

Reaching the Model Minority: Ethnic Differences in Responding to
Culturally Embedded Targeted- and Non-Targeted Advertisements

Abstract

This study examined differences in Chinese and white consumers' psychological responses to advertisements that feature varying levels of ethnic-specific cultural cues. To achieve different levels of cultural cues or "cultural embeddedness" in ads, two product advertisements that contain white or Chinese characters were digitally manipulated to vary the race of the characters, and the nature and strength of ethnic-specific cultural cues present in each ad. The results indicate that Chinese consumers responded more favorably to high Chinese culturally embedded advertisements than they did to low Chinese culturally embedded ads. However, there is some evidence that white character ads may be just as effective in reaching Chinese consumers as high culturally embedded Chinese ads. The results also demonstrate that whites' responses to a Chinese-character ad were mixed. Sometimes they were indifferent to the character's ethnicity, whereas other times they preferred a white character to an Asian character.