

Social and cultural influences in designing cross-cultural consumer research - Case studies in China and Brazil

Authors & affiliations: L. Dreyfuss, H. Nicod, A. Eschevins
lise.dreyfuss@mxns.com
BIOFORTIS Sensory & Consumer, France

Abstract: Currently the international market is rapidly expanding. As a consequence market research companies face an increasing demand for cross-cultural consumer studies. China and Brazil which are on the road to westernization are two target countries for such multicultural approaches. Learning more about these countries, their social and cultural features, their customs and rules is a mandatory step to take local specificities into account when designing cross-cultural studies, especially in the use of some methodologies.

The present study answers the main following questions:

- What are the main social and cultural features in China and Brazil?
- How impactful are socio-cultural characteristics in designing a Chinese or Brazilian consumer study?
- What are the best designs for cross-cultural consumer studies in China and Brazil?
- How can consumer preferences be investigated in China and Brazil?

One of the main issues encountered is the little inclination of Chinese consumers to express their opinions and preferences openly while in Brazil, people tend to overrate products. Thus the use of explicit methods including rating scales in declarative questionnaires is maybe not that appropriate to investigate Chinese and Brazilian consumer preferences. Therefore it is difficult to perform a relevant comparison of results between these countries and Western ones. Finding new methods to measure consumers' perceptions and being able to compare the results is one of the key challenges.

This study presents the usage of an implicit measure with Chinese consumers to understand their perceptions of products.

All information and results of this study were used to create a guide in order to list all socio-cultural issues, rules and customs but also methodologies which can be used or which have to be avoided when designing a consumer study in China or in Brazil.