

MAKING MULTICULTURAL MARKETING MORE FAMILIAR: ETHNIC INFO/MEDIA GRAPHICS: THE SEQUEL

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Abstract

This study takes aim at the paradox of multicultural marketing in American marketing education. Marketing professionals prize strategic multicultural marketing skills while collegiate marketing curricula tend to marginalize multicultural marketing, which leaves many faculty and students unfamiliar with pertinent subjects/skills. Using a Consumer Behavior course brand strategy project, this second phase of an ongoing pedagogical quasi-experiment explores whether contemporary media viewership ratings can raise students multicultural marketing familiarity compared to conventional market segmentation variable profiles. The prior phase of the study explored the potential of television media ratings to overcome students' aversion to quantitative segmentation analysis and also expand the range of U.S. ethnic markets targeted for a brand strategy project. Building upon positive outcomes from the prior phase, this second phase focuses on the utility of television media ratings as a pedagogical instrument for widening the range of U.S. ethnic segments profiled, compared to segmentation data available online from U.S. government agencies and private research firm psychographic indices. The tendency to consider a wider range of multicultural market segments is defined here as an *inclusive universal ethnic* orientation, and the capability of television ratings to facilitate that tendency is defined here as *learning instrument utility*. The findings suggest that television media ratings data improve students' awareness of inclusive universal ethnicity with greater learning instrument utility. In particular, the TV ratings instrument achieved comparably higher results on four brand strategy project objectives -- *analytical familiarity, articulation fluency, conceptual framing, and strategic fit*. Therefore, television ratings offer marketing educators a simple, suitable, and accessible pedagogical tool for making multicultural marketing more familiar.

Research Problem: Improving Universal Ethnic Inclusion and Learning Instrument Utility

Informal evidence suggests that expanding multicultural marketing competency in the classroom is not a prevalent priority among U.S. marketing educators, and for good reason. Ethnic market subject matter is too often perceived as peripheral to core skills like environmental scanning, segmentation/positioning, and the marketing mix. By contrast, practitioners are proficient at aligning multicultural marketing skills with those core marketing strategies. When marketing education pedagogy is incongruent with both market population trends and professional marketing techniques, a curricular problem exists. In the case of multicultural marketing competency the solution may entail making marketing faculty and students more familiar.

In order for ethnic fluency to permeate standard marketing subjects/skills, multicultural marketing must be made more familiar to marketing educators and students.

First, the pedagogical goal of multicultural familiarity can be furthered through universal ethnic inclusion – including White/European Americans. Global marketing strategy adopts a universal approach (Costa & Bamossy, 1995), as does multicultural marketing pedagogy designed to include European American ancestry along with so-called 'people of color' (Carter, 2009). This universal ethnicity premise is reflected in a shift "from exclusion to inclusion" by multicultural marketing scholars (Henderson & Williams, 2013). Aside from its valid cultural anthropology foundation, universal ethnic framing contributes proper market representation and personal membership relevance. These considerations foster familiarity among ethnically diverse marketing students and faculty. The inclusive universal premise asserts that everyone is equally

Figure 1: Progression of US Multicultural Eras

US SOCIETAL FACTORS	US MULTICULTURAL ERAS		
	(A) <i>Uniform</i> Ethnic Homogeneity ("Melting Pot")	(B) <i>Unique</i> Ethnic Heterogeneity ("Salad Bowl")	(C) <i>Universal</i> Ethnic Heredity ("Seeds")
1) Anthropological Origin <i>Authenticity</i> ("roots")	low	medium	high
2) 'Content of Character' <i>Acceptance</i> ("rights")	low	medium	high
3) Global "Flat World" <i>Acceleration</i> ("reach")	low	medium	high
4) Digital Identity <i>Artificiality</i> ("representation")	low	medium	high

ethnic, reflecting a progression in the U.S. multicultural society/market paradigm from ethnic ancestry "melting pot," to "salad bowl," to "seeds."

The emergence of an inclusive universal ethnic orientation is attributable to four primary factors:

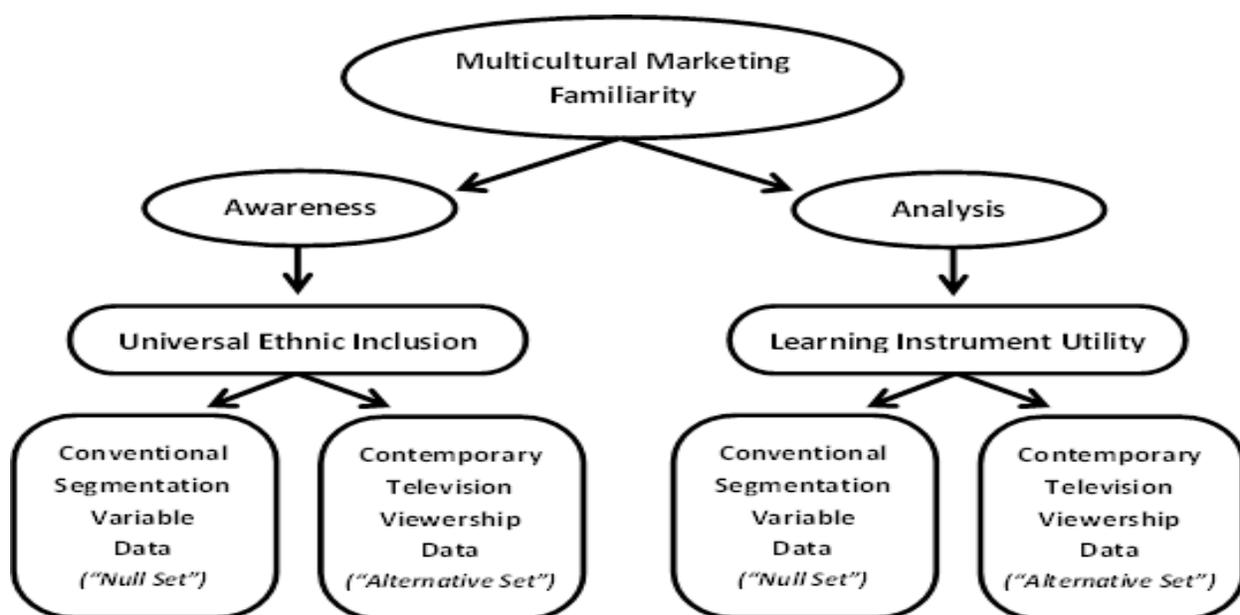
1. Authentic universal human ethnic perspective rooted in primordial cultural anthropology
2. Accepted "content of character" civil rights creed for all ethnic/multi-ethnic backgrounds
3. Accelerating "flat world" dynamics anchors everyone to ancestral origins
4. Artificial digital identity in online, mobile, virtual, and social media.

Second, multicultural marketing familiarity is facilitated by the utility of learning instruments. The utility or usefulness of instruments for learning multicultural marketing subjects/skills is a major determinant of familiarity. Of course, instrument utility depends on the learning objectives, faculty/student class composition, and the type of instrument included in pedagogical designs. The latter factor offers the largest variety of options for marketing educators to incorporate multicultural marketing competency. Whether the appropriate learning instrument is a "diversity seeking scale" (Brumbaugh & Grier, 2013), a multicultural brand meaning index as devised for global cultures (Strizhakova, et al., 2008), or personal market interaction diaries (Karnes, 2005; Nonis, et al. 2006), marketing educators can choose tools to fit their pedagogical focus.

Research Design: A Multicultural Marketing Pedagogical Experiment

This study is narrowly designed to validate specific instructional techniques/tools for achieving both universal ethnic inclusion and learning instrument utility. Empirical validity is most practically established in specific courses and using precise techniques. Generalizing specific course findings to the prevalent curricular problems regarding multicultural marketing competency is a prudent way to expand familiarity and replicate the utility of pedagogical instruments. The multicultural marketing module is designed as a longitudinal quasi-experiment for evaluating the degree of ethnic segment familiarity associated with two different data sources – conventional market data and contemporary media data. Conventional market data are operationalized as accessible online sources for the four market segmentation variables (e.g., demographic, geographic, psychographic, behavior). Contemporary media data are operationalized as Nielsen TV viewership ratings. This research design is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 2: Diagram of Research Design



- Research Question: Do contemporary media data as TV ratings ('alternative data set') raise students' familiarity with multicultural marketing subjects/skills, compared to conventional market data in the form of segmentation variable profiles ('null data set')?

Table 1: Summary of Outcomes from 2 Phases of Ethnic Info/Media Graphics Study

Research Outcome Measures (Teams = 5 – 7 Students)	Conventional Market Data (Segmentation Variables)	Contemporary Media Data (Television Viewership)
1a) Inclusive Universal Ethnicity -- Awareness (# ethnic segments probed -- range)	1 of 4 (25%)	4 of 4 (100%)
1b) Inclusive Universal Ethnicity -- Awareness (# ethnic segments presented -- rapport)	1 of 4 (25%)	4 of 4 (100%)
2a) Learning Instrument Utility – Analysis (preference for data source -- affinity)	3 of 15 Teams (20%)	12 of 15 Teams (80%)
2b) Learning Instrument Utility – Analysis (proficiency with data source -- aptitude) -- verbal fluency & numerical facts	2 of 15 Teams (13%)	12 of 15 Teams (80%)

Research Findings: Universal Ethnic Familiarity Improves Learning Instrument Utility

The second phase of this pedagogical quasi-experiment reconfirmed the capability of television media ratings to raise awareness of multicultural marketing subjects, and affirmed the capacity of television media ratings to sharpen skills for analyzing ethnic market segments. Specifically, findings from the present phase prove that students regard the contemporary media ratings framework as a more familiar learning instrument for ethnic market segment analysis than conventional segmentation variable profiles. More significantly, the analytical utility of television

viewership data exceeds the acumen shown for demographic, geographic, psychographic, and behavior data. These second phase findings, combined with results from the first phase, strongly suggest that television media ratings offer a viable pedagogical technique/tool for expanding multicultural marketing familiarity – defined here as an increased awareness of universal ethnic inclusion and improved analysis from learning instrument utility.

References Available upon Request