

Full Length Research Paper

A descriptive inventory study of recent China marketing research

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This paper surveys marketing research related to China. It focuses upon marketing journals whose scope covers marketing in Asia and China. One hundred articles selected from seven journals were reviewed and analyzed. The research discovered that academic articles on China marketing published in the last decade or so not only increased in number but also expanded in scope. Although most researchers were Chinese ethnically oriented, non-Chinese scholars and Chinese scholars jointly published a large number of articles (44%). Articles solely written by non-Chinese ethnically oriented scholars were relatively limited. Much research emanated from Hong Kong-based institutions. It is clear that since the role China plays in the world economy has become more important, and since the demand for China marketing research is increasing, current research cannot meet the needs of international business. Therefore, scholars both from China and from all over the world should do more research on China marketing.

Key words: China economy, China marketing, International Journal of China Marketing, marketing research.

INTRODUCTION

Thirty years ago, the economic system of China was a centralized planning system that remained largely closed to international trade, in which the market mechanism played a limited role in the production and consumption process. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, China launched the reform of its economy and its "open to the world" campaign. It is this campaign that brought China into a market-oriented economy, and that created a rapidly growing for-profit sector, and made China a major player in the global economy. As such, the market mechanism has become an important factor in the economic development of China (Tian and Wang, 2003; Tian 2008). Today, no one would deny the importance of China marketing in the world's market, and no one would ignore the increasingly tight connections between China and the rest of the world. China has been roaring into the 21st century with the force of a locomotive and its economy has doubled almost every six years. The great changes that have been made by the Chinese people in

every aspect not only impact the domestic market in China but also the international economy (Wu, 2009).

Along with the fact that the market-oriented economic system has become the dominant economic force in China, marketing has become one of the hottest subjects discussed in Chinese society, and marketing research has become one of the most rewarding fields for academic study. However, given the fact that the market economic system is relatively new in China, marketing itself as a field of study is still in its initial development stage, and academic marketing research papers, compared with marketing research in Western countries, is not only limited in scope but also in numbers. In addition, due to language constraints much of China marketing research work has not been published in English journals. Current marketing research pertaining to China does not reflect the reality of the Chinese economy, nor does it meet the needs of the business world.

Philip Kotler, often called "the father of modern marketing", has written that "China's rapid development of the American-style consumer culture, which is revolutionizing the lives of hundreds of millions of

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Chinese, will have the potential to reshape the world.... As China goes, so goes the world". (Kotler, 2010) This revolutionary development of a consumer market in China has in turn provided opportunities for marketing scholars, whose services should be in demand to help China market their products and services. This article aims to explore the development of marketing research pertaining to the China market by taking an inventory of relevant marketing journals beginning in 1998, when the earliest marketing research papers pertaining to China were posted online.

METHODOLOGY

A list of all marketing journals known to the American marketing association was obtained (AMA, 2010). A search was made of this list for all journals whose titles were linked to marketing in China. There were no such journals. However, the authors were aware of a new journal directly related to marketing in China; whose name is international journal of China marketing (IJCM), and therefore, this journal was chosen. Next, a search was made of the American Marketing Association's comprehensive list for all journals whose titles were associated with marketing in Asia generally, as opposed to marketing in China specifically. The following three journals in that category were identified: Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics (APJML), Asian Journal of Marketing (AJM), and Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ).

In order to find a meaningful sample of journal articles, it was decided to make an online search of these four journals for articles related to China marketing. Eleven articles were found in IJCM, 39 articles were found in APJML, 2 articles were discovered in AJM, and 5 articles were found in AMJ, for a total of 57 articles. Since the authors were not satisfied with a sample number of 57 articles from those four journals, they added three additional journals from the American Marketing Association's comprehensive list that related to international or global marketing. These three journals were the journal of global marketing (JGM), the journal of international marketing (JIM), and the journal of international consumer marketing (JICM). Nineteen articles were found in JGM, 5 articles were found in JIM, and 19 articles were found in JICM, for a total of 43, bringing the total research sample to 100 articles.

Except for the Journal of International Consumer Marketing, the entire table of contents for each journal was searched, starting from the date that the journal articles were posted online, up until the most current issue as of September 20, 2011. The Journal of International Consumer Marketing's table of contents was only searched partially, starting with the most recent issues, because it was felt that earlier issues tended to be more general, theoretical and conceptual, rather than quantitative and practical, as the more recent issues were. The beginning search dates (which were the earliest online publication dates) for journals are listed as follows: AJM (2007), AMJ (June, 1998), APJML (1989), IJCM (November, 2010), JGM (1988), JIM (March, 2005), and JICM (2006).

The abstracts of the one-hundred articles were searched for the following data: authors, authors' affiliations, number of pages of each article, key words, country of the journal's origin, date of publication and whether the research method used was qualitative or quantitative. In addition, an effort was made to categorize each article. After all the abstracts were categorized, a list of sixteen categories had been produced. These categories were narrowed down to five broader categories: 1) advertising, 2) consumer behavior, 3) marketing strategy, 4) theoretical issues, and 5) miscellaneous.

In general, we have (partially) followed the procedure of an earlier survey of journal articles relating to marketing in China by

Ouyang et al. (2000). In that research, the authors summarized the work that had been published, the topics covered in the work, and the places the papers have been published. They then identified the individuals and institutions that had contributed to the creation of that particular body of marketing literature.

CONTENTS AND CATEGORIES OF THE ARTICLES

One hundred ninety-five researchers from seventy institutions contributed the one hundred articles selected. Of those 100 articles, 42 were written before 2007, of which 11 were written before 2000, and 58 of the articles were written in 2007 or later. The reader will note the longitudinal increase in the number of articles published. This continues an upward trend in the number of published articles that was noted in earlier research (Ouyang et al., 2000).

The earliest article was written in 1988, and the latest article was written in 2011. The average length of the articles (except for the five articles found in JIM, whose abstracts did not include page numbers) was 14.5 pages. There were several types of papers, including concept papers, literature reviews, case studies, qualitative studies and studies using typical quantitative methods. There were seven journals searched. The journals are ranked in Table 1 by the number of articles within them that were related to China marketing.

The content of the articles

The researchers studied a broad variety of industries in China: automobiles, books, computers, credit cards, IT (including e-commerce, internet services and telecommunications), food retailing, higher education, internet services, iron and steel, manufacturing, retailing (including hypermarkets and malls), restaurants, sports, tourism, TVs, VCDs and clothing. However, the majority of the articles (65%) did not focus on any one particular industry.

The articles were distributed across five categories: 1) advertising 2) consumer behavior, 3) marketing strategy, 4) theoretical issues, and 5) miscellaneous. A verbal description of the content of the articles in each category is given subsequently, Table 1 summarizes the content of the one hundred articles examined (Table 2 for categories and sub-categories).

Advertising

Eighteen (18%) of the 100 papers in the research sample were related to advertising. Articles related to advertising in China appeared in all seven of the journals chosen for this research. Examples of subjects covered in the advertising category are the influence of culture (La Ferle et al., 2008; Emery and Tian, 2010; La Ferle and Lee, 2003) the influence of English (Hung and Heeler, 1999) on Chinese advertising, governmental regulation of Chinese advertising (Gao, 2007; Gao and Zhang, 2011), and the use of sex appeal in Chinese advertising (Cui and Yang, 2009).

Consumer behavior

Thirty-nine (39%) of the papers in the research sample dealt with consumer behavior. Articles related to consumer behavior in China appeared in all seven of the journals chosen for this research. Consumer behavior was the most researched topic in the sample journals. Representative subjects investigated in the articles written about consumer behavior in China include the following: Chinese values (Wang et al., 2000; Cheung and Prendergast, 2006; Sun and Wang, 2007; Tai, 2008, Smith et al., 2010), Chinese attitudes

Table 1. Marketing journals.

Journal name		Number articles	Citations
Asia Pacific journal of marketing and logistics	APJML	39	186
Journal of global marketing	JGM	19	74
Journal of international consumer marketing	JICM	19	72
International journal of China marketing	IJCM	11	1*
Journal of international marketing	JIM	5	50
Australasian marketing journal	AMJ	5	7
Asian journal of marketing	AJM	2	0**
Total		100	390

Source for Citations: Google Scholar. *The small number of citations may be due to the late date of IJCM's first issue (2010). **The two articles used in AJM were not found in Google Scholar.

Table 2. Content of the articles.

Category	Number articles	Sub-Category*
Advertising	18	Influence of culture
		Governmental regulation
		Sex appeal
Consumer behavior	39	Chinese values
		Chinese attitudes
		Country of origin effects
		Influence of children on purchase behavior
		Sex appeal
		Perception of brand names
Marketing strategy	24	Perception of store image
		Branding
		Distribution channels
		Pricing
		Product positioning
Theory	10	Service quality
		Marketing in command and transition economies
		Ancient Chinese theory and real estate marketing
		Marketing for foreign-Chinese joint ventures
Miscellaneous	9	Comparison of Indian and Chinese business climates
		Marketing research quantitative and methodological issues
		General articles about China marketing
		Literature survey about China marketing journal articles
		Effects of population aging on marketing in China
		Marketing ethics in China

*There are no subcategories for the theory and miscellaneous category. Rather, several representative articles are listed.

(Cui et al., 2008; Li et al., 2009; Sun and Wang, 2010) country of origin effects (Kwok et al., 2006; Oh and Zhang, 2010; Parker et al., 2011; Chao and Arnold, 2005; d'Astous and Li, 2009; Ishii, 2009;

Wong et al., 2008) the influence of children on purchase behavior (MacNeal and Yeh, 1996; MacNeal and Mindy, 1996), sex appeal (Liu et al., 2006; Liu et al., 2010) perception of brand names (Ang,

Table 3. Author's publication credits.

Author	Publication credits	Institution*
Nan Zhou	4	City University of Hong Kong
Suk-Ching Ho	3	Chinese University of Hong Kong
Geng Cui	3	Lingnan University (Hong Kong)
Jianyao Li	3	University of Western Australia
Fang Liu	3	University of Western Australia
19 authors published 2 articles	2	
171 authors published 1 article	1	

*Hong Kong universities are in boldface.

1996; Li et al., 2011; Yang et al., 2005), and perception of store image (Chang and Luan, 2010; Hua and Jasper, 2010). From this listing, we can see that country of origin effects produce a large attraction for researchers. Seven (7%) of the 100 articles surveyed concerned this issue.

Marketing strategy

In the research sample, 24 articles were found (24%) which dealt with marketing strategy. Topics investigated include the following: branding (Ga et al., 2006; Bennet, 2008; Wang et al., 2009; Fu et al., 2009; Bodet, 2010; Chen et al., 2011; Chaoying et al., 2011; Leng and Zhang, 2011), distribution channels (Wing, 1994; Luk et al., 2003; Yi and Jaffe, 2007; Sternquist and Wang, 2010), pricing (Tian et al., 2005; Liu and Tang, 2005; Zhang and Zhou, 2010; Jiang et al., 2011), product positioning (Skallerud and Grønhaug, 2010), and service quality (Prugsamatz and Ofstad, 2006; Gebauer and von Zedtwitz, 2007; Stanworth, 2009). From this, it can be seen that branding was the most popular topic for authors writing about marketing strategy in China.

Theoretical issues

There were 10 articles examined in this study (10%) which have been classified as theoretical. This category includes discussions of different modes of marketing in command and transition economies (Wei, 1995; Logan and McEwan, 2010), principles derived from ancient Chinese history applied to modern real estate marketing (Pheng, 2000), a comparison of the business climates of India and China (Panigrahi et al., 2002), the effects of population aging on marketing in China (Hou, 2011), and theoretical quantitative and methodological issues concerning marketing research in China (Sin and Ho, 2001; Tu, 2011).

Miscellaneous

This final category includes nine articles (9%) found in the research sample that were difficult to categorize, but which nonetheless were of interest. Examples are general articles about marketing in China (Liu, 2007; Thorellia, 1988; Kirpilani and Robinson, 1989; Knowles et al., 1990), a literature survey of articles written about marketing in China (Ouyang et al., 2000), and marketing ethics in China (Walle, 2011; Singh et al., 2007).

CONTRIBUTORS AND THEIR AFFILIATIONS

There were 195 researchers who authored the one hundred articles

examined for this paper. There was a good deal of collaboration between western scholars and Chinese scholars. Seventy-eight of the articles had more than one author, and of these 78, western and Chinese researchers jointly authored 34 (44%) of them. The authors of this paper examined each name, and determined whether the name was a western name, or was the romanization of a Cantonese or Mandarin Chinese name. It was discovered that of the 195 authors who wrote the 100 articles, 111 (57%) of those authors were ethnic Chinese.

Top contributors

The researchers were ranked using three different methods: publication credits, adjusted publication credits, and number of citations. Tables 3 and 4 used publication credits in order to rank the authors of the one hundred articles that were examined for this paper. Publication credits have been calculated in two ways: by total number of publication credits (Table 3), and by adjusted number of publication credits (Table 4). If a researcher is listed as an author of an article, that researcher was given a publication credit, no matter whether the author was the sole author, or whether there were co-authors. The total number of publication credits obtained in this fashion equals the author's total publication credits. If the researcher shared the authorship of an article, his adjusted publication credits were determined this way: If there was one other co-author, the researcher received one-half of a publication credit. If there were two other co-authors, the researcher received one-third of a publication credit, and so on. This procedure has been adopted in previous studies (Ouyang et al., 2000). The 195 researchers who wrote the 100 articles were also ranked by citations to their articles by other researchers (Table 5). Google Scholar was used in order to find the number of citations to each of the one hundred articles.

It is interesting to note that when the authors are ranked by total publication credits, the top five researchers are all Chinese, and that when the authors are ranked by adjusted publication credits, the top eight include seven Chinese researchers. This apparently indicates that interest in China marketing has not yet become thoroughly globalized. This is backed by the previously noted fact that 111 (57%) of the 195 authors who contributed to the 100 articles are Chinese.

As previously mentioned, the researchers were also ranked according to the number of times their articles had been cited by other researchers (Table 5). If more than one researcher authored a paper, and the paper was cited once, then each researcher received a citation credit. Thus, no special importance was given to the author whose name was listed first on the paper. An examination of Table 5 in order to discover Chinese names reveal that of the top 41 researchers in terms of citations to their articles, 25 (61%) was Chinese. This is an indication of how Chinese

Table 4. Author's adjusted publication credits.

Author	Adjusted publication credits	Institution*
Susan H.C. Tai	2.00	Hong Kong Polytechnic University
Zhihong Gao	1.50	Rider University (NJ-USA)
Hongbo Tu	1.33	Wuhan Institute of Technology
Suk-Ching Ho	1.33	Chinese University of Hong Kong
Riliang Ou	1.30	Aston Business School (UK)
Nan Zhou	1.25	City University of Hong Kong
Carrie La Ferle	1.20	Southern Methodist Univ/Mich State U
Geng Cui	1.17	Lingnan University (Hong Kong)
187 authors \leq 1.00	\leq 1.00	

*Hong Kong universities are in boldface.

Table 5. Author's citation credits.

Author	Citations	Institution*
Allan K. K. Chan	27	Hong Kong Baptist University
Cheng-Lu Wang	27	Hong Kong Baptist University
Zhen-Xiong Chen	27	Hong Kong Baptist University
Zong-Cheng Zheng	27	Zhongshan University (China)
Wei Na Li	23	University of Texas
Mark J. Arnold	21	St. Louis University
Mike C. H. Chao	21	St. Louis University
Nan Zhou	21	City University of Hong Kong
Leo Yat Ming Sin	19	Chinese University of Hong Kong
Mark Uncles	16	University of South Wales
Simon Kwok	16	University of South Wales
John Fong	15	Macquarie University (Australia)
Lauren a. Swanson	15	Chinese University of Hong Kong
Suzan Burton	15	Macquarie University (Australia)
Carrie La Ferle	14	Michigan State U / Southern Methodist U
Swee Hoon Ang	12	National University of Singapore
Fang Liu	12	University of Western Australia
Amy Wong	11	Lingnan University (Hong Kong)
Chui Yim Wong	11	Victoria University (Australia)
Irvine Clarke III	11	James Madison University (USA)
Jamal Al-Khatib	11	University of St. Thomas
Jatinder J. Singh	11	University of Mississippi
Lianxi Zhou	11	University of Guelph (Canada)
Michael J. Polonsky	11	Deakin University (Australia)
Romana Garma	11	Victoria University (Australia)
Scott J. Vitell	11	University of Mississippi
Jie Chen	10	Purdue University (USA)
Lars Ofstad	10	University of Sydney (Australia)
Mindy F. J	10	Texas A&M University (USA)
Sunita Prugsamat	10	Griffith University (Australia)
Zhilin Yang	10	City University of Hong Kong
Kineta Hung	9	University of Hong Kong
Stella Yiyang Li	9	University of Hong Kong
Steven M. Edwards	9	Southern Methodist University

Susan H. C. Tai	9	Hong Kong Polytechnic University
Brian Murphy	8	Massey University (New Zealand)
Chi Kin (Bennet) Yim	8	University of Hong Kong
David K. Tse	8	University of Hong Kong
Gerald Yong Ga	8	University of Missouri (USA)
Rongmei Wang	8	Massey University (New Zealand)
Yigang Pan	8	York University (Canada)
154 authors 0 – 7 cites	0-7	

*Hong Kong universities are in boldface.

Table 6. Geographical distribution of authors' institutions.

Parameter	Hong Kong	PRC	Asian		Europe	North American	All institutions
			Not PRC	Not Hong Kong			
No. of institutions	7	14	12		7	30	70
Percentage	10	20	17		10	43	100

researchers of China marketing seem to be dominating the field.

The researchers' institutional affiliations

A look at Table 3 (author's publication credits) and Table 4 (author's adjusted publication credits) will reveal the institutions associated with the researchers who have done the most China marketing research in our sample of articles. It is notable that of the top five researchers as measured by publication credits, three were affiliated with Hong Kong Universities and also, of the top eight researchers as ranked by adjusted publication credits, four were affiliated with Hong Kong Universities. The Hong Kong institutions have been bolded in Tables 3 and 4 for easy reference. This dominance by Hong Kong institutions continues a trend that was noted in earlier research (Ouyang et al., 2000). The dominance of Hong Kong universities can also be seen by an examination of Table 5, which ranks the researchers by citations to their articles. The Hong Kong universities in Table 5 have also been bolded for easy reference, demonstrating that of the top 41 researchers listed in Table 5, 13 (32%) are affiliated with Hong Kong institutions.

The data in Table 5 may also be examined to determine the distribution of universities between Asia and the West. We see that 27 (66%) of the top 41 institutions, as measured by citation credits to their affiliated researchers, are Asian, whereas 14 (34%) of the top 41 institutions are western. It is notable that none of the top 41 institutions are European.

We now turn from examining the 41 institutions listed in Table 5 in order to investigate all of the institutions affiliated with the researchers who wrote the one hundred articles of our sample. Table 6 shows the geographical distribution of the seventy institutions whose researchers produced the one hundred articles. The data there show that a small majority (53%) of institutions doing China marketing related research are western universities located either in Europe or North America, while a large minority of such institutions are Asian (47%).

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CHINA MARKETING

One of the journals used in this study was the International Journal of China Marketing. A special part of this paper will be devoted to

this journal, because, as far as is known by the authors, this is the first academic journal in print devoted entirely to marketing in China. The journal was established in the United States in 2010, and was introduced by the renowned marketing scholar Philip Kotler, who has earned the sobriquet "the father of marketing". In the introduction to the inaugural issue, Kotler suggested that the journal could examine "almost all aspects" of marketing in China (Kotler, 2010). Indeed, the scope of IJCM's publications matches that of the articles found in the other journals used in this research. Subsequently, we will use the same categories which were used to analyze the other journals. We will sort the relevant articles found in IJCM into the following categories: advertising, consumer behavior, marketing strategy, and theoretical.

In commentary provided to introduce the third issue, Geoffrey Lantos proclaimed "The notion of a market oriented economy is still brand new in China, while marketing as a field of scholastic study is just in its beginning steps.... "I feel it is an honor to write this commentary on behalf of the editorial board. Like Dr. Philip Kotler and Dr. Ping Zhao, I sincerely hope the International Journal of China Marketing will continue to deliver the highest quality research in the service of those who wish to understand the world of Chinese marketing better" (Lantos, 2011).

It is the authors' considered opinion that IJCM has indeed begun to deliver the highest quality research into the world of China marketing. The subsequent overview will give the reader a taste of the research done so far in the first three issues published to date. It should be noted that the articles in the first two issues were included in the sample of 100 articles studied in this research. The seven articles in the third issue were in press, and not published at the time this paper was written. However, copies of the articles were obtained in advance of their publication. It was decided to discuss these articles, even though they had not been published yet, and even though they were not available for inclusion in the research sample.

Advertising

To date, IJCM has published two articles related to advertising in China. The first article (Emery and Tian, 2010) updated Hofstede's (1980) famous model of cultural variables, related Pollay's (1983) advertising appeals to those variables, and hypothesized that the

advertising appeals which appealed to either China's or the United States' salient cultural variables would have the most impact. For example, China is considered very masculine. An advertising appeal of effective would be considered a masculine appeal. Thus, it was hypothesized that an advertisement with an effective appeal should perform better in China than in the United States. Of twenty such hypotheses, only nine were supported, and one was significant in the opposite direction. The authors therefore concluded that it would be unwise to use Hofstede's cultural dimensions as a sole predictor for advertising effectiveness in China. The researchers speculated that for practical use Hofstede's dimensions were either outdated, or too broad, or both. In addition, the authors speculated that the effectiveness of advertising appeals may be moderated by other factors such as age, societal trends, the political-legal environment and product usage.

The second article in *IJCM* concerning advertising measured changes in brand attitude based upon advertising appeals which mixed rational and emotional appeals (Chaoying et al., 2011). It was hypothesized that customers who predominately processed information cognitively would respond more positively to rational appeals in a mixed-appeal advertisement, and customers who predominately processed information intuitively would more positively respond to emotional appeals in a mixed-appeal advertisement. The authors, having studied an advertisement for a Chinese telecommunication service, concluded that mixing rational and emotional appeals did not hinder effectiveness when those appeals were delivered to a general audience, and that a mixing strategy is a good compromise when trying to attract a population of people which contains those who process both emotionally and rationally.

Consumer behavior

There were three articles dealing with consumer behavior in the first three issues of *IJCM*. The first was a case study of an ethnic Chinese restaurant located in the United States (Tian and Wang, 2010). The authors concluded that reliability and value were the primary indicators of satisfaction for foreign customers of ethnic restaurants. The authors failed to corroborate previous research, which suggested that customers' cultural awareness of the ethnic food sold, had positive effects on customer satisfaction. The second article (Li et al., 2011) investigated the attitudes of Chinese peasants towards refrigerator purchases, and ranked the relative importance to these peasants of seven attributes of refrigerators. The refrigerators' brand was discovered to be of the most importance, followed by price, color, structure, power consumption, volume, and cooling capacity. The author concluded that peasant consumer attitudes towards refrigerator attributes varied in different regions and markets, and that therefore, market segmentation was very important. The third article dealing with consumer behavior studied the different attractions to consumers for Chinese supermarkets and Chinese wet markets, the supermarkets being superior in safety and quality, the wet markets being superior in price, convenience and freshness (Cui, 2011).

Marketing strategy

Articles in *IJCM* dealing with marketing strategy included research into pricing, product positioning and product development, branding, and service quality. One article examined the propensity for Chinese companies to start price wars (Zhang and Zhou, 2010). The authors conclude that, contrary to much opinion, Chinese businesses are not irrational to fight such wars, but that the rational desire to achieve economies of scales is the motivation behind these wars, and that many Chinese businesses participating in them emerge stronger and more profitable. A second article

(Calantone et al., 2011) develops a model whose constructs predict the success of new product launches, and then tests the model using samples from the United States and China. The authors conclude that new product launches in both countries are (generally) governed by the same factors, which are: launch timing, launch execution tactics, resource allocation, marketing activities, distribution channel support, market orientation, and cross-functional integration on launch. A third article describes "Shanzhai" products and branding (Leng and Zhang, 2011), which explains the highly successful marketing strategy employed by small Chinese companies when they imitate the products of large successful brands (and sometimes infringe on the copyright of the more established product's brand name). A fourth article (Shen and Wang, 2011) investigates public satisfaction with education in Beijing, in the context of Chinese education reform.

Theoretical

This category encompasses articles which describe structural or legal aspects of the Chinese economy at a macro-level, or which speculate on the suitability of application of marketing models and methodology to the Chinese context, or which address ethical issues in marketing. One example of research that examines the structure of the Chinese economy is a paper that concluded that China, after the financial crisis of 2008, would surpass the United States in research and development, especially in commercialization of research (Kotler, 2010). Another paper investigating the structure of the Chinese economy and its markets is one that addresses the perennial issue of intellectual property protection (Logan and McEwan, 2010). In this paper, the authors conclude that China should seek a balance between protecting proprietary information and allowing that information to be shared. A third paper which examines the structure of the Chinese economy and its markets is one that looks at the problem of population aging in China (Hou, 2011). This paper warns that the efficiency of the Chinese labor force may be compromised by population aging, as well as the ability of the country's pension system to take care of the nation's elderly.

One paper addresses a marketing model and its applicability in the Chinese context. This paper takes traditional cluster marketing theory and seeks to apply it to the Chinese high-tech industry (Tu, 2011). Another paper also addresses theoretical marketing research issues. This paper argues that traditional anthropological research techniques should be applied to business in China, in order to understand cross-cultural issues in marketing, in order for foreign firms engaged in business there to obtain a competitive advantage (Tian and Borges, 2011).

A final theoretical article involves marketing ethics. This article examined the practice of "cultural tourism" in China (Walle, 2011), and concluded that the traditional marketing focus on the customer was undercutting ethnic communities in China and cheapening their traditions, or unduly creating stress for ethnic people.

DISCUSSION

The findings from this research have impelled the authors to agree with Geoffrey Lantos, who has stated that "The notion of a market oriented economy is still brand new in China, while marketing as a field of scholastic study is just in its beginning steps" (2011). This article has attempted to describe the state of this infant discipline in such a way that readers may ascertain the concerns of researchers in the China marketing field, as well as the characteristics of these researchers and their institutions.

Academic journals have become the primary medium of communicating scholarly knowledge in China marketing, and the number of China marketing-related journals and articles has increased in recent years. However, compared with research covering marketing activity in Western countries, only a handful of journals have covered China marketing issues up to now. The rapid growth of marketing in the Chinese economy makes it increasingly important to gain insight into the relative influence of marketing-related research papers. This research discovers that at this time most interest so far about marketing research related to China is in consumer behavior, although there is a good deal of interest in advertising, marketing strategy, and theoretical issues. As to the research methodologies, the research papers examined in this study mostly tend to be descriptive and content based, although some scholars adopted quantitative research method in their research and the trend of using quantitative method is obvious.

As to the structure of scholars in China marketing research, we can easily see that most authors in the field are Chinese themselves, although much research is jointly collaborative between Chinese and non-Chinese. It is obvious that there is a concentration of scholars doing China marketing in Hong Kong. It is also clear that a small majority of institutions affiliated with China marketing research is located in Europe and North America and that a large minority of such institutions is located in Asia, especially in Honk Kong. The authors of this paper noted that the research conducted by scholars in mainland China is limited; a possible reason could be that most Chinese scholars in China are lack of writing skills in English.

It seems to the authors of this article that several implications flow from the inventory study. One is that the content of China marketing research we analyzed is very broad, but not very deep enough. There are many topics covered in the literature, but few of those topics have been researched thoroughly from different perspectives. There is a need to explore marketing issues in China more deeply by scholars both through qualitative and quantitative methods. Another implication is that professional contacts between China and the west, at both the individual and institutional level, are indispensable prerequisites for doing meaningful marketing research in China. The cultural and language barriers between China and the west are certainly not small. East-west collaboration will help western scholars to dispel the mystery of Chinese markets, and will help Chinese scholars to gain access to advanced marketing research techniques developed in the west.

In the authors' best judgment, China is still virgin territory for researchers, which should entice marketing academicians for years to come. Karl Gerth, Professor of Modern Chinese History at Oxford University, notes that total consumer spending in China of \$4 trillion in 2009 is still less than half that of the US, but it has surpassed

consumer spending in Japan and is closing in on that of the EU. Gerth points out that it has taken China just a few years to learn what took these consumer countries decades: how to spend. Gerth further points out that China's advertising market has grown by 40% a year over the past two decades and may become the world's largest by 2020. China now has over 2000 newspapers with a total circulation above a billion, the world's ten largest general-circulation magazines, and over 1000 television channels. Advertising in China is now a huge industry, including over 80,000 ad companies that employ over one million people to help build brands. Gerth claims that the consequences are radically transforming China and the world (Gerth, 2011). Such a phenomenon cries for academic investigation into China marketing by trained marketing researchers.

Conclusions

The Chinese national economy has been changed greatly since the 1980s, which has brought China one of the most important and powerful economies in the world. Marketing as a field of study is relatively new in China and marketing research about China, although having improved, cannot meet the demands of the world's business institutions. Scholars from all over the world are definitely encouraged to conduct scientific research on China marketing, moreover, the Chinese scholars in China are encouraged to conduct more research on China marketing and write their research reports and articles in English. The research on China marketing should pay more attentions on theoretical issues along with brand strategies study. We predict that in the near future China marketing research could become a hot research topic for more and more scholars in the academic world.

This study was limited in several ways. The sample of journals was restricted to those marketing journals whose titles focused on marketing in Asia or China. In addition, only articles that were posted online were examined, which may have precluded the inclusion of relevant articles on China marketing. Reasonable suggestions for further research would include an examination of all marketing journals, rather than Asian marketing journals, in order to find related articles. In conjunction with this broadening of the research sample, the chronological scope of the article could be restricted to recent years, perhaps five years, in order to obtain a more recent snapshot of the field.

There were certain restrictions placed on the inclusion of articles within the research sample. For example, articles concerning the behavior of ethnic Chinese consumers living outside of China or Chinese industries located outside of China were excluded. Also excluded were articles about the reaction by non-Chinese consumers to Chinese products consumed in countries

other than China. Research into those areas might perhaps be worthwhile. In addition, all articles concerning marketing research into business activity in Hong Kong and Taiwan were excluded. These articles should be worthy of separate investigation. Finally, it is suggested that there is now enough China marketing research available to justify narrowing the scope of research similar to that of this paper. For example, a survey of articles related only to marketing strategy in China, or only related to advertising in China, etc, should perhaps be worthwhile.

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