

Cross-Cultural Globalization of Advertisements

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ABSTRACT. Globalization has amplified countries' connectivity and shifted marketing strategies. Some believe that these changes have sparked a global view toward products, known as *Global Consumer Culture Positioning (GCCP)*. Conversely, some argue that there has only been a shift toward Western individualistic ideals within Eastern and Western cultures. The present study replicated and extended Lin's (2001) research on cultural values expressed in advertisements in China and the United States to determine what changes have occurred in product categories and cultural values since 1998. Further, the current study aimed to determine if these changes represent a shift toward individualism or GCCP. A total of 572 television commercials were analyzed from 3 U.S. and 3 Chinese networks. Results showed significant changes in the representation of cultural values toward GCCP for both U.S. and Chinese commercials between 1998 and 2014. The Chinese sample in the present study increased in individual/independence appeal ($t = 9.07, p < .001, d = 1.02$), and the United States sample increased in group/consensus appeal ($t = 8.19, p < .001, d = 0.81$). Results suggested that both cultures have started to represent cultural values in a unified structure depicting advertisements globally. Furthermore, a specific shift appears to have occurred toward the representation of similar values across different cultures in advertisements.

The term *globalization* has become increasingly popular over the past decade. It now represents the increasing interconnectedness of societies (Steger, 2009). Countries' connectivity has been amplified through changes in economic trends, consumer behavior, trade, capital flows, migration, and technology (Jordá & Sarabia, 2014). As globalization brings about increased change and opportunities, it also leads to increased risk and instability (Lee & McNulty, 2003). Companies attempt to advertise their products to an entire society, but as global connectivity increases, the probability of relating to every culture becomes more difficult. Within the realm of consumer culture and advertising strategies, opinions vary on the best method of connecting to a greater population. Some believe

that globalization has created Global Consumer Culture Positioning (GCCP), a shared global view toward products (Alden, Steenkamp, & Batra, 1999; Jiang & Wei, 2012). As such, this type of advertising strategy highlights brands by using globally understood meanings and cultural values. Others have focused on an increasing shift toward Western behavior and values (Gupta & De, 2007; Lee & McNulty, 2003). The current study analyzed the changes in the cultural values expressed through advertisement over time in relation to increases in globalization.

GCCP, in accordance to Jiang and Wei's (2012) findings, is associated with the global view of advertisements. Alden et al. (1999) found support that GCCP is a useful global positioning tool for marketers to present their products as being

SUMMER 2016

PSI CHI
JOURNAL OF
PSYCHOLOGICAL
RESEARCH

“global.” The main goal for positioning a brand globally is to have it be viewed as a membership into an elite club (Hannerz, 1990). Advertising in this way fosters power and value toward a brand (Shocker, Srivastava, & Reukert, 1994). GCCP is used as an indirect, soft-sell approach and also focuses on high technology items, popular to the younger modern population (Alden et al., 1999). Therefore, the presentation of indirect youthful ideas in advertisements displays GCCP’s emphasis on a global consumer culture. As such, positioning advertisements according to GCCP allows for a larger audience in that the messages conveyed are similar cross-culturally. Overall, in relation to multiple cultures, GCCP has been found in 26.5% of advertisements in other countries, although only 5.5% of U.S. advertisements display GCCP (Alden et al., 1999). Focusing on different cultures, Jiang and Wei (2012) found an increase in the similarity of advertisements cross-culturally in North America, Europe, and Asia supporting the globalization of ads. The research further focused on the time period prior to the 2008 economic crash because it was influential on the global perspective of world market connectivity (Jiang & Wei, 2012). The results indicated an increasing trend of similar values being expressed internationally in relation to global consumer culture. There were no differences in the values presented in China or in U.S. advertisements. Further, a specific shift toward GCCP was evident through the representation of similar values across different cultures in advertisements.

Instead of concentrating on the positioning of advertisements, others have studied the shifts in cultural variables, specifically collectivism and individualism. Collectivism is the increased focus on the group over the individual (Hofstede, 1997). On the other hand, individualism is represented through individuals’ greater degree of separation between self-perceptions and their culture (Hofstede, 1997). Hofstede (1997), along with Franke, Hofstede, and Bond’s (1991) research from 53 countries, found that national wealth is highly correlated with individualism. As such, it can be understood that, as economic growth increases, so does individualism. Hofstede (1997) predicted that, if any cultural dimension were to change, it would be individualism, because it has a direct relationship with the wealth of a country. As an example, Lee and McNulty (2003) found a major shift in Korea’s cultural and consumer values after their economic crash of 1997. In their study,

they analyzed the reasoning behind the downturn and Korea’s ability to overcome it. They found that Korea’s collectivist approach to business was impeding their global economic growth into an economy influenced by Western individualism. Simultaneous to Korea shifting their business approach toward individualistic values, the Korean economic market quickly recovered. This suggested a connection between an individualistic approach and economic success (Lee & McNulty, 2003). Further research by Gupta and De (2007) revealed a similar shift toward individualism in India during a peak in globalization. They found an increase in the importance of the individual through 1947 to 2005.

Based on the evidence, there is a discrepancy in the way GCCP and Western individualism would advertise a product. GCCP would emphasize products using globally shared ideas, while still maintaining culture specificity through differences for collectivistic and individualistic cultures. Opposing this, a shift toward Western values would focus exclusively on individualistic advertisement strategies. To test this hypotheses in the present study, a sample of both U.S. and Chinese television commercials were chosen. It is possible to develop a comparative analysis focusing on these two leading countries due to their differences in cultural values, the leading ideals for thought and action within a society (Srikandath, 1991). The United States is primarily represented as an individualistic country, and China as a collectivist country (Hofstede, 1997). According to the Hofstede Center, the United States scored 91 out of 100 on individualism and China scored 20. However, focusing on advertising strategies in accordance with GCCP and shifts in individualism, traditional, and cultural values can fluctuate.

Cultural Values and Advertising

A substantial amount of research has focused on the cultural values present in advertisements. Mueller (1987) outlined 10 traditional appeals that express culture through ads: group/consensus versus individual/independence, soft-sell versus hard-sell, veneration of older adults/traditional versus modernity/youth, status appeal perspective, product merit perspective, oneness with nature appeal, or time-orientation appeal. On the basis of these appeals, it is possible to measure cultural variations in advertisements, and their shifts over time. Multiple researchers have identified culture specific indicators of Mueller’s appeals in both Western and East Asian countries. For example, Lin

(2001) studied Mueller's traditional appeals present in U.S. and Chinese advertisements. Lin's work demonstrated subtle changes in cultural values and advertisement strategies in 1998; the current study aimed to extend Lin's work to contemporary times.

Group/consensus appeal. In accordance with Mueller's (1987) definition, group/consensus appeal focuses on the individual as being part of the whole and conforming to the group. While comparing Japanese (a collective culture) and U.S. (an individualistic culture) commercials, Lin (1993) argued against the complete standardization of advertisements, because she identified a more collective approach in Japan. In other words, group/consensus appeal was stronger in Japanese culture. Similar to Lin's study, Maynard and Taylor (1999) further found that Eastern cultural values represented collectivism.

Individual/independence appeal. This appeal shifts the focus away from the group and toward the individual (Mueller, 1987). Research has identified that this appeal is more common in Western and individualistic cultures (Lin, 1993; Mueller, 1987). In a recent study of 2,158 print advertisements, Okigbo, Martin, and Amienyi (2005) found that American magazines demonstrate U.S. cultural values, the most common cultural values being individualism, low context communication, and product merit. With regard to both appeals, evidence has shown that there is a difference between Western and Eastern advertisements. To solidify this, Kalliny and Ghanem (2009) surveyed the Middle East (a collective culture) and U.S. advertising agencies to test for the approach taken on advertisement creation. They found that these agencies use culture specific appeals because one focuses on group/consensus and the other on individual/independence.

Soft-sell appeal and hard-sell appeal. Soft-sell appeal is characterized by ads that set a tranquil mood and atmosphere by emphasizing the storyline instead of the products. On the other hand, hard-sell appeal focuses on branding, merit, and recommendation of the product (Mueller, 1987). Early findings on these opposing appeals have shown that hard-sell appeal is seen more frequently in an individualistic market, whereas soft-sell appeal is more common in collectivistic cultures (Lin, 2001; Maynard & Taylor, 1999; Mueller, 1987). More recent research has suggested that there has been a shift toward a global perspective on hard-sell and soft-sell. Okazaki, Mueller, and Diehl (2013) examined the effectiveness of these appeals in a global

market between France, Italy, Japan, Germany, and the United States. They found that the soft-sell appeal is more effective and tends to induce less irritation compared to hard-sell commercials.

Veneration of older adults/tradition appeal. Mueller (1987) defined this appeal as a respect toward older adults' wisdom and traditional values. Previous research has found that tradition is a key factor in many Asian advertisements. Belk and Polay (1985), as well as Mueller (1992), later found that, although Japan appeared to become more "Americanized" between 1953 and 1988, the importance of traditional values expressed through their ads was still strong and even increasing. Similarly, research by Lin (2001) showed that, compared to the United States, Chinese ads displayed more veneration of older adults. Current research has recognized a change in Chinese commercials over time. Zhang and Harwood (2004) identified five dominant themes in Chinese commercials: product quality/effectiveness, family, modernity, beauty/youth, and pleasure. They showed that the importance of family was still a leading traditional appeal (Zhang & Harwood, 2004). However, there has been a shift toward utility, youth, and modernity. This is consistent with the continual growth and ever changing global market.

Modernity/youth appeal. Modernity/youth appeal represents a younger generation through the emphasis on contemporariness and antiaging benefits (Mueller, 1987). Lin (1993) found that a younger and more modern appeal is typical of Western countries, representing a more individualistic culture. However, Lin (2001) found no significant difference between Chinese and U.S. use of modernity/youth appeal.

Status appeal and oneness with nature appeal. Status appeal suggests that individuals can increase their position or rank within the opinion of others (Mueller, 1987). Mueller (1987) demonstrated that Japan, being a collective culture, had a greater inclination to appeals on social status and oneness with nature than the United States. The oneness with nature appeal was defined by Mueller (1987) as the importance of the interaction between people and nature. Similarly, Cheng and Schweitzer (1996) identified that advertisements in China used traditional appeals like status and oneness with nature more readily compared to the United States. They also found that the United States being more individualistic reflected manipulation and control over nature in their ads. However, Lin (2001) found support only for the fact that Chinese commercials

used more oneness with nature appeal, but not status appeal compared to the United States.

Product merit appeal. This appeal is characterized by an ad that describes a product and its merit in depth (Mueller, 1987). China has an inclination toward a soft-sell approach, thus they also often place less information in their ads (Lin, 1993). Lin (1993) concluded that this was because China's traditional values consider it impolite to be direct or "boastful." Similarly, Lin (2001) found that U.S. commercials use more product merit appeals than China.

Time-orientation appeal. Time-orientation appeal refers to advertisements that focus on the importance of time and how the product can save or generate more time (Mueller, 1987). Similar to the concept of economic growth and shifts in individualism, Bruneau (1979) found that time perception and orientation was highly influenced by the amount of industrialization in a culture. Furthermore, Lin (2001) identified that U.S. commercials were characterized by more time-orientation than China.

The Current Study

Similar to the 1997 Korean crisis (Lee & McNulty, 2003), the 2008 global economic downturn demonstrated the world's connectedness. Prasad (2009) revealed that the Chinese and U.S. economies had a close relationship. He predicted that the 2008 crisis, which brought the United States and China under the spotlight, would increase the two countries' close relationship (Prasad, 2009). This was demonstrated in 2010 when China became the second largest global economy, surpassing Japan and trailing the United States (Wang & Praet, 2012). Because of the exponential changes in both the Chinese and U.S. global markets, our study was conducted to replicate Lin's (2001) research. Her research examined a cultural comparison between Chinese and U.S. cultural values as reflected through advertising appeals. Lin's (2001) main finding was that both Chinese and U.S. advertisements remained consistent in their traditional portrayal of cultural values. In taking Lin's findings and our current findings, we tracked the changes and drew a comparison over time.

Lin (2001) identified and tested nine hypotheses to measure the main differences in cultural values expressed in advertisements in China and the United States, all of which were tested again in the present study. Specifically, we expected that (H1) U.S. commercials would have a higher

ratio of hard-sell to soft-sell appeals than their Chinese counterparts, (H2) Chinese commercials would portray more veneration of older people models than their U.S. counterparts, (H3) U.S. commercials would use more time-oriented advertisements than their Chinese counterparts, (H4) Chinese commercials would use more group/consensus appeals than their U.S. counterparts, (H5) U.S. commercials would use more individual/independence appeals than their Chinese counterparts, (H6) U.S. commercials would use more modernity/youth appeals than their Chinese counterparts, (H7) U.S. commercials would use more product merit appeals than their Chinese counterparts, (H8) Chinese commercials would use more status appeals than their U.S. counterparts, and (H9) Chinese commercials were more likely to reflect oneness with nature appeals than their U.S. counterparts. Out of the nine hypotheses, Lin found support for seven. There was no support for H6 or H8.

In addition, the present study examined whether there has been a shift in cultural values either toward Western values or a global consumer culture. Thus, we hypothesized (H10) that a change in U.S. and Chinese commercials did not occur between 1998 and 2014 in shared and personal product categories but that a change did occur in the representation of cultural values in advertising. In addition, we hypothesized (H11) that, between 1998 and 2014, there would be a greater shift in cultural advertisement appeals toward Western individualistic values than toward GCCP. A shift toward individualism would be characterized by less usage of a group/consensus appeal and greater use of individual/independent appeal. Further, this may be identified if Chinese advertising appeals exhibit cultural norms typically seen in U.S. ads, and U.S. advertising stays consistent in their current use of appeals. On the other hand, a shift toward GCCP could be identified through a greater use of the soft-sell appeal and the modernity/youth appeal. In addition, in GCCP, an ad from one country would convey cultural values in a similar way to an ad in another. The fact that two countries' cultures are moving toward one another and away from their own cultural advertising norms would be representative of the shift toward GCCP. Therefore, in the current study, if the United States demonstrated advertising appeals used in Chinese culture and vice versa, this would exhibit GCCP.

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Method

Sampling Method

For the purpose of the present study, Lin's (2001) criteria and sampling procedures were replicated for the collection of advertisements. In Lin's (2001) study, content in the areas of sports, news, entertainment, and cultural programs that aired during primetime were taken into consideration. To draw a comparison between Lin's (2001) results and current television advertisements, the same U.S. and Chinese television channels were chosen for the present study. Channel One (CCTV1) focuses on news, sports, serials, and entertainment programs; Channel Two (CCTV2) focuses on news, sports, arts and music, entertainment, and children's programs. Lin chose these two channels because of the similarity to the United States' audience population and program genres. A third channel chosen by Lin was the Beijing Television Station (BTV), which covers local news, serials, entertainment programs, and sports. BTV provided Lin's study with a wider variety of program genres, apart from those in CCTV1 and CCTV2. To represent the United States in Lin's study, the National Broadcasting Company (NBC), Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (ESPN), and Arts and Entertainment (A&E) were chosen.

Our sampling procedure consisted of recording live primetime television (8–11 p.m.) during a random week in June 2014 (Sunday 22–Saturday 28). To further replicate Lin's (2001) study, six separate days were observed rather than collecting network recordings on the same day of the week. First, the networks were randomly assigned to the days of the week. Randomization was done by writing all the days of the week and the networks on individual slips of paper. The days of the week were put into one container and the networks into another. A researcher then picked a slip of paper from the days of the week container, and a slip of paper from the network container, resulting in a network/weekday schedule. The weekday and network pairings were as follows: Sunday/ESPN, Monday/BTV, Tuesday/NBC, Thursday/A&E, Friday/CCTV1, and Saturday/CCTV2.

A total of 572 advertisements were gathered: 370 U.S. ads and 202 Chinese ads. Duplicate commercials were eliminated from the study, as well as promotional advertisements for the station, the network, or for a program. This was done in order to prevent potentially skewed data. One hundred seventy-two commercials were rejected from the U.S. group and 55 from the Chinese group. This

left a total of 198 commercials for the U.S. sample and 147 for the Chinese sample.

Measurement

Advertisements were classified into 10 categories: auto, beauty and personal care, clothing, food and drink, household appliances, medicine, travel, services, industrial products, and miscellaneous. These categories were taken from Katz and Lee (1992), which were also used by Lin in 2001.

The cultural values evaluated in the present study and Lin's (2001) were adopted from Mueller (1987) because they reflected a comparison between Western and Eastern values. Mueller's conception of cultural values echoed the central difference between Hofstede's (1984) definition of independent and collectivist cultures. The distinct cultural values adopted were: group/consensus, individual/independence, soft-sell appeal, hard-sell appeal, veneration of older adults/tradition, modernity/youth, status, product merit, oneness with nature, and time orientation (Mueller, 1987). Advertisements from the sample were coded in terms of all cultural values on a scale ranging from 1 (*weak*) to 3 (*strong*).

As a precaution, advertisements were also coded into two categories: shared or personal products using Han and Shavitt's (1994) product categories. Personal products were determined through the sum of the following categories: auto, beauty and personal care, clothing, food and drink, and medicine. Shared products were the sum of the following categories: household appliances, travel, services, industrial products, and miscellaneous. Out of 401 advertisements, 54% were classified as personal and 46% as shared for the 1998 sample. In 2014, out of 207 advertisements 57% were classified as personal and 43% as shared. Shared products were defined as those that required more than one individual to make the decision of purchase and usage. Inversely, personal products were those that required one individual to make the decision for usage and purchase (Han & Shavitt, 1994). The coding of personal and shared products was done in the current study as a cautionary measure for the identification of either a cultural shift or a shift in product categories. Therefore, a comparative analysis was conducted between the shared and personal samples of 1998 and 2014. Han and Shavitt (1994) identified that personal products tended to be advertised as being more individualistic, and shared as more collectivistic. As such, the product type, instead of a shift in consumer culture, may

represent a change in cultural values.

Coding Procedures

The samples were collected and coded based on product type and cultural values as described previously. Chinese ads were translated by native Mandarin speakers into English. The two coders were undergraduate students, one Canadian and one Chinese American. The coders were also the primary and secondary investigators; thus, they previously read the background research and were familiar with the background information needed to code the advertisements. They coded 50% of the ads together, 25% of the U.S. and 25% of the Chinese advertisements. Reliability was checked with this sample and coders had an additional training session to discuss and code misunderstood items. The rest of the ads were coded separately. Differences in coding between both individuals resulted in a discussion and were then settled upon. Percent agreement for the U.S. sample was 80% and for the Chinese sample 91%.

Results

Results for the 11 hypotheses are addressed in Tables 1 to 4. Table 1 addresses the current product distribution between U.S. and Chinese commercials. The results in Table 1 reflect that the U.S. 2014 sample had a greater number of ads in the auto, medicine, travel, and services categories compared to the Chinese 2014 sample. On the other hand, the Chinese 2014 sample consisted of a greater number of commercials in the beauty and personal care, food and drink, and miscellaneous categories. The distribution for clothing, household appliances, and industrial products was similar across both the U.S. and Chinese 2014 samples.

Table 2 displays the comparison of product category distribution between 1998 and 2014. Product categories from Table 1 were summed together based on Han and Shavitt (1994) to create the personal and shared categories. This was used as a cautionary measure to examine whether changes in product categories had influenced the changes in advertising appeals. Table 2 exhibits that for both the U.S. and Chinese personal category the results of the analyses were nonsignificant, with moderately low effect size differences. The U.S. shared category results were similar. However, although the China shared category results were nonsignificant as well, the effect size difference was moderately high. These analyses partially supported H10, demonstrating that there were no

changes in product categories between 1998 and 2014. In addition, to identify a comparison between 1998 and 2014 and to further answer H10, Tables 3 and 4 were created.

Table 3 displays the cultural values reflected in both the U.S. and Chinese advertisements. Alpha was set at .01, as a precautionary measure for Type I error that may occur through the use of multiple

TABLE 1
Product Category Distribution in U.S. and Chinese Sample

Product Category	1998 Sample									
	χ^2	<i>p</i>	Contingency Coefficient	U.S. (n = 206)		Chinese (n = 105)		Total (n = 406)		
				<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	
Auto	18.99	< .001	.21	42	20.4	11	5.6	53	13.2	
Beauty and personal care	0.46	.496	.03	19	9.2	22	11.3	41	10.2	
Clothing	1.24	.265	.06	3	1.5	0	0.0	3	0.7	
Food and drink	5.79	.016	.12	31	15.0	48	24.6	79	19.7	
Household appliances	7.17	.007	.13	10	4.9	24	12.3	34	8.5	
Medicine	0.22	.639	.02	23	11.2	19	9.7	42	10.5	
Travel	0.05	.823	.01	6	2.9	4	2.1	10	2.5	
Services	3.60	.058	.09	21	10.2	10	5.1	31	7.7	
Industrial products	13.83	< .001	.18	3	1.5	21	10.8	24	6.0	
Misc	1.42	.233	.06	48	23.3	36	18.5	84	20.9	
Product Category	2014 Sample									
	χ^2	<i>p</i>	Contingency Coefficient	U.S. (n = 198)		Chinese (n = 147)		Total (n = 345)		
				<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	
Auto	3.98	.046	.11	42	21.2	19	12.9	61	17.7	
Beauty and personal care	6.48	.011	.14	14	7.1	23	15.6	37	10.7	
Clothing	0.74	.389	.05	1	0.5	0	0.0	1	0.3	
Food and drink	7.51	.008	.17	45	22.7	59	40.1	104	30.1	
Household appliances	0.67	.413	.05	12	6.1	6	4.1	18	5.2	
Medicine	7.51	.006	.15	13	6.6	1	0.7	14	4.1	
Travel	5.08	.024	.11	17	8.6	4	2.7	21	6.1	
Services	29.20	< .001	.28	44	22.2	3	2.0	47	13.6	
Industrial products	0.63	.426	.03	2	1.0	3	2.0	5	1.4	
Misc	21.68	< .001	.23	8	4.0	29	19.7	37	10.7	

Note. Cell size < 5 are corrected for continuity. The 1998 U.S. and Chinese samples data are from "Cultural values reflected in Chinese and American television advertising" by C. A. Lin, 2001, *Journal of Advertising*, 30, 83–94. doi:10.1080/00913367.2001.10673653. Copyright 2001 by the American Academy of Advertising, aaoa.wilapricot.org. Reprinted with permission.

t tests. The *t* tests identify the results for all 11 hypotheses as to what shifts have occurred over-time. It seems that U.S. commercials used a soft-sell appeal more often than the Chinese ads. However, there was not a significant difference between both samples for the use of hard-sell appeal. Therefore, H1 was not supported because the United States sample did not have a greater ratio of hard-sell to soft-sell appeal than the Chinese sample.

Similarly, both H2 and H3 were not supported because there was not a significant difference between the U.S. and Chinese use of veneration of older adults and time-orientation appeal. In addition, H4, that Chinese commercials would use more group/consensus appeal than the United States, was not supported. The United States commercials tended to use group/consensus appeal more so than the Chinese commercials. A similar relationship was found in the U.S. use of individual/independent appeal. This supported H5 because the individual/independent appeal was more prevalent in the United States sample than the Chinese sample.

Surprisingly, H6 and H7 were also not supported because the Chinese sample emphasized the use of modernity youth appeal and product merit appeal over the U.S. sample. Lastly, H8 and H9 were not supported because there was no significant difference found between the U.S. and Chinese use of status appeal and oneness with nature appeal.

In further support of H10, Table 3 identifies multiple differences between the cultural values expressed in advertisements in 1998 and 2014. In 1998, the Chinese sample demonstrated a greater use of group/consensus appeal over the United States sample (Lin, 2001), whereas the U.S. sample

in 2014 more frequently used group/consensus appeal. However, individual/independent appeal remained prevalent in the United States samples between 1998 and 2014.

A major shift occurred between the U.S. and Chinese use of soft-sell and hard-sell appeals. In 1998, the Chinese sample exhibited a greater use of soft-sell appeal compared to the United States sample (Lin, 2001), whereas the U.S. sample in 2014 showed an increase in its use of soft-sell appeal compared to the Chinese sample. On the other hand, hard-sell appeal was greatly used by the U.S. sample in 1998 compared to the Chinese sample (Lin, 2001). However, there was no significant difference between the U.S. and Chinese samples for hard-sell appeal in 2014.

Correspondingly, veneration of older adults and traditional appeal was more prevalent in the Chinese sample in 1998 compared to the U.S. sample (Lin, 2001). However, in 2014, no significant difference for the greater use of veneration of older adults and traditional appeal was found in either culture. However, the use of modernity youth appeal was consistent between 1998 and 2014 in both countries. On the other hand, the results in 2014 were significant in that modernity youth appeal was viewed more in the Chinese sample than the U.S. sample.

Status appeal remained the same throughout 1998 and 2014, not showing any significant difference. Conversely, product merit appeal use reversed between 1998 and 2014. In 1998, the U.S. sample demonstrated a greater use of product merit appeal compared to the Chinese sample (Lin, 2001). In 2014, the Chinese sample showed a strong increase of its use in product merit appeal compared to the U.S. sample.

Both oneness with nature and time-orientation appeals displayed similar means between the 1998 and 2014 studies. Oneness with nature appeal in the 1998 study was more prevalent in China compared to the United States (Lin, 2001). Time-orientation appeal in the 1998 study was more prevalent in the United States compared to China (Lin, 2001). However, in the 2014 study, both of these appeals were similarly used across samples.

Table 4 shows that, although H11 was not supported, there were shifts in U.S. and Chinese cultural values between the 1998 and 2014 studies that indicated a change toward GCCP. Focusing on Table 4, it is possible to identify a new profile in line with the emerging use of GCCP. The 2014 Chinese ads increased in the use of individual/

TABLE 2

Change in Product Category Distribution Between 1998 and 2014

Product Category by Country	Year	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>p</i>
U.S. Personal	1998	118	23.60	14.48	0.55	0.39	.246
	2014	115	23.00	19.43			
China Personal	1998	100	20.00	17.82	-0.03	0.02	.617
	2014	102	20.40	23.9			
U.S. Shared	1998	88	17.60	18.31	0.091	0.06	.725
	2014	45	16.60	16.27			
China Shared	1998	95	19.00	12.49	1.33	0.84	.712
	2014	45	9.00	11.25			

Note. Personal defined by the sum of (auto, beauty & personal care, clothing, food & drink, and medicine). Shared definition by the sum of (household appliances, travel, services, industrial products, and miscellaneous). Alpha = .01

independence appeal, and the 2014 U.S. sample increased in group/consensus appeal. In addition, the 2014 Chinese sample deviated from the advertising norm in the 1998 sample by increasing the use of the hard-sell appeal product merit appeal, and time orientation appeal. These findings suggested a shift toward increasing globalization of cultural values. The shift can also be seen through the 2014 U.S. sample's increased use of the veneration of older adults/traditional appeal and oneness with nature appeal, as well as a decreased use of time orientation appeal. Furthermore, GCCP was evident in the 2014 sample through the increased use of modernity/youth appeal in Chinese advertising. It was also displayed through the increased use of a soft-sell approach in 2014 U.S. ads sampled.

Discussion

The findings for the present study were surprising. We initially expected a shift toward Western individualistic values. Our initial belief derived

from the positive correlation between personal wealth and individualism (Franke et al., 1991; Hofstede, 1997). Focusing on this relationship, a shift toward individualism may still occur. However, the 2008 global economic crash may still be affecting individuals' opinions regarding their current and expected personal wealth. Similarly, Jiang and Wei (2012) predicted that the 2008 economic crash would be influential on the global perspective of the connectivity of the world market. Therefore, in the future, there may be a shift toward Western individualism. However, although there was not a shift in individualism, the results of the present study demonstrated a shift toward GCCP. We found support for only one out of the nine hypotheses (H5) although Lin (2001) supported seven. The hypotheses focused on the differences between the United States and China, stating that one would be greater or lower in distinct cultural values. Looking at our results for Lin's hypotheses, it is likely that China and the United States have become

TABLE 3

Cultural Values Reflected by Advertising Appeals in U.S. and Chinese Samples

	1998 Sample							2014 Sample							
	Country	n	M	SD	t	d	p	Country	n	M	SD	t	d	p	
Group/consensus	U.S.	206	1.21	1.06	-3.77	0.38	< .001	Group/consensus	U.S.	198	1.92	0.64	3.38	0.64	.001
	China	195	1.61	1.05				China	147	1.51	0.59				
Individual/independence	U.S.	206	1.54	0.99	10.99	1.09	< .001	Individual/independence	U.S.	198	1.79	0.65	8.42	1.04	< .001
	China	195	0.58	0.74				China	147	1.20	0.43				
Soft-sell	U.S.	206	0.74	0.93	-14.40	1.44	< .001	Soft-sell	U.S.	198	2.08	0.72	6.58	0.84	< .001
	China	195	2.04	0.87				China	147	1.52	0.54				
Hard-sell	U.S.	206	1.80	1.00	10.14	1.49	< .001	Hard-sell	U.S.	198	1.97	0.77	1.43	0.18	.018
	China	195	0.83	0.91				China	147	1.83	0.60				
Veneration of older adults/traditional	U.S.	206	0.50	0.77	-10.93	1.08	< .001	Veneration of older adults/traditional	U.S.	198	1.59	0.59	1.24	0.38	.901
	China	195	1.52	1.09				China	147	1.35	0.67				
Modernity/youth	U.S.	206	1.13	1.09	-0.17	0.02	N.A.	Modernity/youth	U.S.	198	1.33	0.55	-7.56	0.92	< .001
	China	195	1.15	0.98				China	147	1.80	0.50				
Status appeal	U.S.	206	1.52	0.81	0.89	0.85	N.A.	Status appeal	U.S.	198	1.41	0.61	0.70	0.19	.143
	China	195	1.44	1.06				China	147	1.25	0.45				
Product merit	U.S.	206	1.77	0.83	2.70	0.28	.007	Product merit	U.S.	198	1.94	0.75	-3.39	0.40	.001
	China	195	1.53	0.90				China	147	2.22	0.56				
Oneness with nature	U.S.	206	0.84	0.93	-3.38	0.34	.001	Oneness with nature	U.S.	198	1.68	0.74	-0.32	0.10	.549
	China	195	1.17	1.02				China	147	1.76	0.67				
Time-oriented	U.S.	206	1.69	1.11	10.50	0.80	< .001	Time-oriented	U.S.	198	1.42	0.66	0.78	0.15	.044
	China	195	0.69	0.76				China	147	1.31	0.47				

Note. N.A. = Not available. Alpha = .01.

more similar between 1998 and 2014 as reported in Table 4.

The main change that we identified was the use of GCCP. A change was evident through both the U.S. and Chinese sample's shifts away from Lin's (2001) original findings of typical Chinese and American appeals. Supporting the shift was the increased use of individual/independence appeal, modernity/youth appeal, hard-sell appeal, product merit appeal, and time orientation appeal in the Chinese advertising sample. The U.S. sample changes also displayed the shift through an increased use of the group/consensus appeal, veneration of older adults/traditional appeal, and oneness of nature appeal, as well as decrease in time orientation appeal. These changes supported the idea that a product is consumed globally, and depicts similarity between attitude, lifestyles, and aspirations worldwide (Alden et al., 1999). This new profile of advertisements is surrounded by specific cultural values.

The current study indicated that the United

States may implement individual/independent and group/consensus appeal more than China. Still focusing on the shift between 1998 and 2014 focusing on the shift between 1998 and 2014 studies, a trend toward globalization can be identified. The United States might have increased in its use of group/consensus appeal, which has previously been associated with collectivistic Eastern cultural values (Lin, 2001; Maynard & Taylor, 1999). Consequently, the Chinese sample also indicated an increase in China's use of the individual/independence appeal between 1998 and 2014. This finding can be explained through the greater emphasis the Chinese society currently places on modern and constantly changing styles (Zhang & Harwood, 2004). Lin (2001) predicted that a younger millennial generation influenced by a search for a unique fashion could increase individual values. Both of these shifts, which can be identified in Table 4, relate to the growing and assimilation of a global market, with the possibility of representing products universally.

Consistent with previous research, the use

TABLE 4

Cultural Values Reflected by Advertising Appeals Between 1998 and 2014

	Country	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>p</i>		Country	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>p</i>
Group/consensus	U.S. 1998	206	1.21	1.06	8.19	0.81	< .001	Modernity/youth	U.S. 1998	206	1.13	1.09	2.31	0.23	.110
	U.S. 2014	198	1.92	0.64					U.S. 2014	198	1.33	0.55			
	China 1998	195	1.61	1.05	-1.04	0.12	.849		China 1998	195	1.15	0.98	7.35	0.84	< .001
	China 2014	147	1.51	0.59					China 2014	147	1.80	0.50			
Individual/independence	U.S. 1998	206	1.54	0.99	2.99	0.21	.002	Status appeal	U.S. 1998	206	1.52	0.81	1.54	0.15	.937
	U.S. 2014	198	1.79	0.65					U.S. 2014	198	1.41	0.61			
	China 1998	195	0.58	0.74	9.07	1.02	< .001		China 1998	195	1.44	1.06	-2.04	0.23	.979
	China 2014	147	1.20	0.43					China 2014	147	1.25	0.45			
Soft-sell	U.S. 1998	206	0.74	0.93	16.15	1.61	< .001	Product merit	U.S. 1998	206	1.77	0.83	2.16	0.25	.016
	U.S. 2014	198	2.08	0.72					U.S. 2014	198	1.94	0.75			
	China 1998	195	2.04	0.87	-6.38	0.72	< .001		China 1998	195	1.53	0.90	8.18	0.92	< .001
	China 2014	147	1.52	0.54					China 2014	147	2.22	0.56			
Hard-sell	U.S. 1998	206	1.80	1.00	1.91	0.19	.028	Oneness with nature	U.S. 1998	206	0.84	0.93	10.02	0.99	< .001
	U.S. 2014	198	1.97	0.77					U.S. 2014	198	1.68	0.74			
	China 1998	195	0.83	0.91	11.56	1.30	< .001		China 1998	195	1.17	1.02	6.09	0.68	< .001
	China 2014	147	1.83	0.60					China 2014	147	1.76	0.67			
Veneration of older adults/traditional	U.S. 1998	206	0.50	0.77	15.93	1.59	< .001	Time-oriented	U.S. 1998	206	1.69	1.11	-2.96	0.30	.002
	U.S. 2014	198	1.59	0.59					U.S. 2014	198	1.42	0.66			
	China 1998	195	1.52	1.09	-1.67	0.19	.952		China 1998	195	0.69	0.76	8.71	0.98	< .001
	China 2014	147	1.35	0.67					China 2014	147	1.31	0.47			

Note. Alpha = .01.

of a tranquil soft-sell approach dominated commercials. Between the 1998 and 2014 samples, the United States increased in its use of the soft-sell appeal. In addition, there was an increase in the Chinese sample's use of the branding and merit of a forceful hard-sell approach. In the past, these opposing appeals have been found to dominate in one specific culture, with the United States focusing on hard-sell appeal and China on soft-sell appeal (Lin, 2001; Maynard & Taylor, 1999; Mueller, 1987). More current research has demonstrated that a soft-sell approach is more effective and tends to stimulate less irritation than hard-sell appeal (Okazaki et al., 2013). This finding, in relation to our own, demonstrates the current shift toward GCCP in the United States. To adapt to a constantly changing global market and implement the universal view of products, ads need to be subtle, image-based, and indirect. In accordance with Alden et al. (1999), a direct hard-sell approach limits the ability to portray a product's symbols globally. Therefore, the emotional- and image-based appeal of the soft-sell approach is more conducive toward GCCP.

A third shift that occurred was the movement away from veneration of older adults/traditional appeal and toward modernity/youth appeal in the Chinese samples from 1998 to 2014. Previous research has found that tradition is a key feature in many Asian advertisements (Belk & Pollay, 1985; Lin, 2001). However, consistent with our results, there has been evidence for a growing younger and more status-conscious generation in China (Lin, 2001). These changes in population could account for the increased focus on modernity/youth appeal and the Chinese use of GCCP in the present study. The Chinese focus on this appeal in the present study revealed the shift toward contemporariness and a more individualistic ideal. The emphasis on product benefits to younger generations demonstrated GCCP through the changing market. More evidence for this is China's increasing use of product merit over the United States in 2014. This can be represented as a shift away from status and toward the purchase of a product for the benefits of the item. These changes can be equated to China's shift toward global individual values. In addition, although the United States does not show a similar increase in modernity/youth appeal compared to 1998, it does demonstrate a significant increased shift in veneration of older adults between 1998 and 2014. Hence, the changes in both appeals exhibit increased similarity between both societies' advertisements.

The findings from the present study supported the globalization strategy of advertisements. The changes that have occurred have shifted the power away from manufacturers toward consumers. As technology has allowed consumers to purchase items in a smart and more informed basis, advertising must be used more effectively to capture the purchaser. It is important to remember that these changes do not indicate a change in culture itself, but instead advocate for shifts in advertising and marketing strategies. In conclusion, with the changes that have occurred in both China and the United States, it is important to recognize the shift that both countries have made. For instance in the present study, China is implementing a global view of products in a soft-sell, modern, and product merit style, and the United States is now shifting toward a more tranquil collectivist approach.

With the analysis of these results, it is important to remember the limitations that may inhibit their accuracy. In the present study, we only analyzed one week of data for 2014, instead of developing a longitudinal study, which could develop more consistent results. Another limitation was that we studied each network on a different day of the week and that only three channels were selected per country. This was done to replicate Lin's work. However, advertisements tend to change daily and between channels with programming. Future studies should focus on developing a more efficient way of gathering data by recording all networks on the same day of the week. Additionally, the small cell size for some product categories and the error that can occur with selective coding schemes should be noted. To further develop the accuracy of these results, replication with a larger sample size is needed.

The present study identified a shift between 1998 and 2014 toward the representation of similar cultural values in accordance with GCCP, for both U.S. and Chinese advertisements. Further research should focus on the development of merging cultures through advertisements and the connection to individual's personal wealth and spending habits. Advertising trends can change rapidly. Therefore, a future comparative analysis over a longer time frame could develop a better understanding of global media flows and cultural values expressed within commercials.

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