

## **The Usefulness of GLOBE Dimensions in Analyzing Consumer Perceptions of Advertising: Results from Multinational Studies**

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### **Abstract**

The development of culturally-based models may contribute to a more general theory of culture's impact on advertising, which has been identified as a key area for future research in international advertising (Taylor, 2005, 2007, 2010). First we summarize the research we have conducted on five cultural dimensions of the GLOBE framework, and then a culturally-based conceptual model is proposed which seeks to explain the influence of GLOBE dimensions on the perception and evaluation of an advertisement. The basic concept of this model is that a given standardized advertising stimulus is likely to be perceived and evaluated differently in various cultures, dependent upon the level of importance which individuals in those cultures place on a given cultural dimension, and on the practices regarding the given cultural dimension in the environment surrounding that individual. The model explicitly differentiates between cultural dimensions on an individual level versus cultural dimensions on a societal level, and also incorporates the distinction between cultural values and cultural practices. Data from five countries confirmed the model to a large extent for the cultural dimension of assertiveness. The model was tested again, employing performance orientation. Overall, the conceptual model was supported by the data here as well. As culture is a highly complex construct, it seems likely that efforts to better understand cultural dimensions and their impact on advertising will continue for years to come.

**Keywords:** Intercultural advertising, cultural dimensions, GLOBE study, standardization, differentiation of advertising

## **1. Introduction**

The debate regarding whether to standardize or differentiate advertising in the international setting is a long lasting one. Today, the dominant strategy is the standardization of positioning, if necessary, differentiation of execution, and in most cases, a differentiation of language (Taylor & Johnson, 2002). There exists little a priori knowledge as to when a standardized appeal might be possible, or when and how to differentiate the execution if it is deemed necessary. For the most part, it is still a trial-and-error-process (Zinkhan, 1994; Taylor, 2005).

Questions central to our research can be summarized as follows:

- To what extent do consumers in various cultures perceive and evaluate standardized advertising campaigns differently?
- What is the role of cultural dimensions with regards to the perception and evaluation of international advertising?

In what follows, the authors briefly mention the most important cultural frameworks, and provide a detailed discussion of the most recent cultural framework – entitled Project GLOBE. We then move on to summarize the cross-cultural advertising research that has been conducted to date employing GLOBE cultural dimensions. Finally, we discuss implications and limitations and suggest further application of the GLOBE framework in order to advance the advertising discipline.

## **2. Overview of cultural frameworks**

Several frameworks of cultural dimensions have been proposed which may prove useful for advertising purposes. There are at least four major frameworks which have both influenced the academic literature and also have practical applicability (Terlutter et al., 2006, 2012 and Quigley et al., 2012). The most prominent approach to cultural dimensions in marketing and advertising research is Hofstede's typology of cultural values (Hofstede, 1980, 2001). A large number of researchers have recognized its applicability to advertising and marketing (e.g. Taylor et al., 1997, Caillat & Mueller, 1996, Kirkman et al., 2006, DeMooij & Hofstede, 2010). Somewhat less frequently applied frameworks are: Schwartz's cultural values (1992, 1994 and 1999) and

Inglehart's World Values Survey (Inglehart, 1997; Inglehart, Basanez & Moreno, 1998; and Inglehart & Welzel, 2005). For a thorough comparison of these various frameworks, see e.g. Terlutter et al., (2006). Stemming from organizational and management theory literature, the most recent cultural framework, entitled GLOBE, was developed by House et al. (2004, 2010), and will be outlined in greater detail. The GLOBE project was initially designed "to develop an empirically-based theory to describe, understand, and predict the impact of specific cultural variables on leadership and organizational processes and the effectiveness of these processes" (House et al., 2004: 4). Because GLOBE provides data on cultural values and practices for a large number of countries, several authors have proposed that it may prove relevant for advertising purposes, as well (Terlutter et al., 2006, Okazaki & Mueller, 2007; House et al., 2010). GLOBE provides data for 62 cultures, based on a survey of 17,300 middle managers in 951 organizations. Managers were drawn from three industries: financial services, food processing, and telecommunications (Mueller et al., in press). The GLOBE framework offers other benefits as well. Over 170 GLOBE researchers from different cultural backgrounds worked together on construct definition, construct conceptualization and on the measurement of the constructs, ensuring a solid theoretical foundation. And given that data collection began after 1994, the GLOBE framework is based on comparatively current data. Further, GLOBE provides data on the societal level and, in contrast to Hofstede, explicitly differentiates between societal values and societal practices, a distinction regarded as important in cross-cultural research (Schein, 2004; DeMooij, 2005) (Terlutter et al., 2006). The distinction between cultural values and cultural practices was incorporated to correspond with Schein's (2010) concepts of artifacts vs. espoused values as two unique levels of culture (House & Hanges, 2004). Artifacts are the visible products, processes and behaviors of a culture. They mainly reflect the current status and how issues are handled in a society, and therefore, the cultural practices. Espoused values are the individuals' or society's sense of what ought to be, as distinct from, what is. They primarily reflect how things should be, and therefore, the cultural values. Both values and practices are often contradictory in a culture and are therefore seen as paradoxical values. Such paradoxical values are common in most cultures. For example, in the GLOBE data, a slightly negative correlation between societal values and societal practices for the dimension of assertiveness is reported ( $r = -.26, p < .05$ ) (Den Hartog, 2004). It suggests that countries scoring higher on assertiveness

practices tend to value assertiveness to a lesser extent, while countries scoring lower on assertiveness practices tend to value assertiveness more strongly (Terlutter et al., 2006).

**GLOBE** is an acronym for: **G**lobal **L**eadership and **O**rganizational **B**ehavior **E**ffectiveness Research Program (House et al., 2004). The framework consists of **nine cultural dimensions** (based on: Hofstede, 1984, 2001; Schwartz, 1992, 1994; Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961; McClelland, 1961, 1985) :

1. **Assertiveness**: The degree to which individuals in organizations or societies are assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in social relationships.
2. **Uncertainty Avoidance**: The extent to which members of an organization or society strive to avoid uncertainty by relying on established social norms, rituals, and bureaucratic practices.
3. **Power Distance**: The degree to which members of an organization or society expect and agree that power should be stratified and concentrated at higher levels of an organization or government.
4. **Collectivism I**: Institutional Collectivism: The degree to which organizational and societal institutional practices encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and collective action.
5. **Collectivism II**: In-Group Collectivism: The degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families.
6. **Gender Egalitarianism**: The degree to which an organization or a society minimizes gender role differences while promoting gender equality.
7. **Future Orientation**: The degree to which individuals in organizations or societies engage in future-oriented behaviors such as planning, investing in the future, and delaying individual or collective gratification.
8. **Performance Orientation**: The degree to which an organization or society encourages and rewards group members for performance improvement and excellence.
9. **Humane Orientation**: The degree to which individuals in organizations or societies encourage and reward individuals for being fair, altruistic, friendly, generous, caring, and kind to others.

Our investigations were conducted with the following goals:

1. Intercultural comparisons of the perception and evaluation of standardized advertising that incorporates different cultural dimensions
2. Development of a conceptual model which attempts to explain the impact of the different cultural dimensions on the perception and evaluation of a standardized advertisement
3. Application of GLOBE (House et al. 2004) to advertising and marketing research (Terlutter, Diehl & Mueller, 2005; Terlutter, Diehl & Mueller, 2006; Diehl, Mueller & Terlutter, 2013a; Diehl, Terlutter & Mueller, 2008; Diehl, Mueller & Terlutter, 2012; 2013b)

### **3. GLOBE-related Studies and Examples of International Advertising Campaigns appealing to cultural dimensions**

#### **3.1 Overview of GLOBE-related Studies**

An overview of the GLOBE-related studies conducted by the authors is listed below in Table 1. To the best of our knowledge, no other studies to date have analyzed the applicability of the GLOBE framework to advertising.

<p><b>Assertiveness:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N= 714 subjects</li> <li>• 5 Countries: Germany, the U.S., the U.K, Austria and Argentina</li> <li>• Publications: Terlutter et al., 2005, 2006 and 2010</li> </ul>	<p><b>Humane Orientation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N.= 924 subjects</li> <li>• 6 Countries: Germany, the U.S., Switzerland, Austria, France and Chile.</li> <li>• Publications: Diehl et al., 2012, 2013b</li> </ul>
<p><b>Performance Orientation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N. 698 subjects</li> <li>• 5 Countries: Germany, the U.S., Spain, France and Thailand</li> <li>• Publication: Diehl et al., 2008</li> </ul>	<p><b>Future Orientation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N. 400 Subjects</li> <li>• 2 Countries: Germany, the U.S., in progress: Austria.</li> <li>• Publications: Diehl et al., 2013a</li> </ul>
<p><b>Gender Egalitarianism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N. 399 subjects</li> <li>• 2 Countries: Switzerland, the U.S., in progress: Austria, Germany.</li> <li>• Publication: in preparation</li> </ul>	

Table 1: Overview of GLOBE-related studies conducted by the authors

Note: As the data collection and analysis for Gender Egalitarianism is still in progress, we limit our analysis in the following to the four dimensions of Assertiveness, Performance, Humane and Future Orientation.

GLOBE has one shortcoming which we attempted to resolve in our research. GLOBE provides data on the societal level, but not on the individual level. The items used in the GLOBE project are designed to reflect societal values and practices, not individual values and practices. But given that individuals are socialized through values that are held and behaviors that are practiced in their cultures, it is very likely that they adopt values and practices that are shared among members of their society (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). The values held, and practices shown by members of a culture, influence individual values and practices, as they enable the individual to behave according to social norms and rules and in a manner that is rewarded by members of that group. Of course, individual values and practices may also deviate from the values and practices held in a society (Mueller et al., in press). Therefore we assessed individual values and practices in our surveys.

### **3.2 Examples of international advertising campaigns employing cultural dimensions**

Despite the fact that the applicability of the GLOBE framework has not been examined by other researchers, examples of international advertising campaigns incorporating the different cultural dimensions can be easily found. For example, performance orientation, assertiveness and humane orientation appear to be very popular cultural dimensions in international advertising.

Figure 1 shows some examples of performance-oriented international advertising from the United States and Europe. The pictures and slogans indicate that performance improvement and excellence are considered to be very important.



Figure 1: Examples of performance-oriented international advertising campaigns

Advertisements addressing humane orientation (CSR) are quite common, as well. Increasingly, a company's reputation in the global marketplace is related to its social, as well as its financial performance. Consumers expect companies to be socially engaged (IB Times, 2011). Several recent marketplace polls have confirmed that a firm's social actions play a significantly greater role than anticipated in forming consumer impressions of companies (see e.g. Nielsen Survey, 2012; Cone Communications/Echo Research 2011 Cone/Echo Global CR Opportunity Study; and Edelman goodpurpose Report, 2009) (Mueller et al., in press).

Dell Computers provides an example of humane-oriented advertising. Dell participated in the "RED" program, whereby the firm donated money from the sale of each computer. Their slogan read: "Buy Dell. Join (RED). Save lives". Companies participating in the "RED" program donate up to 50% of their proceeds in the fight against AIDS. Baume & Mercier offer another example of a humane-oriented international advertising campaign. The copy in their ad reads: "It is time to make a difference. If you want to learn more about how Baume&Mercier (Baume & Mercier & Moi) and Teri Hatcher help to improve the education of our children, help to fight cancer and to protect the environment, please visit our website: [www.baume-et-mercier.com](http://www.baume-et-mercier.com)." Boss Orange is yet an additional example of ads with CSR appeals (see Figure 2).

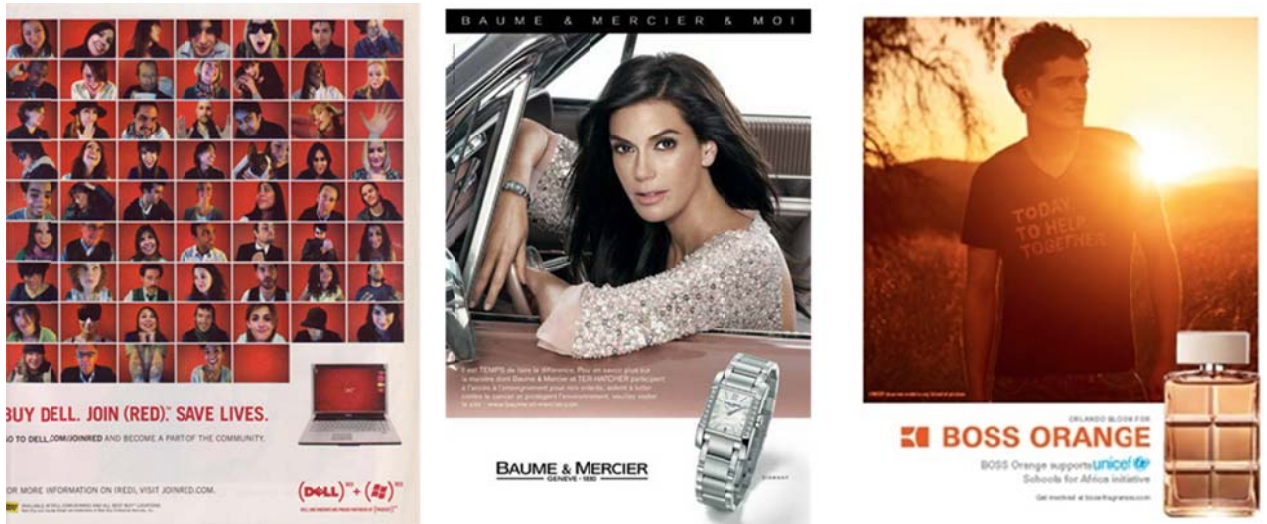


Figure 2: Examples of humane-oriented international advertising campaigns

Examples of ads appealing to the cultural dimension of assertiveness can also be often found in international advertising (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Examples of international advertising campaigns employing assertiveness appeals.

Finally, future-oriented appeals are also common in international advertising campaigns. As the examples below from Germany, Austria and the US show, they are quite often employed by banking or finance institutions, emphasizing that it is important to plan for the future.





This selection of examples shows that commercial messages incorporating culture-oriented appeals are frequently employed in international ad campaigns. This further reinforces the need to develop a conceptual model explaining the impact of various cultural dimensions in advertising.

#### 4. Development of a conceptual model explaining the impact of different cultural dimensions in international advertising

An important goal of our GLOBE-related studies was the development of a conceptual model which attempts to explain the impact of the different cultural dimensions on the perception and evaluation of a standardized advertisement. Based on our exploration of the cultural dimension of assertiveness, such a conceptual model was developed (see Terlutter et al., 2006) and was further tested with the cultural dimension of performance orientation (see Diehl et al., 2008). An analysis as to whether the model is also applicable to other cultural dimensions will follow.

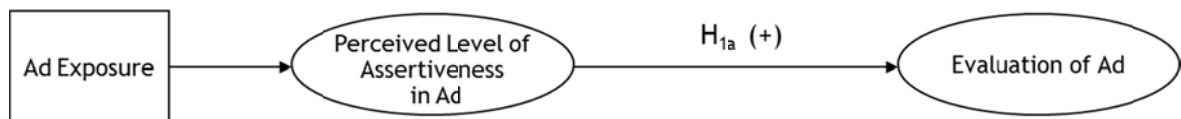
House and Javidan (2004) define assertiveness as “the degree to which individuals in ... societies are assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in relationships.” Members of an assertive society are typically dominant; they tend to actively control their environment and respect force and competition (House & Javidan, 2004).

Assertiveness has primarily been analyzed in the area of management training and as a personality trait (Den Hartog, 2004). Management training studies have analyzed skills that enable the individual to communicate in a convincing and confident manner (Crawford, 1988; Rakos, 1991). Personality trait literature has examined assertiveness as a stable personal characteristic, suggesting that some people are inherently more assertive than others. For instance, in Costa and McCrae's Five Factor Model (1992), assertiveness is closely linked to extraversion (Terlutter et al., 2006). It has only been examined in intercultural research in a rudimentary fashion (Peabody, 1985; Furnham, 1979) and is not well covered by other cultural researchers, further it has never been examined in the context of (international) advertising.

Assertiveness is generally perceived as a valued trait – in the workplace as well as in daily life – and seen as desirable among members of most societies, at least as long as it does not surpass a given level. Only if assertiveness escalates to ruthlessness or the humiliation of another would it no longer be deemed as acceptable (Smith, 1975; Lange & Jakubowski, 1976; Rakos, 1991). Research conducted by Ames (2008) suggests that individuals expect higher levels of outcomes resulting from increased assertiveness, but that they also perceive that exaggerated assertiveness worsens behavioral outcomes. Ames and Flynn (2007) show that assertiveness levels that are either too low or too high are both negatively related to behavioral outcomes, but that moderate levels of assertiveness result in positive effects (Terlutter et al., 2006). Assertive behavior increases self-esteem, the feeling of having control over both oneself and the situation, and reduces feelings of insecurity and vulnerability (Lange & Jakubowski, 1976).

Therefore we hypothesize:

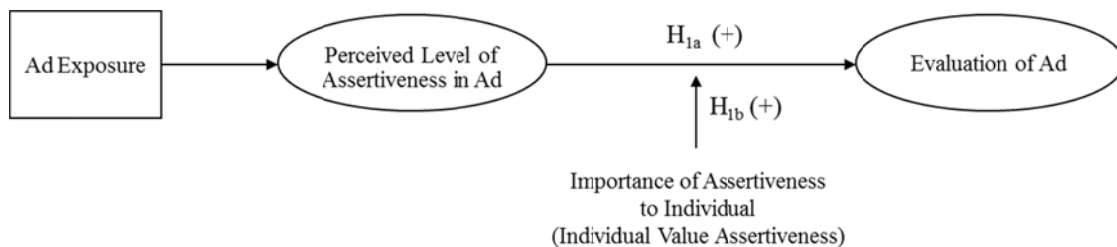
*Hypothesis 1a (H 1a): Perception of a higher level of assertiveness in an advertisement leads to a more positive evaluation of the advertisement, regardless of country.*



Hypothesis 1a proposes that the relationship between the level of perceived assertiveness in an advertisement and the evaluation of the advertisement will be

positive in all countries. However, the strength of this impact may vary depending on the value that individuals in each country place upon assertiveness. We assumed that high individual values would lead to a stronger influence and that the individual value of assertiveness would serve as a moderator. We suggest that the strength of the relationship depends on the importance that individuals in each country place upon assertiveness (individual value of assertiveness). The rationale is that if assertiveness is perceived as an important value by individuals of a given country, then the level of perceived assertiveness in an advertisement will likely have a stronger influence on the evaluation of the advertisement. The greater the importance of assertiveness, the more central it becomes in the individual's evaluation of an advertisement. On the other hand, if assertiveness is perceived as less important by individuals in a country, then the level of perceived assertiveness will likely play a less important role in the judgment of the advertisement. Therefore, it is expected that in those nations in which individuals place greater importance on assertiveness, the influence of the level of perceived assertiveness in an advertisement on the evaluation of that advertisement will be stronger, compared to those nations in which individuals place less importance on assertiveness (Terlutter et al., 2006). Hence, we hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 1b (H1b): The influence of the level of perceived assertiveness in an advertisement on the evaluation of that advertisement will be stronger in those nations in which individuals place greater importance on assertiveness, compared to those nations in which individuals place less importance on assertiveness.*



### **Context Effects and the Perception and Evaluation of Advertising Messages:**

One might expect that in cultures scoring high on assertiveness, individuals would more positively evaluate assertive advertisements; however, context effects must be taken into consideration. Previous experiences, as well as current situations (persons, objects, events, information etc.) influence the perception and evaluation of

stimuli (Kenrick & Gutierrez, 1980; Kenrick, Gutierrez & Goldberg 1989; Richins, 1991). Kenrick & Gutierrez (1980) conducted a study to test the hypothesis that judgments of average females' attractiveness or dating desirability would be adversely affected if judges were previously exposed to extremely attractive females. A total of 81 male students viewed a popular TV show, whose three main characters were strikingly attractive females. They were then asked to rate a photo of an average female. The subjects rated the target female as significantly less attractive when compared to a control group, who viewed a neutral TV News program.

Thus, based on previous experiences, as well as the stimuli in a particular situation, an individual forms a reference value which serves as a comparison standard for the subsequent perception and evaluation of focal stimuli. This effect is explained by reference value theories, in particular, Helson's adaptation level theory (1946, 1964).

In addition, new information is linked to existing information and integrated in existing schemas—for example, the schema of female attractiveness (see cognitive psychology, e.g. Bruner, 1957, and schema theory, e.g. Bartlett, 1932; Rumelhart, 1975).

Therefore, we assume that the level of assertiveness of a culture serves as reference value and comparison standard for the perception and evaluation of an assertive advertisement. Thus, we hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 2 (H2): Subjects from nations with lower assertiveness scores will perceive higher levels of assertiveness in a standardized advertisement incorporating an assertive appeal compared with subjects from nations with higher assertiveness scores.*

*Hypothesis 3 (H3): Subjects from nations with lower assertiveness scores will evaluate the standardized advertisement incorporating an assertive appeal more favorably compared with subjects from nations with higher assertiveness scores.*

As noted above, countries with high assertiveness scores will perceive lower levels of assertiveness incorporated in an ad and vice versa (H2). Given the anticipated positive relationship between the perception of assertiveness in an advertisement and ad evaluation as outlined in Hypothesis H1a, it is likely that

advertisements incorporating an assertive appeal will be more positively evaluated in a country scoring *lower* on the assertiveness dimension and vice versa, as show in the graphic (Figure 4) below:

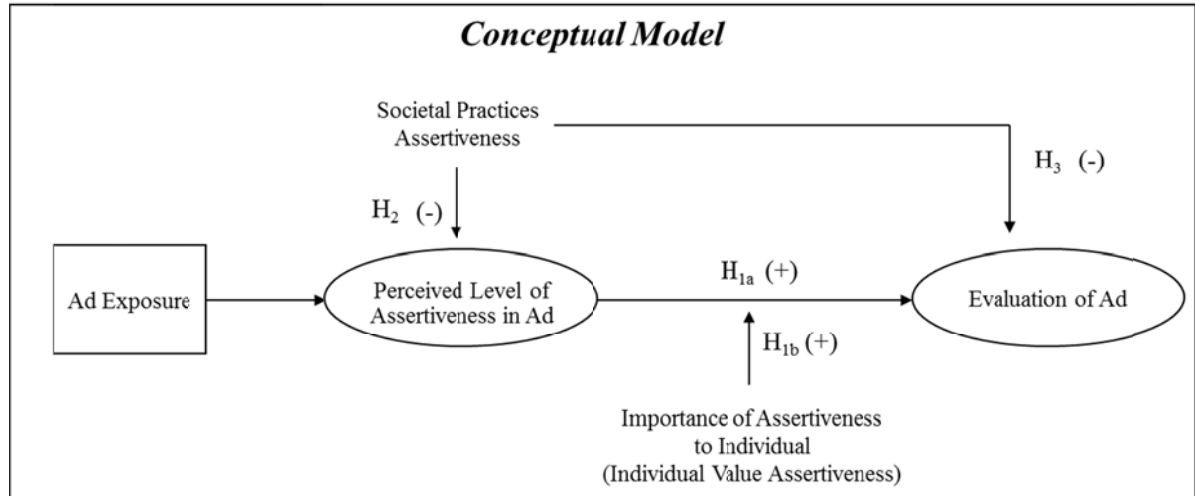


Figure 4: Conceptual Model

## 5. Empirical Study

In order to test our conceptual model, a survey was conducted in five countries: the U.S., the U.K., Germany, Austria, and Argentina. A non-student sample of 714 respondents took part in the survey. The female/male ratio was 50:50 in all countries. The method employed was face-to-face interviews.

We developed a fictitious ad employing an assertive appeal. The ads were standardized, only the slogan was translated, which resulted in German, English and Spanish versions of the ad. The fictitious brand name and the ads were thoroughly pretested and a manipulation check against a non-assertive ad was carried out.

The following variables were included:

- degree of societal assertiveness as well as individual assertiveness, using 3 GLOBE items (House et al. 2004), Alpha > .86 in all countries
- evaluation of advertisement (4 items, based on MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989), Alpha > .88 in all countries

- perceived level of assertiveness in the ad (4 items, based on Rakos, 1991, Crawford, 1988), Alpha > .89 in all countries

## 6. Results of Hypotheses Testing:

As can be seen from Table 2, Hypothesis 1a (*Perception of a higher level of assertiveness in an advertisement leads to a more positive evaluation of the advertisement, regardless of country*) is confirmed by the data.

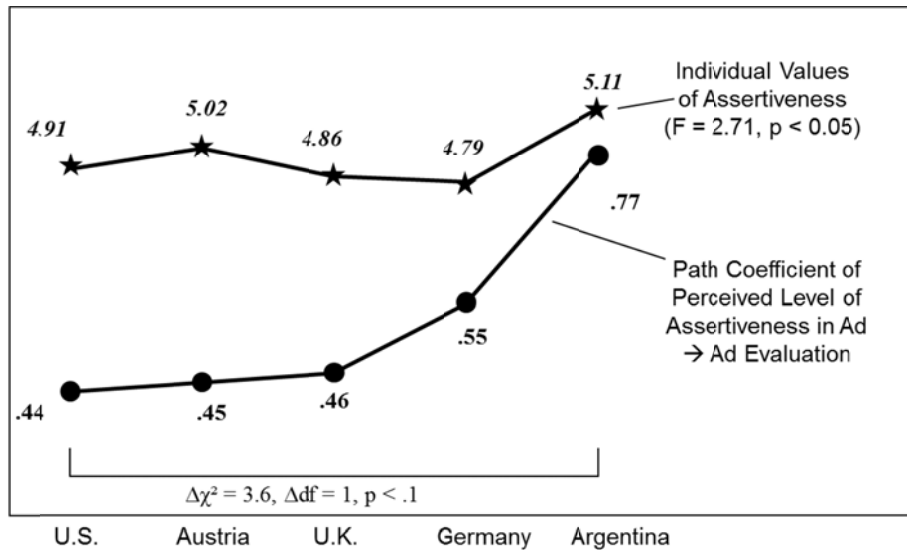
Influence of Perceived Assertiveness on Ad Evaluation						
Model	Standardized path coefficient	$\chi^2$	df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
U.S.	.439***					
U.K.	.460***					
Germany	.545***	185.92	90	.98	.97	.04
Austria	.451***					
Argentina	.773***					

\*\*\* p < .01  
Note: Estimation Maximum Likelihood

Table 2: Results for Hypothesis 1a: Influence of Perceived Assertiveness on Ad Evaluation

The strength of the relationship between perception of assertiveness in an advertisement and its evaluation was addressed in Hypothesis H1b. It was proposed that the influence of the level of perceived assertiveness in an advertisement on the evaluation of the advertisement would be stronger in those nations in which individuals place more importance on assertiveness compared to those nations in which individuals place less importance on assertiveness (individual value assertiveness). Multi-group structural equation modeling revealed that the influence of the perceived level of assertiveness on the evaluation of the advertisement showed path coefficients of .77 in Argentina, .55 in Germany, .46 in the U.K., .45 in Austria and .44 in the U.S. Multi-group structural equation modeling with Chi<sup>2</sup>-difference tests was used to analyze whether the relationships between the variables differed significantly from one another among the five countries. However, results indicated that the relationships did not differ significantly among the five countries.

Only the relationship between the U.S. and the Argentinean dataset differed on a 10%-level ( $\Delta\chi^2 = 3.6$ ,  $\Delta df = 1$ ), lending weak support for the hypothesis. Hypothesis 1b is thus rejected. (Terlutter et al., 2006). The two graphs were not as parallel as expected.



Note: Differences in path coefficient between U.S. and Argentina significant on 10%-level; all other differences are not significant

Figure 4: Results for Hypothesis 1b

### Performance Orientation - Results of Hypotheses Testing

Diehl et al. (2008) examined the GLOBE dimension of performance orientation, which is also seen as a desirable trait among members of many societies. Data was collected from 698 subjects in Germany, France, Spain, the United States and Thailand. As with assertiveness, it was expected that the greater the level of perceived performance orientation in an ad, the more positive the evaluation of the ad (H1a). H1a was confirmed by the data. Additionally it was expected that the strength of this relationship would be influenced by the individual values (H1b). This time, for performance orientation, the expected parallel graphs were found, confirming the conceptual model, even if not all differences between countries were significant (see Figure 5, Diehl et al., 2008).

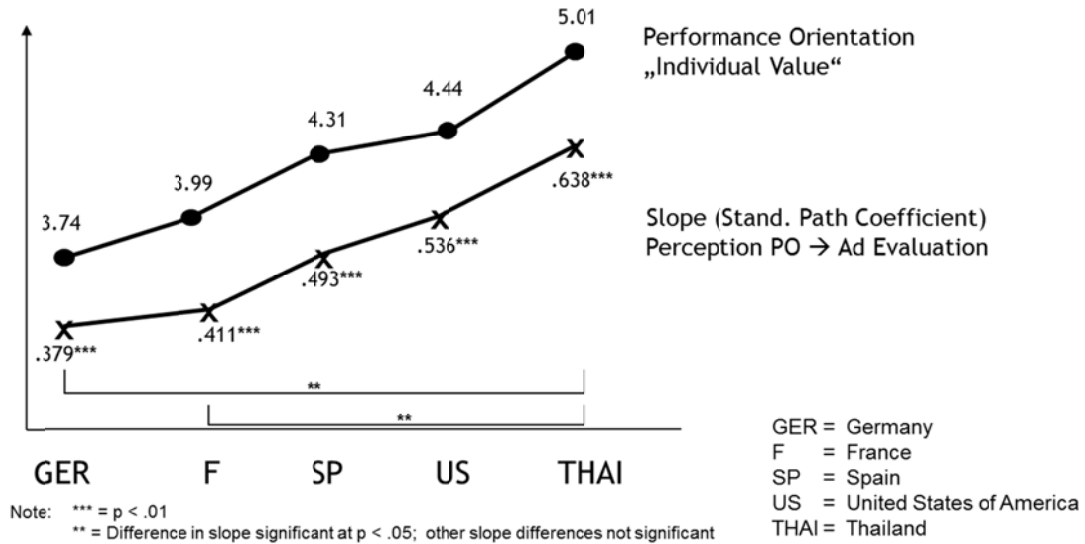


Figure 5: Results for Hypothesis 1b for performance orientation

Returning to the dimension of assertiveness, hypothesis 2 (which stated that subjects from nations with lower assertiveness scores would perceive higher levels of assertiveness in a standardized advertisement incorporating an assertive appeal compared with subjects from nations with higher assertiveness scores) was partly supported by the data. The perceived level of assertiveness in the assertive ad differed significantly between the five countries ( $F = 5.35$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Likewise, societal assertiveness practices differed significantly between the countries ( $F = 25.89$ ,  $p < .01$ ). In line with the stated hypotheses, U.S. subjects (scoring highest in terms of societal practices of assertiveness among the five countries) perceived the lowest level of assertiveness in the assertive ad, whereas the Argentinean subjects (scoring lowest in terms of societal practices of assertiveness) perceived the highest level of assertiveness. The results for the U.K., Austria and Germany were also in line with the stated expectations. Here the results showed the expected crossing of the paths, however, though the rankings of the U.K., Germany, and Austria were as expected, the differences of perceived level of assertiveness in the ad were not significant among these three countries. To summarize, identical (i.e. standardized) ads were indeed perceived differently in terms of the level of assertiveness reflected in the ads, dependent upon the subjects' country of origin and the level of assertiveness in those



cultures (Figure 6). Results were found to be largely (though not entirely) significant, lending partial support for hypothesis H2 (Terlutter et al., 2006).

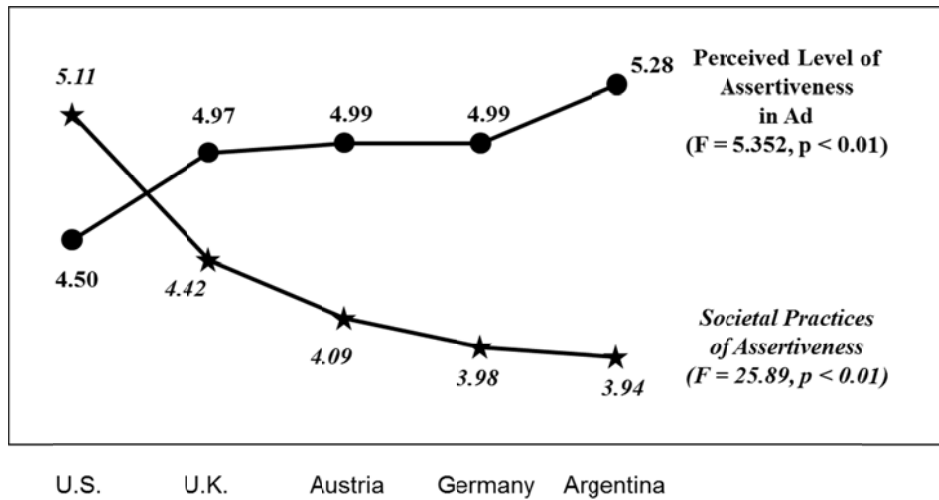


Figure 6: Results for Hypothesis 2

Hypotheses H3 predicted that subjects from nations with higher assertiveness scores would evaluate standardized advertisements incorporating assertive appeals less favorably, whereas subjects from nations with lower assertiveness scores would evaluate ads incorporating assertive appeals more favorably. The evaluations of the assertive ad differed significantly by country ( $F = 8.53, p < .01$ ) and the graphs show the expected crossing. As predicted, U.S. subjects evaluated the ad least positively, whereas the Argentinean subjects evaluate it most positively. Results for the U.K., Austria and Germany are again not significant (Figure 7). Therefore, the results partly supported hypothesis H3 (Terlutter et al., 2006).

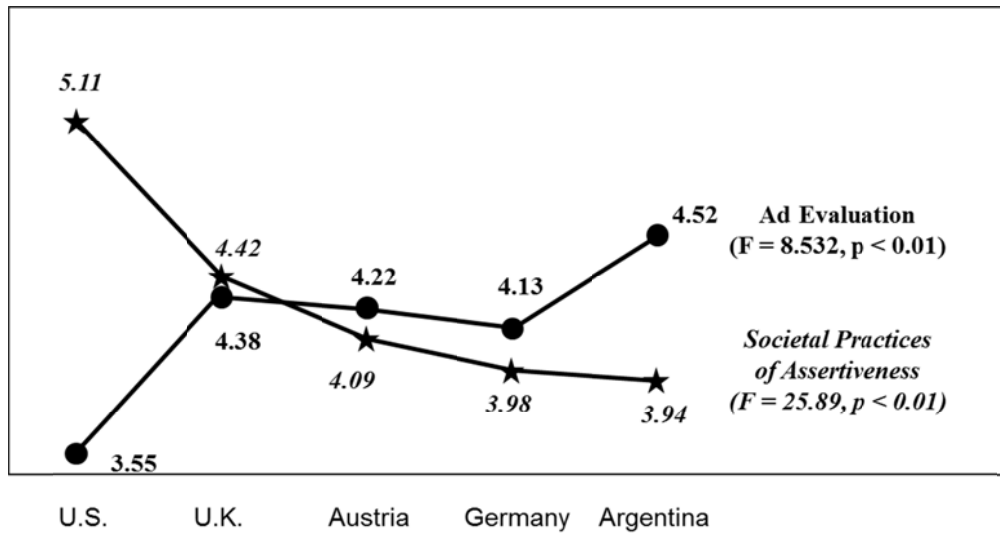


Figure 7: Results for Hypothesis 3

## 7. Implications and Summary

By incorporating an assertive appeal in commercial messages, advertisers can positively influence the evaluation of those messages, due to the positive influence of perception of assertiveness on ad evaluation. These findings apply to all five countries. Therefore, assertive appeals seem to be a promising appeal category for cross-cultural standardized advertising campaigns. However, the results also showed that a standardized ad incorporating assertive appeals is evaluated quite differently in various markets. As predicted by reference value theories, if the assertiveness score of a country is high, the perception of assertiveness in the ad and the ad evaluation will be rather low, compared to countries with lower assertiveness scores. Countries with low assertiveness scores will perceive a higher degree of assertiveness in the standardized ad and also evaluate the ad more positively.

If a company seeks to position its product internationally with a certain level of assertiveness, adaptation in execution will be necessary because stronger assertive cues are needed for assertive countries (e.g. U.S.), whereas weaker assertive stimuli can be used in less assertive countries (e.g. Argentina).

Taking all our investigations of GLOBE dimensions together, it can be said that the GLOBE framework is applicable and useful for marketing and communication

research. GLOBE cultural dimensions, of which we have analyzed five to date, all proved to be well suited as appeals in international advertising. For performance orientation, assertiveness, future orientation and humane orientation, we were able to demonstrate for multiple countries that the higher the perception of each cultural dimension in the ad, the more positively the ad was evaluated. For gender egalitarianism, data collection and data analysis are still in progress.

Our conceptual model (Figure 8) can be considered a promising means of explaining the effects of cultural appeals in ads, even if not all differences were found to be significant. Thus far, the conceptual model has been tested with assertiveness and performance orientation.

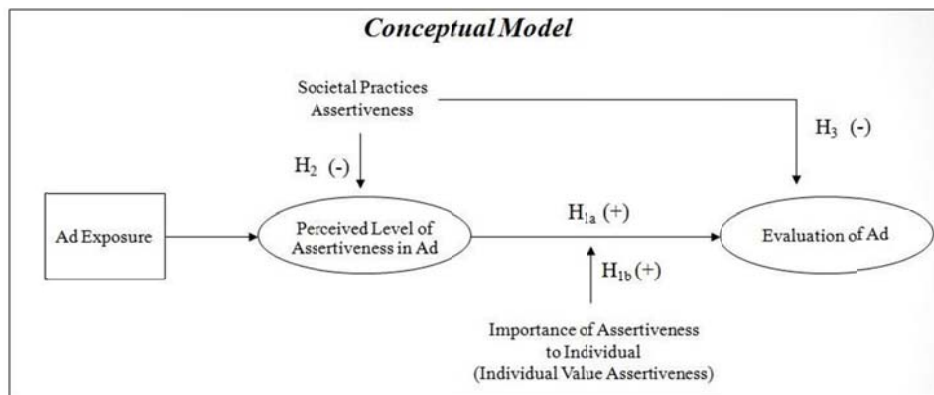


Figure 8: Conceptual model for the effects of ads appealing at a cultural dimension

The development of this culturally-based model contributes to a more general theory of culture's impact on advertising, which has been identified as a key area for future research in international advertising (Taylor, 2005, 2007, 2010). The GLOBE framework appears to be a valuable framework for international advertising, and the four dimensions of Assertiveness, Performance Orientation, Humane Orientation, and Future Orientation are all positively evaluated ad appeals in the various countries investigated.

The use of cultural dimensions in advertisements seems to be promising for standardized international advertising. In addition, the individual values of subjects in the various countries turned out to play a moderating effect, they enforced the positive

relationship between the perceived level of the cultural dimension in advertising and the evaluation of the ad.

For two of the dimensions (assertiveness and performance orientation) we have been able to demonstrate that the societal practices with regard to the respective cultural dimension serve as a frame of reference for the perceived level of that cultural dimension -- the lower the societal practices the higher perceived level of the cultural dimension.

## **8. Limitations and Future Research**

Just five out of nine GLOBE cultural dimensions have been explored to date, so the remaining GLOBE dimensions deserve to be examined in future investigations. In addition, the number of product categories examined has been quite limited: (shoes and wristwatches), and only a single service category has been included (banking). Future research should incorporate a wider range of products and/or services.

A good number of markets have been explored to date (The United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Austria, France, Switzerland, Spain, Argentina, Chile and Thailand). Future investigations should examine a more varied list of markets, including additional Latin American and Asian markets (both Southern Asian and Confucian Asian), as well as countries that represent Eastern Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.

In addition, international researchers are encouraged to expand upon the model empirically tested by Terlutter et al. (2010) and Diehl et al. (2008).

To better understand the processes by which societal culture influences responses to advertising, Quigley et al. (2012: 78-81) propose three models. The first is a cross-level mediated effects model, in which societal cultures drives evaluation of the advertisement and intention to purchase through mediating effects. The second model outlined is a cross-level fit model. Here the authors suggest that an individual's perceptions of an advertisement are independent of the effects of societal culture – but that these perceptions must be consistent with their view of their societal culture in order for the ad to be evaluated positively. The third model (the cross-level complex fit model) draws on the roots of the original GLOBE project and examines how implicit leadership theory can be applied in an advertising context. This model

includes two variables based on implicit leadership theory: the culturally endorsed theory of the advertising message's subject matter and individual-level perceptions of this culturally endorsed theory. It should be noted that none of these models have been tested to date (Mueller et al., in press).

We would like to close this working paper with five research questions from House et al. (2010), which might be applied in future investigations (Mueller et al., in press):

1. What are the cross-level linkages between societal culture, organizational advertising practices and perceptions of global advertising effectiveness at the individual level?
2. Would the fit/match between advertising methods, societal expectations regarding communication and societal culture be an important predictor of advertising effectiveness?
3. Given that advertising often appeals to consumers' aspirations, is it more important to consider the practices or values associated with societal cultural dimensions in advertising communication?
4. What is the influence of multiple dimensions of culture on advertising effectiveness?
5. How does consideration of the cultural differences between the ten country clusters identified by GLOBE shed light on the standardization vs. localization debate in the global advertising literature?" (House et al., 2010: 129 – 131).

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## Appendix

### Appendix 1: Operationalisation of Variables

The perceived **level of assertiveness in the ad** was measured with four items derived from descriptions of assertiveness or assertive behavior found in the literature (Den Hartog, 2004; Rakos, 1991; Crawford, 1988; Peabody, 1985; Lange & Jakubowski, 1976; Rathus, 1973). Subjects were asked to assess the individual portrayed in the ad. The question read: “The person in the advertisement seems to me to be ...” (1) “direct”, (2) “sure”, (3) “strong-willed” and (4) “confident” (7-point-scale, 7 = high). Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  (Cronbach 1951) were U.S.: .95, Germany: .92, UK: .91, Austria: .93, and Argentina: .89. A test for measurement invariance, following the procedure by Steenkamp and Baumgartner (1998), was carried out and showed that measurement invariance across the five countries is supported (for details, see Appendix 2).

**The evaluation of the ad** was assessed with four items, adapted from MacKenzie and Lutz (1989). They read: (1) “Overall, I find the ad ...” “not at all good” (=1) to “very good” (=7) (7-point-scale); “The ad is ...” (2) “interesting”, (3) “likeable” and (4) “pleasant” (7-point-scale, 7 = high). Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  values were U.S.: .93, Germany: .93, U.K.: .88, Austria: .93, and Argentina: .89. The scale was tested for measurement invariance across countries and the results indicate that measurement invariance across countries is supported (for details, see Appendix 2).

### **Societal and individual assertiveness:**

The following items adopted from the GLOBE investigation (House et al., 2004) were used to assess assertiveness: **(1) assertive/non-assertive; (2) tough/tender; (3) dominant/non-dominant.** Participants were asked about their individual practices and values, as well as their societal practices and values. The question read: “Please state what you think about each fact on the following scales. Please mark only one box in each line.” **For societal practices, the question continued: “In country x, people are generally ...”. For societal values, the question was: “In country x, people should be encouraged to be ...”.** In addition, subjects rated their individual practices and individual values with regard to the cultural dimension of assertiveness. **For individual practices, the question read: “I am generally ... .” For individual values, it read: “I should encourage myself to be ... .”** Subjects were asked to indicate to what extent the statements were applicable on a seven-point scale. Principal component analyses revealed that the items of the different types of cultural dimensions loaded on one single factor each. Results for the dimension of assertiveness as reported by GLOBE were compared to the results obtained in this study.

**Appendix 2 Measurement Invariance:**

Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Test for Measurement Invariance Across Countries of Overall Evaluation of the Ad					
Model	$\chi^2$	Df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Configural invariance (baseline model) <sup>a</sup>	5.6	5	1.000	.998	.013
Full metric invariance (rejected)	36.4	17	.991	.984	.040
Partial metric invariance <sup>b</sup> (accepted)	20.0	16	.998	.997	.019
Partial scalar invariance <sup>c</sup> (accepted)	40.3	30	.991	.991	.031
Factor variance invariance <sup>d</sup> (accepted)	44.3	33	.991	.992	.030

Note:  
<sup>a</sup> One covariance between two error terms was estimated.  
<sup>b</sup> One factor loading in Austrian dataset was relaxed.  
<sup>c</sup> Two intercepts in U.S. dataset were relaxed.  
<sup>d</sup> Factor variance in British dataset was relaxed.  
 Estimation: Maximum Likelihood

Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Test for Measurement Invariance Across Countries of Perception of Assertiveness in the Ad					
Model	$\chi^2$	df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Configural invariance (baseline model)	44.0	10	.985	.956	.069
Full metric invariance (accepted)	56.2	22	.985	.980	.047
Full scalar invariance (rejected)	80.3	38	.973	.979	.048
Partial scalar invariance <sup>a</sup> (accepted)	64.0	37	.986	.987	.035
Factor variance invariance (accepted)	71.4	41	.985	.987	.037

Note:  
<sup>a</sup> One intercept in Argentinean dataset relaxed.  
 Estimation: Maximum Likelihood