Materialism in China – Review of Literature

Bogdan Robert Ioane

Higher Colleges of Technology
Al Ain, United Arab Emirates
Email: bogdan.ioane [AT] gmail.com

Abstract: Materialism is a trait or a value that influences the goals consumers pursue and the means by which they pursue those goals. Materialism is influenced both by individual characteristics such as social status and income, and by cultural norms. The existing research into materialism in Chinese culture is currently incomplete, failing to acknowledge the dramatic shifts caused by modernity. This review of literature discusses materialism in China and its associations with both traditional aspects of Chinese culture, such as shame, filial piety, and collectivism, and changes brought on by modernity including industrialization, transformations of its middle class, a possible loss of competitiveness and economic slowdown.

Keywords— materialism, culture, cultural values, China

1. INTRODUCTION

Defining Materialism

Materialism is a complicated construct that can have positive and negative outcomes (Kilbourne & LaForge, 2010; Richins & Dawson, 1992). It plays a central role in several facets of consumer behavior (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2011). While the concept of materialism is well established in philosophy and sociology, consumer research started only after the 1980s; the early studies focused systematically on investigating the concept of economic materialism. Researchers have yet to agree upon a commonly accepted definition of materialism, and definitions vary with their authors' focus: on individual traits (Belk, 1985) and values (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002; Kasser & Ryan, 1996; Richins & Dawson, 1992) or on cultural systems (Sahlins, 1976) and mindsets (Rassuli & Hollander, 1986). Some authors have considered a combination of approaches, such as Browne and Kaldenburg (1997) who defined materialism as both clusters of values and traits focused on possessions (Browne & Kaldenburg, 1997).

Individual focus

As consumer behavior research blends elements of economics and psychology by trying to understand the psychological mechanism behind behavior, researchers began thinking of materialism as a trait (Belk, 1985) or a value (Richins & Dawson, 1992). Rassuli and Hollander (1986) defined materialism as a mind-set, or a self-centered interest in obtaining and spending money. Materialism, as an individual trait or value, is thought to steer consumers' actions towards meaning and happiness (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), to influence the goals that individuals pursue, and impact the means by which they do so (Kasser, 2002; Wong et al., 2011). Ward and Wackman (1971) similarly explained that materialism was a result of individuals seeing material goods as a way to attain happiness and social progress.

Belk (1984) defined materialism as "the importance a consumer attaches to worldly possessions" (p. 291), proposing a construct with three sub-characteristics of materialism – possessiveness, envy, and lack of generosity. Ger and Belk (1996) also promoted a fourth dimension of preservation, a tendency to make memories tangible, separating it from possessiveness. The 1985 Belk scale was validated in a multitude of studies (Ahuvia & Wong, 1995; Belk, 1985; Ger & Belk, 1996).

Rokeach described a value as having "a transcendental quality to it, guiding actions, attitudes, judgments, and comparisons across specific objects and situations and beyond immediate goals to more ultimate goals" (Rokeach, 2008, p. 228). Richins and Dawson (1992) drew on that description in their definition of materialism as a value that guides people's lives, their choices, and their conduct in multiple of situations, including, but not limited to, consumption (Richins & Dawson, 1992). In this context, materialism influences both the type and quantity of goods purchased. Beyond consumption, materialism influences resource allocation, including time (e.g., working more hours for more money). They hypothesized materialistic individuals emphasize acquisition and possessions, are self-centered, and will prefer pursuing a life of material complexity.

Richins and Dawson (1992) defined materialism in three parts: the centrality of acquisition in a person's life, the belief that acquisitions can result in happiness and satisfaction, and the use of possessions as indicators of success in self or

others. Cleveland et al. (2009) equated materialism with the modern world, seeing materialism among the three main constructs of globalization: materialism, cosmopolitanism, and consumer ethnocentrism. Wong et al. (2011) defined materialism as "the extent to which individuals attempt to engage in the construction and maintenance of the self through consumption" (p. 2), viewing materialism's most important function as constructing and maintaining the self (Wong et al., 2011).

Cultural focus

In contrast to viewing materialism as an individual trait, some researchers have defined materialism as a construct that varies between cultures. For instance, Mukerji (1983, p.8), relying on Polanyi's (1944) and Sahlin's (1976) definitions, adapted the definition of materialism to "a cultural system in which material interests are not made subservient to other social goals" and in which "material self-interest is preeminent" (Mukerji, 1983, p.8).

While non-Western cultures only recently undertook materialism research(Chan, 2003; Chan & McNeal, 2003; Chan & Prendergast, 2007; Hung et al., 2007; Podoshen et al., 2010), most materialism scales were actually validated in the 1990s, including Belk's (1985) materialism scale or the Materialist Values Scale (Richins & Dawson, 1992). These theories have been discussed extensively in the context of Western culture, but research is lacking in the case of the Chinese culture and consumer.

2. INFLUENCES ON MATERIALISM

Researchers in psychology, sociology and economics have observed a variety of influences that push the avid pursuit of consumption known as materialism. In some cases, historical changes and modernization in themselves create the conditions for materialism to increase. Issues such as the end of World War II, set minimum incomes, increased income in western countries, increased competition, more choice for the consumer, better marketing strategies, and globalization are all thought to have contributed to an increase in materialism throughout the world. As Inglehart (1981) explained, the abundance of consumer goods is an important factor of materialism. Inglehart suggested that affluent societies move away from materialistic goals as they satisfy basic needs and shift towards less materialist, more abstract needs. Other authors (Ger & Belk, 1996; Parker et al., 2010) discussed this idea, suggesting that individuals from materialistic countries seem to lack in material possessions. Within a given society, social status and income seem to influence individual materialism, while income and cultural differences appear to have a greater effect within a society as a whole.

Status

Social influence has also been identified as a precursor of materialism (Churchill & Moschis, 1979; Clark et al., 2001). For instance, incentive-based parenting styles encourage materialistic motivations, where a child's behavior is rewarded or punished with the use of possessions. In addition, the socially based construct of status within a community is intimately connected with materialism. In fact, research has suggested that the primary motivation behind materialism is social status, defining status consumption as "the motivational process by which individuals strive to improve their social standing through the conspicuous consumption of consumer products that confer and symbolize status both for the individual and surrounding significant others" (Eastman et al., 1999, p. 310).

Status is "the relative rankings of members of each social class in terms of specific status factors" (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2006, p. 358), including wealth, power, and prestige. Possession of luxury goods confers high status on the owner (Fitzmaurice & Comegys, 2006). Furthermore, the goods themselves can also convey information about their owners. For example, some products are usually purchased by adventurous travelers, while other products might usually be purchased by health conscious consumers. Such associations are used consciously or subconsciously by consumers as they select which material goods to purchase and ascribe meaning to their own and others' possessions (Cleveland et al., 2009). In addition to using material goods to bolster their own social status and ascribe such status to others, consumers may also use material possessions in creating their own self-concept. In this process, consumers use products that hold culturally-derived meaning to define themselves and to symbolize membership or desired membership in various social groups (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2007).

Moschis (1981) discussed motivations for social consumption, arguing that the more attuned one is to the social meaning of products purchased, the higher consumption motivation will exist. Furthermore, motivation can bias perception (Rose & DeJesus, 2007), leading to conceptual ramifications within the materialism discussion. For example, purchasing is a social act, as it involves at least two parties in a transaction. Those who are motivated to advance their social standing through consumption will attach social meaning to purchasing as a way to gain others' admiration. Those individuals who construe buying as a means to attain social acceptance will therefore attach greater value to products than those who see less social capital in the same products (Rose & DeJesus, 2007).

Income levels

The notion that consumption is linked with social class was noted by Veblen (1899) before the turn of the 20th century. According to Inglehart (1981), mass materialism was made possible primarily by the rising incomes of the 20th century. Materialism levels are linked to income levels, with low income consumers showing increased materialistic tendencies in comparison to high income consumers (Inglehart, 1981). This idea is furthered by Podoshen and Andrzejewksy (2012), who observed that low income consumers may overcompensate in their consumption, exasperated by situational or societal marginalization, and that compensatory consumption, in turn, can result in conspicuous consumption.

The association between income and materialism can be complex and multidirectional. Richins (2011) described materialism as being a value and a construct composed of three parts: acquisition as a central goal, acquisition in the pursuit of happiness, and possessions as a sign success. Richins further argued that people buy goods in hopes of transforming their lives. This perceived power of material possessions leads to a strong desire for wealth that can be used for the purchase of goods. Psychologists Hartnett and Skowronski (2008) found that important life decisions are guided in part by how a person believes a decision will affect them emotionally; this is known as affective forecasting. This may help to explain the financial risk taking that led more than one million people to bankruptcy in the United States in 2010 (American Bankruptcy Institute, 2012). Rather than materialism, a strong desire for personal-growth was found to be the top reason people claimed to overdraw on their credit. Thus, not only does income-level influence materialism, conversely, materialism influences the motivation to attain higher income.

On a similar note, Atay, Sirgy, Cicic, and Husic (2009) discussed affective-based expectations and their link with materialism. They divided these expectations into ideal, deserved, and least possible need expectations. Ideal expectations are a method of comparison based on remote references instead of specific ones (e.g., the ideal to become "filthy rich"). Materialistic people are more likely to compare their standard of living with "filthy rich", an unquantifiable goal, leading them to dissatisfaction. The deserved expectations is the tendency to make merit-based comparisons involving income and work. Materialistic people tend to think they work harder than others but earn less, generating feelings of injustice, anger, and envy. The least possible need expectation is spending to meet minimum basic needs; materialistic people believe they need more money to make ends meet, having inflated basic need perception.

Atay et al.'s (2009) research concluded that nonmaterialistic people are more likely to use cognitive-based expectations in evaluating their standard of living; for example, they may compare their current standard of living against their past standard of living and/or possessions. Alternatively, materialistic people tend to evaluate their standard of living against expected future wealth (Atay et al., 2009). The expectation framework is supported by Moschis's (2007) life course paradigm, which emphasizes the importance of examining consumer behavior in the context of the person's expectations.

Culture

In addition to the influence by status and income level on materialism, a direct relationship exists between consumption and culture. What consumers choose to acquire is an indication of the culture they belong to. Consumers' perceptions of products, their worldview and mental schema of what is more or less important are all based on their cultural values. An items' ability to satisfy cultural values are of crucial importance when analyzing consumer behavior, as people from different cultures may purchase goods to reinforce their cultural values (Lindridge, 2012). In analyzing status consumption, different types of purchases have been found to be more influenced by materialism than others – for example, the purchase of furniture, décor, or other nonessential household goods are more likely to be influenced by materialism than by necessity (Jacobs & Smit, 2011). In addition, materialistic values not only vary between individual consumers but also vary between contexts (Cleveland et al., 2009).

3. MATERIALISM IN CHINA

Culture is a vague and complex construct, whose pervasiveness has made defining it difficult. Tylor attempted to provide one of the earliest definitions of culture: "the complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral, custom and any other capabilities and habit acquired by man as a member of society" (as cited in McCort & Malhotra, 1993).

Culture is strongly related to materialism, as it defines a set of principles (values) to which an individual is indoctrinated, and materialism is described as one such value. Furthermore, materialism can be an outcome of temperament or psychological attributes, some of which may either be reinforced or inhibited during the enculturation process. In such a complex situation, the subtle influences of these issues on one another could explain the variety in materialistic behavior.

The commercial ability of the Chinese has been observed and noted by researchers; for example, Ryan's study of Chinese values (1961) discussed the "focal value of wealth" (p. 16). Ryan found a cluster of the most respected values in the Chinese community. Firstly, family values hold a priority, where the young Chinese must earn a family fortune and not just an individual fortune. Materialism seems to come next, together with continuous pursuit of wealth, entrepreneurial skill, cleverness, and nerve, most of these in a commercial context (Ryan, 1961). This may explain the proliferation of Chinese entrepreneurs across the world. The concept that materialism is central and typical of Chinese culture was also suggested by Freedman (1979), who discussed the Chinese astuteness in handling money and the general success of the Chinese across Southeast Asian countries to which they immigrated.

Similar findings were observed in attitudinal surveys among the Chinese. One consistent finding was that monetary rewards are high on their list of priorities (Bond, 2008). Another observation involves the entrepreneurial spirit of the Chinese, as noted in most research that studied cultural dimensions. Hofstede (1980) observed that the Chinese are not risk-adverse, being generally willing to take risk and react at entrepreneurial opportunities.

The work ethic, seriousness, and diligence of the Chinese seems to support materialism, and the theory that Chinese people work hard because making money is of great importance, creates security, and reduces vulnerabilities. As immigrants, the Chinese often dealt with issues of acceptance by their host culture, and cases of racial violence have been widespread in countries where the Chinese have immigrated. In such conditions, the only way to survive was to increase

wealth – the Chinese, a besieged minority abroad, had to survive by their wits and work ethic. Bond (2008) discussed the Chinese tendency for hard work, suggesting a number of reasons:

- The perception of wealth as a surrogate for security
- The clear link between effort and reward
- The traditional obligation to the family
- The acceptance of discipline and of power
- The Chinese status-aware culture
- The lack of other valued attributes in the ascription of status
- The relationship system, group pressure and highly sensitive social networks

History can be regarded as one of the enablers of materialism. The history of China is that of repression, discrimination, insecurity, uncertainty, violence, and abuse. In such a hostile environment, it is not surprising that many people idealized money, finding shelter in money in an effort to reduce uncertainty and increase family independence and status. The only moment in Chinese history when wealth has been seen as evil was during Mao's time. Lau (1982) observed that the "emphasis on material values" was the result of historical trends. In Lao's view, the reasons for the traditionally materialistic orientation of the Chinese included:

- A historic tradition of business shrewdness in Kwantung province, which predates exposure to Western influences
- Freedom from traditional religious or moral constraints on purchases or commerce
- The absence of religious nobility setting alternative values
- The lack of upward mobility through political channels in the Chinese colonial society, which led to the use of economic mobility as a unique alternative
- Visible inequality and visible conspicuous consumption as a powerful historical stimuli
- Economic relative openness that led to an inability of the elite to seize monopoly opportunities (Lau, 1982)

History played an important role in shaping today's Chinese consumer behavior (Doctoroff, 2005). Research observed shifts in materialistic values from one generation to another (Gu et al., 2005), supporting Inglehart and Carballo (1997) whose survey on 43 societies suggested a strong correlation between economic development and values. Furthermore, Rogler (2002) observed that significant events could give birth to new historical generations with their own different values. In this context, historic events may influence Chinese consumer behavior; only during the last century, China went through dramatic shifts and changes. As Doctoroff (2005) described of the Chinese:

In the past one hundred years, they have lived through the Republican revolution (1911), twelve years of regional warlords (1916-1927), Japanese occupation (1937-1948), civil war (1945-1948), the Communist liberation (1949), a counter-rightist movement (1953), a Hundred Flowers blooming (1957), the Great Leap Forward (1958-1962), the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), agrarian reform (1980s), the single child policy (1978-), socialism with Chinese characteristics (1992-), the return of foreign barbarians (1995-), and the shredding of the state safety net (1998-) (p. 24).

All these dramatic events and changes influenced the Chinese culture and, as a result, Chinese consumer behavior (Doctoroff, 2005). For instance, the one-child policy seemed to lead to the emergence of a generation of demanding, spoiled, and materialistic children who got everything from their parents (Shao & Herbig, 1994). Later, research found that Chinese children do not fully subscribe to using materialistic values as guiding forces in their life (Chan, 2003). However, it seems that the "little emperor" phenomenon does exist to some degree (Parker et al., 2010). This may be supported by Hung et al (2007), whose research linked differences in materialism between different generational cohorts in China, looking at the effect of "momentous ideological events" on cohorts (p. 837). They identified three cohorts, based on economic conditions prevalent during their formative years. Red Guards, born during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1979) were less materialistic and more frugal. The Modern Realists (born between 1980-1991) were more materialistic. The Global Materialists (born after 1992-present) were the most open and materialistic.

The literature describing the dramatic changes in Chinese culture in previous decades seems to be incomplete, failing to acknowledge the entirety of the underlying causes, and all the consequences of these cultural changes. Yet sufficient evidence supports the premise that China is going through important cultural changes towards more materialistic desires. New research efforts in deciphering what exactly happens, why it happens, and the extent of change, can be enlightening for various organizations, institutions, policy makers, and society as a whole (Doctoroff, 2005).

4. CULTURE SPECIFIC REALITIES IN CHINA

A broader understanding of Chinese culture and values can help to contextualize the emergence of materialism in China's economy and the ways in which materialism in China differs from that in other parts of the World, especially the West. Traditional values are still strong in China, and while modernization and new values are adopted by the more sophisticated Chinese living in large urban areas, the influence of traditional values remain strong, and major differences exist between Chinese consumer behavior and Western consumer behavior (Fenby, 2012; Forsyth et al., 2009; Ger & Belk, 1996; Tse, 1996). Individuals in China must navigate conflicting value systems. On one hand, values of Confucianism are learned from parents and society, on the other hand, there is pressure from popular culture to adopt newer, different, Western values. This dual-pressure can be observed all over China, though at different stages in

different regions. More advanced stages of Westernization can be seen in the Eastern, large cities within China, while the Western areas of China are less modern and more traditional (Doctoroff, 2005; Naisbitt & Naisbitt, 2010). These stages of modernism, as well as the differences between Western concepts of materialism and the ones adapted to the Chinese context, need to be further analyzed.

In China, consumer behavior research focused initially on understanding cultural differences between China and the West, and China's cultural characteristics have been described in numerous studies by Hofstede (1980, 1983, 2001, 2005), Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997) and others. These studies describe the Chinese as being group-oriented, hierarchical, patriarchal, particular in nature, and willing to accept inequality and uncertainty (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997). These descriptors tend to emphasize the differences between Chinese and Western cultures (Hall, 1976; Hofstede, 1993).

Early cross cultural research does not highlight the differences between cultures at the cognitive level, as "human cognition is not everywhere the same" (Nisbett, 2003). Nisbett (2003) suggested that Asians have developed a significantly different process of thought than their Western counterparts. Similarly, Jones and Nisbett (1971), noted a potential researcher bias and irregularity in cross cultural studies. Therefore, well-known research such as Hofstede's (1980, 1983) was received with skepticism (Jones, 2007). Such early cross cultural research may have been fundamentally biased, as the researchers may have unintentionally increased the value of internal explanations while lessening the perceived value of situational ones (Ross, 1977).

In the Chinese context, cross cultural researchers have since had to observe the culture-specific realities and re-evaluate past research. Thrift, filial piety, hierarchy, and conformity to group norms, as well as maintaining honor, are all important parts of the Chinese culture. These are radically different from the equalitarian, consumer-driven, and individual-focused values that exist in Western countries (Chan & McNeal, 2003; Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). The major differences between Aristotle and Confucius assumptions, or between the individualistic and group-centered values, resulted in a radically different worldview that has yet to be deciphered. So far, the Chinese seem to be materialistic, conspicuous consumers, as well as thrifty, cautious and calculated (Podoshen et al., 2010; Tse, 1996; Wei & Talpade, 2007). More information seems to be necessary to better understand the concept of materialism in China due to its size and cultural particularities.

More intense research on materialism in China started in the late 1990s and focused on a variety of factors, including: the link between social characteristics, history and materialism (Nisbett, 2003); family influence on materialistic characteristics of the child or adolescent (Chan, 2003; Chan & McNeal, 2003; Chan & Prendergast, 2007); identification of differences among generations (Hung et al., 2007); and the link among ethnic identities, religion and migration (Cleveland & Chang, 2009). Other efforts in China looked at conspicuous consumption (Podoshen et al., 2010; Zhao, 1997) and luxury (Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). However, the underlying causes of cultural increases in materialism, the pace of change, and the potential effects and consequences of increased materialism have yet to be addressed. To understand the role of materialism in China, it is important to understand the role of shame and of patriarchal respect in Chinese culture, the influence of social change, the differences between individual and collective cultural orientations, as well as the influences of modernity, traditional values, transformations of its almost established middle class and generational differences in materialism.

Shame

An important distinction between the Western and Chinese cultures is the use of guilt and shame as a deterrent to morally or culturally unacceptable behavior. Freud ascribed a major importance of guilt in the development of the Western civilization, spurred on by religion. In sharp contrast, Confucianism, in Chinese culture, is based on shame. In shame-based cultures, behavior is compared with the accepted social norms, while in the guilt-based Western cultures, behavior is based on moral, or religious, grounds (Bond, 2008). This form of Chinese relativism may create ethical issues in cross cultural dealings.

In this distinction, the Chinese shame culture is based on the tradition of Confucianism, with a heavy emphasis on social norms and behaviors. In this society, as Confucius explained in his book "The Analects" (140 BC), "Lead the people with administrative injunctions and put them in their place with penal law, and they will avoid punishments but will be without a sense of shame. Lead them with excellence and put them in their place through roles and ritual practices, and in addition to developing a sense of shame, they will order themselves harmoniously". In the Chinese culture, socialization and control were exercised through social sanctions.

In a guilt society, in contrast, social control was exerted through inoculating feelings of guilt for undesirable behaviors. Therefore, whereas shame societies are based on pride and honor, guilt societies emphasize individual conscience. The distinction was made by R. Dodds in his 1951 book "The Greeks and the Irrational" (Dodds, 1951, 2004). He described that England is a shame culture, even after being converted to Christianity, which usually promotes a guilt culture. Hiebert (1985) provided a vivid description of the distinction between guilt and shame societies:

Guilt is a feeling that arises when we violate the absolute standards of morality within us, when we violate our conscience. A person may suffer from guilt although no one else knows of his or her misdeed; this feeling of guilt is relieved by confessing the misdeed and making restitution. True guilt cultures rely on an internalized conviction of sin as the enforcer of good behavior, not, as shame cultures do, on external sanctions. Guilt cultures emphasize punishment and

forgiveness as ways of restoring the moral order; shame cultures stress self-denial and humility as ways of restoring the social order.

Probably because of this cultural structure, the Chinese never fought for individual freedoms and liberties; there was no Magna Carta or similar movement during Chinese history. Their history contained many tough rulers and sadistic emperors who were not justly ruling the people. However, the Chinese have never challenged the system like European nations challenged their systems. In China, the potential for unrest usually involved unequal balance of power. The authority figures had to be compassionate and just. Violations of moral prescriptions by superiors could justify rebellion against the authority figure. The Chinese culture also prized sincerity and the Chinese people had to adhere to what was right even if the result was disobedience to superiors. Still, most movements were localized and quick to end (Doctoroff, 2005).

Filial piety

Another major difference between the Western and the Chinese society is the value of filial piety: as a Chinese proverb puts it, "In a family of a thousand, only one is the master." The theory of Confucianism supports that the social order must not be disturbed, and challenging the father is a threat to the family, to the social order, and therefore a violation of heaven's mandate (Bond, 2008).

Confucius, or Chung-ni K'ung as he is known to the Chinese, developed the theory of social behavior that stands at the center of Chinese behavior. Born in 551 BC, his system was most likely recognized and accepted because the ideology was aligned with the Chinese agrarian, land-bound, family cultural system of that time; it may have also been accepted due to an emphasis on the duty of officers to serve their masters with extreme loyalty. The ideology promoted restraint over individual desires and equal distribution of goods within the group (family). The hierarchical system promoted educated people into elite positions that were able to exercise power. The code of conduct, or the rules of correct behavior (li) created by Confucius delineated the ideal behavior in most types of relationships. These important relationships, known as the Five Cardinal Relations (wu lun), are those between sovereign and subject, father and son, elder brother with younger brother, husband and wife, and friend with friend. Even the relationship between friends is constructed hierarchically within Confucianism, by seniority. Ultimately, harmony would be realized if each member followed the requirements of the role.

Therefore, in such a system, an individual plays multiple roles: father to his son, son to his father, husband to his wife, and friend. From an individual perspective, some of these dualities are incompatible, seeking sub and super ordination from the same person. This seems not to be a problem under Confucianism, which promotes adaptability and not consistency in character.

Materialism and social change

A study by Ger and Belk associated high levels of materialism with periods and places undergoing rapid social and cultural change. Ever since Deng Xiaoping proposed the new Chinese ideology with his famous adage "to get rich is glorious", the Chinese delved into this new modern new Chinese objective with enthusiasm (Ger & Belk, 1996). The same Deng Xiaoping played a major role in reducing a long held fear of strangers, therefore welcoming and opening China to foreigners. Another study provides an argument that materialism is higher in socially and economically dynamic countries (Schaefer et al., 2004), confirming the link between changes and materialism.

These radical changes caused an earthquake to the culture of China, which was traditionally group-oriented and wary of foreigners. These fast cultural changes, together with the modernization, industrialization and globalization of China, may have already led to an increase in materialistic desires. Moreover, ruthless Chinese marketing may play an important role in the increased materialism of Chinese consumers.

Another study explained that Asia is entering a period of modernity (Heelas et al., 1996); the authors argue that modernity leads to a crisis of identity where traditional values are reinterpreted in response to modernization. The consequences of this process may be anxiety, depression or stress as the identity of the individual is broken down (Kluft & Foote, 1999). One consequence of China's modernity seems to be increased levels of materialism. While values are shifting, culture and identities are broken down, the gap is quickly filled by a consumer culture (Lindridge, 2012).

Individual vs. collective orientation

The traditional Chinese culture is different from western cultures in that it emphasizes individual rights; in China, the emphasis is on collective identities, social interdependence, connectedness, obedience, compromise and mutual deference. In such societies, individual needs are subordinated to suit the perceived wishes of the group. Therefore, Chinese consumers may purchase goods, even goods of conspicuous consumption, in order to satisfy cultural needs. China is different in this way from other Asian countries, as conspicuous consumption seems more individually targeted than in India or Taiwan, where desire to enhance collective family status is only a partial motivation (Lindridge, 2012). A possible explanation for this may be found in Chinese historical events such as the industrialization or the Cultural Revolution. These events may have created a cultural shift from collective attitudes towards individual priorities. Studies have proven that individual experiences during formative years can influence whether an individual becomes more or less materialistic (Wong & Ahuvia, 1998).

Increased materialism can create a conflict between the individual and the collective family prosperity (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002). The collective frame of mind is learned from the family, while individual materialism is derived from

commercial messages found in TV programs and advertising (Kasser et al., 2004). We have yet to determine exactly which materialistic messages are moving the Chinese away from their collective, family bonds.

The influence of modernity and industrialization

Research shows that China's culture is changing rapidly and seemingly breaking away from traditions. The mechanism seems to make the Chinese retain core cultural values while reshaping them with modern inputs. Controversy exists as researchers are trying to improve the models, even though current research suggests that available knowledge cannot explain such a complex concept (Piron, 2006).

Consumption is a symbolic way to participate in the modernization of China, as well as representing the new, innovation-oriented, modern China. Today, China is rushing towards a consumption culture, and, subsequently, a conspicuous consumption state. A study by McKinsey (2011) shows that "China is continuing its march toward becoming the largest luxury market in the world" (McKinsey and Company, 2012). In addition, a report by CLSA Asia Pacific Markets (2011) reveals that the Chinese market will account for 44 percent of global luxury goods sales by 2020, compared to 15 percent in 2010 (CLSA Asia-Pacific Markets, 2011; Lindridge, 2012).

Until recently, accumulation and display of wealth in China was not possible; in fact, it was discouraged by communist values. In addition, for thousands of years, philosophical systems such as Taoism and Buddhism proposed that the perfection of the self was the highest value that an individual could pursue. These philosophical models emphasized the pursuit of spiritual satisfaction over those such as greed, and this spiritual pursuit was valued more than wealth or social status. These traditional values must now coexist with materialism, which can briefly be defined as the motivation to become rich. After 5,000 years of feudalism and 30 years of communism, China has changed from a nation of factories producing consumer goods to a strong market for luxury goods (Huang et al., 2012, p. 316). In a study of luxury goods consumption in China, Sun, D'Alessandro, and Winzar (2008) asserted that by 2015, China will surpass Japan as the largest market for luxury goods worldwide (p. 2).

In a cross-cultural analysis of consumers in Korea and China, Choi and An (2013) described materialism as "a new Asian value" (p. 246). Only since the rise of industrialization in Asia, paired with the relaxation of communism, could Asians aspire to gain wealth and become consumers rather than producers of luxury goods. In the cross-cultural analysis, Choi and An (2013) concluded that although Korean consumers were equally interested in quality of life and related to consumer goods, the Chinese consumers were more materialistic, with urban consumers in China expressing the highest levels of materialism (Choi & An, 2013, p. 245).

Choi and An (2013) noted that industrialization and the opportunity to gain access to large amounts of mass-produced consumer goods has caused a situation in which "consumption and materialism have evolved into universally accepted notions of well-being". Similarly, the advancements in technology have allowed consumers to aspire to greater levels of personal and social well-being (Choi & An, 2013, p. 246). Further, the concept of well-being allied with conspicuous consumption has created a new population of individuals nicknamed "Bobos" or consumers who perceive their own well-being as inseparable from a culture of materialism (Choi & An, 2013, p. 247). In the midst of the poverty that is still common in China, these Bobos, or "bohemian bourgeois," pursue wealth in order to focus on their own health, physical beauty, and leisure activities. They aspire to possess products with a high degree of aesthetic beauty and quality, as part of a lifestyle that emphasizes health, physical beauty, and affluence through purchase of consumer goods.

A Bobo pursues wealth in order to live in a manner that has never been seen before in China (Choi & An, 2013, p. 247). In contrast to a desire for general well-being, which would have been acceptable in prior generations, many consumers in China pursue well-being with an emphasis on the self, which includes the drive to obtain material goods in order to enhance egocentric values that are not communal. Choi and An (2013) noted that this lifestyle is more costly since it involves the purchase of non-essential products, as "materialistic consumers seek well-being via discretionary consumption [that is] within the reach of the masses" (p. 248).

In another study, Durvasala and Lysonski (2010) proposed that industrialization and modernization have resulted in a growing emphasis on Western ideals of individualism, money and hedonism in China. Durvasula and Lysonski (2010) examined the ways in which attitudes towards money impact behavior related to vanity and materialism among young Chinese consumers. As Choi and An (2013, p. 249) have noted, attitudes towards wealth in China are not monolithic. Durvasala and Lysonski (2010, p. 2) concurred with this assessment, and stated that the results of their study indicated numerous variations in materialism among the youth in the study. The authors proposed that as China undergoes an unprecedented transformation, the psyche of Chinese consumers is also likely to undergo a transformation of similar intensity, as passive obedience to socialist values in a hierarchical society is replaced by the celebration of individual achievement (Durvasala & Lysonski, 2010, p. 2).

With regard to the debate between traditional Chinese values versus materialism, Jing and Youngu (2012) studied 46 Chinese college students regarding their personal conflict between traditional social values and materialism. A polygraph measuring galvanic skin response was used during the survey, which involved posing ethical dilemmas in which the subject had to make a choice based on Confucian values or materialism. The subjects who were ranked highest in Confucian values as well as materialism experienced the most conflict (Jing & Youngu, 2012).

The influence of traditional values

In another study of luxury goods consumption in China, Sun, D'Alessandro, and Winzar (2008) proposed that consumption was affected by a combination of cultural and political influences. The study framed consumption from the

perspective of four traditional Chinese values including harmony, moderation, hierarchy in relationships, political values (such as Maoist theory), and the Chinese concept of face (Sun et al., 2008). The first value in the study indicated "face" as a positive influence on materialism. Face was defined in the study as favorable social self-worth that is desirable in a social or relational context in order to gain respect. Face is closely related to material prosperity and status, and individuals with strong face consciousness are likely to pursue wealth as a means of elevating their social status (Sun et al., 2008, p. 4).

The second value was harmony, which involves the pursuit of inner peace of mind. Harmony requires noncompetitive willingness to engage in social solidarity, which would have a negative impact on materialism (Sun et al., 2008, p. 4). When competition is discouraged in favor of group solidarity, the individual drive to obtain more material goods would be suppressed to some degree. Moderation was the third traditional value. The value of moderation discourages extremes of any kind, requires suppression of egoistic behavior and encourages a high degree of self-control in order to remain in balance.

The fourth value, hierarchy in relationships, involves a willingness to conform to hierarchical relationship roles that are defined by social norms. This value involves the degree of respect that is accorded to an individual depending on their social status. The individual in this case would likely aspire to improve their social status. Since Chinese culture involves matching consumer behavior to social status, this value would have a positive impact on materialism (Sun et al., 2008, p. 4). In addition, Deng theory had a positive impact on materialism, since it stated that socialism could be adapted to foster economic development (Sun et al., 2008, p. 5).

China's middle class

Xin (2013) examined the political social and cultural characteristics of the new Chinese middle class. The survey respondents reported a strong preoccupation with conspicuous consumption with regard to housing, home furnishings, leisure activities, and art. They frequently indicated a lack of interest in civic life or participation in social or political change. Many reported that due to China's one-child policy, they spent most of their time, energy, and financial resources on providing their only child with the best possible life (Xin, 2013, p. 1).

Researchers have expressed interest in whether the Chinese middle class are likely to become activists for democratization or social change (Xin, 2013, p. 3). The survey by Xin (2013) focused on middle-class respondents with regard to their political attitudes, social actions, and participation in cultural events (Xin, 2013, p. 8). Respondents were likely to indicate that they were disinclined to become political activists. They did not want greater democratization out of fear of social disruption and its possible impact on their ability to advance economically (Xin, 2013, p. 27). Instead, they favored the pursuit of status and identity through consumerism, feeling this was the best way to show off their middle-class social status. The purchase of brand-name commodities was important for asserting this status (Xin, 2013, p. 36). Respondents indicated high interest in reading books, individual development and career advancement (Xin, 2013, p. 30).

Generational differences

Gu and Hung (2009) proposed that in examining materialism in China, it is important to remember that the material-focus differs between the generation aged 40-49 who lived through the Cultural Revolution and Chinese adolescents who are more closely influenced by the current process of globalization (p. 56). Chinese adolescents are more likely to desire self-expression and quality of life than their elders who emphasize economic security and stability (Gu & Hung, 2009, p. 56).

Gu and Hung (2009) also noted that the typical linear imparting of values from the older generation to adolescents is likely to have been disrupted in ways that are not yet clear due to the intense change that has occurred in Chinese society, beyond capitalism (p. 57). This study, like Chan and Prendergast's (2007), asserted that susceptibility to outside influences including the desire to belong was positively associated with materialism (p. 57). Chinese adolescents are more likely to embrace materialism than their elders, and the influence of mass media was stronger than family background as an influence in fostering materialism in study subjects (Gu &Hung, 2009, p. 62).

5. CONCLUSION

Recent studies propose industrialization and modernization have resulted in a growing emphasis on money, Western ideals of individualism, and hedonism in China (Durvasala & Lysonski, 2010). Materialism can be defined as the pursuit of status and well-being through discretionary consumption of mass-produced consumer goods. This behavior is only possible in an environment of increased wealth, since it involves the purchase of non-essential items. Since China is currently in the process an unprecedented transformation, the focus of Chinese consumers is also likely to undergo a transformation of similar intensity. A hierarchical, socialist society is being replaced by a society in which individual achievement is celebrated.

Important links between cultural context and individual development of behavior exist. In this light, there are two concepts at work: enculturation, the initial learning of culture (e.g., a baby growing up) and acculturation, the learning of the second culture (an individual immigrating). In China, however, the same individuals were enculturated to a culture and then acculturated later to different versions of the same culture that were radically different. This connection between culture and individual development is new and complex. Moreover, a large number of groups, ethnicities, and subcultures exist in China. In addition, these processes of enculturation and acculturation are different, long-term

processes. In each, the long-term psychological consequences are highly variable, depending on social and personal variables. In the process of enculturation, variables are related to the culture, the society, personal variables, and environment. In the process of acculturation, variables are related to the culture of origin, the culture of settlement, and phenomena that exist before and during the process of acculturation (Berry, 1997; Chung & Fischer, 2001; Deshpande et al., 1986). The investigation of such experiences is needed, and future researchers should look at this phenomenon.
Given the cultural differences from the Western cultures and the particularities of the Chinese culture, there seems to be a need for newly adapted scales for measuring consumer behavior concepts such as materialism, instead of using translations of Western created scales. The identification of better processes for translation and cultural adaptation of research instruments is also of concern, especially since little is written regarding the cultural adaptation of research instruments.

6. REFERENCES

- Ahuvia, A. & Wong, N. (1995) Materialism: Origins and implications for personal well-being. European Advances in Consumer Research 2: 172-178.
- Atay, E. G., Sirgy, M. J., Cicic, M., & Husic, M. (2009) Extending the research in relation to materialism and life satisfaction. Advances in Consumer Research 36: 225-232.
- Belk, R. (1984) Three scales to measure constructs related to materialism: Reliability, validity, and relationships to measures of happiness. Advances in Consumer Research 11(1): 291-297.
- Belk, R. (1985) Materialism: Trait aspects of living in the material world. Journal of Consumer Research 12(3): 265-280.
- Berry, J. (1997) Immigration, acculturation, and adaptation. Applied Psychology: An International Review 46(1): 5-68.
- Bond, M. H. (2008) The psychology of the Chinese people. Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong.
- Browne, B. & Kaldenburg, D. (1997) Conceptualizing self-monitoring: Links to materialism and product involvement. Journal of Consumer Marketing, 14(1): 31-44.
- Burroughs, J. E. & Rindfleisch, A. (2002) Materialism and well-being: a conflicting values perspective. Journal of Consumer Research, 29: 348-370.
- Burroughs, J. & Rindfleisch, A. (2011) What Welfare? On the definition and domain of consumer research and the foundational role of materialism. In: D. G. Mick (ed.), Transformative consumer research for personal and collective well-being. New York, NY: Routledge, pp. 249-266.
- Chan, K. & McNeal, J. (2003) Parent-child communications about consumption and advertising in China. Journal of Consumer Marketing 20(4): 317-332.
- Chan, K. (2003) Materialism among Chinese children in Hong Kong. International Journal of Advertising and Marketing to Children 4(4): 47-61.
- Chan, K. & Prendergast, G. (2007) Materialism and social comparison among adolescents. Social Behavior and Personality 35(2): 213-228.
- Choi, H. & An, D. (2013) Materialism, quality of life, and the well-being lifestyle of urban consumers: A cross-cultural study of Korea and China. Global Advanced Research Journal of Management and Business Studies 2(5): 245-257.
- Chung, E. & Fischer, E. (2001) When conspicuous consumption becomes inconspicuous: the case of the migrant Hong Kong consumers. Journal of Consumer Marketing 18(6): 474 – 487.
- Churchill, G. & Moschis, G. (1979) Television and interpersonal influences on adolescent consumer learning. Journal of Consumer Research 6(1): 23-35.
- Clark, P., Martin, C., & Bush, A. (2001) The effect of role model influence on adolescents' materialism and marketplace knowledge. Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice 9(4): 27-36.
- Cleveland, M. & Chang, C. (2009) Migration and materialism: The roles of ethnic identity, religiosity and generation. Journal of Business Research 62(10): 963-971.
- Cleveland, M., Laroche, M., & Papadopoulos, N. (2009) Cosmopolitanism, consumer ethnocentrism, and materialism: An eight-country study of antecedents and outcomes. Journal of International Marketing 17(1): 116-146.
- CLSA. (2011) China to become the world's largest market for luxury goods over the next decade. Media Release, 2 February, https://www.clsa.com/about-clsa/media-centre/2011-media-releases/china-to-become-the-worlds-largest-market-for-luxury-goods.php
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000) Beyond boredom and anxiety. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Deshpande, R., Hoyer, W., & Donthu, N. (1986) The Intensity of Ethnic Affiliation: A study of the Sociology of Hispanic Consumption. Journal of Consumer Research, 13(September): 214-220.
- Doctoroff, T. (2005) Billions: Selling to the New Chinese Consumer. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Dodds, R. (2004) The Greeks and the Irrational. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. (Original work published 1951)
- Doherty, K. & Schlenker, B. (1991) Self-consciousness and strategic self-presentation. Journal of Personality, 59(1): 1-18.
- Durvasala, S. & Lysonski, S. (2010) Money, money, money – How do attitudes toward money impact vanity and materialism? The case of young Chinese consumers. Journal of Consumer Marketing, 27(2): 169-179.
- Eastman, J. Goldsmith., R., & Flynn, L. (1999) Status consumption in consumer behavior: Scale development and validation. Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 7(3): 41-51.
- Fenby, J. (2012) China's unfinished revolution [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.chathamhouse.org/events/view/182923
- Firat, F. A. & Venkatesh, A. (1995) Liberatory postmodernism and the reenchantment of consumption. Journal of Consumer Research, 22(3): 239-267.
- Fitzmaurice, J. & Comegys, C. (2006) Materialism and social consumption. Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 14(4): 287-299.
- Forsyth, D. R., O'Boyle, Jr., E. H., & McDaniel, M. A. (2009) East meets est: A meta-analytic investigation of cultural variations in idealism and relativism. Journal of Business Ethics 83: 813-833.
- Freedman, M. (1979) The study of Chinese society. California: Stanford University Press.
- Ger, G. & Belk, R. (1996) Cross-cultural differences in materialism. Journal of Economic Psychology 17(1): 55-77.
- Gu, F. F., Hung, K., & Tse, D. (2005) Determinants for consumption materialism among late adolescents in China. Advances in Consumer Research, 32: 649-650.
- Gu, F. F. & Hung, K. (2009) Materialism among adolescents in China: A historical generation perspective. Journal of Asia Business Studies 3(2): 56-65.
- Hall, E. (1976) Beyond culture. New York, NY: Anchor Books.
- Hartnett, J. & Skowronski, J. J. (2008) Cash, money, woes: The match between a person's level of materialism and the materialistic (or non-materialistic) character of events alters affective forecasts. North American Journal of Psychology 10(3): 647-664.
- Heelas, P., Lash, S. & Morris, P. (eds.) (1996) Detraditionalization: Critical reflections on authority and identity. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, pp. 1-20.
- Hiebert, P. (1985) Anthropological insights for missionaries. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.
- Hofstede, G. (2005) Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Hofstede, G. (2001) Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions and organizations across nations. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hofstede, G. (1983) Cultures and Organizations: Software of the mind. Administrative Science Quarterly, 132-134.
- Hofstede, G. (1980) Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Holt, D. B. (1997) Poststructuralist lifestyle analysis: Conceptualizing the social patterning of consumption in postmodernity. Journal of Consumer Research 23: 326-350.
- Hoyer, W. & MacInnis, D. (2007) Consumer Behavior (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Huang, C. C., Lu, L., You, C., & Yen, S. (2012) Impacts of ethical ideology, materialism, and selected demographics on consumer ethics: An empirical study in China. Ethics and Behavior 22(4): 315-331.
- Hung, K., Gu, F. F., & Bennett, C. K. (2007) A social institution approach to identifying generation cohorts in China with a comparison with American consumers. Journal of International Business Studies, 38(5): 836-853.
- Inglehart, R. & Carballo, M. (1997) Does Latin America exist? (and is there a Confucian culture?): A global analysis of cross-cultural differences. Political Science and Politics 30(1): 34-47.
- Inglehart, R. (1981). Post-materialism in an environment of insecurity. American Political Science Review, 75(4): 880-900.
- Jacobs, G. & Smit, E. (2011) Materialism and debt among low-income consumers, http://thoughtprint.usb.ac.za/Pages/USB-Leaders-Lab.aspx
- Jing, L. & Yongyu, G. (2012) A study on the conflict between materialism and traditional Confucian values in college students. Journal of Psychological Science 35(1): 160-164.
- Jones, E. & Nisbett, R. (1971) The actor and the observer: Divergent perceptions of the causesf behavior. New York, NY: General Learning Press.
- Jones, M. (2007) Hofstede, culturally questionnable? Paper presented at the Oxford Business and Economics conference; 24-26 June, Oxford, UK.
- Kasser, T. (2002) The high price of materialism. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

- Kasser, T. & Ryan, R. M. (1996) Further examining the American dream: Differential correlates of intrinsic and extrinsic goals. Personality and Social Psychology 22: 280-287.
- Kasser, T., Ryan, R. M., Couchman, C. E. & Sheldon, K. M. (2004) Materialistic values: their causes and consequences. In: T. Kasser and A. D. Kanner (eds.), Psychology and Consumer Culture. Washington, DC: American Psychology Association, pp. 11-28.
- Kluft, R. P. & Foote, B. (1999) Special section: Dissociative disorders. American Journal of Psychotherapy, 53(3): 283-288.
- Kilbourne, W. & LaForge, M. (2010) Materialism and its relationship to individual values. Psychology and Marketing, 27(8): 780-798.
- Lau, S. K. (1982) Society and politics in Hong Kong. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press.
- Lindridge, A. (2012) Middle class consumption in China and India: All change or retrenchment of cultural positions? Paper presented at Asia Rising: A New Oriental Globalism? Conference; The Open University, Buckinghamshire, UK.
- McCort, D. & Malhotra, N. (1993) Culture and consumer behavior: Toward an understanding of cross-cultural consumer behavior in international marketing. Journal of International Marketing 6(2): 91-127.
- McKinsey. (2012). China's love for luxury. https://solutions.mckinsey.com/insightschina/_SiteNote/WWW/GetFile.aspx?uri=:/insightschina/default/en-us/aboutus/news/Files/wp2055036759/McKinsey%20InsightsChina%20-%202011%20Luxury%20Consumer%20Report_7fbe9eff-0bfd-4cea-8bc5-2dff874db6d0.pdf
- Micken, K. S. & Roberts, S. D. (1999) Desperately seeking certainty: Narrowing the materialism construct. In: E. J. Arnould and L. M. Scott (eds.), Advances in consumer research. Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research Conference, pp. 513-518.
- Moschis, G. P. (2007) Life course perspective on consumer behavior. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science 35: 295-397.
- Moschis, G. P. (1981) Patterns of consumer learning. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 9(2): 110-126.
- Mukerji, C. (1983) From graven images: Patterns of modern materialism. New York, NY: Colulmbia University Press.
- Naisbitt, J. & Naisbitt, D. (2010). China's megatrends: The eight pillars of a new society. New York, NY: Harper Business.
- Nisbett, R. (2003) The geography of thought: how Asians and Westerners think differently...and why. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Parker, S., Haytko, D., & Hermans, C. (2010) The perception of materialism in a global market: a comparison of younger Chinese and United States consumers. Journal of International Business and Cultural Studies 3: 399-411.
- Piron, F. (2006) China's changing culture: rural and urban consumers' favorite things. Journal of Consumer Marketing 23(6): 327-334.
- Podoshen, J. & Andrzejewksy, S. (2012). An examination of the relationships between materialism, conspicuous consumption, impulse buying and brand loyalty. Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice 20(3): 319-333.
- Podoshen, J., Li, L., & Zhang, J. (2010) Materialism and conspicuous consumption in China: A cross-cultural examination. International Journal of Consumer Studies 35: 17-25.
- Polanyi, K. (1944). The great transformation. New York, NY: Rinehart.
- Rassuli, K. & Hollander, S. (1986) Desire: Induced, innate, insatiable? Journal of Macro-Marketing, 6: 4-24.
- Richins, M. & Dawson, S. (1992) A consumer values orientation for materialism and its measurement: Scale development and validation. Journal of Consumer Research 19(3): 303-316.
- Richins, M. L. (2011) Materialism, transformation expectations, and spending: Implications for credit use. Journal of Public Policy and Marketing 30(2): 141-156.
- Rindfleisch, A. & Burroughs, J. E. (2004) Terrifying thoughts, terrible materialism? Contemplations on a terror management account of materialism and consumer behavior. Journal of Consumer Psychology, 4(3): 219-224.
- Roberts, J. A., Manolis, C., & Tanner, J. (2003) Family structure, materialism, and compulsive buying. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science 31: 300-311.
- Roberts, J. & Clement, A. (2007). Materialism and satisfaction with overall quality of life and eight life domains. Social Indicators Research, 82(1): 79-92.
- Rogler, L. (2002) Historical generations and psychology: The case of the Great Depression and World War II. American Psychologist 57(12): 1013-1023.
- Rose, P. & DeJesus, S. P. (2007) A model of motivated cognition to account for the link between self-monitoring and materialism. Psychology and Marketing, 24: 93-115.

- Ross, D. (1977) The intuitive psychologist and his shortcomings: Distortions in the attribution process. Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 10: 173-220.
- Ryan, E. J. (1961) The value system of a Chinese community in Java. Unpublished doctoral thesis, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
- Sahlins, M. (1976) Culture and practical reason. Illinois: University of Chicago Press.
- Schaefer, A., Hermans, C., & Parker, S. (2004) A cross-cultural exploration of materialism in adolescents. International Journal of Consumer Studies, 28(4): 399-411.
- Schiffman, L. & Kanuk, L. (2006) Consumer Behavior (9th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Schouten, J. W. & McAlexander, J. H. (1995) Subcultures of consumption: An ethnography of the new bikers. Journal of Consumer Research, 22(1): 43-61.
- Shao, A. & Herbig, P. (1994) Parent agency influence and control over foreign affiliates: A global advertising perspective. International Journal of Commerce and Management, 4(3): 50-67.
- Sun, G., D'Alessandro, A., & Winzar, H. (2008) Traditional cultural values, political ideologies, and luxury consumption desire in China: A conceptual model. In ANZMAC 2011: conference proceedings.
- Trompenaars, F. & Hampden-Turner, C. (1997) Riding the waves of culture: Understanding diversity in global business. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Tse, D. K. (1996) Understanding Chinese people as consumers: Past findings and future propositions. In: M. H. Bond (ed.) The handbook of Chinese psychology. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, pp. 352-363.
- Veblen, T. (1899) The theory of the leisure class: An economic study of institutions. London, UK: Macmillan.
- Ward, S. & Wackman, D. (1971) Family and media influences on adolescent consumer learning. American Behavioral Scientist 14(3): 145-427.
- Watson, J. (2003) The relationship of materialism to spending tendencies, saving and debt. Journal of Economic Psychology, 24(6): 723-739.
- Wei, Y. & Talpade, S. (2007) Materialism of mature consumers in China and USA: A cross-cultural study. Journal of Behavioral Studies in Business, 1: 1-15.
- Wong, N., Shrum, L. J., Arif, F., Chugani, S., Gunz, A., Lowrey, T. M. … Sundie, J. (2011) Rethinking materialism: A process view and some transformative consumer research implications. Journal of Research for Consumers, 19: 1-4.
- Xin, W. (2013) Desperately seeking status: Political social and cultural attributes of China's rising middle class. Modern China Studies, 20(1): 1-45.
- Zhao, B. (1997) Consumerism, Confucianism, communism: Making sense of China today. New Left Review, 222: 43-59.