Please Check the Appropriate Box: The Problems with Ethnic Identification and Its Potential in Cross-Cultural Marketing

Delonia Minor-Cooley
Texas Southern University

Jeff Brice, Jr.
Texas Southern University

Delonia Minor-Cooley is an Assistant Professor of Marketing in the Jesse H. Jones School of Business, Texas Southern University, 3100 Cleburne St., Houston, TX 77004, tel. 713-313-1305, fax 713-313-7722, cooleydo@tsu.edu.
Jeff Brice, Jr. is an Assistant Professor of Management and Entrepreneurship in the Jesse H. Jones School of Business, Texas Southern University, 3100 Cleburne St., Houston, TX 77004, tel. 713-313-1303, fax 713-313-7722, bricejx@tsu.edu.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An increasing number of consumers are identifying themselves as bi-racial and/or multi-racial. More and more, we will continue to see the blurring of races, and with that, come the blurring of cultural boundaries. In the 2000 Census, the government decided to allow people to check more than one racial box. As marketers and researchers, we need to recognize the potential problem that we may face in the very near future of how to market to and predict the buying behaviors of these mixed ethnic and cultural groups. Target marketing based on ethnicity is increasing in frequency and sophistication; however, little has been done in the way creating a unifying definition or theory on ethnic identification. With the lack of these crucial elements, the problems that we had in the 2000 Census, will continue to plague marketers and academicians alike.

ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Green (1995) found one of the major challenges facing marketers in the present is the ability to successfully reach members of diverse cross-cultural groups. Raymond (2001) discovered that minorities have access to more than $900 billion dollars in annual spending power. Raymond also stated if the businesses of today intend to reap the benefits of this bulging consumer purse, they can no longer assume that all minorities are congregating in one area of the U.S or that any one marketing strategy will work for every member of the same ethnic group.

Cui (2001) defined ethnic marketing as the deliberate effort by marketers to reach a group of consumers presumably due to their unique ethnic characteristics. Ethnic target marketing is increasing in frequency and sophistication; however, there is still confusion as to how to market "ethnically". In order to correctly evaluate this situation, marketers need sound theoretical findings to substantiate using their current methods of target marketing. With a review of the literature, it has been shown that there is still much to develop and learn about ethnic identification before instructing others on how to utilize it in practice.

Ethnic Identity

Ethnic identity has been defined several different ways. Cheung (1993) stated that definitions of ethnic identity vary according to the underlying theory embraced by researchers' and scholars' intent on resolving its conceptual meanings. The fact that there is no widely agreed upon definition of ethnic identity is indicative of the confusion surrounding the topic. Some researchers (Bennett, 1975; Berry, 1980; Keefe and Padilla, 1987; Webster, 1994) defined ethnic identity as a more objective term (i.e. trait ethnicity). It is viewed as the traits from language, customs, values, national traits, and religion.

However, some researchers (Hirschman, 1981; Minor, 1992; Rossiter and Chan, 1998; Rotheram and Phinney, 1987; Stayman and Deshpande, 1989) describe strength of ethnic identification as a subjective means of one ascribing to an eth-

nic group based on their feelings of belongingness, how one feels in a particular situation, and one's thinking and behaviors based on that group membership**.**

> P1: The conceptual definition of ethnic identity is the sum of the level of strength of identification, objective ethnicity, and subjective ethnicity.

The following theories address how the construct has been used in marketing research. It is important to understand the origins of the construct in order to better use it in future research. Without understanding how it was originally used would only further dilute the construct; therefore, adding to the confusion surrounding why there is not a solid theoretical framework developed to explain it.

In-Group Bias Theory
In-group bias theory proposed by Brewer (1979) suggests that bias toward members of one's own group represents favoritism toward the in-group. The theory argues that there is a greater social distance between an individual and members of the out-group and those individuals rely on bias toward members of the in-group in making comparisons and/or evaluations.

Distinctiveness Theory
Distinctiveness theory has been suggested to help understand and describe ethnic identification (Grier and Deshpande, 2001). The central prediction of distinctiveness theory is that a person's distinctive traits in relation to other people in the environment will be more salient to the person than more common traits.

Intercultural Accommodation
Intercultural accommodation is used to evaluate the impact of cultural symbols (i.e. language, music, art, attire, spokesperson of a similar ethnic background) on advertising effectiveness (Holland and Gentry, 1997).

> P2: A general theory of ethnic identification states that as a consumer gains a more heighten awareness of their cultural surroundings, they become more attuned to their ethnic identity (objective ethnicity + subjective ethnicity + strength of identification) leading to an evaluation of their feelings about that identity and the identities of those surrounding them.

ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION: MEASUREMENT ISSUES
Why is a measurement scale important? Based on all the information provided thus far, it is important to marketers because of the changing face of the U.S. As the population continues to increase in more multi-cultural households, the means of marketing goods and services will have to adapt to the change as well. There are several scales in existence that propose to measure ethnic identification. The problem with these scales is which is the most useful in actually obtaining the needed information in order to guarantee that marketing researchers are measuring what is necessary to determine the true nature of ethnic identification.

> P3: The development of a scale to adequately measure ethnic identification should include the incorporation of the current scales and one that will include items that correctly represent the proposed definition of ethnic identification.

CONCLUSIONS AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS
This research examines the existing body of knowledge that surrounds the construct, and provides suggestions of actions that can be taken by future researchers to make this area stronger. The development of a consistent, replicable theory, scale, and model that takes into account the multiculturalism of our society is long overdue. That is why, ethnic identification needs to be further researched and developed to help to enhance the world of marketing as we know it. This is will hopefully lead to being able to segment our population into smaller, more succinct segments. It is at that point, that there should no longer be any confusion as to what "box" a consumer should check.

Keywords: ethnic identification, cross-cultural research, ethnic marketing, scale discrepancy, target marketing

Please Check the Appropriate Box: The Problems with Ethnic Identification and Its Potential in Cross-Cultural Marketing

Target marketing has become an increasingly crucial component of marketing strategy (Grier and Brumbaugh, 1999). As the population of our society becomes more diverse, marketers are faced with dual dilemmas: 1) reaching their target audience and 2) with deciding who is the real target market. Target marketing has shifted toward ethnic minority groups. Socioeconomic, demographic, and technological trends have driven the marketer's attention toward consumer groupings that have not typically been encompassed in traditional conceptualizations of the U.S. market. These markets include women, ethnic minorities, immigrants, gays, and lesbians.

An increasing number of consumers are identifying themselves as bi-racial and/or multi-racial. More and more, we will continue to see the blurring of races, and with that, come the blurring of cultural boundaries. For example, interracial relationships (i.e. Blacks/Whites, Whites/Hispanics, Hispanics/Blacks, Asians/Whites, etc.) are becoming more prominent and an accepted situation in society. As these relationships continue to develop, there can be an overlap of characteristics or rituals from each culture. This could affect the make-up of consumer purchases for particular times of the year. For example, there can be some religious differences between cultures. In the Hispanic culture, Cinco de Mayo in May is celebrated to represent a significant historical event. It represents a significant moment resulting in the freedom of the Mexicans. There is a similar holiday in the African American culture. In the Black/African American culture, Juneteenth in is celebrated. This date represents the day of Emancipation from slavery. These holidays are very important to each culture, but do not necessarily transcend the boundaries of other cultural groups just because they happened to cross in a particular situation or relationship. So what do we as marketers do when these two cultural groups come together in one consumer? Do we pick one day as more important to that consumer than the other? Do we market both? How will we know what to do in these types of situation without the necessary research?

In the 2000 Census, the government decided to allow people to check more than one racial box. It was difficult to actually categorize a person who identified themselves as more than one race. An even bigger problem started to evolve for marketers. How do we address one that sees him/herself as more than one target market segment? Does this group of consumers become a target market of their very own? Stayman and Deshpande (1989) stated that consumers in a multicultural society are likely to have a set of identities that may be totally different from each other depending on the situation and the different individuals. Brumbaugh and Grier (2006) found that this problem is very real and very current. In an experiment that they described as a failure, the authors discovered the inherent problems of not having an adequate definition or measurement for ethnicity. The problems that they discovered are the difficulty in accurately predicting consumer behavior for those consumers that have mixed races or ethnicities. As marketers and researchers, we need to recognize the potential problem that we may face in the very near future of how to market to and predict the buying behaviors of these mixed ethnic and cultural groups. It is not enough to say that we need to market differently to the different cultures, we need to embrace the fact that cross-cultural marketing is learning to market to more than one cultural group, while keeping in mind all the differences those groups entail. Frey (2004) stated that the change in the ethnic makeup is profoundly changing the landscape of our country, and it will continue to affect us for at least the next 40 years. This change in the makeup of our consumers will affect everything from buying behaviors to politics. He also found that by 2050 only a mere 50% of the United States population will be non-Hispanic White.

Though research in marketing to different ethnic groups has made great strides in the last 30 years, critical gaps remain to be addressed (Holland and Gentry, 1999). Ethnic target marketing is increasing in frequency and sophistication; however, there is still confusion as to how to market "ethnically". Most research is rooted in the idea that marketers used what is termed ethnic identification to direct practitioners on how to market ethnically. But with a review of the literature, it has been shown that there is still much to develop and learn about ethnic identification before instructing others on how to utilize it in practice. Cokley (2007) found that ethnic and racial identity, even though they are highly researched topics, they are still faced with continuing controversies surrounding their definitions and measurements. Unfortunately, we are lacking a general model and a solid, replicable scale

that can be applicable across a variety of ethnic cultural groups to capture this information. Another variable that is missing is one that has the ability to explain and predict the ethnic consumer's cultural effect on their response to targeted marketing efforts. These are all very good justifications as to why more research needs to be performed in the area of ethnic identification. This research examines the existing body of knowledge that surrounds this situation, some potential problems, and provides suggestions of actions that can be taken by future researchers to make this area stronger.

ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purchasing power of the minority consumer markets is rising even more rapidly than their population (Kim and Kang, 2001). US Census Bureau (2001) stated from 1990 to 1997, the African American population's disposable income increased 54 percent, compared to 41 percent for the average U.S. population. The purchasing power of U.S. Hispanics had grown by 300 percent in 1993 from the previous decade. Deshpande and Stayman (1994) felt that the need to account for cultural diversity through minority targeting and other ethnic marketing efforts has been increasingly documented.

Cui (2001) defined ethnic marketing as the deliberate effort by marketers to reach a group of consumers presumably due to their unique ethnic characteristics. Ethnicity is when the members of a group, mostly likely at birth, identify with each other based on some common ancestry. The members can be united by culture, behaviors, language, rituals, or religious traits (Dimofte, Forehand, and Deshpande, 2004). Perhaps, the largest driving force in ethnic marketing has been the growth in the population of a variety of ethnic groups, and their purchasing power. Ethnic groups can be considered as their own culture or sub-cultures within a country. They continue to reflect the characteristics of the national culture, but also develop their own beliefs and norms (Steenkamp, Hofstede, and Wedel, 1999).

Green (1995) found one of the major challenges facing marketers in the present is the ability to successfully reach members of diverse cross-cultural groups. Raymond (2001) discovered that minorities have access to more than $900 billion dollars in annual spending power. This statistic alone suggests that ethnic markets contribute substantially to the profitability of American business and reaching the ethnic consumer has become an important priority among U.S. marketers. Raymond also stated if the businesses of today intend to reap the benefits of this bulging consumer purse, they can no longer assume that all minorities are congregating in one area of the U.S or that any one marketing strategy will work for every member of the same ethnic group. The diversity in the marketplace has reached a breaking point and requires a reevaluation of the procedures marketers' possess to reach these consumers.

Ethnic Identity
It has been suggested that the ethnic identification of an ethnic group will play an important role in how a marketing strategy will be determined. Glazer (2002) proposed that there still exists a definitional issue between race and ethnicity. So what is ethnic identification? Ethnic identity has been defined several different ways. Cheung (1993) stated that definitions of ethnic identity vary according to the underlying theory embraced by researchers' and scholars' intent on resolving its conceptual meanings. The fact that there is no widely agreed upon definition of ethnic identity is indicative of the confusion surrounding the topic. Typically, ethnic identity is an affiliative construct, where an individual is viewed by themselves and by others as belonging to a particular ethnic or cultural group. Cheung also stated an individual can choose to associate with a group especially if other choices are available (i.e., the person is of mixed ethnic or racial heritage). Affiliation can be influenced by racial, natal, symbolic, and cultural factors.

Some researchers (Bennett, 1975; Berry, 1980; Keefe and Padilla, 1987; Webster, 1994) defined ethnic identity as a more objective term. The basic assumption of the objective perspective of ethnicity, otherwise known as trait ethnicity, is that when people speak a similar language, have a common history or ancestry, and a similar ethnic origin, they will automatically behave in the way that is the same, but different from other groups. The use of sur-

name (Hoyer and Deshpande, 1982), area of residence (Wallendorf and Reilly, 1983) and/or city (Saegert, Hoover, Hilger, 1985) are other examples of objective/trait ethnicity. Then, to understand ethnic differences and similarities commonly objective measures such as ethnic origin, language, country of origin, ancestry, religion, and nationality have been widely used (Makgosa, 2007). The use of objective/trait ethnicity is just one way of deriving one's ethnic identity is based on more concrete and observable means. This method is deemed as a more desirable and measurable way of deriving ethnic identity, but it could still be missing very important information to fully determine one's ethnic identity (Cheung, 1993).

However, some researchers (Hirschman, 1981; Rotheram and Phinney, 1987; Stayman and Deshpande, 1989; Minor, 1992; Rossiter and Chan, 1998) describe ethnic identification as a subjective means of one ascribing to an ethnic group based on their feelings of belongingness, how one feels in a particular situation, and one's thinking and behaviors based on that group membership. It can also be synonymous with ethnic self-awareness. This is a temporary state, at which point, a consumer is more aware of their ethnicity (Forehand and Deshpande, 2001). Ogden, Ogden, and Schau (2004) stated that the assumption of subjective ethnicity is the best indicator of how one feels inside about their perception of their cultural reality. Forehand and Deshpande (2001) felt that consumers can be prompted to be more aware of their ethnicity in certain situations in which they have to categorize themselves along ethnic criteria. It is at this point, that it becomes more of a subjective debate of one's own ethnicity based on the other subjective traits that are utilized to make their decision. This decision can also be influenced by the summarization of affiliation of one's ethnic group. Deshpande, Hoyer, and Donthu (1986) stated that any combination of subjective-objective perspectives may still not be enough to fully explain ethnic identity, because the intensity of affiliation with the group is still lacking from the definition.

Chung and Fisher (1999) stated that an effective approach in the study of intracultural differences has been the strength of ethnic identification. They found that one of the best resources of the ethnic identification approach is its recognition that people are not mainly and solely directed by culture. Stayman and Deshpande (1989) felt that ethnicity is not just their identification with an ethnic group, but how strongly they identify with that particular group in a given situation. Forehand and Deshpande (2001) defined the strength of ethnic identification as people's enduring association with their ethnic background. Deshpande and Stayman (1994) describe strength of ethnic identification as how strongly a minority or ethnic group member affiliates with his or her group. Strength of ethnic identification has been shown to influence consumer behavior for both ethnic and racial classifications. Research has found that strength of ethnic identification affects the amount of attention consumers give to ethnic information, the probability that consumers will purchase ethnic products and the response of consumers to advertising featuring ethnic actors.

Hui and Laroche (1998) performed a study with a major focus on ethnicity and consumption and how they affected the identification of ethnic group membership. They found idiosyncrasies in group behavior and attitudes that are of importance to marketers. They realize that some ethnicity indicators (e.g. ethnic origin) are cultural aspects that are not subject to one's volition and remain largely unchanged even after extended contact with another ethnic group. Some other ethnicity indicators (e.g. media usage), however, refer to cultural behavior that is at least partly determined by a person's own preference and choice and is readily influenced by the extent and duration of contacts with another ethnic group. Therefore, it is deemed necessary to develop a precise and fluid definition of ethnic identity.

   P1: The conceptual definition of ethnic identity is the sum of the level of strength of identification, objective
   ethnicity, and subjective ethnicity.

Ethnic identification has evolved over time to include several different vantage points of previous researchers. The following theories address how the construct has been used in marketing research. It is important to understand the origins of the construct in order to better use it in future research. Without understanding how it was originally used would only further dilute the construct; therefore, adding to the confusion surrounding why there is not a solid theoretical framework developed to explain it.

In-Group Bias Theory
In previous research, there have been theories proposed that have tried to explain the importance of ethnic marketing or why ethnic identification is a valid construct. Green (1999) looked at the in-group bias theory. This theory proposed by Brewer (1979) suggests that bias toward members of one's own group represents favoritism toward the in-group. The argument is that if you are a member of the group, you will be more likely to stick closer to those members than members of another group that is not the "in group". In other words, African American consumers would be more inclined to favor ads with other African Americans than ads that don't feature African Americans. This is a very good starting point for the development of a theory for ethnic identification. Based on the literature, ethnic identification is based on one's feeling toward themselves and their ethnicity (Forehand and Deshpande, 2001). Based on the theory and the literature, the information is very relevant to the formation of a framework to explain ethnic identification.

Distinctiveness Theory
Distinctiveness theory has been suggested to help understand and describe ethnic identification (Grier and Deshpande, 2001). The thesis of distinctiveness theory is that a person's distinctive traits in relation to other people in the environment will be more salient to the person than more common traits. In other words, when at the office Christmas party, people will be more attuned to their ethnicity when they are in the fewest of number in the room. This theory helps to explain some of the actions of consumers when they are more likely to purchase an item simply because the actor in the ad was "the same" as they are.

Intercultural Accommodation
Intercultural accommodation is used to evaluate the impact of cultural symbols (i.e. language, music, art, attire, spokesperson of a similar ethnic background) on advertising effectiveness (Holland and Gentry, 1999). In 1999, Holland and Gentry suggested that intercultural accommodation is useful to influence the consumer's evaluation, comprehension, and recall of the message, and to influence behavioral intentions toward the communicator. The term "intercultural" is used to convey the idea that communication is occurring across at least two cultures. Intercultural accommodation involves communicators of one group borrowing cultural symbols from another group to appear more similar, enhance communication, and gain approval.

With the three theories, it would have been expected that one would stand out or at least be able to help develop a stable model of ethnic identification. But yet, not one theory is dominant in this area of study. With the synthesis of the three theories, it is hard to believe that a unifying theory can not be developed. Therefore, it is our assertion that a theory of ethnic identification is well over due. Cui and Choudhury (2002) stated that regardless of the body of literature, there are still not many studies that address the effectiveness of multicultural target marketing and how consumers feel about this practice. De Run (2005) stated that targeting ethnic groups have become big business for the advertising industry. Jamal (2003) felt that a framework to measure ethnic identity would possibly lead practitioners to better focus on the correct consumer groups and modify their marketing mix accordingly. These are very prevalent arguments for the development of a unifying theory of ethnic identification.

Is it possible, that all these theories are still not hitting the essence of what ethnic identification really is? Could it be that they are all still measuring external variables that may affect ethnic identification, but not actually measuring ethnic identification itself? Based on the information, the following is suggested as a more meaningful way to explain this phenomenon.

   P2: A general theory of ethnic identification should state that as a consumer gains a more heighten awareness of their cultural surroundings, they become more attuned to their ethnic identity (objective ethnicity + subjective ethnicity + strength of identification) leading to an evaluation of their feelings about that identity and the identities of those surrounding them.

ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION: MEASUREMENT ISSUES

The ethnic identification dilemma is very interesting. A lot of its problems are due to the idea of multiculturalism among ethnicities. The 2000 Census was plagued with a similar problem of how they should account for persons with multiple ethnic identities. There can be diverse groups within each ethnicity, and being able to identify with only one may pose a potential problem for the respondent. This problem could possibly lead to reasons why there has been so much controversy in how to correctly measure ethnic identification. As previously stated, Cokley (2007) found that ethnic and racial identity, even though they are highly researched topics, they are still faced with continuing controversies surrounding their definitions and measurements. With this problem abounding, it is not surprising that an empirically agreed upon measurement scale has yet to come into existence. Why is a measurement scale important? Based on all the information provided thus far, it is important to marketers because of the changing face of the U.S. As the population continues to increase in more multi-cultural households, the means of marketing goods and services will have to adapt to the change as well. There are several scales in existence that propose to measure ethnic identification. The problem with these scales is which is the most useful in actually obtaining the needed information in order to guarantee that marketing researchers are measuring what is necessary to determine the true nature of ethnic identification.

A discrepancy was found by Chung and Fischer (1999) based on Donthu and Cherian (1992) 4-item scale. Donthu and Cherian stated that their scale had a high reliability of .79. When Chung and Fischer used the scale on their data set, the reliability was unacceptably low (.19). It was felt that the one-item scale developed by Deshpande, Hoyer, and Donthu (1986), the first item in Donthu and Cherian scale, produced better and more adequate reliability.

The way a construct is measured is very important. Ethnic identification has been measured several ways. Some of the more prevalent ways the construct has been measured is based on scales by Deshpande, Hoyer, and Donthu (1986), Hirschman (1981), Donthu and Cherian (1992), and Webster (1992). These scales were combined (Donthu and Cherian, 1994) to make a 5-item scale that measured ethnic identification using a Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The questions were:
1. What ethnic group do you identify with or belong to?
2. How strongly do you identify with this cultural group?
3. How important was it to assimilate with the dominant Anglo culture?
4. How important was it to identify with your own culture?
5. How often do you speak your native tongue?

Though these are very interesting questions, do they really get at the heart of measuring one's ethnic identity? Since ethnic identity has, for the most part, been seen as a construct with more than one dimension (i.e. subjective ethnicity, objective ethnicity, and strength of identification), is it possible that the aforementioned scale is only measuring one dimension and not the others? Being that all dimensions were possibly not captured could be the cause for such low reliability upon replication by other authors. The limiting nature of this type of measure should lead marketing researchers to the examination of the previous measurement scales and the conclusion that a new and more integrated measurement model is needed.

Laroche, Kim, and Tomiuk (1998) examined the literature and found a distinct model that attempts to measure ethnic identity. The most common model is a linear bipolar model. Ethnic identity was conceptualized along a single continuum ranging from strong ethnic ties (low acculturation/high ethnic identity) at one end to strong mainstream ties at the other (high acculturation/low ethnic identity). The outcome of the scale was for a consumer to use their level of acculturation or their level of identification with the majority culture to measure their ethnic identity (Olmedo, 1979).

If researchers and academicians are to ever move forward in the area of cross-cultural marketing or target marketing, the development of a measurement scale(s) has to be completed. The scale(s) will help to better tailor find-

ings from research studies to the needs of practitioners, as well as, possibly ensuring that target marketing is being utilized at it's optimal potential for every business or organization that actively participates in this type of practice. These scales, combined or independently, all still have one subsequent problem; there is not a unifying theory to base the results. They also face the problem of correctly measuring ethnic identity when the construct can not be definitively explained. Most of the problems with measurement scales stem from the lack of a correct definition and then subsequently, a fluid theory. These issues do not allow the scales an adequate chance to perform statistically. Therefore, the need for an agreed upon scale that is theoretically sound is greatly needed in this area.

P3: The development of a scale to adequately measure ethnic identification should include the incorporation of the current scales and one that will include items that correctly represent the proposed definition of ethnic identification.

CONCLUSIONS AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Based upon all the discrepancies and different schools of thought when defining ethnic identification, in the literature, what should we, as marketers, do? Should we move on and discover a single, unified form of measure and theory? Should we even consider ethnic identification as a viable means of observing our consumers? Does it really matter to consumers that we make accommodations for their ethnicity (i.e. cultural differences) or is it their "race" (i.e. physical differences)? It will be helpless to continue utilizing measures and theories that are not really explaining or capturing the information that marketers are trying to study. In short, is ethnic identification an empty construct? This construct is important in a world of diversity such as, the one in which we live. Yes, it is important to consumers that we, as marketers, consider them as a whole person. That is why, ethnic identification needs to be further researched and developed to help enhance the world of marketing as we know it.

It is abundantly clear that marketers need a definition, then a theory, and then the emergence of a measurement scale to adequately capture the true essence of how ethnic identification affects consumers, both in the United States and abroad. Marketers should consider that the different scales that have been used to date may not be truly accurate classifications of the individuals they are trying to research. This can and will cause serious problems with the construct validity of a scale. More and more, marketers will realize that general target marketing strategies will not be as effective as they used to be. Also, marketers will have to start looking at an even more micro-marketing means of targeting consumers. Therefore, the first step is to ensure an adequate definition of ethnic identification that will be applicable across the different ethnic groups. This will help to ensure the adequate advance of a baseline for the development of a theoretically sound construct.

Once an agreed upon definition of the construct has been established, a theoretical framework can be created and tested. This will help to solidify the ethnic identification marketing literature. There have been initial steps in the right direction for a theory formation, but there just has not been a consistent theory accepted and supported. A valid measurement instrument needs to be created and tested. Upon finding a measurement instrument that will capture the necessary data that researchers are trying to measure, an emerging body of work on ethnic identification will come to the forefront and offer insights that we have been aiming at with one shot studies. These findings will go a long way in solidifying the cross-cultural body of literature as well. The development of a consistent, replicable theory, scale, and model that takes into account the multiculturalism of our society is long overdue. The development of better sampling and scales to identify ethnic identification will help to facilitate the acquiring of more useable data in order to make better culturally-based predictions.

Once a theory is in place, researchers will be able to provide explanations to the differences in marketing responses that may be due to the ethnic identification of a person. This finding will also allow the continued and necessary cultural research that is needed to extend the existing body of knowledge. It can also help to be a starting point of measuring how consumers really feel about target marketing. There have been several studies that suggest that target marketing can have a negative effect on consumers (De Run, 2005; Jamal, 2003; Torres and

Briggs, 2005). But how can we know, if we can not correctly recognize how consumers ethnically identify themselves? Marketing researchers would greatly benefit from a theoretically sound construct that can help with the ever present and constantly developing culturally based studies that will be needed as the world becomes more global and cultures continue to mix.

With more detailed information on how ethnic groups are identifying themselves, marketing will become even more niche, and more successfully reach the intended micromarkets. Practitioners and academicians alike can move forward toward a more consumer-oriented form of marketing. Again, Frey (2004) stated that the change in the ethnic makeup is profoundly changing the landscape of our country, and it will continue to affect us for at least the next 40 years. The growing trend of marketing is to find that untapped area of consumers with an unsatisfied need or want. What better way for a practitioner to find that area by having a more meaningful process of knowing how to accurately utilize ethnic target marketing through the delineation of these issues with ethnic identification. Once the issues have been addressed, academicians and marketers alike will be able to better narrow their focus on target markets. This is will hopefully lead to being able to segment our population into smaller, more succinct segments. It is at that point, that there will no longer be any confusion as to what "box" a consumer will check.

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