

## EMERGING CONSUMER MARKETS: ACTIVE LEARNING EXERCISES FOR CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AND MARKETING

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### ABSTRACT

During the last two decades, we have witnessed drastic demographic changes that have literally transformed the social and cultural landscape of the United States. Such changes include, but are not limited to the rapid growth of multiracial persons, recent immigrants from Asia and Latin America, and evolving family structures that include blended families, multi-generational families, women over 40 with infants and young children at home, and professional career women over 40 who are childless and unmarried (Larsen 2004; Downs 2003; Jones and Symens Smith 2001; Spraggins 2000).

While all of these emerging consumer markets no doubt warrant the attention of marketing educators and marketers alike, their rapid emergence into American society presents a challenge to university textbook authors and publishers trying to keep up with the pace of such changes. Needless to say, while the majority of consumer behavior and marketing textbooks provide effective coverage and insights into more static, mainstream consumer markets, they usually fall short of providing genuine insights about emergent consumer markets like those mentioned above.

Recent scholarship in marketing education has called attention to the fact that multicultural marketing has been relatively marginalized in marketing curricula (Burton 2005). In an effort to address this void, the authors will present active learning exercises in consumer behavior and marketing to help bridge the gap between information available in textbooks and the changing social and cultural reality of the marketplace. Exercises will provide informative, interactive, and

insightful examples of how the marketplace has been transformed by these emerging consumer populations. Open discussion will follow so participating marketing educators can identify clear strategies to engage their students in the process of exploration, discovery, and critical thinking about the dynamic nature of consumer markets.

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