

The Perceived Effects of Marketing Efforts on the Influence of Subcultural Groups on Purchase Probability: Initial Analysis

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This report is on the second of a series of studies designed to examine subcultural group influence on purchase decision-making in different product categories. Our first study (Drozdenko, Jensen and Coelho, 2014) reported at this AABRI conference in 2014, provided evidence that product features and past experience were more influential than the subcultural factors in the purchase decision process. Further, a statistically significant interaction was found between subcultural groups and product categories.

This study focusses on the potential relative return on investment for marketers who develop marketing campaigns to reach different subcultural groups. Specifically, are certain subcultural groups more responsive to marketing campaigns and does this responsiveness vary by product category?

Past research has examined related issues. For example, Webster (2011) found that urban Hispanic-Americans relative to urban Anglo-Americans agreed more with the statement that “most advertising provides essential information.” Holland and Gentry (1999) suggest that marketers be careful in their use of cultural symbols and number of factors will have an effect on the effectiveness of the marketing communication. However, no researchers to our knowledge have examined the potential effectiveness of marketing effects in several subcultural groups and product categories simultaneously.

A sample of 860 respondents provided purchase probabilities on six different product categories (smart phones, holiday foods, clothing, car and toy) under the scenario that a marketer is reaching out to subcultural groups that the respondent might identify with. The subcultural groups studied were: identification with where you live (for example, south, east, urban, country, etc.), gender identification, professional group identification (for example, teacher, business person, mechanic, doctor, lawyer, etc.), religious identification, age group identification, the national culture/background of your family, sexual orientation identification, ideological identification (for example, conservative, vegetarian, environmentalist, etc.)

The results indicated that marketing efforts directed toward specific subcultural groups may influence brand switching. However, the effects of marketing efforts vary by subcultural group and product category. For example, food marketers might find it effective to develop marketing campaigns directed toward national family background while smartphone marketers might find a higher ROI by developing campaigns directed toward age or professional identification subcultural groups.

The findings are discussed relative to the previous study in our series and the conclusions of other researchers.

Drozdenko, R., Jensen, M. & Coelho, D. (2014). The Relative Influence of Subcultural Factors in Consumer Purchasing in the U.S. :Initial Analysis. Abstract Proceedings of AABRI, Orlando, Fl.

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