

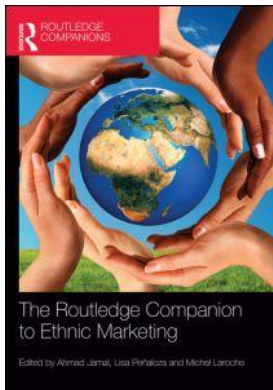
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Print advertising and Asian Indian consumers

Durriya H. Z. Khairullah and Zahid Y. Khairullah

Introduction

Advertising is a key component of marketing and print media is an important mode for communicating advertising messages. Magazine advertisements of products and services are widespread in countries across the world. Research within the field of marketing has looked at advertising, its effects and responses to different media and advertising aimed at different ethnic groups. This chapter reviews the results of our research in advertising related to ethnic minority consumers and the impact of acculturation on responses towards advertising. In particular the focus is on perceptions and effects of acculturation at different levels among Asian Indian immigrants especially in the United States (US). The chapter includes: conceptual background; description of our research studies and findings; followed by a discussion of theoretical and practical implications of our research.

Conceptual background

Ethnicity

Ethnic origin or ethnicity is defined as a group having common national or religious backgrounds (Cohen 1978; Hirschman 1981; Minor 1992); country of origin and surname (Hirschman 1981; Laroche *et al.* 1998); racial, language or national backgrounds (Hawkins and Mothersbaugh 2013). Ethnicity also means a group sharing common customs, language, religion, values, morality and etiquette (Webster 1994). Most contemporary researchers are of the view that ethnicity arises from the notion that certain individuals belong to or identify with certain cultural groups (Cleveland and Laroche 2007). 'Culture is the sum total of learned beliefs, values, and customs that serve to direct the consumer behaviour of members of a particular society' (Schiffman *et al.* 2010, p. 348). These factors encompass such elements as food, dress, religious beliefs and people with whom they associate with (Kara and Kara 1996). Ethnic groups do not just differ in the languages they speak or their skin colour. They differ in cultural values, attitudes, experiences, where they shop and what advertising appeals they pay attention to. Such factors intertwine to shape differences in buying behaviour (Perreault *et al.* 2011). Ethnicity affects consumer behaviour through choices related to clothes, music,

leisure pursuits, food and drink consumption (Bocock 1993). Individuals originating from a particular nation normally share cultural values that are often different from cultural values of other nations (Hofstede 1983).

In the last three decades the US has become a more ethnically diverse society. The number of ethnic minority consumers is growing at a much faster rate than the overall White population in the US and their purchasing power is also increasing rapidly. This surge in ethnic minority populations has provided growth opportunities for U.S. marketers. In order to boost sales among ethnic minority groups some U.S. marketers have been designing marketing strategies that are reflective of specific cultural values (Cho *et al.* 2013; Dunne *et al.* 2014; Hawkins and Mothersbaugh 2013; Jamal 2003; Peñaloza and Gilly 1999; Perreault *et al.* 2011; Schiffman *et al.* 2010). In doing so, marketers often adopt a market segmentation strategy to cater to ethnic consumers in a multicultural marketplace. Much of the growth in ethnic minority populations has resulted from immigration (Perreault *et al.* 2011). According to Jamal (2003) the multicultural marketplace also provides an opportunity for ethnic entrepreneurs and retailers to tailor their marketing mix for their respective ethnic groups. According to several researchers, notions of ethnicity and culture are also linked to the phenomenon of acculturation, which is discussed in the next section.

Acculturation

When discussing culture, anthropologists often distinguish between the learning of one's own, or native, culture and the learning of some 'new' (other) culture. The learning of one's own culture is known as *enculturation* and the learning of a new or a foreign culture is called *acculturation* (Schiffman *et al.* 2010). Acculturation is a general term that incorporates intercultural interaction and adaptation and includes assimilation of a new culture, preservation of the old culture, and resistance to both new and old cultures (Peñaloza and Gilly 1999). Prior research considers acculturation from uni-directional, bi-directional and multi-dimensional viewpoints. Uni-directional acculturation is the acceptance of values of a host society by members of a minority or immigrant group (Garcia and Lega 1979; Gordon 1978; Phinney 1990). This view is consistent with an assimilation perspective that suggests that immigrants' adaption to the host culture invariably leads to a loss of one's original culture (Hraba 1979; Wallendorf and Reilly 1983). The bi-directional view proposes two dimensions of acculturation, the extent to which one identifies with the culture of origin and the degree to which one identifies with the host culture (Berry 1990). The multi-dimensional view incorporates ethnic identity into the adaptation process with the assumption that immigrants in the process of adapting some aspects of host culture may also independently retain certain aspects of their original culture (Berry 1997; Cleveland and Laroche 2007; Laroche *et al.* 1997; Padilla 1980; Mendoza 1989). According to this viewpoint, the process through which immigrants adapt to the host culture is called acculturation, and the process of retaining the home country's culture by the immigrants is called ethnic identity (Felix-Ortiz *et al.* 1995; Phinney 1990). The bi-directional and multi-dimensional views are consistent with the basic premise of 'multiculturalism', which postulates that a variety of cultures can, and do, co-exist in the same geographical region and show a part or whole of their ethnic identity (Cleveland and Laroche 2007; Hraba 1979; Jamal and Chapman 2000; Jamal 2003).

Consumer acculturation and marketer acculturation

In the consumer behaviour literature, culture and ethnicity are linked to the study of two concepts – consumer acculturation and marketer acculturation. When consumers come in

contact with a new culture the resulting change due to intercultural contact in consumer behaviour is referred to as consumer acculturation (Peñaloza 1989; 1994). Marketer Acculturation is used to refer to the resulting change for marketers in contact with a new culture of consumers (Peñaloza and Gilly 1999; Peñaloza 1994). Several researchers have advocated that ethnic minority subcultures are growing in Europe, United Kingdom and the US and the globalization of world markets makes both consumer acculturation and marketer acculturation important agents in facilitating marketing strategies (e.g. Berry 2005; Cleveland and Laroche 2007; Jamal 2003; Peñaloza and Gilly 1999; Peñaloza 1994).

Acculturation and marketing studies

Some ethnic consumers retain a great many of their own culture's attitudes, values and behaviours, while others more readily adopt values, attitudes and behaviours of the dominant host culture. These differences are reflected in market related behaviours, including:

- (i) The importance of product attributes (Barbosa and Villarreal 2008; Faber *et al.* 1987; Kara and Kara 1996; O'Guinn and Faber 1985a; 1986);
- (ii) Product evaluation (Lee and Um 1992);
- (iii) Consumption factors e.g. food, price, shopping/purchasing behaviour (Choe 1987; Gupta 1975; Hair and Anderson 1973; Hair *et al.* 1975; Hernandez and Kaufman 1991; Laroche *et al.* 1997; Nyer and Gopinath 2002; O'Guinn and Meyer 1983/84; O'Guinn *et al.* 1985b; Ownbey and Horridge 1997; Segal and Sosa 1983; Seitz 1998; Suri and Manchanda 2002; Wallendorf and Reilly 1983; Weinstock 1964);
- (iv) Media usage (Cervantes 1980; Choe 1987; Cui and Powell 1993; Deshpandé *et al.* 1986; Kim 1978; O'Guinn and Meyer 1983/84; O'Guinn *et al.* 1985b; Shoemaker *et al.* 1985);
- (v) Perception of time usage for work and leisure activities (Manrai and Manrai 1995);
- (vi) Marital roles in purchase decisions (Ownbey and Horridge 1997; Stafford *et al.* 1996; Webster 1994);
- (vii) Brand loyalty, language preference (Deshpandé *et al.* 1986);
- (viii) Perceptions of advertisements (Green 1999; Khairullah 1995; Khairullah *et al.* 1996; Khairullah and Khairullah 1999a; Ueltschy and Krampf 1997);
- (ix) Religious affiliation (Schiffman *et al.* 1981).

The two common findings of these studies are: (i) that ethnic consumers are not homogeneous groups and (ii) that there is a positive relationship between marketing related behaviours studied and the extent of acculturation. Based on the results of their studies, these authors conclude that marketers should study ethnic consumers from an acculturation perspective. Using acculturation provides ethnic marketers a means of refinement of an ethnic segmentation strategy. This in turn helps to develop improved ethnic marketing strategies to meet the needs of specific sub-segments of ethnic populations. This leads to our discussion of the development of some relevant conceptual models of acculturation.

Models of acculturation

According to Berry (1997), and in the context of two cultures meeting, migrant consumers adopt specific acculturation strategies. His conceptualization generates four acculturation strategies:

(i) *An Assimilation Strategy* when individuals do not wish to maintain their cultural identity and interact on a daily basis with others; (ii) *A Separation Strategy* when individuals hold on to their culture and at the same time wish to avoid interactions with others; (iii) *An Integration Strategy* when individuals maintain an interest in both maintaining one's original culture, while at the same time seek to participate as an integral part of the dominant groups and (iv) *A Marginalization Strategy* when there is little interest in cultural maintenance and in having relations with others.

Models of immigrant consumer acculturation (Peñaloza 1989; 1994) postulate that the immigrant enters the new consumer environment with consumption knowledge acquired from his/her culture of origin comes in direct contact with members of the new consumer culture. Several factors including demographics and socialization agents lead to three possible consumer acculturation outcomes: (i) Assimilate culture of origin, where immigrants mingle or assimilate into the dominant culture; (ii) Maintain culture of immigration, when immigrants maintain their original culture; and (iii) Express Hybrid Culture where immigrants adopt a combination of two cultures.

Peñaloza and Gilly (1999) propose a *Marketer Acculturation Process* when a marketer wishes to cater to a culturally distinct group of consumers. It consists of the learning and adaptation processes employed by marketers.

A model based on identification of microcultures (Ogden *et al.* 2004) postulates that the purchase outcomes of microcultures is influenced by two variables: (i) the degree or the level of consumer acculturation sub-groups within the microculture and (ii) the type of product under consideration – value expressive versus utilitarian products. The outcome sought is the purchase of the product.

Stages of acculturation

Similar to the descriptions of acculturation outcomes provided by the models discussed above, prior research has identified either three levels (e.g. Barbosa and Villarreal 2008; Berry 1980; Gupta 1975; Khairullah 1995; Segal and Sosa 1983) or four levels (e.g. Cervantes 1980; Sodowsky and Carey 1988) of acculturation. Our studies focused on the three levels: (i) low acculturation when ethnic consumers retain their original cultural values and do not yet accept cultural values of the host country; (ii) moderate acculturation when ethnic consumers retain not only their original cultural values but at the same time also accept cultural values of the host country; and (iii) high acculturation where ethnic consumers give up most of their original values and adopt cultural values of the host country.

Rational for our study on print advertising and Asian Indian consumers

The initial interest in our research was developed from a review of the literature on ethnic minority consumers in marketing journals and trade publications. These articles discuss the phenomenal growth of ethnic consumers in the US and also advocate the development of culturally attuned ethnic advertisements to reach ethnic groups effectively. Advertising is considered as a mirror reflecting cultural values of a given society (McCracken 1986). Based on this notion, cultural values are embedded in such a way that consumers can see the similarity between themselves and the content of advertisements (Hong *et al.* 1987; McCracken 1986). Thus the cultural diversity in the US affects how ethnic consumers perceive and accept advertisements. Studies on acculturation mentioned earlier, demonstrate the importance of acculturation on immigrants' consumption, buying and media usage patterns. However, there is little

empirical evidence in marketing literature actually offering insights and information indicating how Asian Indian immigrants, originally coming from India, perceive Indian advertisements versus American advertisements of the same product class, and whether these perceptions were considered from an acculturative perspective. Our studies attempt to fill this gap. The result of such a comparison could help marketers evaluate the feasibility of developing culturally appropriate advertisements to reach Asian Indians effectively, an ethnic segmentation advertising strategy. The findings would also enable marketers to consider whether acculturation could help in refinement of ethnic segmentation strategy. It could allow development of improved advertisement campaigns to meet the needs of specific sub-segments of Asian Indian immigrants. The following sections provide background information on Asian Indian immigrants in the US. This is followed by a discussion of our studies regarding perceptions of advertising.

Asian Indian immigrants in the US

In the last twenty years, one of the fastest growing ethnic subcultures in the US is the Asian Indians who are coming from the sub-continent of India. There were approximately 2.8 million Asian Indians in the US in 2012 (Macioge 2012). Asian Indians have surpassed Filipinos as the second-largest Asian population after Chinese (El Nasser and Overberg 2011). The Asian Indian segment is growing rapidly as a result of fewer immigration restrictions applied to Indians under the U.S. Immigration Laws of 1965 (Gitlin 2005; Hawkins and Mothersbaugh 2011; Joseph 2006; Macioge 2012). This growing ethnic segment has strong purchasing power. They are the wealthiest ethnic group in the US with a median household income that ranges between \$60,000–80,000 compared to the national median household income of under \$50,000 nationwide (Macioge 2012; Sohrabji 2012). Asian Indians are also well-educated and fluent in English (Gitlin 2005; Mogelonsky 1995). Several studies have reported that most of the Indian immigrants in the US sampled in their research are married, younger, highly educated, well-to-do individuals coming from urban areas of India (e.g. Dasgupta 1989; Khairullah and Khairullah 1999b; Leonhard-Spark *et al.* 1980; Sodowsky and Carey 1988; Mehta and Belk 1991) and come from different religious, caste and regional backgrounds (e.g. Dasgupta 1989; Gandhi 1970; Gupta 1975; Khairullah and Khairullah 1999b; 2011) reflecting the regional, language and religious diversity of India's population. In spite of these differences they share a large number of common Indian traditional values that they retain and follow.

Studies regarding Asian Indians in the US

Dasgupta (1989) found that Indian immigrants see Americans as extroverts, practical, honest, technology oriented, self-confident, self-sufficient, hard working, assertive, lonely, self-centred and less attached to their families. Asian Indians consider themselves as introverts, emotional, knowledgeable but not practical, less confident and very much oriented towards family and society.

According to Ganesh (1997), among the Asian Indian families, the husband domination in the family is declining and that the wife domination is increasing perhaps, due to the influence of American culture and as a part of the acculturation process in the US. Although parents make joint-decisions and shop together, fathers usually dominate major purchase decisions (Jain 1995, cited in Mogelonsky 1995). Dasgupta (1998) found that first generation and older subjects are not in favour of dating and have more traditional attitudes towards women while the younger and second-generation subjects have more liberal views. Higher levels of anxiety are experienced by individuals who are more acculturated and assimilated in the host culture. Respect and

value of age, religious beliefs and beliefs in simplicity and fatalism are important to Asian Indian Americans (Rossman 1994).

Indian cultural identity in terms of arts and crafts, furniture, heirlooms, movies, songs and religious objects of India are found in the homes of the Indian immigrants in the US (Desai and Coelho 1980; Gandhi 1970; Mehta and Belk 1991; Saran and Leonard-Spark 1980). Mathur *et al.* (2008) examined the consumption of cultural goods among the first and second generations in the US and in India. They concluded that the first-generation adults in the US have a lower level of culture-specific consumption than the second-generation youth in the US and in India. The second-generation youth in the US have a higher level of culture-specific consumption than the first-generation adults in India but a lower level of culture-specific consumption than the youth in India.

Asian Indian respondents sampled by researchers are found to follow and practise their religious beliefs (e.g. Gandhi 1970; Mehta and Belk 1991; Sadowsky and Carey 1987). A majority of Asian-Indian Americans eat Indian foods using herbs and spices rooted in Indian traditions, women wear traditional Indian dresses at their social functions (Pavri 2011). Studies have shown that compared to many other ethnic groups in the US, Asian Indians are conservative in their investment decisions and tend to save more rather than spend (e.g. Cheng 2003; Delpchitre and DeVaney 2007; Hussein and Thirwall 1999) especially for education and retirement (Jain 1995, cited in Mogelonsky 1995). Against the backdrop of Asian Indian immigrants discussed in the preceding sections, we now turn our attention in discussing our studies on Asian Indians' perceptions of advertising. The aim is to provide a richer understanding of cultural mechanisms in play that can explain Asian Indian consumers' responses to advertisements.

Khairullahs' studies of Asian Indian immigrant perceptions of print advertisements

Study I

Khairullah (1995) investigated whether the perceptions of first-generation Asian Indian immigrants' in the US towards Indian print advertisements versus American print advertisements of the same product class vary within and across the three levels of acculturation. Several tests find no significant differences ($p < .05$) in order of presentation of advertisements effects and gender effects. The results of product effect and ethnicity effect for male and female sub-groups are mixed when these tests are performed without using the degree of acculturation as a variable; however, when it is introduced as a variable, a statistically significant effect of advertisements' ethnicity is found. The findings indicate: (i) Asian Indian immigrants sampled are not a homogenous group and (ii) the perceptions of Asian Indian immigrants for the Indian versus the American advertisements vary within and across different levels of acculturation. Low and moderate acculturated Asian Indian immigrants prefer Indian advertisements more than American advertisements while high acculturated respondents prefer American advertisements more than Indian advertisements.

Study II

Khairullah *et al.* (1996) examined whether Asian Indian immigrants would have a more favourable affective attitude toward an advertisement (Aad) for Indian magazine advertisements than toward American magazine advertisements. When the respondents are treated as a homogeneous group,

without considering their degree of acculturation, the results are mixed. No clear preference by Asian Indians sampled for Indian advertisements is found. However, when acculturation is introduced as a variable, the results indicate that Asian Indian consumers with higher-acculturation scores have a more favourable Aad towards American advertisements than Asian Indian with lower acculturation scores. It is also found that as the degree of acculturation increases, Asian Indians' preferences for the American advertisements increases and their preference for Indian advertisements decreases.

Study III

In their 1999a study, Khairullah and Khairullah found that there was a strong positive relationship with Aad and purchase intention of the advertised products. The results indicate that: (i) if Asian Indian immigrants like the print advertisements, they are more likely to buy that advertised product and (ii) Aad is an important measure of advertising effectiveness. These results support the proposition and findings of earlier studies (e.g. Batra and Ray 1986; Lutz *et al.* 1983; Mitchell and Olson 1981) that the 'likeability' of advertisements could give that brand a competitive edge in the long run.

Study IV

Khairullah and Khairullah (2003) propose a conceptual model that postulates that the acculturation process of ethnic consumers is influenced by those consumers' demographic characteristics. The authors suggest that marketers of U.S. and ethnic goods should develop culturally loaded advertising messages based on immigrant consumers' levels of acculturation. Several studies have found that demographic characteristics influence the extent of acculturation of immigrants in the US (e.g. Baldassini and Flaherty 1982; Clark *et al.* 1976; Ghaffarian 1987; Goldlust and Richmond 1974; Gupta 1975; Khairullah and Khairullah 1999b; Mehta and Belk 1991; Olmedo and Padilla 1978; Padilla 1980; Peñaloza 1994; Sodowsky and Carey 1988; Szapocznik *et al.* 1978). These studies indicate that males tend to acculturate more rapidly than females. Younger immigrants acculturate much faster than older immigrants. Those immigrants married to spouses other than their own ethnicity acculturate more quickly than those who married spouses of their own ethnicity. Immigrants who stay longer in the US are more acculturated than those who are in the country for a shorter period. More acculturated individuals have a higher level of education, occupational status and income than their lower acculturated counterparts. High acculturated immigrants are more likely to come from urban areas of their original countries.

Study V

In 2005, Khairullah and Khairullah conducted an exploratory research to examine the cultural perceptions of second-generation Asian Indians in the US for Indian magazine advertisements versus American magazine advertisements of the same product class. The results show that second-generation Asian Indians prefer Indian advertisements more than corresponding American advertisements for the majority of products used in the study. The second-generation respondents used stronger language in describing the extent of sex portrayed in the American man's suit advertisement and the shampoo advertisement that they were shown.

Study VI

Khairullah and Khairullah (2011) conducted a study using one of the qualitative research methods, a projective technique, to obtain interpersonal interpretations of Asian Indian participants. The study had three objectives: (i) to gain insights regarding cultural differences that the Asian Indian immigrants' subjects see in terms of the general appearance, lifestyle and personality of the models appearing in selected Indian magazine advertisements versus American magazine advertisements of the same product class; (ii) to find out if the religious, caste and regional differences among the Indian respondents in the US would have an impact on how they feel towards Indian advertisements; and (iii) to ask respondents whether they prefer Indian advertisements or American advertisements. This research supports the contention of studies mentioned earlier in the chapter that Asian Indian immigrants through their cultural values, rituals, clothing, furnishings, religion, etc. see themselves as a unique group in the US. Religion, caste and regional diversity among those sampled did not have an impact on their perceptions toward Indian advertisements. Sign tests indicated statistically significant differences between male and female respondents in their preferences for Indian advertisements over American advertisements.

Having discussed our substantial work in relation to Asian Indian consumers' responses to advertising, we now turn our attention to discussing important implications for both theory and practice based on the results of our research.

Implications

Implications for theory

The results of our studies indicate that ethnic consumers in the US are not a homogenous group. They go through an acculturation process. While some ethnic consumers retain a great many of their traditional attitudes, values and behaviours, others more readily adopt the cultural attitudes, values and behaviours of the dominant host culture. These differences are reflected in their perceptions of advertisements.

There is a relationship between ethnic consumers' perceptions of advertising and their levels of acculturation. As ethnic consumers become more acculturated, their preference for American advertisements increases (positive relationship) and their preference for ethnic advertisements decreases (negative relationship). The rate of change in ethnic consumers' perceptions of advertisements with respect to acculturation differs with the nature of advertisements, i.e. whether the advertisements are 'ethnic' or 'American'. Low and moderate acculturated ethnic consumers prefer ethnic advertisements to American advertisements, while the highly acculturated prefer American advertisements to ethnic advertisements. Hence, if advertising messages are insensitive to the cultural values of a significant portion of low and moderate acculturated ethnic consumers, the advertising could prove to be ineffective in reaching them. Similar relationships have also been found in other studies on acculturation and marketing-related behaviours. Research results imply marketers should consider developing advertising campaigns and marketing strategies from a multi-dimensional perspective of acculturation. These observations lend support to the propositions of consumer acculturation process; marketer acculturation process; acculturation strategies; and also the work of researchers who conclude that intercultural contact and adaptation is an important feature of the contemporary global, multicultural marketplace.

Practical implications

Our results imply that just as marketers tailor their marketing mixes to suit the unique needs of their dominant target market, so should they consider the levels of acculturation as a basis for segmenting ethnic groups. By treating immigrant consumers as a homogeneous group, marketers could overlook the underlying differences in their behaviours. These differences may be quite significant and better allocation of resources, and appropriate media selection, can be made by marketers who take into account acculturation as a segmentation variable. Segmentation is said to be a useful strategy when the target market is (i) different in attitudes and behaviours from other segments; (ii) reachable by available media and (iii) large enough in size to be cost effective (Perreault *et al.* 2011). The results of our research together with the evidence available in the literature indicate that the Asian Indian immigrants considered in our research meet criteria for a segmentation strategy.

Our research has implications for U.S. and ethnic marketers who can effectively reach low and moderate acculturated Asian Indian immigrants by using appropriate visual stimuli in their advertising. These include using Asian Indian models, showing female models in the traditional Indian dress of sari and jewellery. Females can be shown as young conservative housewives and male Indian models can be portrayed as young, educated, well-to-do individuals where appropriate. Indian cultural and moral values can be portrayed through the acts of models; for instance focus on family bonds, respect for elders, husband/wife relationships and religious rituals can be depicted. Indian art and artifacts in the backgrounds can also be included in the advertisements. In order to avoid pitfalls in reflecting cultural values, marketers must make sure that Indian advertisements are either prepared or screened by those individuals who are familiar with Asian Indian cultural values.

Our research was conducted entirely in English. Language and media are important considerations in planning an advertising campaign for any ethnic group. Most of the Asian Indian immigrants coming to the US are proficient in both spoken and written English (Mogelonsky 1995). In terms of acculturation and the subsequent cultural change processes, the multi-lingual ability of Asian Indians makes them a distinct group. Further research should examine multi-lingual capabilities across different ethnic consumer groups and the impact of multi-lingual abilities on acculturation outcomes.

According to Gitlin (2005), it is a language-form of the spoken English language that is more formal and more precise than standard American usage that unifies diverse groups of Asian Indians immigrants in the US. Hence caution must be exercised in using English words and phrases that may be offensive to Indian immigrants' cultural values. Marketers can reach Asian Indians through various English language print media that is used by Asian Indian immigrants, such as: *India Abroad*, *India News*, *Little India* and *Masala*. Asian Indians are also heavy users of broadcast media in metropolitan cities such as Chicago, Los Angeles and New York, where Indian programs in Indian languages as well as in English are aired on a regular basis. The Internet should also be considered. There are a number of Indian organizations and associations that organize religious and cultural events (Pavri 2011). U.S. and ethnic marketers could participate in these events to familiarize their products and get recognized for their initiatives in reaching out to Asian Indians. Our results also reinforce that religion, caste and regional diversity are not important considerations for purchase decisions to Asian Indian immigrants once in the US. This is good news for marketers, as it means that they do not have to incur added costs of developing separate Indian advertisements based on Asian Indian immigrants' diverse religious, language, regional and social backgrounds. According to the established literature, the Asian Indian population has a favourable growth rate and is an affluent group.

Relatively few Asian Indian subjects in our studies were high acculturated. A plausible explanation may be that these subjects could have been Westernized in their upbringing in India before migrating to the US. India had been under the British rule for more than 200 years and British influence is still prevalent in many parts of India, more specifically in urban areas. In Sodowsky and Carey's (1988) study, a small percentage of Asian Indians who consider themselves to be 'mostly or very American' consistently choose not to maintain their original national identity. This can be true of high acculturated Asian Indians in our studies. Earlier studies on other ethnic groups and Asian Indian immigrants found that the bi-cultural Asian Indians eat American food when they socialize with Americans and female Indians wear American dress at work. Like other immigrant groups, they celebrate traditional American holidays such as Thanksgiving and Christmas. It is likely that moderately acculturated Asian Indians sampled in our studies may not feel it necessary to comply with American ways and thus are more receptive to Indian advertisements than to American advertisements. Positive relationships between acculturation, Aad and purchase intention found in our study can provide marketers an added incentive for measuring the effectiveness of their culturally attuned advertising campaigns prepared for Asian Indians.

The results indicate the importance of advertising as a form of social communication that is particularly reflective of a society's culture. Consumers are exposed and overwhelmed by numerous advertisements, but ethnocentred advertisements catch their attention more easily. There was a time when Westerners would consider Asian subculture as one people, but now they have recognized that the Chinese, Japanese, Indians and others are all very different and these differences have been recognized in advertising media (Schmit 1977, cited in Krishna 1997). The effectiveness of ethnic marketing has inspired some U.S. marketers to develop culturally sensitive campaigns to reach Asian Indian immigrants residing in the US. These include long-distance telephone companies, airlines, insurance, Indian restaurants, match-making/dating services (Mogelonsky 1995; Krishna 1997). These authors note that Asian Indians tend to patronize those marketers who develop culturally sensitive advertising campaigns to reach them. Recently a few U.S. companies advertising such products as clothing (e.g. Guess, Gap); computer (e.g. IBM); cosmetics (e.g. Olay, L'Oreal); insurance (e.g. New York Life, Metlife); telephone (e.g. AT&T, Verizon) have included Asian Indian models in their advertisements.

Research also lends support to the characteristics of culture of being natural, shared, dynamic and learned, satisfying needs and wants, and being handed down from generation-to-generation (Schiffman, *et al.* 2010). The second-generation Asian Indians sampled in our study appear to have learned the cultural values from their parents and other social institutions to which they are exposed and perceive clearly the cultural differences between India and the US. They too prefer Indian advertisements over American advertisements sampled.

Conclusion

This chapter discusses literature on ethnicity, acculturation and Asian Indian immigrants in the US, which provide the conceptual background for our studies comparing Asian Indian immigrants' perceptions of Indian versus American print advertisements. Our results indicate that when Asian Indian immigrants are treated as a homogeneous group without considering their level of acculturation, the preferences for Indian versus American advertisements are mixed. However, when examined from an acculturative perspective, low acculturated subjects prefer Indian advertisements to American advertisements and the preferences change as acculturation level increases. While some Asian Indians retain a great many of their traditional cultural

values others adapt to cultural values of the dominant U.S. society, showing that the Asian Indians sampled are therefore not homogeneous. Our findings confirm that the more the target audience like the advertisements, the more inclined they are to purchase the advertised products. Our research also indicates that Asian Indians coming to the US have favourable socio-economic characteristics in terms of education, occupation and income.

In summary, the results of the studies presented in this chapter lead us to conclude that marketers should evaluate the feasibility of developing appropriate advertisements to reach successfully the growing affluent Asian Indians in the US, who in spite of favourable demographics and socio-economic characteristics, have so far been ignored by U.S. marketers (Bell 2006; Gitlin 2005; Krishna 1997; Raju 1995; Robey 1988). Marketers should not only undertake an ethnic segmentation strategy, but also consider acculturation as a segmentation variable to meet the needs of specific sub-segments of this ethnic group.

The insights provided by our research and several other studies will help both U.S. and ethnic marketers to acknowledge, appreciate and understand that it is in the interest of marketers to develop culturally attuned advertising and other marketing strategies to be successful in the diverse multicultural market of the US. Furthermore, in today's competitive, global and multicultural marketplace, one of the important growth strategies for marketers is market development, where they look for new consumers. The surge in the growth and purchasing power of ethnic groups provides a lucrative opportunity for marketers to sell their goods and services to these groups.

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