

RGC Ref. No.: UGC/FDS14/B12/14 _____ (please insert ref. above)
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**RESEARCH GRANTS COUNCIL
COMPETITIVE RESEARCH FUNDING SCHEMES FOR
THE LOCAL SELF-FINANCING DEGREE SECTOR**

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (FDS)

Completion Report
(for completed projects only)

<p><u>Submission Deadlines:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Auditor's report with unspent balance, if any: within <u>six</u> months of the approved project completion date. 2. Completion report: within <u>12</u> months of the approved project completion date.
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Part A: The Project and Investigator(s)

1. Project Title

Psychological Acceptance of Culture Mixing: Effects of Cultural Politeness

2. Investigator(s) And Academic Department(s) / Unit(s) Involved

Research Team	Name / Post	Unit / Department / Institution
Principal Investigator	Dongmei Li/ Assistant Professor	Department of Marketing/Hang Seng Management College
Co-Investigator(s)	Letty Y-Y Kwan/ Assistant Professor	Department of Psychology/Chinese University of Hong Kong
Others		

3. Project Duration

	Original	Revised	Date of RGC / Institution Approval (must be quoted)
Project Start Date	1 November, 2014		
Project Completion Date	30 October, 2016	30 April, 2017	17 November, 2015
Duration (in month)	24	30	17 November, 2015
Deadline for Submission of Completion Report	31 October, 2017	30 April, 2018	17 November, 2015

Part B: The Final Report

5. Project Objectives

5.1 Objectives as per original application

1. Generate new knowledge: to generate new knowledge on the marketing implications of globalization by identifying a marketing communication approach that will promote acceptance of culture mixing in global markets, and the boundary conditions of this communication approach. This knowledge has important theoretical and managerial implications for practicing culture mixing in global markets.
2. Promote research on culture mixing: to promote interdisciplinary research on the nature of culture mixing and its psychological and sociocultural ramifications.
3. For course design: to utilize the findings of the current project to design courses in culture and marketing, such as courses in global marketing and international business management.
4. Get local students to participate in the project: to engage local students in research activities through participating and assisting in the experiments in the project.

5.2 Revised objectives

Date of approval from the RGC: NA

Reasons for the change: NA

- 1.
- 2.
3.

5.3 Realisation of the objectives

(Maximum 1 page; please state how and to what extent the project objectives have been achieved; give reasons for under-achievements and outline attempts to overcome problems, if any)

The objectives of the project have been successfully achieved through a series of research and teaching activities:

1. Generate new knowledge by identifying a marketing communication approach that will promote acceptance of culture mixing in global markets, and the boundary conditions of this communication approach.

This project aims to provide a systematic framework to understand the effect of cultural politeness on the acceptance of culture mixing products and foreign brands in three conditions: product features, brand characteristics, and consumer characteristics. Based on this framework, two sets of empirical studies were conducted. The first set of studies focused on the conditions of product features and consumer characteristics. One pilot test and two main studies were conducted by recruiting participants from Hong Kong and the United States. Fifty culture mixing products in various domains (e.g., food, architecture, design, entertainment, and music) were used in the main

studies. To reduce the participants' workload, the main study was divided into eight sets of surveys for each sample. A total of 16 surveys were used in the two main studies.

The second set of studies focused on the conditions of brand characteristics and consumer characteristics. Seven pilot studies and six main studies were conducted by recruiting participants from Hong Kong, the United States, and India. The participants included students from university campuses and consumers from online platforms. As the marketing communication approach (i.e., cultural politeness) and brand characteristics were manipulated in the main studies, pilot studies were conducted to select the appropriate stimuli for the manipulation.

Eight pilot studies and eight main studies were conducted in the project. The results from these studies provide theoretical knowledge and managerial implications for the practice of culture mixing in the global marketplace.

2. Promote research on culture mixing: to promote interdisciplinary research on the nature of culture mixing and its psychological and sociocultural ramifications.

This objective was achieved through three types of practices: attendance at international conferences and research workshops, participation in editorial activities, and journal publication. The research findings from this project were presented at the 2017 Cultural Evolution Society Conference in Germany, the 13th Culture Mixing Research Conference, organized by Zhengzhou University in China, and the 23rd Congress of the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology in Japan. The PI also presented the research findings at informal workshops organized by the Chinese University of Hong Kong and Sun Yat-sen University. The PI also served as a guest editor for the special issue of "Culture Mixing: Its Nature and Psychological Implications" in the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*. With this editorial work, the PI was able to leverage the knowledge gained from the project and encourage more interdisciplinary research on culture mixing. Finally, the PI published a paper about culture mixing in the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*.

3. For course design: to utilize the findings of the current project to design courses in culture and marketing, such as courses in global marketing and international business management.

The findings of the project were used to design teaching materials for the course "Global Marketing" from the academic years 2015/16 and 2016/17. These teaching materials include lecture notes, individual assignments, group projects, and in-class exercises.

4. Get local students to participate in the project: to engage local students in research activities through participating and assisting in the experiments in the project.

In the module "Global Marketing," local students were encouraged to finish assignments in which they applied research findings on culture mixing and cultural politeness to solve some marketing issues. For example, in the group project, students were asked to design a culture mixing product, create a culturally polite advertisement, and propose marketing strategies to promote the products. In addition, some studies were conducted in local universities by recruiting local students as participants.

5.4 Summary of objectives addressed to date

Objectives (as per 5.1/5.2 above)	Addressed (please tick)	Percentage Achieved (please estimate)
1. <i>Generate new knowledge</i>	√	100%
2. <i>Promote research on culture mixing</i>	√	100%
3. <i>For course design</i>	√	100%
4. <i>Get local students to participate in the project</i>	√	100%

6. Research Outcome

6.1 Major findings and research outcome

(Maximum 1 page; please make reference to Part C where necessary)

This project provides insight and evidence for foreign companies regarding the management of local consumers' responses to foreign brands and culture mixing products.

First, three clusters of culture mixing products were found: (1) local culture orientation; (2) foreign culture orientation; and (3) a balance of local and foreign culture orientations. These three types of culture mixing products vary in the level of cultural obviousness, cultural compatibility, cultural status, cultural power, harmony, and cultural sacredness. In the local culture-oriented mixing products, the degrees of obviousness, status, power, and sacredness of local cultural elements are high; the compatibility and harmony between local and foreign cultural elements are also high. In the foreign culture-oriented mixing products, the degrees of obviousness, status, power, sacredness of local cultural element is low; the compatibility and harmony between local and foreign cultural elements are also low. In the culture mixing products that balance local and foreign culture, the degrees of obviousness, status, power, and sacredness of local cultural elements are median; the compatibility and harmony between local and foreign cultural elements are high. The obviousness, status, power, and sacredness of local cultural elements were found to have positive correlations with politeness perception and product evaluation. The compatibility and harmony between local and foreign cultural elements had positive correlations with politeness perception and product evaluation.

Second, competence perception of foreign brands was found to moderate the effect of cultural politeness on evaluations of foreign brands and culture mixing products. If the brand was perceived as competent, culturally polite marketing communication increased consumers' acceptance of the foreign brand and its culture mixing products. However, if the brand was perceived as incompetent, the effect of cultural politeness on evaluations of the foreign brand and culture mixing products became smaller or not significant. Moreover, the joint effects of competence perception and cultural politeness on brand evaluation and the acceptance of culture mixing products were mediated by the perception of the brand's cultural intelligence. In other words, local consumers are more sensitive to a competent foreign brand's polite communication and they expect that a competent brand should be able to understand local culture well and communicate politeness. However, if the brand was perceived as incompetent, local consumers thought that the brand lacks the ability to understand local culture well. Thus, they are likely to forgive its impolite marketing communication.

Lastly, the interactive effects of politeness and cosmopolitan identity on purchase intention and evaluation of foreign brands, respectively, were significant. Specifically, if consumers had a strong cosmopolitan identity, the positive effects of politeness on purchase intention and evaluation became weaker. If consumers had a weak cosmopolitan identity, the positive effects of politeness on purchase intention and evaluation became stronger. That is, cosmopolitan consumers are likely to be less sensitive to and more tolerant of cultural impoliteness.

In sum, these findings suggest a few ways for foreign brands to manage local markets effectively. To attract local consumers, marketers should consider the obviousness, status, power, and sacredness of local cultural elements when design a culture mixing product. In particular, the combination of foreign and local cultural elements should be harmonious and compatible. In addition, culturally polite communication should be adopted to increase local consumers' acceptance of foreign brands and culture mixing products. If the foreign brand comes from a competent foreign country or is competent in terms of market performance, marketers should pay careful attention to cultural politeness in the communication. Moreover, if the target consumers are less cosmopolitan, marketers also need to pay attention to culturally polite communication. Some of the new knowledge and insights gained from the project has been published in international journal or presented in international and local conferences (see Part C).

6.2 Potential for further development of the research and the proposed course of action (Maximum half a page)

This project points to the importance of cultural politeness in global markets in terms of its positive influence on local consumers' acceptance of foreign brands and culture mixing products. One potential development of this research may be the investigation of the casual relationship between cultural politeness and other marketing outcomes. Such investigation includes the examination of how culturally polite marketing communication influences market share, consumer loyalty, brand extension, and self-brand connection. Research may adopt experimental approaches to examine the relationship between cultural politeness and consumer behavior (e.g., loyalty, brand extension, and self-brand connection) or use longitudinal data to test the effect of culturally polite communication on financial performance (e.g., market share and revenues).

Another potential development may be the examination of other antecedent factors of cultural politeness effectiveness, such as the status of local culture over foreign culture (i.e., cultural status). Although the PI found a positive correlation between cultural status and the perception of cultural politeness, this study did not manipulate the variable of cultural status and thus cannot provide evidence for the proposed causal relationship. The proposed course of action includes an investigation of how perceived cultural status moderates the effect of cultural politeness on local consumers' response to culture mixing products. These directions of development can deepen theoretical knowledge about the mechanism of cultural politeness and its boundary conditions of exerting influences on consumer behavior.

7. Layman's Summary

(Describe in layman's language the nature, significance and value of the research project, in no more than 200 words)

This project attempts to investigate the effectiveness of being respectful to local culture in marketing communication. With empirical studies using consumer samples from Hong Kong, the United States, and India, the project shows that displaying politeness to the local culture increases local consumers' positive evaluation of foreign brands and culture mixing products (i.e., both foreign and local cultural elements are used in the product design). The positive outcomes of being culturally polite are prominent when local cultural elements are dominant in the product design, when the combination of foreign and local cultural elements are harmonious and compatible, when the foreign brand is perceived to be strong and competent, or when consumers have low level of cosmopolitan identity (i.e., less open to foreign cultures and less motivated to engage in divergent cultural experiences). This research enhances academic knowledge about the mechanism of local market management strategies. The managerial implications gained from the project also help both Western and Asian companies better manage their marketing communication in global markets and reduce the risk of generating emotional resistance from local consumers.

Part C: Research Output**8. Peer-Reviewed Journal Publication(s) Arising Directly From This Research Project**

(Please attach a copy of the publication and/or the letter of acceptance if not yet submitted in the previous progress report(s). All listed publications must acknowledge RGC's funding support by quoting the specific grant reference.)

The Latest Status of Publications				Author(s) (denote the corresponding author with an asterisk*)	Title and Journal / Book (with the volume, pages and other necessary publishing details specified)	Submitted to RGC (indicate the year ending of the relevant progress report)	Attached to this Report (Yes or No)	Acknowledged the Support of RGC (Yes or No)	Accessible from the institutional repository (Yes or No)
Year of Publication	Year of Acceptance (For paper accepted but not yet published)	Under Review	Under Preparation (optional)						
2016				Jia Hao, Dongmei Li*, Luluo Peng, Siqing Peng, and Carlos J. Torelli	Advancing Our Understanding of Culture Mixing, Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, Vol.47(10) 1257-1267	Yes (31 Oct 2016)	No	Yes	Yes

9. Recognized International Conference(s) In Which Paper(s) Related To This Research Project Was / Were Delivered

(Please attach a copy of each conference abstract)

Month / Year / Place	Title	Conference Name	Submitted to RGC (indicate the year ending of the relevant progress report)	Attached to this Report (Yes or No)	Acknowledged the Support of RGC (Yes or No)	Accessible from the institutional repository (Yes or No)
September 2017, Germany	An Investigation on the Joint Effect of Competence and Cultural Politeness on Response to Foreign Elements	Cultural Evolution Society Conference	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

April 2017, China	Be a Weak Brand or a Competent Brand? The Joint Effect of Competence and Cultural Politeness on Response to Foreign Brands	The 13 th Culture Mixing Research Conference	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
July 2016, Japan	The Role of Country Competence in the Effectiveness of Culturally Polite Communication	The 23rd Congress of the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology	Yes (31 Oct 2016)	Yes	Yes	Yes

10. Whether Research Experience And New Knowledge Has Been Transferred / Has Contributed To Teaching And Learning

(Please elaborate)

The research experience and new knowledge gained from the project have greatly contributed to teaching and learning in the course “Global Marketing” in the academic years 2014/15, 2015/16, and 2016/17. The PI introduced the latest project findings in lectures to promote students’ critical thinking about the marketing practice of culture mixing in the global marketplace. Some assignments were designed to encourage students to apply relevant culture mixing theory and cultural politeness findings to solve marketing problems and create business opportunities. New knowledge from the project was also transferred to students’ learning in some sessions of the course “Consumer Behavior” in the academic year 2017/18. Students were asked to conduct a small-scale study to understand consumers’ consumption of culture mixing products via deep interviews or surveys. These teaching and learning activities in contemporary marketing issues increase students’ interest and sharpen their analytical skills.

11. Student(s) Trained

(Please attach a copy of the title page of the thesis)

NA

Name	Degree Registered for	Date of Registration	Date of Thesis Submission / Graduation

12. Other Impact

(e.g. award of patents or prizes, collaboration with other research institutions, technology transfer, teaching enhancement, etc.)

The inclusion of research findings on culture mixing in the course module “Global Marketing” has enhanced the PI’s teaching performance. After the PI carried out the practices related to the new knowledge gained from the project in the year 2015/16, the overall teaching score increased by 11%. In addition, the research outputs gained from the project enabled the PI to receive a research achievement award from the School of Business in the Hang Seng Management College.

13. Public Access Of Completion Report

(Please specify the information, if any, that cannot be provided for public access and give the reasons.)

NA

Information that Cannot Be Provided for Public Access	Reasons

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FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (FDS)

Completion Report - Attachment
(for completed projects only)

RGC Ref. No.: UGC/FDS14/B12/14

Principal Investigator: Dongmei Li

Project Title: Psychological Acceptance of Culture Mixing: Effects of Cultural Politeness

Statistics on Research Outputs

	Peer-reviewed Journal Publications	Conference Papers	Scholarly Books, Monographs and Chapters	Patents Awarded	Other Research Outputs (Please specify)
No. of outputs arising directly from this research project [or conference]	1	3	0	0	1 (Research Achievement Award from HSMC)