

# MERCADOLOGIA



# ARE MEN MORE RATIONAL THAN WOMEN WHEN PURCHASING CARS? A CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISON

HOMENS SÃO MAIS RACIONAIS DO QUE AS MULHERES QUANDO COMPRAM CARROS? UMA COMPARAÇÃO CROSS-CULTURAL

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## RESUMO

O objetivo do presente estudo foi identificar o tipo de julgamento utilizado no Brasil e nos Estados Unidos da América com relação à compra de automóvel e a relação desse tipo de julgamento com os valores humanos dos respondentes. Na pesquisa, 542 brasileiros e 449 estadunidenses responderam à escala de valores LOV (KAHLE; KENNEDY, 1988) e à escala de Significado e Julgamento (ALLEN, 2000). Os tipos de julgamento no Brasil e Estados Unidos foram comparados através de testes-t. A influência dos fatores demográficos foi verificada através do uso de MANCOVA e a capacidade dos valores humanos em prever o tipo de julgamento mais utilizado na compra de automóvel foi calculada através de regressões stepwise. Os resultados sugerem que o julgamento na compra de automóveis, no Brasil, é predominantemente afetiva, enquanto nos Estados Unidos é predominantemente passo-a-passo. Em ambos os países as mulheres possuíram um escore significativamente superior para julgamento passo-a-passo na compra de automóveis. Os valores pessoais de “excitação” e “ser bem respeitado” se relacionaram com o julgamento afetivo em ambos países, enquanto “realização pessoal” apresentou relação com julgamento passo-a-passo em ambos os países.

## PALAVRAS-CHAVE:

Valores humanos. Significado e Julgamento; Marketing. Cross-cultural.

## ABSTRACT

*The main goal of the study was to identify the type of judgment used in Brazil and in the United States of America relative to the purchase of automobiles and the relevance of Human Values in the evaluation used, 542 Brazilians and 449 North Americans filled out the List of Values (LOV) (KAHLE; KENNEDY, 1988) and the Meaning and Judgment Scale (ALLEN, 2000). The types of judgment in Brazil and the United States were compared using T-Tests, the influence of demographic factors was investigated through the use of MANCOVA and the ability of human values in predicting the type of judgment was calculated using stepwise regressions. The results suggested that in Brazil the judgment for purchasing a car is predominantly affective, while in the United States it is predominantly piecemeal. In both countries Women scored higher in piecemeal judgment for car purchase. The values of “excitement” and “being well respected” are related to affective judgment in both countries while “personal fulfillment” is related to piecemeal judgment in Brazil and the United States.*

## KEYWORDS:

*Human values. Judgment and Meaning; Marketing. Cross-cultural.*

## INTRODUCTION

Over the past 40 years, the context, which is embedded in organizations, underwent profound changes. A greater number of international products increased rapidly and considerably to match a competitive and global market (AXINN; MATTHYSSENS, 2002). Caldas and Amaral (1998) point out that market globalization is a result of the worldwide production integration of goods and of their consumption.

The consumption of physical products and services is part of the modern human being's daily routine and is studied by many researchers in different areas. Hunt (1991) points out that consumer behavior is characterized by the open use of different methods and theories, originating from very different sources such as Economics (DEATON; MUELLBAUER, 1980;

DUESENBERY, 1967), Sociology (BOURDIEU; PASSERON, 1979; RIBEIRO, 2008; RIESMAN, 1964) and Psychology (ALLEN; TORRES, 2006; KAHLE; KENNEDY, 1988). One aspect that was not taken into account was cultural influence. Studies show that different cultures may possess different purchasing behavior (ALLEN; TORRES, 2006; TORRES; PÉREZ-NEBRA, 2007) even if economic and social factors are controlled or disregarded.

The studies of Hofstede (1980, 1983, 1984, 1991) demonstrate that people from different cultural groups assign attributions in distinct ways; their intentions may be different and thus they behave unevenly. Therefore, culture can influence consumer behavior, altering the importance or interpretation of some intangible or tangible characteristic of a product or service. For

Hofstede (1991), culture is learned and not genetically inherited, thus personal experience and the environment in which the person inhabits are the main contributing factors in shaping consumer behavior.

## Literature Review

### Culture

Culture can be defined anthropologically where, generally, more complex and diverse meanings are assigned to the term. Culture of Civilization in an ethnographic, broad sense is the “complex role that includes knowledge, beliefs, art, moral, laws, customs and other capabilities and skills acquired by a man as a member of a society” (TYLOR, 1871, p. 1).

For Keesing (1974) there are two strands when talking about culture. The first one considers it an evolutionary process. Culture is shaped and disseminated by society based upon the cultural circumstances that individuals find themselves in, taking into account technology, economics, beliefs, religion, among many other factors. The second strand divides culture into three idealistic theories that are defined as a cognitive system, a structural system and a symbolic system.

Culture as a cognitive system emphasizes learning and knowledge. A person needs to learn or believe in the prevailing culture order to live in an acceptable manner within their society. Culture is not a material phenomenon. Culture is not formed by things, people, behavior and emotions but by the organization of all of these factors. It's the way people think, the models they follow, how they relate and how they interpret (GOODENOUGH, 1957).

In Levi-Strauss' vision (1963), culture as a structural system is defined as the ac-

cumulation of the creations of the mind. What occurs in an individual's life shapes his thoughts which form cultural patterns. To Keesing (1974), culture as a symbolic system attaches high importance to symbols and meanings. The rules and categories are not disrupted by behavior; they exist on a separate plane. In an attempt to integrate these two visions, cognitive and symbolic, Kluckhohn (1962) divided the concept of culture into two parts: the first referring to the objective elements (for example, crafts produced by social groups) and the second, reflecting its subjective elements (such as, the values, beliefs and social norms of these groups).

Torres and Allen (2009) suggest that the basic cultural values influence the way people consume by imposing limits on human behavior, implying that these values directly impact consumer behavior. Arnould, Prince, and Zinkhan (2003) indicates a relationship between culture and consumption, arguing that cultural consistency is also maintained in the consumption of products that reinforces that same culture. As such, consumer behavior presents an intrinsic link with a population's culture, reflecting cognitive aspects and symbols within the goods and services that are consumed.

### Consumer behavior

Lemos (2010) suggests that research on consumer behavior are tools that help managers trace their objectives, understand the meanings and messages expressed by the ownership of products, and identify the wishes and expectations of the clients in each specific market. This can be observed in the description by Mowen and Minor (2003, p. 3) that defines consumer behavior as “the study of units

of purchase and the exchange processes involved in the acquisition, consumption and availability of goods, services, experiences and ideas". From a theoretical point of view, the purpose of understanding consumer behavior has been achieved through the development and clarification of analytical models that intend to portray the real world in which decision processes of purchasing products and their corresponding variables are present.

Studies such as those of Markin (1979), Kassarijan (1981), McAlister and Pessemier (1982), and Ferber (1984), organize many explanatory variables of different analytical models of consumer purchasing behavior. Such models attempt to predict the preferences among the alternatives, which are systematically related to psychological characteristics (MOWEN; MINOR, 2003).

In the context of Consumer Behavior, according to Sheth, Mitall, and Newman (2001), the psychological characteristics are more complex than the demographics. Psychological characterization adds activities, interests, opinions, needs, values, types of judgment, attribution of meaning, and personality traits to the demographic data that alone would present limited utility. This allows consumers to be characterized in various psychological dimensions. Solomon (2008), points out that the combination of psychological variables with demographic elements allows studies to go beyond identifying consumers bringing an understanding of the reason why purchases are made.

Weinstein (1995) describes that the psychological characteristics, which are used in segmentation studies, such as the identification of a target market, may be fundamental tools to get to know consumers and their demographic background well.

Researchers must use scrutiny to capture the state of mind of each consumer in order to identify the characteristics of their target audience. Solomon (2008) describes the efforts of companies that attempt to position a product for their market and to make it suitable for an existing consumption pattern. Adapting a product to a new market then means aligning tangible and intangible characteristics of the product to the psychological characteristics of the market that it seeks to achieve.

### **Human values**

Values have been discussed and studied since Aristotle, who defined them as "what everyone desires" and not what everyone should desire; in other words, values are the realization of what they consider to be important since human beings have the need to feel virtuously accomplished in what they consider natural, their reason and the way in which they bloom, is themselves (ARISTOTLE, 2001). Conversely, in the context of modern societies, Goergen (2005) suggests that Kant (1724-1804/2002) stated that the value is the prioritization of a norm and that it may or may not have a practical realization, but it provides truth, goodness and beauty to things that are subjected to choice.

This suggests that the priorities of values will differ according to the environmental changes since people consider that this change in priorities represents a better way to live and express oneself (ROHAN, 2000). Rokeach (1973) argues that people use their culturally learned values to help them rationalize about attitudes and behaviors that could otherwise be personally or socially unacceptable. Culturally learned values are hierarchically organized situa-

tional beliefs that serve to guide behavior and are internalized in the socialization process by the convergence of social institutions (e.g. family, school, and friends). They constitute the core of personality and therefore are the basis of a self-concept.

Schwartz (2005) defines values as criteria that are used by people to evaluate actions, people and events. The author proposes a unification theory of the motivation and human behavior fields in order to develop a universal system of human values that contemplate the main values shared by all cultures (BLACKWELL; MINIARD; ENGEL, 2005; SCHWARTZ, 2005). According to the author, all people possess numerous common values that vary on levels of priority and importance from person to person.

Because the values vary from individual to individual, from country to country and from culture to culture (DE MOOIJ, 2003), a detailed analysis of the values defended by a particular culture might demonstrate that certain approaches to product positioning, or even the product itself, are entirely unsuitable for the culture or the group of individuals in question, since the product may be in conflict with their values (DE MOOIJ, 2003; LINDQUIST; SIRGY, 2006). It is relevant for consumer behavior studies to acknowledge that values will determine what types of benefits consumers will seek in the products they purchase (LINDQUIST; SIRGY, 2006). Therefore, it becomes fundamental for companies to deeply understand and know what values are endorsed and approved by the customers they are targeting in each market segment (DE MOOIJ, 2003).

An analysis of these values can lead a company to change the market segment

it is focusing on, recreate their advertisements and reposition their products in the market, communicating the values that are truly important to their customers in a more effective manner, and, it may even discourage a company from entering a country or a new culture (BLACKWELL *et al.*, 2005; DE MOOIJ, 2003; LINDQUIST; SIRGY, 2006; SOLOMON, 2008).

Allen (2000) indicates that even though values promote interests of individuals and social groups, motivate actions, and sometimes serve as a starting point for people to judge themselves and others, such judgments and preferences directly depend upon two processes, abstraction and generalization. Rokeach (1973) and Feather (1982) suggest that the beliefs that an individual has about an object derive from the positive and negative experiences that occur with that object and the summary of the evaluations about these beliefs form a general perspective.

Given these findings, Allen (2000) proposes that the suggestions made by Rokeach (1973) and Feather (1982) regarding the beliefs about an object are the same as those shown in the expectancy theory model (FISHBEIN, 1967), which determines that each belief has an evaluation associated with it and that the combinations of beliefs and evaluations matched with other beliefs and evaluations pertaining to the object form an attitude towards it. Therefore the values determine the way people judge the object and form their beliefs about it, making it imperative to understand how the relationship between values and judgment occur.

Lindberg, Garling, and Montgomery (1989) suggest that preferences between products derive from the value that the product's attribute emphasizes and how

important consumers consider the emphasized value. Allen (2006) points out that this way consumers calculate the utility or preference for some products or brands using a mathematical formula and then choose whichever one obtained the highest result.

However, Allen (2000) describes that such a structure is restricted to tangible attributes of the product and can be considered limited, because it considers human values as indirect influence only in selection processes and only considers the utility value of products. Several studies analyzed the decision making process from another aspect, the hedonic aspect, Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) suggest that products perceived symbolically, when being chosen, their physical characteristics weigh much less than their representation and the symbolism that is attached to the product by the individual. On the other hand, Zajonc (1980) indicates that the sentimental association is immediate and precedes cognition excluding attention and processing elements that are connected to the identification of the object, also arguing that the very description of the object depends on its abstraction and meaning in the eyes of the individual that is describing it, thus “when we evaluate an object or an event, we are describing not so much what is in the object or in the event, but something that is in ourselves” (ZAJONC, 1980, p. 157), because affective judgments are always about the self (ZAJONC, 1980).

Concomitantly, Lazarus (1984) questions Zajonc (1980) arguing that, cognitive activity is a necessary precondition of emotion, because to experience an emotion, people must first comprehend the significance of what is happening (LAZARUS, 1984, p. 124). Even so, Lazarus (1984) emphasizes

that the preferences and the way that they are constituted reside in an uncertain zone between emotion and no emotion. Allen (2006) describes two types of judgment that derive from previous discussions, a piecemeal judgment, described in the studies of Fiske and Pavelchack (1986) as an evaluation in which “consumers evaluate products attribute-by-attribute, and that the judgment of each product attribute independently contributes to the assessment of the product whole” (ALLEN, 2000, p. 3), and the affective judgment derived from studies by Zajonc (1980) that evaluates the object as a whole, as opposed to comparing separate attributes, “the object is compared to a mental prototype, and if the two match, the affect associated with the category prototype is ascribed to the object in question” (ALLEN, 2006, p. 27).

Allen and Torres (2006), on the other hand, argue that the type of judgment applied to a product derives from the meaning assigned to it by the individual, encompassing two categories, utilitarian or symbolic, being that the utilitarian meaning is represented by tangible and functional aspects and is directly related to the practical utility of the product, its performance and efficiency. In symbolic meaning the attributes are intangible and represent an image or a symbolism of a product. Dittmar (2007, p. 34) defines symbol as an entity that represents another entity and that can only have meaning to the extent that there is a shared understanding among the people that classify that symbol as real, thus, the symbolic meaning is linked to the group culture (DITTMAR, 1992).

Allen (2006) summarizes the two types of judgment presented classifying them according to their characteristic as shown in table I.

**TABLE 1 - Types of Judgment that Affect Consumer Behavior**

Characteristic	Type of judgment	
Product meaning	Utilitarian	Symbolic
Content	Overt function and utility	Social categories and cultural principles
Location	Separate tangible attributes	Product whole
Focus	Objective: Product focused	Subjective: self-focused
Conceptual clarity	Clear	Vague
Judgment type	Piecemeal	Affective
Reasoning	Logical, comprehensive, and systematic attribute-by-attribute analysis	Holistic, intuitive and approximate goodness of fit to exemplar
Affect latency	Delayed	Immediate
Affect intensity	Low: evaluative	High: emotional states
Psychological function	Instrumental	Expressive
Source of benefit	The product's intrinsic qualities, means to an end, and ability to control de environment	The use of the product as a vehicle for self-expression
Value relevance	Low	High
Product attachment	Weak	Strong

Note. Source: Adapted from Allen, M. W. (2006). Human values and product symbolism: Do consumers form product preference by comparing the human values symbolized by a product to the human values that they endorse (p. 2476) *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, v. 32, n. 12, p. 2475-501.

Therefore, culture can influence not only the values, but also individuals' perceptions concerning the characteristics that a product possess, enhancing or diminishing the importance of these characteristics.

## Method Sample

The research was constituted by two convenience samples composed by Brazilians and North Americans. The Brazilian sample was comprised of 542 individuals varying from ages 18 to 72 years ( $M = 40.6$ ;  $SD = 9.70$ ), 52.1% with income above the national average. Most of the individuals in the sample were enrolled in higher education or above, and of these individuals 79% and 55% were male. The U.S. sample consisted of 449 individuals, with ages between 15 and 86 years ( $M = 42$ ,  $SD = 11.8$ ), 49.1% with income above the national average. Of these individuals 80% were attending a higher education or above and 52% of them were male.

## Instruments

To measure the values of respondents the LOV scale (List of Values) (KAHLE; KENNEDY, 1988) was applied in which nine fundamental human values and one most important value are listed. To measure the type of judgment and the attribution of meaning to the product the Meaning and Judgment Scale (Allen, 1997) was used in its reduced version (ALFINITO; NEPOMUCENO; TORRES, 2012) resulting in 4 distinct factors: Affective Judgment, Piecemeal Judgment, Affective Meaning and Symbolic Meaning.

The chosen product for the survey was the automobile due to the convenience of finding it in both countries. In addition to these instruments, a list of questions of demographic and situational nature was presented, namely: sex, educational level, and marital status, type of dwelling, number of dependents, age and income.

## Procedures

The surveys were structured in Likert

Scale and applied online and presentially all being self-administered. The respondents used, in average, 10 minutes to answer the survey completely.

## Results

As recommended by Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tathan (2009) in the light of being a group comparison the test of equality of means between two independent samples indicated is the T-Test to compare the differences between North Americans and Brazilians regarding the predominant type of judgment in selecting a car. Brazil and the United States of America were compared in Affective Judgment and Piecemeal Judgment. As a result of the T-Test for independent samples it was possible to observe differences in the type of judgment that prevails in each country, as shown in Table 2.

The two factors presented significant differences for equal assumed variances, demonstrating that in Brazil affective judgment is predominant and its average is greater than the affective judgment in the United States for the automobile product. In the piecemeal judgment the results are reversed, its average is significantly higher for the sample collected in the United States resulting in a more affective judgment for Brazilians and a more rational one for North Americans regarding automobiles.

In order to avoid type I error, caused by the influence of demographic variables (i.e. income, education, age, number of children) a multivariate analysis of covariance was performed (MANCOVA) for its sensitivity in terms of direction and size of the correlation between the dependent variables, and its ability to remove variance at-

**TABLE 2 - T-tests for the Type of Judgment Comparing Brazil and The United States of America**

	Country	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Df	t	Sig.
Affective judgment	Brazil	542	3.49	0.94	990	4.91	0.00
	United States	450	3.10	0.99			
Piecemeal judgment	Brazil	562	2.51	1.03	1010	25.3	0.00
	United States	450	4.13	0.98			

Note. Source: Data from this research.

**TABLE 3 - MANCOVA Using the Demographics Variables**

Independent	Dependent	Sum squared	df	Mean squared	F	Sig.	Eta	Power
Sex	Affective Judgment	.01	1	.008	.010	.91	.00	.05
	Piecemeal judgment	8.79	1	8.790	10.94	.00	.06	.91
Age	Affective judgment	.84	1	.845	1.04	.30	.00	.17
	Piecemeal judgment	.04	1	.040	.04	.82	.00	.05
Number of children	Affective judgment	5.19	1	5.196	6.41	.01	.01	.71
	Piecemeal judgment	.06	1	.06	.08	.77	.00	.05
Income	Affective judgment	1.18	1	1.18	1.46	.22	.00	.22
	Piecemeal judgment	.99	1	.99	1.24	.26	.00	.19
Educational level	Affective judgment	.31	1	.31	.38	.53	.00	.09
	Piecemeal judgment	.75	1	.75	.94	.33	.00	.16
Marital status	Affective judgment	.06	1	.06	.08	.77	.00	.05
	Piecemeal judgment	.78	1	.77	.96	.32	.00	.16

Note. Source: Data from this research.

tributed to a variable that can influence the sample (HAIR *et al.*, 2009). Table 3 presents the results of the MANCOVA for the Brazilian sample.

The sex variable has influenced the Brazilian sample, with  $n$  of 0.06 and power of 0.91. The other demographic variables did not achieve  $\text{sig} < 0.05$  or power greater than 0.80, necessary conditions for it to figure as influential in the average effect for affective and piecemeal judgments (HAIR *et al.*, 2009).

Thus, a t-test for independent samples was performed only for the Brazilian sample using the piecemeal judgment factor and the sex as the grouping variable, as shown in Table 4.

The t-test for independent samples suggests that for the Brazilian sample, women use in average the piecemeal judgment more predominantly than men. A t-test for independent samples considering the North American sample was then performed, in order to compare women and men regarding the predominant type of

judgment used in terms of automobile purchase according to Table 5.

The t-test shows that for the North American sample women also prioritize the piecemeal judgment more than men in the choosing of the automobile.

Then, two regressions were performed for each country using two types of judgment (Affective and Piecemeal) as the dependent variable and as independent variables the personal values of the LOV scale (KAHLE; KENNEDY, 1988) in order to observe the ability of prediction of the type of judgment used according to the values endorsed by the respondents. As indicated by Paschoal and Tamayo (2005) for exploratory analysis, where there is no clear criterion indicating which independent variables plays primary roles in terms of theoretical criteria or of preferences of the researcher in predicting an independent variable, the use of the Stepwise method is recommended. Table 6 presents the results for the Brazilian sample for Affective Judgment.

**TABLE 4 - T-test Comparing the Piecemeal Judgment Grouped by the Sex of the Subject in Brazil**

	Sex	N	Mean	Std. deviation	df	t	Sig
Piecemeal judgment	Women	320	2.70	0.92	527	3.9	0.00
	Men	208	2.35	0.87			

Note. Source: Data from this research.

**TABLE 5 - T-test comparing the Piecemeal Judgment Grouped by the Sex of the Subject in The United States**

	Sex	N	Mean	Std. deviation	df	t	Sig
Piecemeal judgment	Women	215	4.17	0.88	447	-2.15	0.00
	Men	234	3.84	1.13			

Note. Source: Data from this research.

**TABLE 6 - Stepwise Regression for the Affective Judgment Factor in Brazil**

Model	Variables	B		$\beta$	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>
1	Excitement	0.21	0.35	0.12		0.64
2	Excitement	0.31	0.27	0.15		0.14
	Being well respected	0.26	0.19			

Note. Source: Data from this research.

Human values as predictors of affective judgment in Brazil obtained in excitement  $R^2=0.12$  and Excitement and being well respected were responsible for a  $R^2=0.15$ . The Stepwise regression was performed using the 9 values of the LOV scale (KAHLE; KENNEDY, 1988) considering the North American sample whose results are as shown in Table 7.

The Stepwise regression presented the same human values (Excitement and being well respected) as predictors of affective judgment, but with  $R^2=0.17$  for excitement and  $R^2=0.23$  for excitement and for being well respected. Similarly a regression with the 9 human values of the LOV scale was performed for the piecemeal judgment using the Brazilian sample, as shown in Table 8.

The human values of “Personal Achievement” presented  $R^2=0.16$  and along with “Personal Satisfaction”, the second model involving both values resulted in a  $R^2=0.18$

in the Stepwise regression. For the North American sample the Stepwise regression was performed by repeating the same procedures of the Brazilian sample, considering the piecemeal judgment as the dependent variable and the human values as independent variables, the results are presented in Table 9.

The human value of “Personal Achievement” alone obtained  $R^2=0.35$  and together with “Friendly Relations” obtained a  $R^2=0.42$  in the second model.

## Discussion

Based on the test results, we found there was the influence of a “country effect” in the decision making process dependent on the culture of the consumer. Previous studies (HOFSTEDE, 1980; SCHWARTZ, 1992) demonstrate cultural differences, concerning many dimensional aspects, between Brazil and the United States. Hofstede (1980)

**TABLE 7 - Stepwise Regression for the Affective Judgment Factor in The United States**

Model	Variables	B		$\beta$	$R^2$	Adjusted $R^2$
1	Excitement	0.35	0.41	0.17		0.17
2	Excitement	0.26	0.30	0.23		0.23
	Being well respected	0.23	0.27			

Note. Source: Data from this research.

**TABLE 8 - Stepwise Regression for the Piecemeal Judgment Factor in Brazil**

Number	Model	B		$\beta$	$R^2$	Adjusted $R^2$
1	A sense of accomplishment	0.37	0.40	0.16		0.16
2	A sense of accomplishment	0.29	0.31	0.18		0.17
	Self-fulfillment	0.15	0.16			

Note. Source: Data from this research.

**TABLE 9 - Stepwise regression for the Piecemeal Judgment factor in The United States**

Model	Variables	B		$\beta$	$R^2$	Adjusted $R^2$
1	A sense of accomplishment	0.55	0.59	0.35		0.35
2	A sense of accomplishment	0.37	0.40	0.42		0.42
	Warm relationships with others	0.28	0.44			

Note. Source: Data from this research.

identifies Brazil as a more collective country, a country that has a strong sense of hegemony and whose objectives are greatly influenced by social norms. The United States is described as a country whose objectives are tied to individual's personal attitudes and internal processes (TORRES; ALLEN, 2009).

Wong (1997) suggests that in cultures where an independent self (Individualists) prevails, materialism is more heavily focused on the utility of the product for the individual; cultures where the self is interdependent (collectivist) materialism and the possession of the product is predominantly symbolic, depending on the group that the individual is or aspires to be in. Still, such considerations are valid for products that are displayed and seen in daily life and are capable to convey meaning to others, not only to those who are using the products (D'ANGELO, 2004).

The congruence of collectivism with the predominance of Affective Judgment in Brazil finds support in the studies of Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) about distinction. The studies indicate that the preferences for certain products are generated because the products manifests the distinct taste of whoever owns them, creating differentiation between classes and social groups. Mancebo, Oliveira, Fonseca, and Silva (2002) indicates that characteristics that transcend the physical nature of the product play an important role as a differentiator for classes. Through judgment, preference and symbolic knowledge of the item, the formation of taste becomes a mechanism of social differentiation, thus reflecting the importance of choosing a product that is accepted by the group, even if for the individual the product is not considered the best rational choice in utilitarian terms.

The consumption analysis from the perspective of sex is studied by Fischer and Arnold (1994) with regard to their differences in various contexts and product preferences. Zeithaml (1985) in turn addresses the specific difference in the analysis of the same product, suggesting that men and women behave differently when evaluating it. Putrevu (2001) analyzes the differences in information processing between the sexes and suggests that men and women process information about a product differently according to the role that product has on society and the capacity that it has in expressing masculine or feminine characteristics in that culture.

The results contradict the studies by Haas (1979) that describe men as more analytical and logical in processing information and women as more subjective and intuitive. Putrevu (2001) also suggests that product advertisement aimed at the male public should endorse specific attributes of the product while advertisements aimed at women should use more extensive information like the product's category. Such statements are also contrary to the results, reported in this study.

Mitchell and Walsh (2004) state that men see their possessions in a more functional manner while women analyze them in a more symbolic way. Dittmar (1989) indicates that men and women consider different items in unequal levels of importance in their lives. As Putrevu (2001) suggests, the ability of the item to represent the role that each sex plays in the society in which the individual belongs to is directly connected to the importance of the product for that individual and the way that he sees it. Thus, despite the fact that the "country effect" influences the aver-

ages for each type of judgment (affective and piecemeal) in both countries, women are less likely to have piecemeal judgment. Even so the meaning that the product possesses for women has positioned them as more analytical and less sentimental than men when purchasing a vehicle.

The human values “excitement” and “being well respected” demonstrate relation with affective judgment in both countries for vehicles, demonstrating which human values are endorsed when the judgment is affective. Along with the results found for the sex differences, it is suggested that men in Brazil prioritize excitement and the sense of being respected in purchases associated with automobiles. The values of “personal achievement” and “personal satisfaction” indicates a relationship to piecemeal judgment in Brazil, while in the United States “personal achievement” and “friendly relations” indicate a strong rela-

tion to affective judgment. In both countries “personal achievement” was the most strongly related value to the affective judgment, suggesting that goods that are evaluated more affectively endorse individuals’ personal achievements.

Overall, the results further develop our understanding concerning the differences between product evaluations for men and women, including the propositions that the difference is not only exclusive to sex and biological characteristics (SPERRY; LEVY, 1970), but also depends on the meaning of the product for the individual. More specifically, the results show that the construction of communication strategies and positioning of the vehicles, especially for brands that internationalize productions providing identical products in different markets, must take into consideration the “country effect” on the development of products that aim to reach different cultures.

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