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Published in:
International Journal of Business and Emerging Markets

DOI:
[10.1504/IJBEM.2018.095710](https://doi.org/10.1504/IJBEM.2018.095710)

Publication date:
2018

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication in Tilburg University Research Portal](#)

Citation for published version (APA):
Broeder, P., & Derksen, R. (2018). Exclusivity in online targeted promotions: Cross-cultural preferences of consumers. *International Journal of Business and Emerging Markets*, 10(4), 396-408.
<https://doi.org/10.1504/IJBEM.2018.095710>

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Exclusivity in online targeted promotions: cross-cultural preferences of consumers

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Abstract: The ease of adapting and customising content leads targeted promotions to be one of the most important strategies in online marketing. Online marketers use different strategies to attract consumers to their webshop, such as scarcity effects. A specific type of scarcity is exclusivity, in which only a selected group of people receives a promotion. This study examines the effectiveness of the use of online targeted promotions across cultures. 140 Dutch and 123 Mexicans between 18 and 35 years old filled out an online questionnaire. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions in which they received either an exclusive or a non-exclusive offer on either Facebook or Gmail. The results indicated that Mexicans are more prone to exclusive offers than non-exclusive offers, while for Dutch consumers an opposite trend was found. Mexicans report a more favourable attitude and higher visiting intention for online advertisements in general, although the found effect was especially strong for exclusive offers. This study shows that the use of exclusivity can be effective in emerging online markets such as Mexico. However, new ways of online advertising are needed to persuade the experienced online consumer.

Keywords: online advertising; exclusivity; targeted offers; consumer behaviour; cultural localisation; Mexican; Dutch.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows: Broeder, P. and Derksen, R. (2018) 'Exclusivity in online targeted promotions: cross-cultural preferences of consumers', *Int. J. Business and Emerging Markets*, Vol. 10, No. 4, pp.396–408.

Biographical notes: Peter Broeder investigates intercultural aspects of online marketing communications and consumer behaviour. These issues are addressed in Europe and Asia (<http://www.broeder.com>).

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1 Introduction

The evolution of the internet yields infinite implications for online marketers. Low barriers for adapting and customising content made targeted advertising one of the most important strategies in online marketing. Charlesworth (2015) stated that the digital transformation caused a change of attitude of marketers from 'helping the seller to sell', to 'helping the buyer to buy'. Hence, it seems vital for companies to adapt their campaigns to the needs of consumers, for which targeted promotions could be the instrument. Online marketers use scarcity effects in order to attract potential customers to their webshop. One way of doing this, is by arousing a feeling of exclusivity. This study will examine the effect of exclusivity in online-targeted promotions across cultures.

1.1 Deal exclusivity

Targeting specific groups also means that others are excluded from the promotion. In the field of marketing exclusivity this refers to the effect of scarcity. Items and opportunities become more desirable as they become less available (Cialdini, 2001). Marketers try to make use of this desire by manipulating the perceived scarcity of products, services, and promotions (Lynn, 1991). They bring this into practice by advertising in terms of limited editions, limited stock, limited availability, limited time offers, and to limited groups of people. Using scarcity for exclusive targeting of specific groups has not yet been widely adopted. This entails the exclusivity of a promotion, rather than the exclusivity of a product. In other words, this refers to an exclusive opportunity rather than an exclusive item. Barone and Roy (2010) investigated this type of exclusivity in advertising electronics and found exclusive promotions to be favoured over non-exclusive deals. In addition, Aggarwal et al. (2011) did a similar study on the effects of limited quantity and limited time promotions. They found both effects to increase purchase intention for wristwatches. Besides that, they found the use of limited quantity offers to be most effective. In a second study, they investigated the moderating role of two types of brands, functional brands and hedonistic brands, and found the effectiveness to depend on the type of advertising. Functional brands stress the importance of products in terms of the utilitarian function, such as cars for which it is common to advertise in terms of performance or durability. On the other hand, hedonistic brands stress the symbolic value and appeal, and advertise in terms of opportunities for self-enhancement. These types of brands entail mostly exclusive products, such as Rolex and Chanel (Aggarwal et al., 2011). Results demonstrated limited quantity offers to be more effective for hedonistic brands, while limited time offers were found to be more effective for functional brands. This indicates that the effectiveness of scarcity may differ depending on the type of product and advertising context.

Trinh Anh (2014) found that scarcity effects are mitigated in an online context, because of the ease of searching for alternatives on the internet. She investigated two types of scarcity effects with different combinations in terms of limited quantity and limited time in advertising tablets and handbags. She found the effect of scarcity to be highly dependent on the ease of searching for alternatives. The effect of scarcity on purchase intention was only found to be present in conditions, in which the ease of searching for alternatives was low, which is unrepresentative for actual online buying behaviour. Additionally, knowledge of advertising in a specific context could influence

the decision process, in which consumers having more knowledge about a specific type of advertising are less likely to be persuaded by it (Friestad and Wright, 1994). Based on these considerations the following hypothesis are proposed:

- Hypothesis 1 Consumers have a more positive attitude towards exclusive offers than non-exclusive offers.
- Hypothesis 2 Consumers are more likely to visit a webshop when advertised by an exclusive offer than a non-exclusive offer.
- Hypothesis 3 Deal evaluations mediate the relationship between deal exclusivity and visiting intention, such that a positive relationship between deal exclusivity and deal evaluation leads to a higher visiting intention.

1.2 Cultural differences

Self-construal is the degree to which people define themselves as individuals (i.e., independent self-construal) or in relation to a group (i.e., interdependent self-construal). People with independent self-construals see themselves as individual and autonomous people and consider themselves unique, whereas people with interdependent self-construals consider themselves as part of a group and value interpersonal relationships (Agrawal and Maheswaran, 2005). The self-construal dimension is highly related to the individualism dimension as suggested by Hofstede (2001). Moreover, Oyserman et al. (2002) argue for the consensual use of these terms, as according to them the component of personal independence (or interdependence) is critical in describing these dimensions. However, the distinction made by Hofstede (2001) between individualism and collectivism describes a general tendency of a culture, whereas individuals can adopt different self-construals within a certain culture, dependent on the situation and the accessibility of related constructs (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). Nevertheless, when constructs of independence or interdependence are frequently accessible, the cultural environment is likely to shape persistent behaviour that can be seen as a chronic self-construal (Oyserman et al., 2002). Western cultures, which tend to be rather individualistic, tend to value independence and are therefore likely to chronically activate the independent self. In contrast, Asian and South American cultures, which tend to be rather collectivistic, are more likely to make the interdependent self chronically accessible (Agrawal and Maheswaran, 2005; Markus and Kitayama, 1991). Han and Shavitt (1994) showed that persuasive advertisements that are consistent with the type of chronic self are more effective. Moreover, Barone and Roy (2010) found that participants who were primed with an independent self-construal preferred exclusive deals to a greater extent than participants who were primed with an interdependent self-construal.

Ansari and Mela (2003) analysed big data and found that customised content, which is adapted to the preferences of consumers, can increase response rate on direct mailing by 62%. Moreover, Singh et al. (2004) and Singh et al. (2006) pointed out that web content which is adapted to local culture enhances usability and effectiveness, leading to higher purchase intentions. Singh et al. (2004) found in their study across five countries (the Netherlands, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, and India) that consumers prefer local country websites over adapted and standardised websites, although on different aspects of

the websites. Spanish and Indian consumers ranked localised websites higher on all four dimensions of website effectiveness: presentation, navigation, attitude towards the website, and purchase intention. In a similar study, Singh et al. (2006) confirmed this result for Indian and German consumers. However, Dutch and Swiss consumers evaluated local websites more favourably on the presentation of information on the website, though only Swiss consumers reported higher purchase intentions. Italian consumers also reported a more favourable attitude and higher purchase intentions on localised websites, though they ranked standardised websites higher on presentation. Additionally, Singh et al. (2006) found Chinese consumers to report a more favourable attitude and higher purchase intentions on localised websites, though no significant results were found for the navigation and presentation of information.

These findings point at the existence of cultural differences in the preferences of online consumers. Hence, to target selective groups as effectively as possible it seems worthwhile to consider the cultural background, as the adaption of advertisements and websites to culture is found to enhance likeability and persuasiveness (Han and Shavitt, 1994; Tai and Pae, 2002; Pae et al., 2002; Singh and Baack, 2004; Singh et al., 2004; Polegato and Bjerke, 2006; Singh et al., 2006; Broeder and Scherp, 2017). Moreover, as online marketing practices enable targeting based on nationality and location, examining cultural differences in the proneness to specific characteristics of advertisements, such as exclusivity, could accommodate online marketers. The discussed findings suggest that consumers in individualistic cultures evaluate exclusive targeted promotions more positive than consumers in collectivistic cultures, leading to the fourth hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4 Culture influences the relationship between deal exclusivity and visiting intention of the webshop, such that a stronger positive relationship exists for individualistic cultures than for collectivistic cultures.

2 Method

This study uses a $2 \times 2 \times 2$ design. The independent variables are advertisement type (exclusive offer, non-exclusive offer), culture (individualistic, collectivistic), and platform (Facebook, Gmail). Advertisement type and culture will also function as moderators. The dependent variables are deal evaluation (attitude towards the advertisement) and visiting intention of the webshop, in which deal evaluation is expected to mediate the relationship between deal exclusivity and visiting intention.

2.1 Population

263 respondents completed an online survey: 141 females and 122 males. Mean age was 23.1 yrs. (age range 18–25 yrs.). There were 123 participants from Mexico, mostly living in Mexico City (58% male and 42% female), and 140 participants from the Netherlands (49% male and 51% female). Their cultural background was checked through combining birth country and self-identification (“to what ethnic group do you belong?”). Hofstede (2001) classifies the Netherlands as a highly individualistic country (score 80 on a 0–100 scale) and Mexico as a collectivistic country (score 30).

2.2 Advertisement

The participants were instructed to imagine a scenario in which they approached the advertisement either in their Facebook news feed, or a scenario in which they opened the e-mail on their Gmail account. They were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions (deal exclusivity: exclusive, non-exclusive; platform: Facebook, Gmail). They were presented with a general advertisement of an electronics webshop. The deal exclusivity manipulation implied that in the exclusive (non-exclusive) deal condition, the promotion informed participants that very few (many other) customers were selected to receive this invitation. The text of the advertisement was comparable with the text in the study by Barone and Roy (2010) with minor changes (e.g., price and value of the promotion were not specified). Table 1 shows the texts presented for the offers in a Facebook context.

Table 1 Content of the exclusive and non-exclusive offers in a Facebook context

Deal	Text of the offer
Exclusive	<p>SALE, BY INVITATION ONLY!!</p> <p>Congratulations, you have been selected from a very select group of Facebook users. Electronicshop.com offers a sale on top-name products with discounts well below our everyday low prices. Sale items include products from each and every department.</p> <p>Remember, you're part of a very select group of Facebook users that have been invited to this sale. We hope to welcome you.</p>
Non-exclusive	<p>SALE FOR ALL FACEBOOK USERS!!</p> <p>Electronicshop.com offers a sale on top-name products with discounts well below our everyday low prices. Sale items include products from each and every department.</p> <p>This sale is open to all Facebook users. We hope to welcome you.</p>

Figure 1 Exclusive offer in a Gmail context (see online version for colours)

Comparable texts were presented in a Gmail context. However, for exclusive offers on Gmail the part ‘a very select group of Facebook users’ was substituted by ‘a very select group of our customer base’, whereas for non-exclusive offers the part ‘open to all Facebook users’ was substituted by ‘open to all customers’. Figure 1 shows an example of an advertisement with an exclusive offer in a Gmail context.

2.3 Questionnaire

Visiting intention was measured with two items (“I would like to visit the webshop in the advertisement”, and “the chance of me visiting the webshop is low”), with answers on a five-point scale from ‘completely disagree’ to ‘completely agree’ (internal consistency: Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.89$, mean inter-item correlation = 0.80).

The deal evaluation scale (“how do you feel about the text in the advertisement?”) consisted of four five-point bipolar items: ‘bad-good’, ‘positive-negative’, ‘(un)favourable’, and ‘(un)likable’ (internal consistency: Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.83$, mean inter-item correlation = 0.54).

The perceived exclusivity scale checked the manipulation for the two conditions. This scale was built on Barone and Roy (2010). The four five-point bipolar items were: ‘available to very few/many customers’, ‘(not)exclusive’, ‘(not) selective’, and ‘(not)restricted’ (internal consistency: Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.91$, mean inter-item correlation = 0.71).

The perceived targeting scale captured whether participants perceived that the advertisements were targeted specifically at them. This scale consisted of two five-point bipolar items: ‘(not)targeted at me’, and ‘standardised/selected for me’ (internal consistency: Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.78$, mean inter-item correlation = 0.64).

The general attitude towards electronics was measured with two items (“I like to use electronics”, and “I like to buy electronics”) with answers on a five-point scale from ‘completely disagree’ to ‘completely agree’ (internal consistency: Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.83$, mean inter-item correlation = 0.66).

3 Results

3.1 Manipulation check

A manipulation check was conducted to assure that participants perceived the exclusive offers as more exclusive than the non-exclusive offers. On average, the exclusive offers were perceived as more exclusive ($M = 2.64$, $SD = 1.29$) than the non-exclusive offers ($M = 1.94$, $SD = 0.86$). The difference, 0.70, BCa 95% CI [0.44, 0.96], was significant, ($t(273) = 5.27$, $p < 0.001$), and represented a medium effect of $d = 0.64$. In contrast, the participants did not perceive the exclusive offers ($M = 2.40$, $SD = 1.21$) to be more targeted at them than the non-exclusive offers ($M = 2.15$, $SD = 1.02$). The difference, 0.25, BCa 95% CI [-0.19, 0.51], was not significant, ($t(273) = 1.83$, $p = 0.69$).

Also, the manipulation of the context of the advertisement was checked. On average, deal evaluations were the same on Facebook ($M = 2.64$, $SD = 0.96$) and Gmail ($M = 2.59$, $SD = 0.82$). The difference, 0.05, BCa 95% CI [-0.16, 0.26], was not significant, ($t(273) = 0.48$, $p = 0.632$). Visiting intentions of the webshop were the same on Facebook

($M = 2.19$, $SD = 1.02$) and Gmail ($M = 2.04$, $SD = 0.87$). The difference, 0.15, was not significant, $t(243) = 1.27$, $p = 0.206$.

In total, only 44 participants (16%) were likely to visit the webshop. When presented an exclusive offer, 17% ($N = 20$) of the participants were likely to visit the webshop, whereas 15% ($N = 24$) were likely to visit the webshop when receiving a non-exclusive offer. To understand why participants were unwilling to visit the webshop, the general attitude towards electronics was assessed. On average, participants showed a positive general attitude towards electronics ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 0.86$). No correlation between the electronics attitude and visiting intention was found ($r = -0.00$, $p = 0.986$).

3.2 Deal exclusivity

To examine whether exclusive offers are preferred over non-exclusive offers in both cultures, a PROCESS model was conducted (Hayes, 2013) with culture as independent variable, deal evaluation as dependent variable, and deal exclusivity as moderator. The outcome of the regression model is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Linear model of predictors of deal evaluation

	<i>b</i> [<i>BCa</i> 95% <i>CI</i>]	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	2.61 [2.51, 2.71]	0.05	51.42	< 0.001
Deal exclusivity (centred)	−0.36 [−0.56, −0.16]	0.10	−3.56	< 0.001
Culture (centred)	0.59 [0.38, 0.79]	0.11	5.72	< 0.001
Culture × deal exclusivity	0.48 [0.08, 0.88]	0.21	2.33	0.021

The overall model was significant, $R^2 = 0.17$, $F(3, 263) = 18.43$, $p < 0.001$. Both culture and deal exclusivity had a main effect on deal evaluation. Moreover, an interaction effect between culture and deal exclusivity was found. This interaction is plotted in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Regression of deal evaluation for (non)exclusive offers per culture (see online version for colours)

To explain the interaction effect, an ANOVA was conducted. The results confirmed a significant main effect of deal exclusivity ($F(1, 259) = 11.72$, $p = 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.04$), and

culture ($F(1, 259) = 32.85, p < 0.001, \eta_p^2 = 0.11$). Mexicans have a more positive deal evaluation ($M = 2.92, SD = 0.86$) than Dutch ($M = 2.34, SD = 0.83$). The main effects were quantified by a significant interaction between deal exclusivity and culture ($F(1, 259) = 5.56, p = 0.019, \eta_p^2 = 0.02$). Simple effects analysis showed that the difference in deal evaluation of exclusivity is only present for Dutch participants. They evaluate non-exclusive offers more positive ($M = 2.64, SD = 0.80$) than exclusive offers ($M = 2.05, SD = 0.75$), $F(1, 259) = 17.89, p < 0.001$.

3.3 Visiting intention

To examine whether culture interacts with deal exclusivity in predicting visiting intention of the webshop, a second moderation analysis was conducted, with culture as independent variable, visiting intention as dependent variable, and deal exclusivity as moderator. The outcome of the regression model is presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Linear model of predictors of visiting intention

	<i>b</i> [BCa 95% CI]	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	2.11 [1.99, 2.23]	0.06	36.35	< 0.001
Deal exclusivity (centred)	0.08 [-0.15, 0.31]	0.12	0.69	0.491
Culture (centred)	0.64 [0.40, 0.88]	0.12	5.29	< 0.001
Culture $\times$ deal exclusivity	0.60 [0.12, 1.08]	0.24	2.47	0.015

The overall model was significant, $R^2 = 0.14, F(3, 233) = 11.86, p < 0.001$. There was no main effect of deal exclusivity on visiting intention. The effect of culture was significant. The results also showed a significant interaction effect, indicating that the relationship between culture and visiting intention is moderated by deal exclusivity. The interaction is plotted in Figure 3.

Figure 3 Regression of visiting intention for (non)exclusive offers per culture (see online version for colours)

An ANOVA was conducted with deal exclusivity and culture as independent variables and visiting intention as the dependent variable. The results confirmed a significant main effect of culture, $F(1, 229) = 28.60, p < 0.001, \eta_p^2 = 0.11$. Mexicans reported a higher visiting intention ($M = 2.47, SD = 1.01$) than Dutch ($M = 1.83, SD = 0.78$). No significant main effect of deal exclusivity was found, $F(1, 229) = 1.03, p < 0.312, \eta_p^2 = 0.00$. The main effects were quantified by a significant interaction between deal exclusivity and culture ($F(1, 229) = 6.62, p = 0.011, \eta_p^2 = 0.03$). Simple effects analysis revealed that the difference in visiting intention is only present for Mexican participants. They have a higher visiting intention on exclusive offers ($M = 2.67, SD = 0.98$) than non-exclusive offers ($M = 2.25, SD = 1.01$), $F(1, 229) = 5.72, p = 0.018$.

3.4 Deal evaluation

To examine whether visiting intention can be explained by differences in deal exclusivity and deal evaluation, a mediation analysis was performed using the procedures developed by Preacher and Hayes (Hayes, 2013). In this analysis, deal exclusivity was entered as a predictor for visiting intention, and deal evaluation was entered as mediator.

Figure 4 Model of deal exclusivity as a predictor of visiting intention, mediated by deal evaluation (see online version for colours)

Note: The confidence interval for the indirect effect is a BCa bootstrapped CI-based samples.

The model displayed in Figure 4 shows that the standardised regression coefficient between deal exclusivity and deal evaluation was statistically significant, as was the standardised regression coefficient between deal evaluation and visiting intention. Deal exclusivity was found to negatively contribute to deal evaluation, and deal evaluation was found to positively contribute to visiting intention. The total standardised indirect effect was significant ($b = -0.21, 95\% \text{ BCa CI } [-0.35, -0.07]$). The significance of this indirect effect was tested using bootstrapping procedures (1,000 samples).

4 Conclusions

This study examined cultural differences on the effects of exclusivity in online-targeted promotions. Hypothesis 1 stated that consumers have a more positive attitude towards exclusive offers than non-exclusive offers in both individualistic (e.g., the Netherlands) and collectivistic (e.g., Mexico) cultures. Additionally, Hypothesis 2 expected a similar effect on visiting intention of the webshop. Results showed no support for Hypothesis 1. In contrast, Dutch consumers evaluated non-exclusive offers more positive than exclusive offers. However, this did not result in a higher visiting intention on non-exclusive offers. This is in line with findings of Singh et al. (2006), who found that a more positive evaluation of the presented information does not necessarily lead to a higher purchase intention. Nevertheless, the results of our study did provide partial support for Hypothesis 2, yet only for Mexican consumers. Although Mexicans did not evaluate exclusive offers more positive, the exclusive offers did result in a higher visiting intention of the webshop. This indicates that even though advertisements are not likable, they can be effective, indicating that the likability of advertisements is not necessarily related to effectiveness.

The participants in our study were mostly unwilling to visit the webshop. However, this was not due to the use of electronics as product category. Participants showed in general a positive attitude towards electronics, and no relationship between the attitude towards electronics and visiting intention was found. Hence, we anticipate that findings on visiting intention can be attributed to characteristics of the advertisements rather than attitudes towards electronics.

The findings of this study provided partial support for Hypothesis 3, which stated that deal evaluations mediate the relationship between deal exclusivity and visiting intention, such that a positive relationship between deal exclusivity and deal evaluation leads to a higher visiting intention. The mediating effect of deal evaluation was supported. However, deal exclusivity was found to negatively contribute to deal evaluation. In other words, exclusive deals resulted in a less positive attitude towards the advertisement. Nevertheless, the mediating effect of deal evaluation showed a positive relationship between deal evaluation and visiting intention.

Hypothesis 4 expected culture to influence the relationship between deal exclusivity and visiting intention of the webshop, such that a stronger positive relationship exists for individualistic cultures (e.g., the Netherlands) than collectivistic cultures (e.g., Mexico). Mexicans were found to evaluate both exclusive and non-exclusive offers more favourable than Dutch participants. Accordingly, Mexicans showed a higher visiting intention on both exclusive and non-exclusive offers, though for non-exclusive offers the effect was marginally significant. Hence, the results confirmed the existence of a positive relationship between deal exclusivity and visiting intention only for Mexican participants, which provides partial support for Hypothesis 4. The influence of culture was found, although in a direction which was contradictory to the expectations. It has to be noted that Mexicans showed a more favourable attitude and a higher visiting intention in general, which indicates that the effect cannot be attributed to exclusivity only. However, the effects were substantially stronger for exclusive offers.

5 Limitations and implications for future research

In the field of international marketing there is an ongoing debate about whether to use a standardised or a localised approach for marketing campaigns. Standardisation refers to the use of a global marketing strategy across different markets, whereas localisation refers to adapting the marketing strategy to local markets. Supporters of the standardisation approach argue that standardisation can create a homogenised consumer market that encourages a global brand identity, which can lead to global competitive advantage (Levitt, 1983; Ohmae, 1989). In other words, a standardised approach is beneficial in terms of scale advantages, and can accordingly lead to higher efficiency and profits. However, a localised approach seems to respond better to the needs of consumers by adapting the marketing mix (product, price, placement, promotion) to the preferences of consumers, in an attempt to optimise consumer satisfaction. The rise of the internet breathes new life into this discussion, as the web is a global communication platform, which yields great opportunities for relatively cheap customisation and adaption. This causes scale advantages to diminish, as the ease of customisability on the internet offers cost effective solutions to provide customers with targeted promotions.

This study demonstrated that exclusive offers are evaluated more positive in collectivistic cultures than non-exclusive offers, whereas non-exclusive offers are preferred in individualistic cultures. Hence, a localised approach seems more appropriate for online marketers than a standardised approach in meeting the needs of consumers of different cultures. Exclusive offers were found to result in a higher visiting intention for Mexican consumers, while no effect on visiting intention was found for Dutch consumers. This is in contrast with findings of Barone and Roy (2010), who found exclusive offers to be preferred over non-exclusive deals in individualistic cultures. However, several explanations could possibly account for this inconsistency in findings. Firstly, third variable effects could have caused an undue influence on the findings of Barone and Roy (2010). For example, the stimuli of Barone and Roy (2010) included textual cues such as 'ONE DAY SALE', which point at scarcity effects (i.e., limited time offers) rather than the specific effect of exclusivity. Secondly, the presentation of stimuli in a realistic advertising context in this study could have led participants to engage in a more accurate reflection of their actual behaviour. This is supported by findings of Trinh Anh (2014), who found a representative online context to mitigate the effects of scarcity. Moreover, she found that scarcity effects in a representative online context could even lead to a negative effect on purchase intention, which is in line with findings of this study for the evaluation of exclusive offers by Dutch participants.

The results of this study also indicate that Mexican consumers are more prone to exclusivity than Dutch consumers. This finding is inconsistent with findings of Barone and Roy (2010) for related self-construals. They found consumers adopting an independent self-construal, which concerns individualistic values (i.e., independence), to evaluate exclusive offers more favourably than consumers adopting a dependent self-construal, which concerns collectivistic values (i.e., interdependence). In contrast, this study indicates consumers from collectivistic cultures to be more susceptible for exclusivity than consumers from individualistic cultures. The use of primed self-construals in the study of Barone and Roy (2010) might have triggered an unrepresentative high activation of the individualistic values.

Furthermore, this study indicates Mexican consumers to be more susceptible for online advertising in general, which affirms a great potential for companies to target

emerging markets in the field of online advertising. Although perceived persuasive intent or advertising knowledge was not measured in this study, the fact that Mexico is an emerging market in the field of online advertising fuels the expectation that Mexican consumers have less experience with online advertising. Consequently, fewer experience and knowledge about the persuasive attempts could have led them to evaluate the advertisements more positively (Friestad and Wright, 1994).

In future research, this study could be replicated for different subcultures, age categories, and income groups. Moreover, replications could be done for countries with different scores on the individualism/collectivism dimension by Hofstede (2001).

Also, different types of online media could be examined, e.g., the use of exclusivity in advertising on Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Snapchat. Furthermore, different types of exclusivity and scarcity effects could be examined across cultures. For example, the use of scarcity in advertising for limited stock, limited editions, exclusive products, exclusive distributions, or limited time sales. Moreover, different combinations of exclusivity and scarcity effects could be examined. Additionally, the study could be replicated for different product categories or specific types of products. Also, brands of existing products or webshops could be included to examine the effects of (hedonistic/utilitarian) brand attitude and brand loyalty on proneness to exclusivity. Lastly, it could be worthwhile to include variables such as advertising experience, advertising knowledge, and persuasive intent, which could be explanatory for findings.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments.

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