packaging as an example of 'segment-based product differentiation' (Dickson and Ginter 1987). However, for those ethnic minorities who would be identified as 'integrated' or 'separated' or who need to demonstrate their ethnicity (within situational ethnicity, such as other ethnic minorities visiting the consumer's house) Gain is demonstrating a market

segmentation strategy. Perhaps most importantly is that Gain's ability to target Latinos and African Americans has delivered strong financial results.

Separating ethnic minorities into sub-segments, mediated through demographic, geographic, psychographic and behaviour variables, however, raises feasibility problems. For most countries, differing ethnic group populations tend to be small and geographically diverse. For an organization to segment an already small heterogeneous population into smaller sub-segments may render those market segments unviable.

Having identified a possible resolution on how to market segment differing ethnic groups, future research would be well advised to explore further the relationship between acculturation and consumer behaviour within, as well as between, different ethnic groups, particularly to what extent market segmentation is viable for these groups or whether organizations are likely to leave them as a diverse, heterogeneous group who, while different, do not represent a financially viable segment.

## **In conclusion: the key steps marketing managers can undertake in ethnic market segmentation**

This chapter concludes by discussing how marketing practitioners can undertake effective market segmentation through a seven step process.

### ***Step one: why do you want to market segment an ethnic group?***

Market segmenting an ethnic group has been shown to be a difficult undertaking therefore an organization should ask 'What do we wish to achieve from segmenting this ethnic group?' The reasons may vary but could include:

- Increasing the organization's competitiveness
- Identifying new marketing opportunities
- Defending market share
- Encouraging customer brand loyalty
- Attracting new customers

### ***Step two: take some time to understand your own customers***

An organization's existing customer base is likely to include a range of different ethnicities. Using available information organizations should undertake an in-depth analysis to identify which ethnic groups are purchasing your products, how often, where from and in what quantities. If you have access to Mosaic you may wish to apply this marketing research tool to further elaborate upon your customers.

By identifying which ethnic groups are purchasing your products and their characteristics the organization will potentially be able to develop this information into profitable market segments.

### ***Step three: now focus on the value of these ethnic groups to your organization***

Having recognized the reasons for undertaking marketing segmentation of ethnic minorities and identified which ethnic groups are already purchasing your product, we now need to calculate

their value to the organization. After all, regardless of which ethnic groups purchase your products, if they do not represent a current or future profit source or positively contribute towards the organization's marketing objectives then the organization should not consider developing them into a market segment.

In assessing the value of an ethnic group to an organization, three variables should be considered:

<b>Financial value</b>	what is the financial value offered by each individual ethnic customer? This should be considered on a monthly and annual basis. In particular, profit and sale levels need to be considered here.
<b>Customer potential</b>	to what extent is the individual ethnic customer susceptible to purchasing different organizational products? The greater their propensity to purchase related products, the higher their financial value to the organization.
<b>Customer loyalty</b>	what is the customer loyalty for this ethnic group? The greater the loyalty the more profit and value they offer the organization increasing their commercial attractiveness.

#### ***Step four: now undertake some marketing research***

While step two involved collecting secondary data to identify potential market segments, this step now requires the organization to undertake some primary research. Step three should have identified which potential ethnic market segments offer the organization opportunities for increased profit and achieving marketing objectives. In this step, the organization now needs to understand what the needs, wants and benefits are that are sought from the potential ethnic market segments.

#### ***Step five: recognize which segmentation approaches will work***

In this step, the organization reviews the marketing research data gathered previously and identifies whether demographic, geographic, psychographic and behavioural variables will be effective in targeting ethnic market segments. In some instances, more than one variable may be applicable. For example, where an ethnic group lives in a country (demographic) but is dispersed into specific geographical areas (geographic) with differing lifestyles (psychographic). In these instances the organization needs to evaluate which segmentation variable is most likely to achieve the profit and marketing objective outcomes sought.

We should also consider at this step whether acculturation needs to be considered and what the implications of this would be.

#### ***Step six: implement marketing activities that will appeal to your ethnic market segments***

This step involves developing a marketing strategy and tactics that address the ethnic market segment needs. For example, if the segment is less acculturated then it would be expected to be more ethnocentric. Consequently the marketing strategy would need to draw upon symbolisms indicative of that group's cultural values to ensure the strategy's success.



### **Step 7: evaluate**

The final stage involves evaluating the effectiveness of the ethnic market segments to the original aims agreed upon in step one. In this step the organization should decide what changes need to be made to the ethnic market segments to improve their effectiveness.

### **Summary**

This chapter reviewed the feasibility of market segmenting ethnic minorities. Market segmentation relies upon the premise that a heterogeneous group can be separated into separate homogeneous sub-groups. An approach that lends itself to ethnic minorities who as a group either self-identify or have an ethnic identity imposed upon them by wider society. Yet market segmentation variables when applied to ethnic minorities have been criticized for effectively undertaking product differentiation. To resolve this criticism careful consideration must be undertaken to ensure that different behaviours required to justify market segmentation are evident.

Effective market segmentation of ethnic minorities requires two themes to be considered. First is whether the ethnic minority group's behaviour truly is different from the dominant ethnic group. Second, if the ethnic minority's behaviour is different, then acculturation needs to be considered, in particular, how the ethnic minority group's acculturation affects their behaviour and related consumption. Only if acculturation results in different behaviour should market segmentation be undertaken.

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