

Influence of Cultural Differences and Interest Level in Thai Culture on the Online Shopping Behavior of Chinese Consumers

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Abstract

The past ten years have witnessed an exponential growth of cross-border e-commerce, which has become an important trade channel for small and large businesses worldwide. One factor affecting consumers' attitudes and transnational online shopping purchase decisions is cultural difference. This study focuses on the online shopping behavior of Chinese consumers towards Thai products. It aims to determine the extent to which cultural factors influence Chinese consumers' online shopping behavior and whether gender, age, and education have an impact on the level of influence of a different culture, in this case Thai culture. Data was collected via random sampling of Chinese consumers with experience shopping online for Thai products and analyzed using SPSS. Theories of culture and sub-culture as well as Hofstede's cultural dimensions were also relied upon to predict the probability of the influence of cultural difference on online shopping behavior. The Logit Regression model was used to verify the research hypotheses. The results reveal that the influence level of Thai culture on Chinese shopping behavior towards Thai products was small and was not significantly related to age. Gender and education level play a greater role in the perception of another culture and openness to purchasing foreign products.

Keywords: Purchase Decision, Cultural Factor, Online Shopping, Consumer Attitude, Influence

1. Introduction

Cross-border e-commerce has been growing exponentially and has become an important communication tool for both small and large businesses worldwide. It is greatly influencing international trade and setting new societal trends. In China alone, international e-commerce has brought approximately 200 million shoppers online as Chinese customers' demand for foreign products is high, including for goods from Thailand (Statista, 2020). This is creating opportunities for Thai firms to enter the Chinese online shopping market. However, when it comes to international transactions, cultural differences cannot be ignored as they can affect cross-cultural consumer behavior. It is thus imperative for firms seeking to expand abroad via shopping websites to understand the impact of a different culture on the behavior of consumers in the targeted market (Soares, 2004). The recognition of and adaptation to cultural diversity can lead to high consumers' purchase intention of foreign products. When Thai or other foreign businesses decide to enter the Chinese market, they must compete with local products and therefore adjust to Chinese consumers' behavior and satisfaction, and to various other marketing aspects inherent in a different cultural environment.

Although China and Thailand and China share similar cultural aspects such as, for example, high context communication (Hall, 1966), an emphasis on the group (Triandis, 1995; Hofstede, 2001), and respect for elders (Bizumic, 2014), there exist several significant

differences. The literature, music, dance, art, fashion, and food, found in each country offer many contrasts. For instance, colors and numbers do not have the same symbolic value in each culture (Aslam, 2006). Yellow in Thailand represents nobility, whereas red in China is a symbol of happiness. Chinese people like number 6 and 8, which mean good fortune and prosperity but Thai people dislike number 6, which stands for failure, and like number 9, which signals development. The key point here is that, given the different cultural background of Chinese and Thai consumers, it can be assumed that their online shopping behavior is likely to differ as cultural factors strongly influence consumer behavior (Unsworth, Sears, & Pexman, 2005). Generally, an individual's purchase decisions are determined by his/her needs, desires, and preferences, all of which being closely related to the individual's cultural environment. Accordingly, direct experience with the foreign culture has a stronger effect on consumers' attitudes than indirect experience (Millar, 1996).

The demand for Thai products in China is growing. This is largely due to the fast-rising number of Chinese vacationing in Thailand (Tourism Authority of Thailand-TAT, 2019). In March 2015, the top three countries in terms of foreign tourists bound for Thailand were China (2,033,495), Malaysia (890,164) and South Korea (374,808) (TAT, 2019). From that year onwards, the arrival of Chinese tourists has been increasing at the approximate annual rate of 15-20%, making China by far the first source of foreign tourists in Thailand. Among other consequences, the influx of Chinese tourists has raised the brand awareness and value perception of Thai products. Chinese growing familiarity with Thai goods (at least those with travel experience in Thailand) has also affected their online shopping behavior towards products from 'the land of smile'. The increased interest of Chinese consumers in Thai products is also related to Thai movies.

This study focuses on the online shopping behavior of Chinese consumers of Thai products. It aims to answer the following research questions:

1. Do cultural factors influence Chinese consumers' online shopping behavior towards Thai products?
2. Does gender have an impact on the level of influence of a different culture?
3. Does age have an impact on the level of influence of a different culture?
4. Does education have an impact on the level of influence of a different culture?

To answer these questions, Chinese residing in five economically developed areas in China were surveyed and the relevant literature on attitude towards Thai culture explored. Some of the Chinese polled had travel experience in Thailand, others did not. However, they all had a minimum of one experience purchasing Thai products online. The role of cultural differences in purchasing behavior has been receiving much attention from scholars recently. This paper adds to the body of literature on this issue.

2. Review of Literature

This section explores the relevant operative concepts in this study. The culture and sub-culture construct is discussed first.

- Culture and Sub-Culture

Culture represents a set of values, ideas, beliefs, customs, habits, and attitudes that are accepted by a group of people and passed down to the next generations (Oyserman, 2011). It determines fashion style, eating habits, living conditions and travel destinations that are related to consumption behavior. Ting-Toomey (1999) stated that culture is an iceberg consisting of traditions, beliefs, and values that sit at deeper layers and are hidden from sight but affect behavior and the decision-making process. According to Harris and Robert (1987), culture includes the following characteristics: (i) culture is understood; (ii) culture can be learned; (iii) culture operates within a scope of acceptable behavior (for example, in

American society, people cannot walk naked on the beach); (iv) cultural standards are limited by conscious awareness; and (v) the evolution of cultures depends on the acceptance period. Culture involves different perceptions. People tend to perceive the person who is out of the group more than those in the group because within cultures, individuals often have clear differences (Unsworth et al., 2005). Culture is divided into subcultures and clusters based on geographic regions and human characteristics such as nationalities, religions, gender, age and ethnical backgrounds.

- Values

Values share five features: (i) they are few in numbers; (ii) they provide a guideline for culturally proper action; (iii) they are tied to particular things; (iv) they are difficult to change; and (v) they are widely accepted by group members (Harrison & Huntington, 2000). Values are not only a form of thoughts they also play an important role in choices that people make and are used as standards for evaluating good, bad, must, and should (Gupta, Dash, & Mishra, 2019). In addition, variations in cultural values affecting behavior through norms can be divided into three categories: (i) Other-oriented values such as individual/collective, youth/age, extended/limited family, masculine/feminine, competitive/cooperative and diversity/uniformity; (ii) Environmental-oriented values such as cleanliness, performance/status, tradition/change, risk taking/security, problem solving/ fatalistic and nature; and (iii) Self-oriented values such as active/passive, sensual gratification/abstinence, material/non material, hard work/leisure, postponed gratification/immediate gratification and religious/secular (Kawakami et al., 2018).

- Cultural Differences and Cross-Cultural Consumer Behavior Variations

Consumer cross-cultural differences refer to how individuals make decisions to consume based on different cultures (Bagozzi, 2000; Hall, 1990). In addition to differences in verbal communication, behavior is affected by nonverbal communication variables such as time, personal space, symbols, relationships, agreements and etiquette (Kragh & Malene, 2001). For instance, different countries have different preferences and taboos about colors; yellow in Thailand represents nobility whereas red in China is a symbol of happiness. One salient cultural dimension is the difference between high- and low-context cultures (Hall, 1959; Richardson & Smith, 2007). In low-context Western cultures, expressions of thought come out straightforward as opposed to high-context Asian cultures, where people do not express what they mean directly (Kim, 1998). When two cultures are fundamentally different, the risk of ethnocentrism is higher (Hammond & Axelrod, 2006). As a self-reference criterion, ethnocentrism refers to the practice of using the standard of one's own culture to evaluate others. As a learned behavior embedded into a variety of beliefs and values, it generally implies that one believes that one's own culture is superior to other cultures (Bizumic, 2014).

Many studies found that cultural differences have an effect on cross-cultural consumer behavior (Unsworth et al., 2005; Oyserman, 2011; Purwanto, 2013). It is therefore necessary to understand the impact of consumer behavior in different national and cultural settings (Soares, 2004). The recognition of different cultures can lead to high consumers' purchase intention of foreign products (Otnes & Zayer, 2012). For example, consumers will pursue the fashion of foreign cultures and try on different cultural experiences and lifestyles. They have a strong impact on purchase willingness of foreign products (Yakup, Mucahit, & Reyhan, 2011) and on consumer behavior (Yoldas, 2011). Cultural differences also play an important role in transnational e-commerce (Pavlou and Lin, 2002; Purwanto, 2013). Chinese consumers in particular are eager to learn about and buy foreign products (Hu, 2014). Responding to foreign demand requires to develop a strategy to market the goods sought after among consumers whose culture is different from that of the marketer's own culture (Watkins, 2010). According to Engelen and Brettel, (2011), to develop a cross-cultural marketing

strategy, marketers need to answer seven questions. Does the geographic area have homogeneous or heterogeneous culture? What needs can these goods satisfy in this culture? Can enough people afford the goods? What values are involved with the purchase and use of the goods? What is the distribution, political and legal structures for the goods? How can we communicate about the goods? What are the ethical implications of marketing these goods in this country?

- Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Hofstede's (2001) stated that cultures are separated on the basis of five dimensions: (i) masculinity-femininity, (ii) individualism-collectivism, (iii) power distance, (iv) uncertainty avoidance, and (v) long-term vs short-term orientation (of course, as we saw earlier, Hall's low- high-construct should also be included). The masculinity-femininity dichotomy distinguishes clearly the gender roles of society. In individualist or collectivist countries, people either focus on individual responsibilities or give priority to the ingroup. Power distance measures people's attitudes towards the distribution of power, most notably their level of acceptance of unequal power. Uncertainty avoidance refers to the tolerance of a given society for uncertainty and ambiguity and the level of comfort or the lack thereof in unstructured situations. In nations with long- or short-term orientations, people either focus on the near future and immediate success or wish to establish a long-term commitment (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, (2010). The implication is that when looking at countries' cultures, it is possible to classify them along Hofstede's (2001) axis, for instance, collectivist, masculine, and low power distance countries (de Mooij, Hofstede, & Hofstede, 2011). China and Thailand are collectivist societies in which the relationship between attitude and transaction intentions is significant. In other words, in both nations, people are more influenced by social norms than those in individualist societies (Pavlou & Lin, 2002). According to Hu (2014), cultural distance and trade flows are negatively correlated, but the differences in humanistic values have a positive effect only on the exportation of publications.

- Attitude

The concept of attitude in consumer behavior describes an individual's relatively consistent evaluations and feelings towards an object (Krasniqi & Krasniqi, 2014). Attitudes put people into a frame of mind for liking or disliking an object and wanting or not wanting it. Psychologists Rosenberg and Hovland (1960) determined that attitude is made up of three components: cognition, affect, and behavioral intentions. This tripartite view is quite common (Albarracín, Johnson, & Zanna, 2005). The cognitive component refers to one's beliefs, which can be positive, negative, or neutral, depending on the person or the situation, and not always accurate (Himmelfarb & Eagly, 1974). Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior links one's beliefs and behavior. According to this theory, attitude toward behavior and perceived behavioral control together shape an individual's behavioral intentions (Ajzen, 1991). The affective component of an attitude relates to some form of judgment or a positive/negative evaluation of the object or brand. The view can be positive or negative (Albarracín et al., 2005). Consumers have feelings toward brands or objects that may trigger behavioral intentions. The latter refer to what the consumer plans to do with respect to the object (Krasniqi, & Krasniqi, 2014). Attitudes have an impact on the reaction of consumers to objects because of beliefs and attitudes. Since they are buried in each person's mind and are part of one's personality, they are difficult to change (Wood, 2000). It is nevertheless possible to make consumers change their beliefs and affect (i.e., their feelings and affection toward an object) by matching products with a stimulus, for example, in this study, Thai products with a particular element of Thai culture dear to Chinese consumers.

- Demographic Factors

Demographic factors refer to age, gender, marital status, race, education, income, and occupation. All of them are used to segment consumers into smaller target markets. Suriyo (2005) found that the demographic background in aspect of gender, age, education, occupation, and income affect consumer purchase behavior. Demographic factors have also been determined to affect online shopping (Garbarino & Stranilevitz, 2004; Guo & Ismawati, 2011). This is especially the case in respect of gender (Ling & Yazdanifard 2014). Thus, to understand the purchase behavior of online consumers, it is not only necessary to understand the culture of buyers or sellers and cross-cultural marketing issues in general, it is also essential to develop a good grasp of the effects demographics factors can have on the purchase behavior of international online shoppers (Julamakron, 2012).

- Effects of the Differences between Thai and Chinese Cultures on Online Shopping

As explained earlier, cultures significantly impact the consumption behaviors of online shoppers as, for example, between online Thai and Chinese consumers. Table 1, compiled from several surveys, summarizes the different behavior and consumption patterns of Chinese and Thai online shoppers.

Table 1: Chinese and Thai Consumer Online Behavior

Consumption Patterns	Thai Online Shoppers	Chinese Online Shoppers
Consumption Behaviors	Similarity	Differences
Proportion in online shopping	2.9% Age <15, 64.4% age 15-34, 26.2% age 35-50, 6.5% age 51-69	8% age < 20, 74% age 20-40, 18% age >40
Top hit products	Fashion (clothes, shoes, etc) 42.6%, IT 27.5%, health and personal care product 24.4%, travel 23.2%, download 21%, entertainment 12%, home appliance 10.8%, investment 5.8%, jewelry 5.5%, infants and mothers 3.4%, others 13%	Apparel 27%, food and beverages 2%, publication 3%, consumer electronics 20%, cosmetics 5%, infants and mothers 5%, others 39%
Different preference demand	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any kind of convenience food 2. Personal care products (come third) 3. Healthy food and products favor western products 4. Auto products (high for decoration accessories) 5. Beer is a common drink for each generation; wine and carbonated drinks are served in banquets; farmers and laborers prefer local alcohol 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Only Chinese convenience food 2. Personal care products (come last) 3. Most elderly and low income turn to natural treatment and Chinese herbal medicine, while younger and the rich often buy Western products 4. Auto products is low 5. Bai jiu is favored by young generation along with strong traditional drinks; the rich often drink wine, while people with lower income drink local beer.
Expenditure per shopping	Mostly < 200 RMB except IT, travel, invest >2,000 RMB	Mostly < 100 RMB and 100-500 RMB
Payment method	Mainly offline (Bank counter or ATM) more often than online (credit cards)	Mostly online (Alipay), less frequently credit cards and internet banking
Influence on purchase	Friends' advice 34%, advertisements 32.3%, top websites in search engine 31.5%, comments from Bloggers, Idols 20.8%	Comments from Bloggers 39%, friends and family's advice 34%, experience 27%

Reason for shopping online	Information from review of goods and users' comments 58.8%, web advertisement 50.2%	Easy, fast, cheap, comparable price, want to try new things and have various and modern products or services
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Source: <<https://www.it24hrs.com/2015/thailand-internet-user-profile-2015-2558> >
 <<http://www.wishopping24.com/index.php/blog/post/view/id/109/>>
 <<http://www.chinabusinessreview.com/understanding-chinese-consumers>>

3. Research Model and Methodology

- Hypothesis Development

A number of previous research studies focusing on the impact of cultural factors on consumer behavior are based on the theory of planned behavior (e.g. Aaker, Kumar, & Day, 2004; Abdullah, 2008; Yoldas, 2011). Recall from above that this theory links behavior to one's beliefs (as we also saw, the cognitive component is one of the three components of attitude, a key determinant of consumer behavior). The planned behavior theory is equally applicable to the proposed e-commerce adoption model and to cross-border e-commerce. In addition, it also fits well in a collectivist culture like China, where the relationship between attitude and transaction intentions is strongly influenced by social norms (Pavlou & Lin, 2002). Therefore, to explore the extent to which cultural factors influence the attitude of online shoppers towards Thai products this study devised a conceptual model that reflects the direct link between beliefs and behavior, in line with previous empirical research (see Figure 1). This investigation of the level of impact of various demographic factors on the consumption of products from another culture is based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions and on various other cultural differences between China and Thailand..

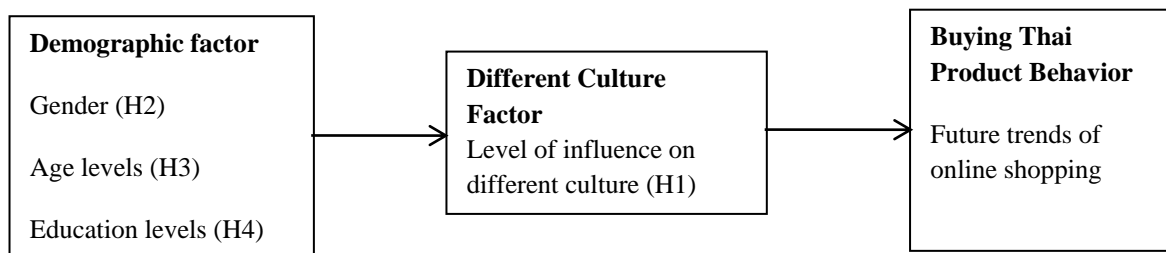


Figure 1: Research Framework (Created by the author for this study)

In light of this research framework, the following hypotheses have been developed:

- H1:** *The level of influence on a different culture has a significant positive impact on the online shopping behavior of Chinese consumers of Thai products.*
- H2:** *Gender is significantly related to the level of influence on a different culture.*
- H2a:** *Males and females have different effects on the level of influence on a different culture.*
- H3:** *Age is significantly related to the level of influence on a different culture.*
- H3a:** *Age levels have different effects on the level of influence on a different culture.*
- H4:** *Education is significantly related to the level of influence on a different culture.*
- H4a:** *Education levels have different effects on the level of influence on a different Culture.*

- Data Collection and Analysis

A survey questionnaire was used in this quantitative research study to collect data and statistics. The sample group consisted of 400 Chinese consumers, who had a minimum of one experience shopping for Thai products online (whether they had or never had travelled to Thailand was not relevant). A pre-test survey was conducted from March 3, 2016 to April 4,

2016. Data was then collected during the period May 2, 2016-June 2, 2016. Out of the 350 valid responses, 212 were usable for analysis (the 138 responses discarded involved non-online shoppers and incomplete answers). The total response rate was 60.57%. The questionnaire was based on prior relevant research studies (e.g. Hasan, 2010; Katawetawaraks & Wang, 2011). The questions related to cross-cultural online shopping and the impact of the Thai culture on those shoppers' purchase behavior. They specifically probed the respondents on the demographic factors influencing Chinese consumers' behavior and on their level of satisfaction with Thai products, asking them about personal attitude, brand awareness, and purchasing decisions. The data was analyzed through SPSS statistical software developing regression model and other methods.

- Measure Validation and Hypothesis Testing

The validation of the measure was preliminary examined for reliability. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was computed for each question. Since, as Table 2 indicates, Cronbach's alpha was over 0.7, which is above the cutoff value for acceptance, the reliability was acceptable.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics

S.No.	Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha
1	Cultural Factors and Purchasing decisions	10	0.981
2	Different culture	1	0.982
3	Online shopping trend	1	0.982

The Logit Regression was used to test the hypotheses and analyze the impact of gender, age, and education on the level of influence of a different culture on the purchase behavior towards buying Thai products.

4. Results

- Demographic Variables Analysis

A total of 212 valid questionnaires were collected for analysis. Table 1 shows that there were 74 male and 138 females respondents. 75 percent of them were aged between 21-30 and 16 percent of them were between 31-40 years old. The composition of the group in terms of age is consistent with a report by Shanghai-based iResearch, according to which out of the almost 300 million people who shop online in China most of them are between 18-35 years old. Moreover, 53.3 percent of the respondents held a bachelor degree and 31.1 percent a master degree. 42.5 percent of them were students or had part time job, 21.2 percent were working full-time and 20.8 percent were teachers. As to their income level, 23.6 percent of them had a monthly income of less than or equivalent to 1,000 RMB (USD), 21.7 percent an income of 1,000-3,000 RMB (USD) whereas the remaining 28.3%, 21.2% and 5.2% had a salary ranging from 3,000-5,000 RMB (USD460-770), 5,000 RMB (USD770) and above, and 10,000 RMB (USD1,530) and above respectively. 42.9% of them came from Chuanyu City group, 20.3 percent were out of five economic zones (i.e., from other cities and nearby economic zones), 15.6 percent came from Changjiang middle reaches megalopolis and the remaining come from the Delta area of Yangtze river city, Region over Bohai ring and Urban Agglomeration in the Pearl river (about 9%, 7.1% and 5.2% respectively).

Table 3: Parameter Estimates

		Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	d f	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Threshold	[ATTITUDE DIFC Extreme = 1]	-1.790	1.320	1.838	1	.175	-4.377	.798
	[ATTITUDE DIFC Strong = 2]	-.160	1.312	.015	1	.903	-2.731	2.411
	[ATTITUDE DIFC Normal = 3]	1.416	1.315	1.161	1	.281	-1.161	3.994
	[ATTITUDE DIFC Small = 4]	3.029	1.340	5.111	1	.024	.403	5.655
Location	[Male=1]	-.587	.274	4.600	1	.032	-1.123	-.051
	[Female=2]	0	.	.	0	.	.	.
	[AGE ≤ 20 =1]	.180	1.292	.019	1	.889	-2.352	2.712
	[AGE 21-30 =2]	.040	1.230	.001	1	.974	-2.371	2.451
	[AGE 31-40 =3]	-.044	1.240	.001	1	.972	-2.474	2.387
	[AGE 41-50 =4]	-.736	1.468	.252	1	.616	-3.613	2.140
	[AGE > 50 =5]	0	.	.	0	.	.	.
	[Primary =1]	2.565	1.388	3.417	1	.065	-.155	5.285
	[High School/voc. =2]	1.767	.760	5.403	1	.020	.277	3.258
	[Bachelor =3]	.275	.474	.338	1	.561	-.654	1.205
	[Master =4]	.179	.494	.131	1	.717	-.788	1.146
	[Doctor & above =5]	0	.	.	0	.	.	.
	[TREND to ONLINE Yes =0]	.196	.293	.450	1	.502	-.377	.770
	[TREND to ONLINE No =1]	0	.	.	0	.	.	.

Source: Compiled by this author for this study

Based on the parameter estimates shown in Table 3, the cumulative predicted probabilities from the Logit model were calculated as follows:

$$\text{Prob (DIFC score 4)} = 1 / (1 + e^{3.029}) = 0.046$$

Therefore, the probabilities for the small influence on a different culture towards buying Thai product were 0.046.

$$\text{Prob (Gender1 score 4)} = 1 / (1 + e^{3.029 - .587}) = 0.012$$

Hence, the probabilities for the small influence on different culture affecting buying Thai product were varied by gender of male significantly at 0.012.

$$\text{Prob (Education2 score4)} = 1 / (1 + e^{3.029 - 1.767}) = 0.22$$

Thus, the probabilities for the small influence on different culture affecting buying Thai product were varied by education level of High school/Vocational significantly at 0.22

The level of influence of a different culture on the purchasing behavior towards Thai products had probabilities of 0.046 for males and 0.012 and 0.22 for high school/vocational educational level but was not significantly related to age. Gender and education level thus play an important role in the perception of another culture and openness to the purchase of foreign products. However, a different culture has no impact on the online purchasing decision of Thai products. The null hypothesis is rejected as the observed significance level of both the location and scale parameters are 0, meaning that the variances are equal. Besides, males are less likely to assign higher ratings than females and people with less education are less likely to assign higher ratings than people with graduate education. Therefore, males and younger consumers have higher perception rates at knowing level, while females and older consumers have higher perception rates at identifying level and using levels (Chen, Yin, & Xu, 2015).

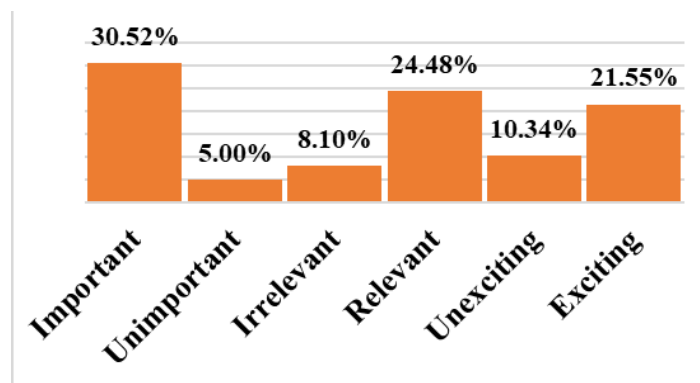


Chart 1: Interest level in Thai culture and Respondents' Attitudes
(Created by the author for this study)

As shown in Chart 1, the interest level in Thai culture is related to consumers' purchasing behavior and attitude towards Thai products. 30.52 percent of the respondents recognized that their purchase decisions are moderately related to their interest in Thai culture. 24.48 percent said that it was quite relevant. 21.55 percent acknowledged it get them exciting and provide an extra motivation. A few respondents, however, claimed to have no interest in the Thai culture and no desire to purchases Thai products. Thai culture has no bearing on them.

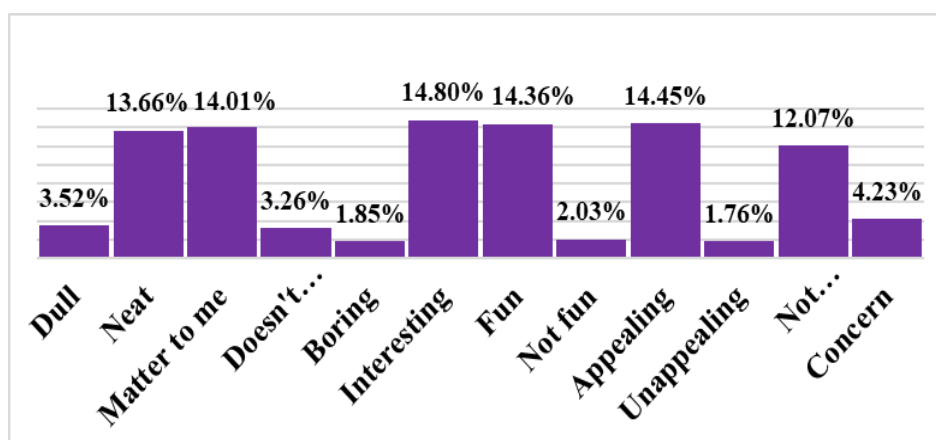


Chart 2: Attitude on Thai culture Affecting Buying Satisfaction Level
(Created by the author for this study)

Chart 2 shows that generally respondents have a positive attitude towards Thai culture, which they consider neat, interesting, fun, appealing, and easy-going. This provides them with a high level of satisfaction when buying Thai products. 14.8 percent of them identified it as interesting and a source of satisfaction buying Thai products. Overall Thai culture has a high positive effect on satisfaction level in buying Thai products.

As shown in Table 4, the scores of the cultural factors affecting satisfaction towards the decisions to purchase Thai products were over average except for items 8, 9, and 10, which had scores under 3.0, indicating that some aspects of Thai culture are perceived to be more enjoyable and Chinese ones. This is the case with Thai food and Thai drama, whose plots are quite different from Chinese ones. The overall results show that Thai products generally meet with a high level of satisfaction and that Thai culture plays a role in that perception. The appearance, variety, and quality of Thai products appeal to Chinese consumers and are compatible with their behavior. Combining with various features of Thai cultures found in Thai drama and with Thai cultural values, it creates enthusiasm to buy Thai products but this enthusiasm is still not very strong.

Table 4: Cultural Factors Affecting Thai Products’ Purchasing Decisions

Cultural Factors and Purchasing decisions	Strongly disagree =1	Disagree = 2	Uncertain = 3	Agree = 4	Strongly agree = 5	Average Score
1. Cultural background motivates the need for products	3.3%	4.7%	22.2%	46.2%	23.6 %	3.82
	7	10	47	98	50	212
2.Thai products fit with your consuming habits	3.3%	9.4%	33%	36.3%	17.9%	3.56
	7	20	70	77	38	212
3.Products are designed with an eye on your cultural background	2.8%	10.8%	30.7%	38.7%	17%	3.56
	6	23	65	82	36	212
4. I would buy a product I need even if it did not adhere to the ideology/religion of my community	13.2%	12.7%	25.9%	33%	15.1%	3.24
	28	27	55	70	32	212
5. I would buy a product I need even if it did not adhere to the norm/values /customs of my community	14.6%	11.8%	25.5%	32.5%	15.6 %	3.23
	31	25	54	69	33	212
6. I would buy a product I need even if it did not adhere to my language	2.8%	5.2%	20.8%	45.3%	25.9 %	3.86
	6	11	44	96	55	212
7. I would buy something to assimilate with the community around me	3.8%	4.7%	23.1%	43.9%	24.5%	3.81
	8	10	49	93	52	212
8. I think Thai drama or movies are better than Chinese drama	22.6%	24.5%	29.7%	14.2%	9%	2.62
	48	52	63	30	19	212
9. I think Thai culture is more interesting than Chinese cultural values	14.6%	20.8%	30.7%	22.6%	11.3%	2.95
	31	44	65	48	24	212

	26	45	72	46	23	212
10. I feel it is more enjoyable to have Chinese foods than Thai foods	24.5%	25.5%	25%	15.1%	9.9%	2.60
	52	54	53	32	21	212
Total respondents: 212						

Source: Compiled by this author for this study

Table 5: Summary of Results

No.	Hypotheses	Findings
H1:	<i>The level of influence on a different culture has a significant positive impact on online shopping of Thai products in the future</i>	Unsupported
H2:	<i>Gender is significantly related to the level of influence on a different culture</i>	Partially Supported
H3:	<i>Age is significantly related to the level of influence on a different culture</i>	Unsupported
H4:	<i>Education is significantly related to the level of influence on a different culture</i>	Partially Supported

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The role of cultural difference in purchasing behavior has recently attracted the attention of researchers, including the author of this paper. The findings in this study, however, go against most of the previously constructed hypotheses. It should be noted first that cultural differences have no effect on Thai products purchasing decision. But Thai culture highly is highly correlated with satisfaction with Thai products and the decision to purchase them. Moreover, interest level in a different culture and buying satisfaction level affect one's intention to shop Thai products online. In the meantime, the influence level of a different culture towards buying Thai products is significantly related to males and high school or vocational education level, but not to age. The theoretical basis of masculinity versus femininity and ethnocentrism and self-reference criterion have little bearing. This is also the case with Hofstede's other cultural dimensions. This study provides further evidence that the impact of a difference culture on online shoppers' intention to purchase products from that culture is limited. By the same token it also shows that the perception of a different culture influences purchase satisfaction and brand awareness, which in turn affects the brand loyalty of foreign products. For young people, highly educated, prone to consumerism, and eager to follow fashion, it is easy to adopt new products.

This is all the more the case as they are widely open to learn about other cultures, which is vital to the intention to shop Thai products on line and for repurchase behavior. From a practical standpoint, because of cultural differences in terms of demographics, languages and values, marketing across cultural boundaries should not be globalized. Since attitudes toward multinational brands vary, communication and advertising messages should be adjusted to reflect the specific values of different cultures as well as the consumption patterns and lifestyles. Secondly, sellers should use social media, in particular the power of e-word-of-mouth, as a tool or a channel to communicate the values of Thai culture and the benefits of products to customers. This would go a long way in ensuring that consumers are provided with the correct information about products and in increasing the perception of Thai culture and the trust related to purchase behavior. Thirdly, marketers should focus on the group of

males with high school and vocational school level education to increase their interest in another culture towards turning them into potential customers of Thai products. Sellers should adjust competitive marketing mix strategy and develop products that fit the targeted customers abroad. Finally, since this study focused on a limited area of China that may not be representative of the attitude of online shoppers towards Thai products in other part of the country, further studies should concentrate on other areas or another population, for instance rural dwellers.

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