



# Pattern of similarities/differences in time orientation and advertising attitudes

Time orientation  
and advertising  
attitudes

## A cross-cultural comparison of Georgian and Macau consumers

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631

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### Abstract

**Purpose** – The empirical, cross-national study reported here examines how time orientations influence attitudes toward advertising in two emerging Asian economies with very different background and time orientation, namely Macau and Georgia. The paper aims to discuss these issues.

**Design/methodology/approach** – Questionnaire was used as an instrument to conduct a survey for the study. The questionnaire design was adapted from Rojas-Méndez *et al.* study. The two samples were collected through either a drop-off-and-pick-up method or street-intercept interview.

**Findings** – Georgians are found to be more past oriented and had had more suspicious feelings about advertising whereas Macau data indicated more future-orientation was the most dominant dimensions and they had better dispositions towards advertising.

**Practical implications** – With the findings, managers of different time orientation markets can consider one more factor to strike for the optimal balance in placing their promotional budget between pull and push strategy, and between above-the-line and below-the-line activities when executing the pull strategy.

**Social implications** – Government of different time orientation can be more informed of the effectiveness of using advertising to communicate with its citizens in its culture.

**Originality/value** – Studies on how time orientation relates to attitudes toward advertising are few and such relationship appears to be never compared within two Asian countries with very different background and time orientation.

**Keywords** International advertising, Consumer behaviour, Cultural values, Customer orientation, Advertising

**Paper type** Research paper



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### **Introduction**

Researchers argue that consumers view the world around them in terms of three factors: time, space, and possessions. Although there has been some recent surge in the studies investigating consumers' time orientations, such studies especially in different cultural contexts are still scarce. Consumer research shows that cultural values are considered one of the most influential factors of consumer behavior, and they differ significantly from one market to another. Among other cultural dimensions cited in the marketing literature, time orientation of consumers is assumed to have significant influence on their experiences, judgments, decisions, and actions (Zimbardo and Boyd, 1999). Time orientation may be considered a multi-dimensional construct and relates to how consumers prioritize, allocate, and spend their time. Therefore, investigating the role of time in consumer decision making is valuable in terms of understanding how consumers perceive, value, and how they manage time. Learning about the existing patterns in time perceptions of consumers in different cultural backgrounds should strengthen our understanding of how consumers make decisions in different environments. Answers to these questions have important implications for the development of marketing and communication strategies in global markets.

Cross-cultural researchers argue that each culture or sub-culture could have its own dominant construct of time (Lin and Mowen, 1994), including the value placed on the uses of time and the priorities being attached it (Macduff, 2006). Bergadaa (1990) created a conceptual framework to classify individuals into past, present, and future-oriented groups. Based on this conceptualization, consumers have a preferred temporal zone of past, present, or future time orientation (Davies and Omer, 1996). However, different cultures operate under different orientations that may not necessarily be characterized as linear – where time is perceived as past, present, and future – and may be sliced into discrete units for allocation of specific consumer tasks. Accordingly, perception of time is a part of a person's culture and it has a significant influence on that person's world view and behavior. Furthermore, time perception may be transmitted through the spoken language (Graham, 1981). Consumers with different perceptions of time would perceive different cue patterns which might results in different patterns of consumption.

Therefore, the objective of this study is to contribute to the body of literature that examines time orientations of consumers in different cultural settings and provide information regarding the role of time orientation and attitudes towards advertising. To this end, two relatively understudied emerging economies of Asia, namely Georgia and Macau, are selected to investigate the relationship between time-orientation and advertising attitudes. Both Georgia and Macau may be considered as high-context cultures using Hall (1976) classification provided an opportunity to assess the effects of other cultural differences on avoidance behavior. Using empirical data collected from these two different countries in Asia, this study seeks to replicate and test the findings of Rojas-Méndez and Davies (2005) in two Asian countries by investigating Georgian and Macau consumers' advertising attitudes and time orientations in explaining their exposure and attention to TV advertisements.

### **Literature review**

Advertising attitudes, or attitudes toward advertising, has long been a very popular topic of scholars (some frequently cited examples are: Hite and Fraser, 1988; Larkin,

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1977; Muehling, 1987; Reid and Soley, 1982; Zanot, 1984, some recent examples are: Bakir and Palan, 2010; Defever *et al.*, 2011; Millan and Mittal, 2010). Cross-cultural research of such topic is also abundant (Bush *et al.*, 1999; Durvasula *et al.*, 1993; Gao and Zhang, 2011; Wills and Ryans, 1982). Some studies are more specific to investigate the factors that lead to advertising avoidance, which are closer to what has been done in the current study. For instance, Prendergast *et al.* (2010) investigated the antecedents to advertising avoidance in China. Speck and Elliott (1997) found out that advertising avoidance is most prevalent for television, the second is magazines, followed by radio and newspapers and the strongest predictor is advertising perceptions. Brittany and Ronald (2011) found out that the appearance of the banner advertisements on a webpage at time when the audience is engaged in search or focused activity will be seen as distractors, and the audience will not only avoid the ads but also display negative attitudes toward the avoided brand. Baek and Morimoto (2012) found out that both privacy concerns and advertising irritation have a direct positive effect on advertising avoidance, but together with perceived personalization, they are partially mediated by advertising skepticism. When advertising skepticism is a concern, Obermiller *et al.* (2005) adopted the SKEP scale (Obermiller and Spangenberg, 1998) to measure advertising skepticism and investigate its relationship with advertising response including advertising avoidance. It is found that skeptics avoid advertising when they can and their purchase intent is less affected by advertising. However, studies on how time orientation relates to attitudes toward advertising are few and such relationship appears to be never compared within two Asian countries with very different background and time orientation.

On the other hand, current marketing literature presents evidence that researchers have studied time orientation from various perspectives, such as use of time (Feldman and Hornik, 1981), role of time (Graham, 1982), time allocation (Manrai and Manrai, 1995), time perception (Graham, 1981), time activity (Kaufman *et al.*, 1991), time use and management (Gauthier and Smeeding, 2003), race and ethnicity (Hill *et al.*, 2000), gender (Mattingly and Sayer, 2006), employment status (Garhammer, 2002) and different time-styles. It may be argued that time-styles are the customary ways in which people perceive and use time. Cotte *et al.* (2004) categorized individuals' time styles in terms of social, temporal, planning, and polychromic orientations. Researchers argued that societies generally have a dominant time orientation. Time orientation may be considered to have three dimensions – past, present, and future (Graham, 1981; Jones, 1988). Past orientation refers to relying on one's past experience with regard to time planning and managing. Present orientation is determined by certain events that happen in the present, not relying on past experiences nor concerned about the future to come. Finally, future orientation assumes that time is continuous and one should always save for the future needs. Rojas-Méndez *et al.* (2002) empirically examined the attitudes of individuals toward time by using temporal orientations (past, present, and future) plus time pressure (or time as duration) and planning (time as succession) in four different countries. They developed a time attitude scale to be used for cross-cultural research that encompasses those dimensions mentioned in the literature. Their study results indicated that past and future orientations and time pressures emerged as relatively well-defined constructs.

A popular cultural framework was proposed by Hall (1976) in which cultures are situated along a dimension ranging from the high-context/low-content category to the

low-context/high-content category. Hall (1976) further argued that the perception of time is culture-specific. He identified cultures belonging to each end of the spectrum as being either polychronic or monochronic, where HC cultures are polychronic and LC cultures are monochronic. Monochronic cultures view time as an important, almost tangible phenomenon; they are generally oriented towards planning and scheduling, so as to promote efficiency, while people in polychronic cultures believe that everything will happen “when it’s time”. Prior research also indicates that there are behavioral differences between high- and low-context cultures with regard to time orientation as well as use of time. However, Jones (1988) argues that different time perceptions might be used simultaneously by different people in the same culture or by the same people in different situations. Rojas-Méndez *et al.* (2002) illustrated that there are certain emergent dimensions of time orientation in the countries studied. They also discovered relationships between the identified dimensions and the consumer behavior variables. Our study provides additional empirical insights into the generalizability of the role of time orientation on consumers’ reactions to TV advertisements in two high-context cultures that are not studied in the current marketing and consumer behavior literature.

#### *Motivation for the study*

Rojas-Méndez and Davies (2005) used time orientation dimensions to explain consumers’ behavior of avoiding TV advertisements in Britain and Chile. They concluded that time orientation influenced attitudes toward advertising and consumers’ judgment to avoid watching advertisements. Their findings indicated that a person, who is high in past orientation, is more likely to avoid advertising. On the other hand, while present-oriented people are less likely to skip advertising because they are more hedonistic and seek immediate gratification and have more positive attitudes towards advertising. Finally, future-oriented are similar to present-oriented people with respect to attitudes toward advertising but for different reasons (advertisements appeal to this group because of their future benefits). As we have mentioned earlier, there is a shortage of such studies in relatively unknown emerging Asian countries (Kaynak *et al.*, 2013). Asian countries are known for their long histories and inclination toward tradition, and their behaviors are known to be influenced by cultural values from the past (Brislin and Kim, 2003). The value of replication studies has been recognized as crucial to the process of scientific inquiry and to the growth of scientific knowledge (Lykken, 1968; Reynolds, 1971). We strongly argue that it is justifiable and worthy of further investigation, especially for exploring cross-cultural differences, justifiable to assess the replicability of the previous studies. Validating and testing Rojas-Méndez and Davies (2005) study in such environments provides valuable information in fulfilling the gaps in the literature. We hope that our research will be a stimulus into more theoretical and empirical investigations of understanding the role of time orientation on consumers’ advertising avoidance behavior across cultures. To this end, we present the replication results of an empirical evaluation where we attempted to replicate, as closely as possible, Rojas-Méndez and Davies (2005) study in two distinct and relatively understudied markets of Asia. The results of this study should further raise awareness of the potential cultural bounds of the time orientation-advertising avoidance relationship as the multinational corporations make decisions to transfer their knowledge on consumer behaviors underlying advertising avoidance to other countries. This information should prove to be helpful for organizations to better manage their marketing resources in

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foreign country environments, and understand the cultural barriers that may constrain the effectiveness of their practices.

*Choice of cultural contexts: Georgia and Macau*

Georgia is one of the former Soviet bloc countries located in Caucasus region. International comparisons show that Georgia's development indicators are comparable to those of other poorer developing countries. However, Georgia's macroeconomic performance continues to be impressive and may be considered one of the best performers among transition countries along with Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Kazakhstan. There is a heavy population concentration in cities due to an inflow of refugees from Abkhazia and Sabachlo, with one quarter centered in the capital city of Tbilisi. In recent years, there has been a profound change in consumption habits of Georgians predominantly concentrated in major urban centers such as Tbilisi and Batumi. It is expected that the current change and development in the country will trickle down to other lesser developed segments of the populace. This, in turn, will have a far-reaching impact on consumer behavior (Apil and Kaynak, 2010; Kaynak *et al.*, 2011). Georgian shoppers frequently patronize their neighborhood bazaars and buy in smaller quantities. This means that consumer shopping outreach is limited and consumers do not engage in comparative shopping practices. According to the CIA World Factbook, Georgia's GDP per capita is estimated to be \$4,400 (2009), and state run TV broadcast along with private cable TV broadcast is available in Georgia.

On the other hand, a former Portuguese colony of Macau, subject to foreign control for centuries, is a Chinese dominated society but known for its independence from mainland China until 2049 even after its handover to China in 1999. China's socialist system is not practiced in Macau, and the country enjoys a special status and so it is one of the two so-called "Special Administrative Region (SAR)" of China (the other one is Hong Kong). Situated in the heart of the Pacific Rim, Macau attracts a significant number of visitors from mainland China. Their economy is primarily based on tourism and hospitality, and it houses the world's largest gambling industry. The country has gone through significant and rapid economic and urban transformation during the last few decades. To be able to keep pace with such rapid transformation and accommodate challenges brought by Western ideologies, the people of Macau have made significant adaptations in their lives and value systems. For instance, they live in a densely populated environment where convenience is an important factor in decision making (Lam, 2000). A high degree of modernization of the city influenced their time consciousness (very fast paced) and time perceptions. According to the CIA World Factbook, Macau's GDP per capita is \$33,000 (2009), and local TV broadcast (Portuguese and Cantonese) along with cable and satellite broadcasts are available.

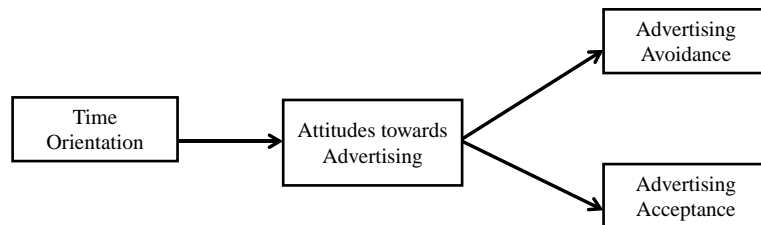
Furthermore, Hofstede developed four dimensions about cultural difference in the eighties and later in collaboration with Michael Bond add one more dimension, long-term orientation (Minkov and Hofstede, 2011). Countries score high, medium and low in the long-term orientation index are with future, present and past orientation, respectively. It is found that high long-term orientation score are typically found in East Asia, with China scoring 118, Hong Kong 97 and Taiwan 87. Eastern and Western Europe are having middle to low score, for example, Sweden scores 33, Poland 32, and Germany 31 (Hofstede, 1997). Macau is believed to be at the top of long-term orientation score because of its Chinese culture and its close proximity to Hong Kong and high

similarity in lifestyle with Hong Kong people. Georgia, on the other hand, is believed to be at the middle to low side of the score chart, because of its closeness to Eastern Europe and the share of the former Soviet Union influence with Poland. Therefore, while Macau and Georgia are both regarded as within Asia, they are expected to be at the two different ends of the long-term orientation spectrum, which in turn justifies the use of them in our current study.

**Conceptual framework**

Past marketing literature indicates that time orientation influences consumer behavior by altering perceptions and beliefs about allocating time between different activities, reaction to waiting time, and how time is perceived and considered by the individual (Legohere *et al.*, 2009). Accordingly, time orientations (past, present, and future) influence consumer beliefs and attitudes toward specific consumer actions. In this process, consumers' time orientations should influence their behavior of watching or avoiding TV advertisements through influencing their thought processes, behavioral intentions, and consumption of advertising. Therefore, the researchers in this study have adopted a similar conceptual model used by Rojas-Méndez and Davies (2005) to examine the role of time orientation on advertising avoidance in two distinct countries of the Asia, namely Georgia and Macau. The model used in this study is shown in Figure 1.

Consumers' time perceptions shaped by life experiences and cultural values influence perceptions of the consequences of current actions (Graham, 1981). People in poverty have been found to orient themselves in the present while affluent and more educated people had higher levels of future orientation. Research suggests that future oriented people are more motivated to act to achieve future ends and actively seek opportunities for self-improvement (Bergadaa, 1990). Furthermore, past orientation is argued to promote strong ties with traditional values (Bergadaa, 1990), they are not interested in in extensive information search because they cannot affect the future. Accordingly, past-orientated consumers may have higher levels of unfavorable views of advertising because they are not interested in the potential additional information that advertising may generate and they may perceive advertising as waste of time. On the other hand, present and future orientation influences consumers' interests in improving their current and future conditions through problem recognition and extensive information search. They are motivated by purchasing now and using it in the future and searching for alternatives worth the time spent because of perceived future value (Graham, 1981). Accordingly, they are expected to approach advertising as valuable source of information in their pursuit of looking for alternatives and



**Figure 1.**  
Conceptual model



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opportunities for purchasing products for future use. In the light of this background information, we postulate the following hypotheses:

- H1. Consumers' past orientation will be positively related to unfavorable advertising attitudes.
- H2. Consumers' present orientation will be positively related to favorable advertising attitudes.
- H3. Consumers' future orientation will be positively related to favorable advertising attitudes.

It is well established in the marketing literature that consumers' actions are influenced by their attitudes and beliefs. Therefore, overall attitudes toward advertising are expected to influence consumer behavior of advertising consumption (or avoidance). Lutz (1985) indicated that attitude toward advertising is a learned behavior and may be consistently favorable or unfavorable. The relationship between time orientation and advertising consumption may not be visible directly but time orientation is expected to influence attitudes which in turn influence advertising consumption. This has resulted with the following hypotheses:

- H4. Consumers' unfavorable advertising views will be negatively related to overall advertising attitudes.
- H5. Consumers' favorable advertising views will be positively related to overall advertising attitudes.
- H6. Consumers' overall advertising attitudes will be negatively related to advertising avoidance.

## Study methodology

### *Survey instrument and data collection*

The questionnaire used in this study is intended to measure time orientation of Georgian and Macau people and the role of their time orientation on advertising avoidance behavior. The questionnaire used in this study was adapted from a Rojas-Méndez *et al.* (2002) study. An English version of the original questionnaire was translated into Georgian and Chinese (native language of Macau citizens) by locals fluent in both languages. After it had been translated into the two respective languages, two other bilingual locals translated the target language questionnaire back into English. Then two of the authors of this study, who are bilingual locals of Macau and Georgia, respectively, compared the original and back-translated versions for differences and comparability and made necessary changes. The process is smooth enough that the bilingual authors deemed adequate and so the collaborative and iterative approach of translation as proposed by Douglas and Craig (2007) were not performed. The survey instrument included questions about consumer behavior during television commercial breaks, attitude toward time, attitude toward advertising, and demographic and socio-economic characteristics. The measurement scales used for the time-orientation study were obtained either from existing time-study questionnaires or from the ideas contained in previous research conducted in areas such as anthropology, sociology, psychology, and marketing (Ko and Gentry, 1991; Bergadaa, 1990;

Gonzalez and Zimbardo, 1985; Gjesme, 1979; Rojas-Méndez *et al.*, 2002; Wessman, 1973). Items were chosen to assess the five attitudes toward time expected from the literature appraisal: “attitude to past,” “attitude to present,” “attitude to future,” “time pressure,” and “planning”. Although it has not been empirically tested, in theory when searching in a variety of sources for items, one should expect an increase in a measure’s reliability (Churchill and Peter, 1984). The 41 items dealing with time orientations are measured on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree. The 17 items dealing with attitude toward advertising were taken from the survey instrument developed by Pollay and Mittal (1993).

The Georgian data were collected using drop-off-and-pick-up method by the MBA students from a local university. The interviewers distributed the questionnaires to the selected participants in different areas of Georgia (capital city of Tbilisi, Kutasi and Batumi). The subjects were told that the completed questionnaires will be collected a week later. For the Macau data, respondents were approached by university students as interviewers in different areas of Macau (City Centre, Three Lamps District and Taipa area) to respond to the questionnaire on street (i.e. Street-intercept). Macau is so small geographically (only 29.5 sq.km) and it is supposed to have the highest population concentration in the world that even just three different areas to collect data is deemed adequately representative of the population. Although the coverage of the geographical areas in each country was pretty good, the subjects in different geographical areas were selected randomly. With a strong support and encouragement letter from the university administration which provided additional credibility in terms of the scientific nature of the study, we were able to obtain a total of 451 responses from Georgia. Due to SEM analysis requirements, case wise deletion method was utilized. Availability of missing data reduced the number of usable questionnaires from Georgia to 251 and 241 from Macau. Demographic profile of the sample respondents indicates that both samples were predominantly female (Macau 61 percent and Georgia 66.2 percent); Georgian sample consisted of older population (56.2 percent above the age of 30) whereas Macau sample was mostly younger (84 percent was below the age of 30); 98 percent of Macau sample spoke Chinese and 92.4 percent of Georgia sample spoke Georgian at home and a majority of the respondents in both countries had higher education (90 percent Macau and 79.9 percent Georgia).

### **Analysis and results**

Table I shows the mean values of 41 scale items used in the time orientation scale. Independent sample t-test results show that there are significant differences between Georgian and Macau samples in terms of how they rated these statements. Although the response between the two samples to the most of the statements are statistically significant, we highlighted few very large mean differences. These mean values mainly show that Georgian sample were less open to change, less positive about the future, and prefer a more stable environment than the Macau sample.

We then analyzed the differences between the groups in terms of their overall attitudes towards advertising related statements. Table II illustrates the average responses to these statements and provides statistical significance results between the samples.

Table II shows that Macau consumers have more favorable feelings towards advertising than Georgian consumers. We have highlighted the large mean differences



Time orientation and advertising attitudes

Statements <sup>a</sup>	Georgia (n = 241)	Macau (n = 251)	Significance
I don't like change	5.54	3.53	**
Time is money	5.79	5.45	**
I look to the future for success	3.86	6.00	**
I could never contemplate living anywhere else	5.17	2.84	**
There is never enough time in the day	5.87	5.12	**
Children should be taught well the traditions of the past	5.51	4.59	**
I plan all my decisions	4.28	4.24	NS
I like things that happen unplanned	4.88	3.50	**
I often try to do more than one thing at a time	5.54	4.79	**
I like to think about what I am going to do in the future	5.55	5.44	NS
Things always go up and down even if I work hard	4.21	5.14	**
Others would say I am good at saving money for the future	4.49	3.83	**
I am always in a rush	3.76	4.54	**
I live for today	5.20	3.95	**
The best way to do new tasks well is to rely on what has been done in similar instances in the past	3.94	4.46	**
I use a calendar to schedule events well ahead of time	4.57	4.41	NS
It is best to give more attention to what is happening now in the present	5.23	5.09	NS
I always think ahead	3.54	4.67	**
I have control over my future	5.30	4.14	**
It is good to be ready to accept new ways to do things, which will help to make life easier and better as I live from year to year	5.57	5.27	*
It is important to be able to do things quickly	4.92	5.41	**
I like to hear my elders talk about the "old days"	4.75	4.52	NS
I like to read about how others see the future	4.75	4.70	NS
It makes my life easier just to accept some changes as they come along	4.42	5.18	**
I am constantly looking at my watch	5.05	4.56	**
I know where I want to go in life and I know how I am going to get there	4.13	4.57	**
Others would say I like to spend my money almost as soon as I receive it	3.70	3.21	**
I do not waste my time worrying about a problem until it needs to be solved	4.85	3.50	**
I buy or use many time saving devices	5.20	3.67	**
It is important to know one's family history	6.26	4.19	**
I like to improve my present well-being	4.65	5.12	**
The future is dynamic, but we can anticipate most outcomes beforehand	2.93	4.66	**
I use a diary to plan ahead	4.26	3.04	**
Each day has its own worries, so I do not have to think too much about the future	4.89	3.86	**
I am always looking for ways of saving time	5.10	4.35	**
If I could have purchased a product today, but I did not, it is not problem, because the chance for purchase will come again	4.88	4.65	*

(continued)

**Table I.**  
Mean comparative scores of time orientation items

Statements <sup>a</sup>	Georgia (n = 241)	Macau (n = 251)	Significance
It is very important to understand what happened in the past	5.38	5.02	**
I have been thinking a lot recently about what I am going to do in the future	4.63	5.42	**
I am mostly concerned about how I feel now in the present	2.76	4.85	**
I use a diary to see what I am doing today	3.48	3.05	**
It is really no use worrying about the future, because what will be, will be	2.61	4.45	**

**Notes:** Significant at: \* $p < 0.001$  and \*\* $p < 0.000$ ; <sup>a</sup>a seven-point scale is used where 1 – strongly disagree and 7 – strongly agree

Table I.

Statements <sup>a</sup>	Georgia (n = 241)	Macau (n = 251)	Significance
Most advertising insults the intelligence of the average consumer	2.54	2.84	**
From advertising I learn about fashions and about what to buy to impress others	3.37	3.31	NS
In general, advertising helps our nation's economy	3.02	3.63	**
Advertising is making us a materialistic society, overly interested in buying and owning things	3.05	3.50	**
Advertising helps raise our standard of living	3.77	3.35	**
Advertising helps me keep up to date about products/ services available in the marketplace	3.71	4.04	**
Overall, I consider advertising a good thing	3.19	3.45	**
Advertising promotes undesirable values in our society	2.97	2.69	**
Advertising results in better products for the public	2.57	3.07	**
Mostly, advertising is wasteful of our economic resources	2.92	2.67	**
Most advertising distorts the values of our youth	3.11	3.11	NS
Advertising tells me what people with life styles similar to mine are buying and using	2.92	3.41	**
Advertising makes people live in a world of fantasy	3.47	2.66	**
I consider advertisements unwelcome interruptions	2.96	2.58	**
My general opinion of advertising is unfavorable	2.83	2.46	**
Advertising makes people buy unaffordable products just to show off	3.43	2.94	**
Advertising tells me which brands have the features I am looking for	3.49	3.59	NS
Advertising is not an important issue for me, and I am not bothered about it	3.47	3.03	**
Because of advertising, people buy a lot of things they do not really need	3.08	3.32	*
Overall, I like advertising	1.36	3.39	**

Table II.

Mean comparative values of advertising attitudes

**Notes:** Significant at: \* $p < 0.001$  and \*\* $p < 0.000$ ; <sup>a</sup>a five-point scale is used where 1 – strongly disagree and 5 – strongly agree

in some of the statements. For instance, Macau consumers see more value in advertising in terms of information and educational value than Georgian consumers. Georgian consumers are more suspicious about the role and value of advertising.

To understand what consumers did during the commercial, we asked them series of questions regarding the possible actions that they take during commercials. The mean values of both samples are illustrated in Table III.

Perhaps Table III shows the most startling differences between the two groups in terms of the actions taken during commercials. This table shows that Georgian consumers took the most severe actions, such as leaving the room, turning off the TV set, and muting the sound during the commercials. These actions confirm our conclusion in terms of Georgian consumers have more negative views about the commercials in general.

To test the hypothesized relationships, each country's data was analyzed independently using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM). All constructs were evaluated on the basis of uni-dimensionality, reliability, and discriminant validity (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). The measurement model was estimated based on a covariance matrix using the maximum likelihood estimation method (Cudeck, 1989; Chou and Bentler, 1996), which is the most commonly used approach in structural equation modeling. The data was explored for outliers, and a purification process reduced the number of scale items that were retained for each sub-scale (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1988). Multivariate normality was assessed by comparing Mardia's (1970) coefficient against its critical ratio (Byrne, 2001), and all scales data were found to be acceptably normal. According to Rojas-Méndez and Davies (2005), time orientation items could be categorized into three dimensions of time orientations, namely past, present, and future. The total number of indicators used for each of the three constructs in the model was reduced in the purification process (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1988), leaving the most salient ones to measure the constructs in the final model. Table IV shows detailed item statistics for the measures used in the study for both samples.

Table IV shows that the reliability of measures obtained using the survey instrument in both Georgia and Macau. These results allow us to make cross-national reliability comparisons in terms of the questionnaire instruments used in both country

Statements <sup>a</sup>	Georgia ( <i>n</i> = 241)	Macau ( <i>n</i> = 251)	Significance
Leave the room	5.54	3.86	*
Switch to another channel	2.08	5.45	*
Switch the television set off	4.04	1.91	*
Watch the ads	2.75	4.29	*
Mute the sound	3.64	1.83	*
Read a book, magazine, newspaper, etc.	5.34	3.98	*
Talk with other people in the room	4.23	4.95	*
Make phone calls	2.87	4.11	*
Check e-mails in internet	3.97	3.00	*
Other activities	5.33	3.71	*

**Notes:** Significant at: \* $p < 0.000$ ; <sup>a</sup>a seven-point scale is used where 1 – strongly disagree and 7 – strongly agree

**Table III.**  
Mean comparative scores  
of different actions taken  
during commercials

**Table IV.**  
Detailed reliability  
statistics for measures  
used by sample: Georgia  
and Macau

Measures	Georgia ( <i>n</i> = 241)			Macau ( <i>n</i> = 252)		
	Scale mean if item deleted	Scale variance if item deleted	Alpha is item is deleted	Scale mean if item deleted	Scale variance if item deleted	Alpha if item is deleted
I don't like change	246.283	443.550	0.739	239.904	456.840	0.767
Time is money	246.032	452.252	0.744	237.983	440.155	0.757
I look to the future for success	247.963	455.911	0.749	237.431	441.615	0.757
I could never contemplate living anywhere else	246.658	446.319	0.741	240.595	460.399	0.772
There is never enough time in the day	245.959	450.103	0.741	238.315	435.332	0.756
Children should be taught well the traditions of the past	246.313	450.598	0.742	238.844	442.782	0.759
I plan all my decisions	247.550	451.727	0.745	239.193	441.441	0.758
I like things that happen unplanned	246.943	442.360	0.739	239.931	463.085	0.770
I often try to do more than one thing at a time	246.291	443.398	0.739	238.642	441.332	0.758
I like to think about what I am going to do in the future	246.275	445.210	0.739	237.999	439.349	0.756
Things always go up and down even if I work hard	247.622	448.684	0.745	238.300	442.295	0.758
Others would say I am good at saving money for the future	247.337	440.244	0.738	239.605	442.774	0.761
I am always in a rush	248.064	446.426	0.744	238.897	437.309	0.756
I live for today	246.622	439.769	0.736	239.487	437.990	0.758
The best way to do new tasks well is to rely on what has been done in similar instances in the past	247.890	441.289	0.740	238.977	442.681	0.759
I use a calendar to schedule events well ahead of time	247.256	436.400	0.736	239.026	435.043	0.756
It is best to give more attention to what is happening now in the present	246.600	441.470	0.737	238.343	444.018	0.759
I always think ahead	248.286	455.997	0.748	238.770	443.048	0.758
I have control over my future	246.531	443.652	0.738	239.298	447.838	0.763
It is good to be ready to accept new ways to do things, which will help to make life easier and better as I live from year to year	246.255	449.835	0.742	238.160	444.887	0.759
It is important to be able to do things quickly	246.901	446.786	0.741	238.021	444.247	0.759
I like to hear my elders talk about the "old days"	247.075	443.489	0.740	238.919	441.410	0.760
I like to read about how others see the future	247.072	449.602	0.742	238.734	442.636	0.760

(continued)

Measures	Georgia ( <i>n</i> = 241)		Macau ( <i>n</i> = 252)		Alpha if item is deleted
	Scale mean if item deleted	Scale variance if item deleted	Scale mean if item deleted	Scale variance if item deleted	
It makes my life easier just to accept some changes as they come along	247.406	438.503	238.260	444.389	0.759
I am constantly looking at my watch	246.777	452.470	238.871	437.846	0.767
I know where I want to go in life and I know how I am going to get there	247.702	452.768	238.861	440.353	0.757
Others would say I like to spend my money almost as soon as I receive it	248.129	445.306	240.223	455.633	0.768
I do not waste my time worrying about a problem until it needs to be solved	246.973	444.211	239.935	459.835	0.769
I buy or use many time saving devices	246.626	441.567	239.763	444.040	0.760
It is important to know one's family history	245.563	451.080	239.248	445.068	0.762
I like to improve my present well-being	247.182	447.811	238.319	441.587	0.758
The future is dynamic, but we can anticipate most outcomes beforehand	248.897	437.347	238.778	443.852	0.760
I use a diary to plan ahead	247.568	436.804	240.395	445.076	0.762
Each day has its own worries, so I do not have to think too much about the future	246.940	438.212	239.575	436.624	0.784
I am always looking for ways of saving time	246.722	448.848	239.090	437.988	0.757
If I could have purchased a product today, but I did not, it is not problem, because the chance for purchase will come again	246.943	446.233	238.790	443.437	0.760
It is very important to understand what happened in the past	246.447	445.000	238.411	446.147	0.760
I have been thinking a lot recently about what I am going to do in the future	247.196	444.844	238.015	431.697	0.753
I am mostly concerned about how I feel now in the present	249.065	440.418	238.583	444.054	0.759
I use a diary to see what I am doing today	248.343	445.627	240.387	448.409	0.764
It is really no use worrying about the future, because what will be, will be	249.218	453.539	238.989	445.540	0.764

(continued)

Time orientation and advertising attitudes

Table IV.

Table IV.

Measures	Georgia ( <i>n</i> = 241)			Macau ( <i>n</i> = 252)		
	Scale mean if item deleted	Scale variance if item deleted	Alpha is item is deleted	Scale mean if item deleted	Scale variance if item deleted	Alpha if item is deleted
Most advertising insults the intelligence of the average consumer	249.287	450.277	0.743	240.594	454.042	0.764
From advertising I learn about fashions and about what to buy to impress others	248.455	453.306	0.743	240.124	450.312	0.761
In general, advertising helps our nation's economy	248.810	447.427	0.740	239.810	453.223	0.763
Advertising is making us a materialistic society, overly interested in buying and owning things	248.780	450.787	0.742	239.931	451.483	0.762
Advertising helps raise our standard of living	248.057	452.994	0.743	240.086	453.654	0.763
Advertising helps me keep up to date about products/services available in the marketplace	248.111	452.474	0.743	239.392	456.846	0.765
Overall, I consider advertising a good thing	248.637	448.510	0.740	239.987	457.641	0.765
Advertising promotes undesirable values in our society	248.851	452.602	0.743	240.746	454.993	0.764
Advertising results in better products for the public	249.255	450.579	0.741	240.368	455.184	0.764
Mostly, advertising is wasteful of our economic resources	248.904	451.613	0.742	240.763	452.004	0.762
Most advertising distorts the values of our youth	248.721	446.379	0.739	240.328	446.797	0.759
Advertising tells me what people with life styles similar to mine are buying and using	248.911	447.240	0.741	240.025	452.879	0.762
Advertising makes people live in a world of fantasy	249.165	461.117	0.749	239.969	450.493	0.761
I consider advertisements unwelcome interruptions	248.865	452.399	0.743	240.852	458.084	0.766
My general opinion of advertising is unfavorable	248.996	452.509	0.743	240.976	459.670	0.767
Advertising makes people buy unaffordable products just to show off	248.399	452.086	0.743	240.499	452.392	0.763
Advertising tells me which brands have the features I am looking for	248.335	453.710	0.744	239.841	456.739	0.765
Advertising is not an important issue for me, and I am not bothered about it	248.353	445.906	0.740	240.407	459.648	0.767
Because of advertising, people buy a lot of things they do not really need	248.746	458.547	0.746	240.114	451.650	0.762



environments which produced similar reliabilities of the measurements (Davis *et al.*, 1981; Feldt, 1980). Table IV shows significant variations between sample reliability. Therefore, we do not see any threat to the validity of conclusions drawn about similarities in terms of the likelihood of measures varied in the countries used.

Table V shows the items retained in the final model and their reliability coefficients. The items retained for the final model somewhat differ from Rojas-Méndez and Davies (2005) study, and the reliability coefficients for most constructs in both data sets were less than the acceptable reliabilities cited in the literature. This might indicate that the stability factor structure and items used to measure time orientation in our data sets were not strong. Rojas-Méndez and Davies (2005) were also concerned about the marginally satisfactory reliability coefficients they obtained in their data, but they attributed this to the reliability and validity trade-off. Although the reliability scores were below the suggested levels (0.70) in the literature, in general we can make a case that these scores are satisfactory for testing and validating the structure reported in Rojas-Méndez and Davies (2005).

It is known that Alpha is not a good indicator of uni-dimensionality and low levels of alpha can be attributed to the sample homogeneity (Bernardi, 1994) and do not put the results in question. Usually 0.70 is desired but Schmitt (1996, p. 351) states that “[. . .] use of any cutoff value is shortsighted”. Accordingly, when a measure has other

Constructs and scale items	Reliability (alpha)	
	Georgia	Macau
Past orientation	0.64	0.50
I like to hear my elders to talk about the “old days”		
It is important to know one’s family history		
It is very important to understand what happened in the past		
Present orientation	0.69	0.54
I like things that happen unplanned		
It is best to give more attention to what is happening now in the present		
I am mostly concerned about how I feel now in the present		
Future orientation	0.54	0.59
I look to the future success		
I like to think about what I am going to do in the future		
I have been thinking a lot recently about what I am going to do in the future		
Favorable advertising view	0.53	0.58
Advertising results in better products for the public		
Advertising tells me what people with life styles similar to mine are buying and using		
Unfavorable advertising view	0.56	0.78
I consider advertisements unwelcome interruptions		
My general opinion of advertising is unfavorable		
Overall advertisement attitude	0.57	0.52
Overall, I consider advertising a good thing		
Overall, like or dislike advertising		
Advertising avoidance	0.82	0.49
Switch the TV set off during commercial breaks		
Leave the room during commercial breaks		

**Table V.**  
Scale items retained in  
the final model

desirable properties, the low alpha scores may not be a major impediment to its use (Schmitt, 1996). In addition, as coefficient values are relatively receptive to the number of items in the constructs, particularly when constructs have fewer than ten items, as in the case of this research, it is common to find coefficient alphas around 0.50 (Pallant, 2007). For instance, almost all alphas reported in Rojas-Méndez and Davies (2005) study was below the cutoff suggested in the literature.

Table VI displays the average values of the constructs used in the study for both samples. It is visible from the mean scores that Georgian consumers are more past oriented while Macau consumers may be characterized as more present and future oriented. Macau consumers have more favorable views of advertising and advertising avoidance is less in comparison to the Georgian consumers.

The hypothesized loading structure for the model showed significant loadings on their corresponding construct with the lowest *t*-value being larger than 2.00 for Macau data. The model had a just significant  $\chi^2$  (36.5, 24,  $p < 0.05$ ) but other model fit indices such as CFI = 0.94, GFI = 0.97, NFI = 0.85, and RMSEA = 0.045 indicating that CFA model had an acceptable fit. For Georgian data, loading structure for the model showed significant loadings on their corresponding construct with the lowest *t*-value being larger than 2.00. The model had an insignificant  $\chi^2$  (27.4, 24,  $p < 0.24$ ) and the other model fit indices such as CFI = 0.98, GFI = 0.98, NFI = 0.87, and RMSEA = 0.018 indicating that CFA model had an acceptable fit. These results indicate that scales had adequate measurement properties and were appropriate for further analyses. Tables VII and VIII display the path coefficients obtained in the structural models used.

**Table VI.**  
Mean values for  
different constructs  
tested in the study

Constructs <sup>a</sup>	Georgia ( <i>n</i> = 241)	Macau ( <i>n</i> = 251)	Significance
Past orientation	5.4713	4.5732	*
Present orientation	4.2841	4.4791	*
Future orientation	4.6796	5.6223	**
Favorable advertising views	2.7468	3.2390	**
Unfavorable advertising views	2.8927	2.5287	**
Overall advertising feelings	2.2745	3.4150	**
Advertising avoidance	3.6548	3.0898	**

**Notes:** Significant at: \* $p < 0.001$  and \*\* $p < 0.000$ ; <sup>a</sup>a seven-point scale is used where 1 – strongly disagree and 7 – strongly agree

**Table VII.**  
Structural model results  
for Macau (path  
coefficients/regression  
weights)

Structural paths	Coefficients	CR	Confirmed*
<i>Components of time orientation</i>			
Past → unfavorable view	0.224	2.414	Yes
Present → favorable view	0.257	0.668	No
Future → favorable view	0.352	0.921	No
Unfavorable view → Ad attitudes	- 0.783	- 6.123	Yes
Favorable view → Ad attitudes	0.527	4.093	Yes
Ad attitudes → avoidance	- 0.097	- 2.373	Yes

**Notes:** Significant at: \* $p < 0.05$ ;  $\chi^2 = 152$  with *df* = 110,  $p = 0.000$ , RMSEA = 0.039, GFI = 0.94, CFI = 0.93

Unfortunately, these results provide at most weak or partial support for the hypothesized relationships. The relationships were relatively weak for the Georgian sample.

**Discussion**

It is argued that different cultures have their own dominant construct of time, and differences may occur in the value placed on the uses of time and the priorities given by individuals to past, present, or future orientations in their lives (Macduff, 2006). Asian cultures are known to be endorsed both hierarchy and conservative values, such as being devout and obedient and respecting tradition and security, should be conceptually close to present orientation. This study sought to understand the relationship between consumers’ time orientation and their attitudes toward advertising and advertising avoidance behavior in two different cultural settings of Asian cultures, namely Georgia and Macau. Moreover, this study tried to assess the validity and applicability of the cultural time-orientation scale developed by Rojas-Méndez *et al.* (2002).

Although both Georgia and Macau may be considered high-context cultures, there are significant differences that exist between the two countries in terms of not only Hofstede’s long-term orientation but also macroeconomic factors (economic well-being), history, and political environments. Moreover, exploratory factor analysis indicated that Georgians are past and present-oriented, but conscious of the future; planning and time saving is important, but they interpret the present in light of the past, and they are considered action oriented. Georgians consider improvement of well-being as the most important factor for future generations. Furthermore, descriptive data analyses showed that Georgians generally are less neutral towards advertising and advertising messages than Macau consumers.

Macau consumers consider advertising as an educational and informative tool or source to keep them up to date about products or services, and compared to Georgian consumers, they have more favorable views of advertising. They believe that advertising informs them about companies as well as their products offered for public consumption. The reason for these findings is attributed to Macau’s long experience with product advertisements under Portuguese administration where consumers of Macau had been exposed to product/brand advertisements. Whereas the case was totally different for Georgians as under former Soviet Union, advertising and other promotional media were frowned upon and advertising was not practiced as we know it in the west. Word-of-mouth advertising was the most prominent communication medium. Since its independence, advertising has been playing a less role in the lives of Georgians

Structural paths	Coefficients	CR	Confirmed*
<i>Components of time orientation</i>			
Past → unfavorable view	0.087	1.327	No
Present → favorable view	0.365	0.651	No
Future → favorable view	0.252	0.913	No
Unfavorable view → Ad attitudes	-0.208	-2.806	Yes
Favorable view → Ad attitudes	0.352	3.559	Yes
Ad attitudes → avoidance	-0.077	-0.511	No

**Notes:** Significant at: \* $p < 0.05$ ;  $\chi^2 = 245$  with  $df = 110$ ,  $p = 0.000$ , RMSEA = 0.052, GFI = 0.94

**Table VIII.**  
Structural model results  
for Georgia (path  
coefficients/regression  
weights)

and Georgians indicated that they have some negative attitudes toward advertising because they consider advertising as stimulating or enticing consumers to buy unnecessary items or the items they do not need. On the other hand, exploratory factor analysis of the Macau data indicated that future-orientation was the most dominant dimensions along with enjoying present life and planning. Some of the consumers were not very enthusiastic towards advertising by indicating that they would switch to another channel and talk to other people, or engage in zipping behavior during commercial breaks. However, others believed that advertising informed them about available alternative products and enabled them to engage in comparative shopping.

Confirmatory and structural analyses were used to validate the relationships suggested by Rojas-Méndez and Davies (2005) among time-orientation constructs and advertising avoidance behavior. Although the Macau data provided a better support for the conceptualized model, the Georgian data did not indicate any strong relationship between time orientation and advertising avoidance behavior. Furthermore, the time-orientation scale reliabilities for both samples were below the suggested level in the literature (alpha 70 percent), indicating that both items and the dimensions of the scale were not stable. This was also evident in Rojas-Méndez and Davies (2005) study since they did not use the same scale items in the previous Rojas-Méndez *et al.* (2002) study, leading to the hypothesis that some scale items were dropped or pruned to obtain a better model fit. This brings up the relevant discussion regarding whether or not researchers should focus on testing and validating existing scales in different cultural environments or develop country/culture-specific scales. It is possible that there were other factors that influenced – especially the Georgian advertising avoidance behavior – that was not accounted for in the structural model tested. Further investigation and conceptualization on this issue will be forthcoming.

### **Theoretical implications**

Cross-cultural research could be very valuable in terms of making contribution to the theory development by applying and testing existing relationships among constructs in culturally different market environments. Accordingly, researchers during the past several decades used both etic and emic approaches to provide support for the conceptualized relationships among marketing variables (Brislin, 1976). The objective of etic approach is to make generalizations across cultures that take into account all human behavior while the objective of emic approach has been to document the valid principles that describe consumer behavior in specific cultures. In other words, researchers have attempted to justify whether they should develop a single core approach to measure consumer behavior in all cultures or instead they should focus on culture-specific items which are designed to measure the phenomenon of interest in each culture.

In this study, we have attempted to understand the applicability of the previously developed conceptual model (Rojas-Méndez and Davies, 2005) in explaining consumer behavior in different cultural environments with respect to the relationships between advertising avoidance behavior and the time orientations. Our findings provided mixed results and conceptualized relationships were not totally confirmed for both studies. From a cross-cultural comparative perspective, we derived from the fifth dimension of cultural difference as advocated by Hofstede (1997) to expect that in terms of long-term orientation, Georgian culture differs from the Macau one and this cultural difference should create a suitable research environment to assess the

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applicability of the model. Although several of the hypothesized relationships in Rojas-Méndez and Davies (2005) conceptualization of the relationship between time orientation and advertising avoidance behavior appear to be holding in describing and explaining consumer behavior beyond the context that they have tested, the lack of strong (complete) support identified in this study could be best interpreted as the results are not totally dependent on the cultural factors and may be influenced by other factors not studied in our comparison. Having said that, the better support for the conceptualized model by the Macau data provide us a strong theoretical implication that the relationship between time orientation and advertising avoidance would be more established in future rather than past oriented population. Furthermore, future studies are needed to clarify the relationship between advertising avoidance behavior and time orientation by perhaps utilizing emic approaches in understanding the relationship between these variables. To this end, specific measurement scales for understanding consumers' time orientation could be developed for each cultural environment and the relationships between time orientation and avoidance behavior should be reassessed.

### **Managerial and public policy implications**

Our findings provided at least partial support for the relationship between time orientation and advertising avoidance behavior in both cultures. In order to ensure every dollar spent on advertising is justified, marketers should put more emphasis in other means of communication whenever wherever advertising avoidance behavior is overwhelming. Through the study, now the marketers can have one more predictor, time orientation, to predict advertising avoidance behavior. Therefore, the study provides some degree of implication to marketers who have to face a dilemma on how to allocate their promotional budget. In a typical situation, a manager has to make a decision on the percentage split of budget on pull strategy (emphasize in advertising) versus push strategy (emphasize in sales promotion). Depending on the product type, company strategy and situations, emphasis on either pull or push can also make sense. For instance, traditionally, as compared with Procter and Gamble, Unilever has long been regarded as more emphasizing in push than pull strategy. With the findings of the study, managers in a culture where the score of Hofstede's long-term orientation is high are informed that money spent in advertising will not be wasteful since the consumers' advertising avoidance behavior is low as compared with the culture where the score is low, and so an emphasis on pull strategy makes sense. This in turn implies that when the budget for pull strategy is established, culture with high score in Hofstede's long-term orientation justifies more spending on the above-the-line activities (like TV commercials) whereas culture with low score justifies more spending on below-the-line activities (like free trials). By the same token, governments with different scores in Hofstede's long-term orientation can now be more informed of the effectiveness of using advertisement to communicate with their citizens. Having said that, it should be stressed that time orientation can serve as only one of the many factors that an international marketer should consider. Other important factors, such as advertising clutter, effectiveness of other means of communication, should be of equal, if not higher, concerns to marketers.

To summarize, it would be effective if the companies were to more emphasize on word-of-mouth communication in cultures where the past orientation is more prevalent

and engage in more media communication in future oriented cultures. In present oriented cultural environments where the Hofstede score is medium, efficiency and not to waste time could be emphasized in all marketing communications.

### **Study limitations and future research avenues**

It should be noted that this study has certain limitations. It is a study narrowing down to the investigation of how time orientation influences attitudes toward advertising. There are other factors that may have influenced the outcome that the current study has not addressed, so it leaves room for future research. For instance, Fraj and Martinez (2006) built on the work done by Schwartz (1992, 1994) and measured values based on Rokeach's (1973) terminal and instrumental groups of values to identify what values and lifestyles best explain ecological consumer behavior. Such values and lifestyles may also be used to explain advertising avoidance behavior. Theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) has been applied to a wide variety of topics such as physical activities, quitting smoking, blood donation, complaining and internet use (East, 1997). We believe it may also be applied to the topic about advertising avoidance. Sierra and McQuitty (2007) used social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1985) to explain how an individual's identification with a particular time period, based on group membership, influences consumer responses. They used a model that can incorporate a cognitive factor (attitudes toward the past) and an emotional factor (yearning for the past) to explain purchase intent of nostalgic products. We believe such model can also be used to explain attitudes toward advertising. Miniard and Cohen (1983) developed a model that separates personal and normative reasons for better understand behavior. Partitioning the personal and normative motivations may also serve as a good future research direction to understand more about advertising avoidance.

Other limitations may include the representativeness of the samples used in this study. It was still pretty much a convenience sampling procedure even though certain degree of randomness was introduced, and both samples were relatively small. Also, the lack of consumer behavior research related to emerging economies did not allow us to make comparisons and capture (external validation) the advertising attitudes and behavior in both countries.

In light of this study, narrower demographic segments (male vs female, high-income vs low-income consumers, older vs younger individuals, higher-education vs lower-education holders) should be surveyed. This may produce more actionable results. In addition, an experimental research design may produce more realistic findings that can control for socio-demographics factors. In this kind of research design, different types of advertisements can be tested to determine more specific advertising avoidance behavior. In order to understand the inner dynamics of the self in the way of attitudes towards advertising and time orientation, motivational research techniques may be used. Finally, future research studies should consider investigating different interaction effects among the variables identified in this study. Such studies should incorporate additional variables to check their moderating and mediating roles in the relationships identified. Some potential variables to examine are the Hofstede's cultural dimensions and psychographic/lifestyle variables as moderating variables. Also, consumer involvement and familiarity should be tested as mediating variables of the relationships.



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