愛媛大学
EHIME UNIVERSITY

WORKING PAPER

Research Unit for Glocal Area Studies_GLOCAS

003 / 2020

Store Image and Shopping Patronage: The Case of Customers of Japanese Shopping Center in the U.S.

Satoru MIKAMI

GLOCAS (Ehime University Research Unit for Glocal Area Studies) aims to establish the framework and methodology for analyzing processes and mechanisms through which knowledge, values, technology, and systems fostered in local areas are transmitted to the wider world.

Store Image and Shopping Patronage: The Case of Customers of Japanese Shopping Center in the U.S.

Satoru MIKAMI

Publication of the GLOCAS Working Paper Series is funded by the Faculty of Law & Letters, Ehime University.

Store Image and Shopping Patronage: The Case of Customers of Japanese Shopping Center in the U.S.

Satoru Mikami*

Abstract

Retail grocery stores with ethnic minority origin usually target customers with shared ethnicities such as refugees, migrants, and expatriates, whereas mainstream stores emphasize store image in their marketing strategy. This paper examines the potential role played by the store image at retail stores with ethnic origins. Using a shopper survey at Mitsuwa Marketplace in California, the study reveals that the shopping patronage by customers is not determined by ethnic ties with the store but by the image of trustworthiness of the store of which they conceive.

Key words: shopping behavior, store image, ethnicity

1. Introduction

Globalization has increased, in addition to the refugees and migrants, a host of expatriates, both assigned and self-initiated, across the world. Expatriates are people who, temporarily or permanently, relocate their place of residence as the center of their personal life for professional work beyond international borders (Andresen et al. 2013; Przytuła 2015). "Professional work" distinguishes expatriates from refugees and migrants, who usually have no officially secured non-manual job in the destination country, and the international relocation of "the center of personal life" differentiates expatriates from those transferred within the country and those who travel abroad on business.

Accordingly, for those who run retail businesses, it has become imperative to adapt to and exploit more or less the heterogeneous structure of potential customers' demand. Approaches adopted by each store can range from total ignorance of the existence of ethnic groups to unlimited diversification of services, depending on the store's resources and urgency, but one promising and viable approach, among others, is the purification of its targeting strategy to one ethnic group in the host country. If the growth of the population of the ethnic group is on an upward trend, the strategy also promises growth of the business. One of the supermarket chains that have been successfully implementing this strategy is the Mitsuwa Marketplace, which has 11 stores in the United States,[1] where 444,063 Japanese expatriates live, as of 2019.[2]

* Associate professor, Faculty of Law and Letters, Ehime University, Matsuyama, Japan. E-Mail: mikami.satoru.ut@ehime-u.ac.jp

[1] Mitsuwa Marketplace Homepage https://mitsuwa.com/ (access: March 6, 2021)

[2] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "kaigai zairyu-hojinsuu tyousa toukei (statistics of Japanese living

Table 1 Japanese expatriates in the United States

State	Number of Japanese expatriates in 2017[3]	Proportion	State population in 2017[4]	Japanese expatriates per 1000 population
California	132,511	31.1%	39,358,497	3.367
New York	50,709	11.9%	19,589,572	2.589
Hawaii	22,975	5.4%	1,424,393	16.130
New Jersey	18,386	4.3%	8,885,525	2.069
Washington	15,936	3.7%	7,423,362	2.147
Illinois	15,301	3.6%	12,778,828	1.197
Massachusetts	14,855	3.5%	6,859,789	2.166
Michigan	14,038	3.3%	9,973,114	1.408
Ohio	13,699	3.2%	11,659,650	1.175
Florida	10,703	2.5%	20,963,613	0.511
Texas	10,389	2.4%	28,295,273	0.367
Georgia	9,428	2.2%	10,410,330	0.906
Virginia	7,770	1.8%	8,463,587	0.918
Pennsylvania	7,647	1.8%	12,787,641	0.598
North Carolina	6,795	1.6%	10,268,233	0.662
Oregon	6,625	1.6%	4,143,625	1.599
Maryland	6,466	1.5%	6,023,868	1.073
Indiana	5,772	1.4%	6,658,078	0.867
Arizona	4,767	1.1%	7,044,008	0.677
Kentucky	4,469	1.0%	4,452,268	1.004
Colorado	4,345	1.0%	5,611,885	0.774
Tennessee	4,258	1.0%	6,708,799	0.635
Nevada	3,588	0.8%	2,969,905	1.208
Minnesota	3,298	0.8%	5,566,230	0.593
Utah	2,694	0.6%	3,101,042	0.869
Missouri	2,691	0.6%	6,106,670	0.441
Connecticut	2,542	0.6%	3,573,297	0.711
Alabama	2,505	0.6%	4,874,486	0.514
Wisconsin	2,406	0.6%	5,790,186	0.416
South Carolina	2,197	0.5%	5,021,268	0.438
Connecticut	1,605	0.4%	3,573,297	0.449
Kansas	1,535	0.4%	2,908,718	0.528
Nebraska	1,327	0.3%	1,915,947	0.693
Iowa	1,274	0.3%	3,141,550	0.406
Washington, DC*	1,055	0.2%	694,906	1.518
Louisiana	985	0.2%	4,670,560	0.211
Arkansas	863	0.2%	3,001,345	0.288
New Hampshire	832	0.2%	1,348,787	0.617
West Virginia	800	0.2%	1,817,004	0.440
Mississippi	759	0.2%	2,988,510	0.254
Alaska	728	0.2%	739,700	0.984
New Mexico	704	0.2%	2,091,784	0.337
Idaho	659	0.1%	1,717,715	0.384
Rhode Island	654	0.2%	1,055,673	0.620
Oklahoma	579	0.1%	3,931,316	0.147
Maine	555	0.1%	1,334,612	0.416
Vermont	503	0.1%	624,344	0.806
Delaware	479	0.1%	956,823	0.501
Montana	447	0.1%	1,052,482	0.425
South Dakota	238	0.1%	872,868	0.273
North Dakota	208	0.0%	754,942	0.276
Wyoming	173	0.0%	578,931	0.299
US total	426,727	100.0%	330,276,551	1.292

Note. * Washington, D.C. is a federal district, not a state.

overseas) 2020 version" https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/toko/tokei/hojin/index.html (access: February 15, 2021)

[3] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "kaigai zairyu-hojinsuu tyousa toukei (statistics of Japanese living overseas) 2018 version" (https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/toko/page22_003338.html access: March 6, 2021)

[4] United States Census Bureau, "Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for the United States, Regions, States, and Puerto Rico: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019," (https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/popest/2010s-state-total.html#par_textimage_1574439295 access: March 6, 2021)

The target of Mitsuwa Marketplace is evident from store locations. Seven (Torrance Del Amo, Irvine, Costa Mesa, San Gabriel, Santa Monica, San Diego, and San Jose) out of the 11 stores of Mitsuwa are concentrated in California, which holds the largest number of Japanese expatriates (132,511), according to 2017 data. Waikiki in Hawaii is located in Honolulu, where more than 70% of Japanese in Hawaii live. Hawaii is also one of the most popular destinations of Japanese tourists, where 1,587,781 Japanese visited in 2017.[5] Edgewater in New Jersey, together with Fort Lee, constitutes the largest Japanese community in New Jersey, inhabited by 3347 Japanese citizens (18% of Japanese living in the State of New Jersey). Moreover, across the Hudson River, it is located on the opposite bank from Manhattan, where 17,922 Japanese expatriates live. Metropolitan Chicago in Illinois hosts 11,928 Japanese expatriates, which is more than 77% of Japanese in the State of Illinois. Lastly, in Plano, in the State of Texas, Japanese citizens constitute only 0.4 per 1000 population. However, there is the headquarters of Toyota Motor North America in Plano.

Also, unlike Uwajimaya in Seattle, in the state of Washington, which is another successful Japanese supermarket chain that is projecting not a pure Japanese style but a distinctive mixture of various cultures, the in-store appearance of Mitsuwa is almost the same as that of the typical supermarkets in Japan, giving customers a temporary illusion of being in Japan. Goods and services that are necessary for the customs peculiar to Japan but have little prospects in the entire U.S., such as a chocolate gift on St. Valentine's day, are also available in Mitsuwa. The above evidence suggests that the supermarket chain is prioritizing Japanese expatriates. But the success of this chain store may not necessarily depend on the strategy of the store. There can be other factors than the store manager's intention that attract customers. The factor this paper primarily examines is the store image.

Despite the widely acknowledged importance of the store image for customer loyalty (Sirgy and Samli 1985; Amirani and Gates 1993; Bloemer and de Ruyter 1998; Martenson 2007; Orth and Green 2009; Hassan et al. 2010; Helgessen et al. 2010; Bao et al. 2010), most studies on the shopping behavior of ethnic minorities have been neglecting store image and relying almost exclusively on the primordial or constructed ethnic identity (Donthu and Cherian 1992; Wang and Lo 2007; Mankekar 2002; Yamada 2017). Mikami (2019) is one of a few studies that have examined the effect of the store image on the shopping behavior of customers of a supermarket with an ethnic minority origin. Based on a shopper survey at Uwajimaya, the study revealed that the store image perceived by customers differs by ethnic groups and has different effects on each group's shopping behavior. However, these findings may well be irrelevant for Mitsuwa, given that the marketing condition in Seattle and the resulting marketing strategy of

[5] Japan Travel Bureau Foundation, "Annual Report on the Tourism Trends Survey 2019", https://www.jtb.or.jp/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/nenpo2019_1-3.pdf (access: March 6, 2021)

Uwajimaya, as noted above, are apparently different from those of Mitsuwa. Research by Wijnen et al. (2011) is unique in that it focuses on expatriates, as defined above, and not on migrants in general. However, what they sought, after all, is the way to adapt the store attributes to attract expatriates whose shopping behavior they assume is determined by ethnic background.

The originality of the current paper is that it explicitly tests the effect of the store image on the shopping behavior of the actual customers of Mitsuwa Marketplace. The shopper survey at Torrance Del Amo reveals, first of all, that a surprisingly large portion of customers is constituted by non-Asian Americans. Furthermore, regression analyses shed a light on the role played by the store image of trustworthiness in explaining the level of shopping patronage of the customers. Surprisingly, neither ethnic categories nor the affinity with Japan matter. The paper is structured as follows. After the explanation of the method of investigation, the third section reports the results of the bivariate as well as multivariate analyses. The fourth section discusses the limit of this research and suggests an agenda for future research.

2. Method

2.1. Sample

Table 2 Demographic attributes of survey participants and refusers

	Participants		Refusers	
Gender				
Female	63	(39.6%)	58	(44.3%)
Male	95	(59.7%)	71	(54.2%)
Unknown	1	(0.6%)	2	(1.5%)
Age				
Under 30	29	(18.2%)	17	(13.0%)
31 – 50	65	(40.9%)	75	(57.3%)
51 – 70	44	(27.7%)	31	(23.7%)
Over 70	13	(8.2%)	8	(6.1%)
Unknown	8	(5.0%)	0	(0.0%)
Ethnicity				
Asian	108	(67.9%)	76	(58.0%)
Non-Asian	51	(32.1%)	55	(42.0%)
Total	159		131	

The population of this survey is customers who visited the Torrance Del Amo Store from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. on March 11 and 12, 2018.[6] Three enumerators used systematic sampling to select people whom they invite to the survey. Of 290 customers to whom the enumerators spoke, 159 (54.8%) agreed to join the survey. 59.7% of respondents were male, 40.9% were aged between 31 and 50, and 67.95% were

[6] The survey was carried out with financial support from Ehime University, logistical support from the Southern California Kochi Kenjinkai, and supervision by Professor Ryoko Sato and Professor Carol Ruth Vergin.

Asians.[7] The distributions of these basic demographic attributes of non-participants were roughly equal, as shown in Table 2. Fisher's Exact Test yielded no statistically significant difference between participants and refusers in gender (p = .505) and ethnicity (p = .087). But age distribution did differ (p = .009), probably due to item non-response. To compare responses from different ethnic groups, further information about ethnic background was collected from the participants.

2.2. Outcome variable

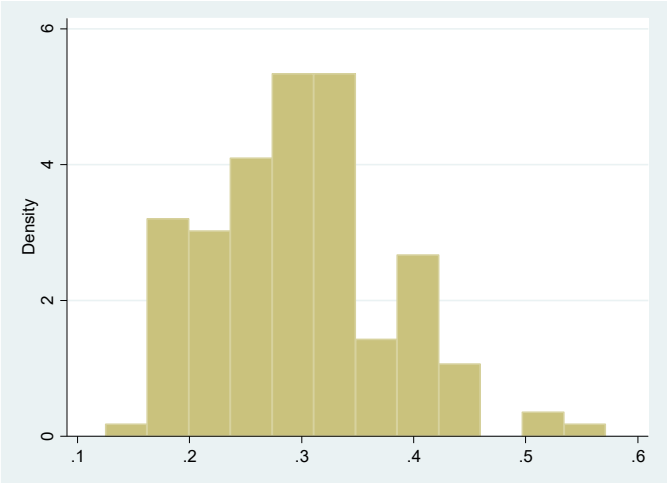

Figure 1 Distribution of shopping frequency index.

The outcome variable of shopping patronage is measured by the frequency of visits to the store. Of 159 respondents eight (5.0%) were first-time visitors who may become frequent shoppers. The rest used the store less than once per month (18.9%), one to four times per month (59.1%), five to eight times per month (13.2%), and more than eight times per month (3.8%). However, this reported frequency can have different meanings depending on the use of other stores. For instance, even those who use this store less than once can be heavy users if they do not use other stores at all. By contrast, there can be respondents who use this store more frequently than other respondents just because they shop more frequently than others. In that case, the number reflects only the tip of the iceberg of their shopping behavior and cannot prove that they are addicted to this store. Therefore, information about the monthly use of other shops (e.g., farmers' markets, smaller, more specialized Asian food stores, and larger, Asian food supermarkets such as Mitsuwa) was also collected using the same 4-point ordinal measure and was used to adjust the above number. Specifically, excluding the eight first-time visitors, the frequency of visits to this store was divided

[7] These attributes are based on the enumerators' assessment.

by the sum of the frequency of visits to other shops after assigning 1 to “less than once”, 2 to “one to four times”, 3 to “five to eight times”, and 4 to “more than eight times.” Theoretically, it can range from 0.083 to 1.333; in actuality, it ranges from 0.125 to 0.571. The histogram of the new index of shopping frequency is depicted in Figure 1. Below, analyses use 151 respondents who are equipped with this measure.

2.3. Explanatory variables

The first explanatory variable of shopping patronage is ethnicity. Respondents are categorized into four groups: Japanese citizens, Japanese Americans, Non-Japanese Americans, and Non-Asian Americans based on the self-report. As noted above, the target of Mitsuwa marketplace is Japanese expatriates, who relocate the center of their personal life for professional work. For that reason, the goods and services offered in the store are almost the same as those offered at supermarkets in Japan, so that expatriates can enjoy their usual life. However, the service may also attract descendants, Japanese Americans, who at least partially have inherited Japanese tradition and culture. Non-Japanese Asians, especially compared to Non-Asian Americans, may also find utility in the store due to their cultural commonalities with Japan. Of 151 respondents analyzed below, 20 (13.3%) are Japanese citizens, 37 (24.5%) are Japanese Americans, 48 (31.8%) are Non-Japanese Americans, and 46 (30.5%) are Non-Asian Americans.

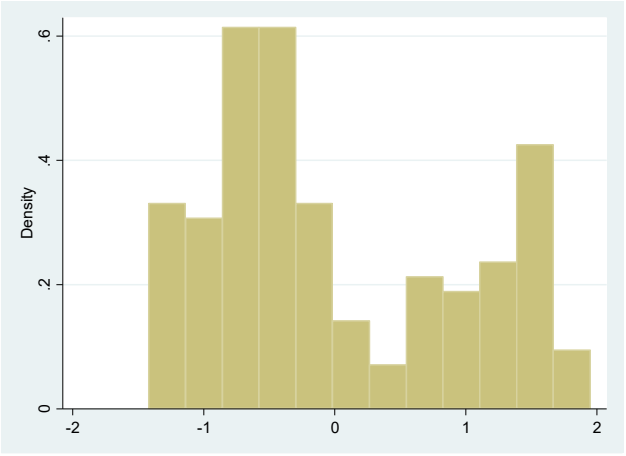

Figure 2 Distribution of the index of affinity with Japan

The second explanatory variable is the non-ethnic affinity with Japan. Regardless of the biological ancestral relationship, people can deepen involvement with Japan in conjunction with work, study, and social life, which may influence, usually positively, the tendency to be attracted by Japanese-

style retail shops. Based on the 10 items regarding the relationship with Japan,[8] a standardized summary measuring affinity with Japan was constructed, of which distribution is shown in Figure 2.

Table 3 Relative frequency of choice of adjectives that describe the store image (Multiple answer question up to five)

Adjective	Categories	Frequency	Relative frequency	Category sub total
Exotic		12	7.9%	
Original		16	10.6%	
Authentic	Peculiarity	64	42.4%	135
Unique		36	23.8%	
Exceptional		7	4.6%	
Clean		96	63.6%	
Safe		51	33.8%	
Healthy	Trustworthiness	34	22.5%	289
Fresh		66	43.7%	
Reliable		42	27.8%	
Convenient		66	43.7%	
Reasonable		32	21.2%	
Practical	Cost-effectiveness	28	18.5%	159
Efficient		24	15.9%	
Usable		9	6.0%	
Friendly		76	50.3%	
Fancy		2	1.3%	
Fashionable	Atmosphere	2	1.3%	104
Luxurious		9	6.0%	
Exciting		15	9.9%	

The third explanatory variable is the perceived store image. How the Japanese-style store image of Mitsuwa is perceived can differ from shopper to shopper and those who perceive it in some particular way may be more likely to become patrons of the store. To examine this possibility, respondents were asked to choose up to five adjectives from among 20 positive adjectives that best describe their image of the store. The proportions by which each adjective was selected are listed in Table 3. Adjectives are intentionally clustered into four categories: from “exotic” to “exceptional” are words that appreciate peculiarity, from “clean” to “reliable” describe trustworthiness, from “convenient” to “usable” emphasize cost-effectiveness, and from “friendly” to “exciting” are words related to atmosphere. Five adjectives that were most frequently mentioned were “clean,” “friendly,” “convenient,” “fresh,” and “authentic,” but, when compared by category, the adjectives that describe trustworthiness were the most frequently mentioned, and those that refer to atmosphere were the least frequently mentioned by the respondents. To capture this aspect, category subtotals, ranging from zero to five, were calculated for each respondent based on the binary variables that indicate whether each adjective was mentioned by the respondent. The averages were 0.91 (peculiarity), 1.91 (trustworthiness), 1.05 (cost-effectiveness), and 0.69 (atmosphere).

[8] Each of the ten binary variables was summed after standardization. The sum was further standardized to have zero mean and one standard deviation. The ten Items used are as follows: 1) I usually eat Japanese foods (miso soup, gohan, etc.); 2) I like Japanese pop culture; 3) I can speak Japanese; 4) I can understand spoken Japanese; 5) I can read Japanese; 6) I can write Japanese; 7) I have/had Japanese friends; 8) I have studied in Japan; 9) I have visited Japan; 10) I work/have worked for Japanese company.

Figure 3 describes the distribution.

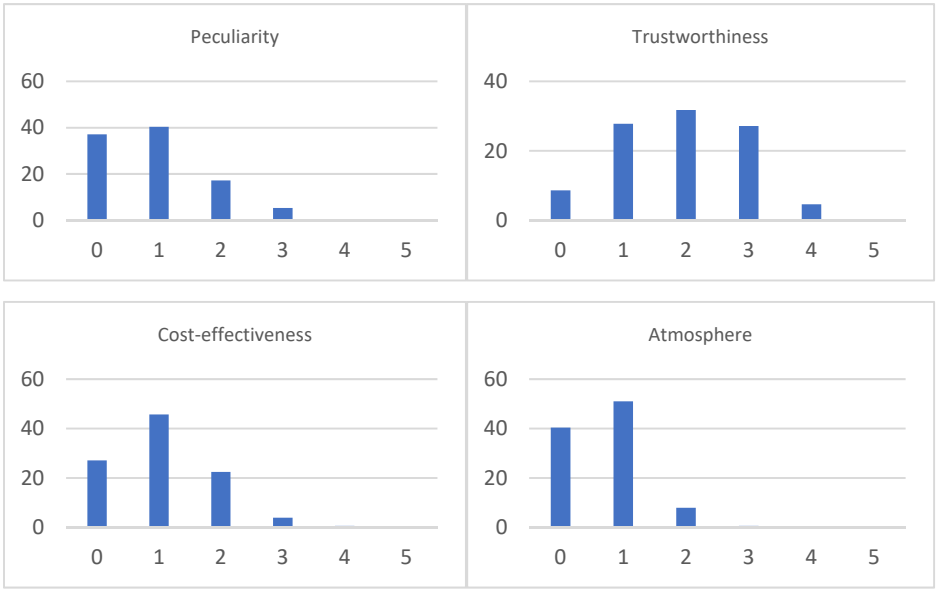

Figure 3 Distribution of the category subtotals of store image

Table 4 Relative frequency of choice of adjectives that describe the store image by ethnicity.

	Japanese citizen	Japanese American	Non-Japanese Asian American	Non-Asian American	Total	P-value
Exotic	0.0%	5.7%	6.5%	13.6%	7.6%	.327
Original	5.3%	8.6%	15.2%	13.6%	11.8%	.700
Authentic	21.1%	31.4%	50.0%	56.8%	43.8%	.019
Unique	15.8%	20.0%	23.9%	27.3%	22.9%	.782
Exceptional	0.0%	5.7%	2.2%	9.1%	4.9%	.363
Clean	63.2%	62.9%	63.0%	63.6%	63.2%	1.000
Safe	47.4%	31.4%	37.0%	25.0%	33.3%	.341
Healthy	15.8%	28.6%	15.2%	27.3%	22.2%	.366
Fresh	47.4%	48.6%	50.0%	34.1%	44.4%	.430
Reliable	26.3%	34.3%	23.9%	25.0%	27.1%	.762
Convenient	31.6%	65.7%	41.3%	34.1%	43.8%	.021
Reasonable	36.8%	31.4%	15.2%	13.6%	21.5%	.064
Practical	36.8%	25.7%	8.7%	15.9%	18.8%	.036
Efficient	5.3%	8.6%	15.2%	27.3%	16.0%	.083
Usable	26.3%	5.7%	2.2%	2.3%	6.3%	.005
Friendly	42.1%	40.0%	45.7%	63.6%	49.3%	.144
Fancy	0.0%	2.9%	2.2%	0.0%	1.4%	.803
Fashionable	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%	1.4%	.397
Luxurious	15.8%	2.9%	6.5%	4.5%	6.3%	.303
Exciting	5.3%	0.0%	13.0%	15.9%	9.7%	.048

Note. Relative frequencies are reported. P-values are based on Fisher's exact test.

Before moving to the operationalization of the control variable, it should be examined whether different ethnic groups systematically tend to perceive the store image differently, hence the distributions of these image variables are compared across groups. Table 4 shows the proportions of each item mentioned by four groups. The proportions of five (authentic, convenient, practical, usable, and exciting) out of 20

adjectives are statistically significantly different across groups according to Fisher's exact test. Ironically, the pure Japanese style of Mitsuwa tends to be appreciated more by non-Japanese groups. These groups are the ones who tend to have the feeling of excitement. Japanese citizens tend to describe it as more "practical" and "usable" while Japanese Americans are more likely than others to call it "convenient."

Table 5 Difference in means of category subtotals of store image by ethnicity.

	Japanese citizens	Japanese American	Non-Japanese Asian American	Non-Asian American	Total	P-value
Peculiarity	0.421	0.714	0.978	1.205	0.910	0.004
Trustworthiness	2.000	2.057	1.891	1.750	1.903	0.599
Cost-effectiveness	1.368	1.371	0.826	0.932	1.063	0.007
Atmosphere	0.632	0.457	0.674	0.886	0.681	0.034

Note. Means are reported. P-values are based on one-way ANOVA.

Table 5 compares the means of four categories of the image across the ethnic groups. It should be noted that "trustworthiness" shows an inter-ethnic commonality. Other categories vary statistically significantly among groups. "Peculiarity" and "atmosphere" tend to be higher as the ethnic proximity to Japanese declines, while "cost-effectiveness" indicates the reverse tendency.

2.4. Control variables

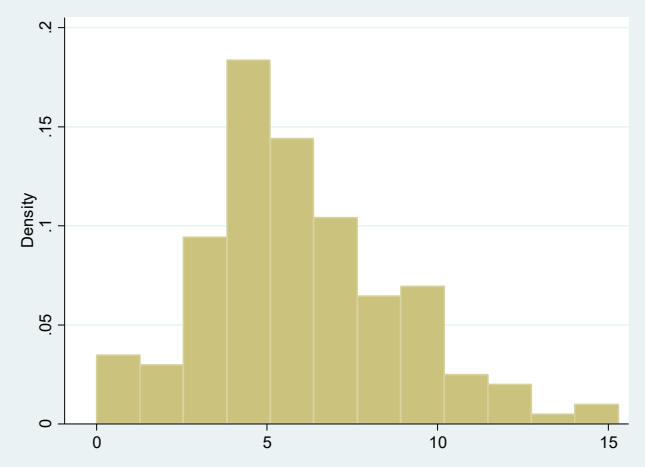

Figure 4 Distribution of the wealth level

Control variables for multivariate regression include gender, age, wealth, transportation cost, and the purpose of the visit. Of the 151 respondents, 91 (60.3%) were male and 59 (39.1%) were female. One person refused to answer. Regarding age, 27 (17.9%) were under 30, 62 (41.1%) were between 30 and 50, 42 (27.8%) were between 51 and 70, 13 (8.6%) were over 70, and 7 (4.6%) refused to answer regarding

their age. In what follows, analyses are further limited to 144 respondents with information about age and gender.

The level of wealth of the respondents is measured by the amount of money spent at the time of the survey by the respondents. A larger amount of money can be seen as a sign of the customer's wealthiness, although it can fluctuate every time when they shop. The measurement is based on self-report, which may not be precise, but it succeeded in tapping the information from the 144 respondents under examination. The value ranges from zero to 234 USD with a mean of 45.8 USD and a standard deviation of 42.0 USD. Figure 4 depicts the distribution of the square root of the value, which ranges from zero to 15.3.

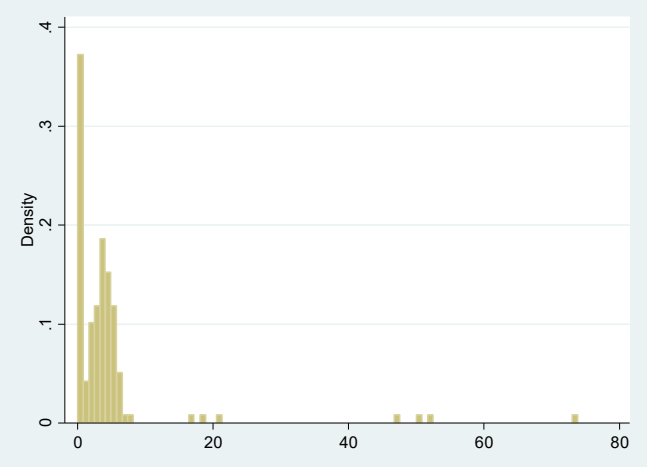

Figure 5 Distribution of the transportation cost

The transportation cost is measured by the distance between the store and the reported residence of respondents. Zero was assigned to 44 respondents who reported living in Torrance. The distance was measured using Google Maps for the remaining 100 respondents (69.4%) from outside of Torrance, of which 95 were from California and the remaining five included four from different regions of the US (Hawaii, Nevada, Michigan, and Washington, D.C.), and one from Japan. The longer distance necessitates a higher transportation cost, which should influence the frequency of visits to the store. Since the Mitsuwa Marketplace apparently deploys its chain stores to the areas where Japanese concentrate, Japanese citizens and Japanese Americans tend to have a shorter distance to the store. To remedy, even if only slightly, the skewness of the original distribution, the square root of the value is used in the regression, ranging from zero to 73.8, with a mean of 4.44 and a standard deviation of 9.42. Figure 5 depicts the distribution.

The Mitsuwa Marketplace is a supermarket, where the primary purpose of visitors should be the shopping of goods for daily consumption. However, people can use the store for a variety of reasons, which in turn can influence their frequency of visits. Respondents were asked to choose descriptions that best fit their original purpose of visiting. In descending order, the purposes mentioned were "to buy Japanese goods" (31.3%), "to eat at the restaurant/café/deli" (28.5%), "to get weekly/monthly groceries" (22.9%), "to look for Japanese specialty goods such as local delicacies and crafts" (12.5%), "to buy Asian goods" (5.6%), "just for entertainment/browsing" (4.2%), and "to pick up a few essential/emergency items" (0.7%).

2.5. Selection of control variables

Table 6 Result of multiple regressions: Control variables only.

	Unrefined		Refined	
.	Estimate	P-value	Estimate	P-value
Male	0.011	.370		
	(0.013)			
Age 30−50	0.007	.716		
	(0.018)			
Age 51−70	0.005	.787		
	(0.018)			
Age over 70	0.066	.009	0.069	.002
	(0.025)		(0.021)	
Wealth	−0.006	.010	−0.005	.015
	(0.002)		(0.002)	
Transportation cost	−0.003	.000	−0.003	.000
	(0.001)		(0.001)	
Purpose1	0.032	.098	0.036	.015
	(0.019)		(0.015)	
Purpose2	-0.095	.210		
	(0.075)			
Purpose3	−0.015	.410		
	(0.018)			
Purpose4	0.014	.627		
	(0.028)			
Purpose5	−0.002	.905		
	(0.017)			
Purpose6	0.008	.703		
	(0.021)			
Purpose7	−0.047	.144		
	(0.032)			
Intercept	0.326	.000	0.324	.000
	(0.024)		(0.014)	
Adjusted R-squared	0.214		0.2264	
n	144.000		144	

Note. Partial coefficients are reported. Standard errors are in parentheses. Purpose1, To get weekly/monthly groceries; Purpose2, To pick up a few essential/emergency items; Purpose3, To eat at the restaurant/café/deli; Purpose4, To buy Asian goods; Purpose5, To buy Japanese goods; Purpose6, To look for Japanese specialty goods such as local delicacies and crafts; Purpose7, Just for entertainment/browsing.

Table 6 reports the multivariate regression analysis using only the control variables. The reference category for the age group is under 30. Stepwise elimination of non-relevant variable reveals that those who are over 70 and those whose original purpose was "to get weekly/monthly groceries" tend to visit the store more frequently, and those who are wealthier and must bear higher transportation cost to come to this store

tend to visit less frequently. The next section first reports bivariate analyses focusing on the main explanatory variables and then proceeds to multivariate regressions controlling for these relevant factors.

3. Results

3.1. Bivariate Analyses

The four categories of ethnicity do not statistically significantly differentiate the index of frequent use of the store according to the one-way ANOVA (p = .400), although both the mean and the median tend to be higher among Japanese citizens and Japanese Americans as shown in Table 7.

Table 7 Summary statistics of shopping frequency index by ethnicity

	Mean	SD	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Japanese citizens	0.306	0.087	0.333	0.167	0.429
Japanese American	0.311	0.090	0.286	0.167	0.571
Non-Japanese Asian American	0.284	0.082	0.286	0.167	0.500
Non-Asian American	0.287	0.073	0.286	0.167	0.429
Total	0.294	0.082	0.286	0.167	0.571

Figure 6 shows the scatter plot and the fitted line of the correlations between the affinity with Japan and the shopping frequency. A positive correlation is found between the affinity and the frequency, which is not, however, statistically significant (p = .115).

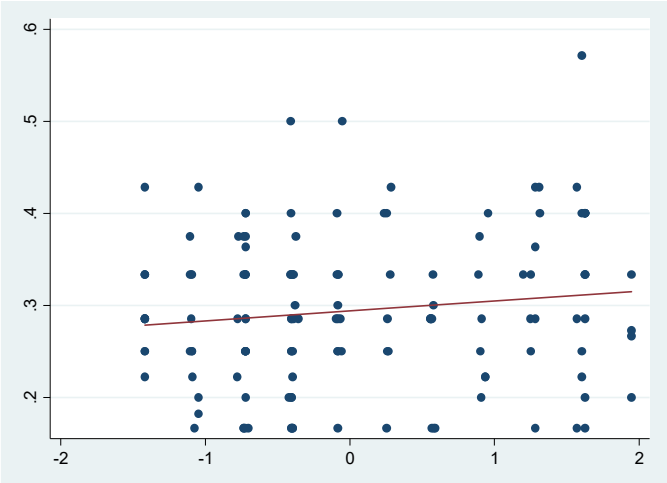

Figure 6 Correlation between the affinity with Japan (x axis) and Shopping frequency

Figure 7 shows the impact of having a certain image about the store on the frequency to visit it. A statistically significant positive impact was detected when respondents consider the store "fancy" (p

= .003), and a negative impact was found when they perceive it as "exciting" (p = .012). However, it should be noted that the number of respondents who mentioned "fancy" is only two. Meanwhile, no statistically significant impact at a 5% level of the image about the store was found when it is operationalized as four category subtotals, although "trustworthiness," which is composed of "clean," "safe," "fresh," "healthy," and "reliable," was found to be marginally significant at a 10% level (p = .056).

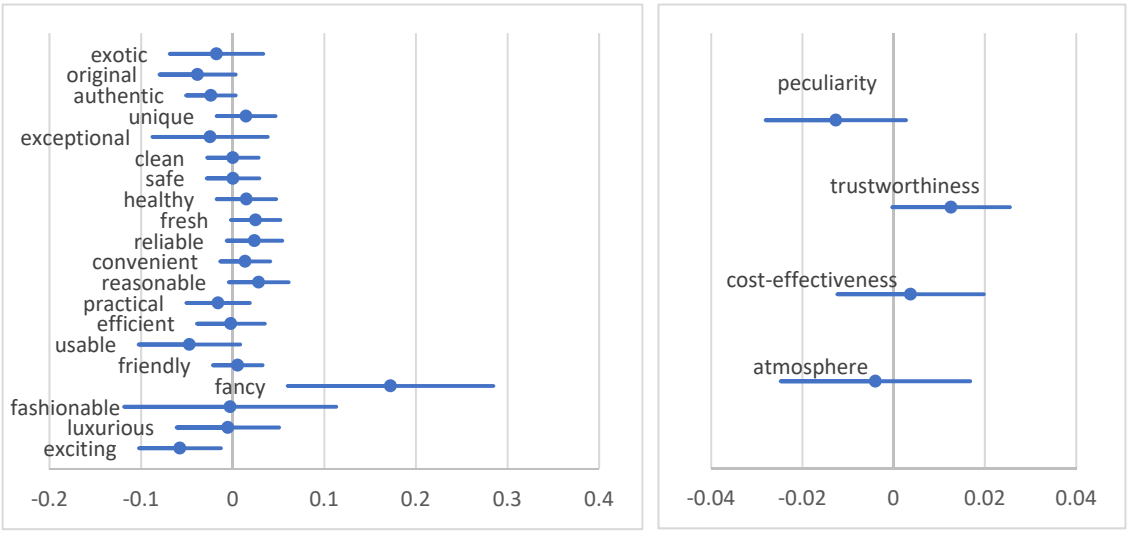

Figure 7 Point estimates and 95% confidence intervals of regression coefficient for image variables (Left, 20 individual dummies; Right, Category subtotals)

3.2. Multivariate Analyses

Table 8 reports the result of multivariate regressions that use the 20 separate adjectives for estimation. The unrefined result with all variables is shown on the left. Consistent with the bivariate analyses, the ethnic dummies, as well as the affinity with Japan, are not statistically significant at all. Meanwhile, some of the image dummies are close to statistical significance. When the model is refined through the stepwise method, which is shown on the right, "fresh," "reliable," "reasonable," and "fancy" emerge as statistically significant determinants. This result is also consistent with the above bivariate analysis, except for the result of "exciting."

The result does not largely change even if the image factor is operationalized differently. Table 9 reports the result of multivariate regression using the subtotals of four image categories. Both ethnic dummies and the affinity with Japan are far from statistical significance while "trustworthiness" falls slightly short of 10 % statistical significance. The result also endorses the previous bivariate result.

Table 8 Results of multivariate regressions (20 separate image adjectives)

	Unrefined		Refined	
	Estimate	P-value	Estimate	P-value
Japanese citizen	−0.007	.821		
	(0.030)			
Japanese American	−0.028	.179		
	(0.021)			
Non-Japanese American	−0.016	.337		
	(0.016)			
Affinity with Japan	0.004	.684		
	(0.009)			
Exotic	−0.013	.623		
	(0.027)			
Original	−0.022	.305		
	(0.022)			
Authentic	−0.017	.217		
	(0.014)			
Unique	0.025	.138		
	(0.017)			
Exceptional	−0.008	.808		
	(0.031)			
Clean	−0.002	.873		
	(0.014)			
Safe	−0.012	.418		
	(0.014)			
Healthy	0.006	.739		
	(0.017)			
Fresh	0.024	.102	0.022	.063
	(0.015)		(0.012)	
Reliable	0.028	.067	0.032	.016
	(0.015)		(0.013)	
Convenient	0.008	.586		
	(0.015)			
Reasonable	0.033	.061	0.034	.016
	(0.017)		(0.014)	
Practical	0.006	.748		
	(0.018)			
Efficient	−0.007	.718		
	(0.019)			
Usable	−0.020	.495		
	(0.030)			
Friendly	0.005	.692		
	(0.014)			
Fancy	0.146	.009	0.143	.005
	(0.055)		(0.050)	
Fashionable	−0.019	.741		
	(0.056)			
Luxurious	−0.013	.631		
	(0.027)			
Exciting	−0.019	.418		
	(0.024)			
Age over 70	0.053	.022	0.060	.004
	(0.023)		(0.021)	
Wealth	−0.005	.032	−0.005	.013
	(0.002)		(0.002)	
Transportation cost	−0.003	.000	−0.003	.000
	(0.001)		(0.001)	
Purpose1	0.024	.150	0.024	.096
	(0.017)		(0.014)	
Intercept	0.318	.000	0.299	.000
	(0.036)		(0.015)	
Adjusted R-squared	0.249		0.307	
n	144		144	

Note. Partial coefficients are reported. Standard errors are in parentheses. Purpose1: To get weekly/monthly groceries.

Table 9 Results of multivariate regressions (four category image subtotals)

	Unrefined		Refined	
	Estimate	P-value	Estimate	P-value
Japanese citizen	−0.002	.935		
	(0.026)			
Japanese American	−0.014	.499		
	(0.020)			
Non-Japanese American	−0.010	.548		
	(0.016)			
Affinity with Japan	0.003	.734		
	(0.008)			
Peculiarity	−0.002	.863		
	(0.009)			
Trustworthiness	0.011	.141	0.009	.111
	(0.008)		(0.006)	
Cost-effectiveness	0.010	.295		
	(0.010)			
Atmosphere	0.006	.561		
	(0.011)			
Age over 70	0.074	.001	0.068	.002
	(0.022)		(0.021)	
Wealth	−0.005	.022	−0.005	.020
	(0.002)		(0.002)	
Transportation cost	−0.003	.000	−0.003	.000
	(0.001)		(0.001)	
Purpose1	0.032	.048	0.033	.029
	(0.016)		(0.015)	
Intercept	0.295	.000	0.305	.000
	(0.035)		(0.018)	
Adjusted R-squared	0.213		0.235	
n	144		144	

Note. Partial coefficients are reported. Standard errors are in parentheses. Purpose1: To get weekly/monthly groceries.

3.2.1. Heterogeneity of influence

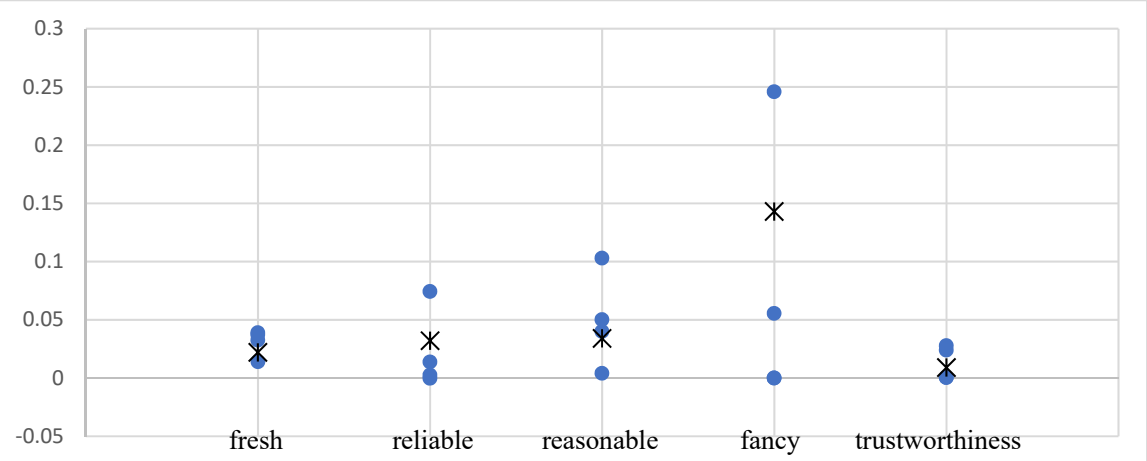

Figure 8 Points estimates of the image for each group.

Lastly, to explore the possibility that the effects of store image differ depending on the ethnicity of customers, the sample was divided by ethnicity and replicated using the same set of explanatory variables

except for ethnic dummies. Figure 8 plots the point estimates of regression coefficients for "fresh," "reliable," "reasonable," "fancy," and "trustworthiness." The circles stand for estimates for each group and X refers to the estimates based on the pooled sample listed in Tables 8 and 9. Except for the influence of "fancy," the point estimates do not spread widely, which suggests that at least the image of "trustworthiness" has a common positive effect on shopping patronage regardless of ethnicity.

4. Conclusion

This study has investigated the impact of store image on the shopping behavior of customers at supermarkets of ethnic minority origin. Previous studies on ethnic supermarkets have largely neglected the store image influence, which is one of the established determinants of shopping patronage of usual retail shops. Using the shopper survey at one of the Mitsuwa Marketplace stores in California, this study found that, even though the store specializes in one particular culture and focuses on the goods and services peculiar to the specific culture, a large number of customers who do not share that ethnic background can be attracted, and the degree of the customers' patronage of the store is determined neither by their ethnicity and nationality nor by their affinity with the culture. Instead, the store's image, specifically, trustworthiness, plays an important role in facilitating the use of the store. This image is not something that can be conceived only by a certain group; the proportion of customers who have this perception was roughly the same across different groups. The influence found is not limited to certain groups, either. The positive influence of trustworthiness is common to all groups.

However, the findings should not be generalized hastily. The data used in this study were obtained from one of the 11 stores of Mitsuwa Marketplace. In other branches, there may be other factors that exert influence over the customers' behavior. Moreover, there are other Japanese supermarket chains in the U.S., such as Nijiya and Marukai. Whether and how the store image influences customers of these stores are yet to be established.

In addition to the external validity, this research cannot rule out the problem in the internal validity because the images customers conceive are inevitably correlated with latent variables that are omitted in the above regressions. Usually, the instrumental variable method can remedy the bias caused by the omitted variables. However, in this case, it was difficult to find appropriate variables that satisfy the crucial conditions of the instrumental variable. Neither are images, by definition, amenable to random assignment. Therefore, it is possible that the result obtained in this research includes bias.

Notwithstanding these cautions, if the full cooperation of the store could be secured, future study should test what combination of attributes of the store, such as layout and arrangement, is most likely to induce in the mind of customers the image of trustworthiness through the randomized controlled trials.

References

Amirani, S. and Gates, R. (1993). An Attribute-Anchored Conjoint Approach to Measuring Store Image. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management* 21 (5): 30–39.

Andresen, M., Bergdolt, F., and Margenfeld, J. (2013). What Distinguishes Self-Initiated Expatriates from Assigned Expatriates and Migrants? A literature-Based Definition and Differentiation of Terms, In Andresen, M., Ariss, A. A., and Walther, M. [Eds.] *Self-Initiated Expatriation: Individual, Organizational, and National Perspectives*, 11–41, Routledge.

Bloemer, J. and de Ruyter, K. (1998). On the Relationship Between Store Image, Store Satisfaction and Store Loyalty. *European Journal of Marketing* 32 (5–6): 499–513.

Donthu, N. and Cherian, J. (1992). Hispanic Coupon Usage: The Impact of Strong and Weak Ethnic Identification. *Psychology & Marketing* 9 (6): 501–510.

Hassan, Y., Maheran, N., Muhammad, N., and Bakar, H. A. (2010). Influence of Shopping Orientation and Store Image on Patronage of Furniture Store. *International Journal of Marketing Studies* 2 (1): 175–184.

Helgesen, Ø., Håvold, J. I., and Nesset, E. (2010). Impacts of Store and Chain Images on the 'Quality–Satisfaction–Loyalty Process' in Petrol Retailing. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* 17: 109–118.

Mankekar, P. (2002). 'India Shopping': Indian Grocery Stores and Transnational Configurations of Belonging. *Journal of Anthropology* 67 (1): 75–97.

Martenson, R. (2007). Corporate Brand Image, Satisfaction and Store Loyalty: A Study of the Store as a Brand, Store Brands and Manufacturer Brands. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management* 35 (7): 544–555.

Mikami, S. (2019). Customer Diversification Through Multifaceted Store Image: The Case of a Japanese Immigrant Entrepreneur in Seattle, *The Bulletin of the Faculty of Law and Letters Social Science* 46: 17–36.

Orth, U. R. and Green, M. T. (2009). Consumer Loyalty to Family versus Non-Family Business: The Roles of Store Image, Trust and Satisfaction. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* 16: 248–259.

Przytuła, S. (2015). Migrants, Assigned Expatriates (AE) and Self-initiated Expatriates (SIE): Differentiation of Terms and Literature-Based Research Review, *Journal of Intercultural Management* 7 (2): 89–111.

Sirgy, M. J. and Samli, A. C. (1985). A Path Analytic Model of Store Loyalty Involving Self-Concept, Store Image, Geographic Loyalty, and Socioeconomic Status. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 13 (3): 265–291.

Wang, L. and Lo, L. (2007). Immigrant Grocery-Shopping Behavior: Ethnic Identity versus Accessibility. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 39 (3): 684–699.

Wijnen, G. J., Kemperman, A. D. A. M., and Janssen, I. I. (2011). Shopping behaviour and attribute evaluation of expatriates: A cross-cultural study. In *18th Annual Conference, European Real Estate Society, Eindhoven, June 2011*, 1–16, ERES.

Yamada, A. (2017). Role of a Japanese Market for New Japanese Migrants in the United States. *Journal of Asian Research* 1(1): 29–46.

GLOCAS Publications

GLOCAS Series

1 土屋由香・三浦智恵美（編）『[資料集] 愛媛県南部におけるマグロ遠洋漁業者への聞き取り調査』

2 Ishizaka Shinya (ed.), *Natural Faming Today 1*

3 土屋由香・三浦智恵美（編）『高知県室戸市におけるマグロ遠洋漁業関係者への聞き取り調査報告書』

4 梶原克彦（編）『『海南新聞』松山俘虜収容所関連記事集成 大正三年八月-十二月』

5 Ishizaka Shinya (ed.), *Natural Faming Today 2*

6 梶原克彦（編）『『海南新聞』松山俘虜収容所関連記事集成 大正四年一月-大正六年十二月』

7 Ishizaka Shinya (ed.), *Natural Faming Today 3*

GLOCAS Working Paper

1 Ishizaka Shinya, *Glocalization of Natural Farming: A Case Study of India*

2 Kajiwara Katsuhiko, *German POWs and their Occupation: Forced Global Migration and Subsistence in Locality*

3 Mikami Satoru, *Store Image and Shopping Patronage: The Case of Customers of Japanese Shopping Center in the U.S.*

4 Ohta Kyoko, *Scaling Up of Niche Policy Innovation for Long-term Care*

5 Tsuchiya Yuka, *Japanese Deep-sea Tuna Fisheries: A New Wave of Overseas Expansion in the Post-Second World War Era*

GLOCAS

Ehime University Research Unit for Glocal Area Studies
Working Paper # 003

Published 2021/03

3 Bunkyo-cho, Matsuyama, Ehime, Japan 790-8577
Faculty of Law and Letters, Ehime University
Tel/Fax:089-927-9245
http://glocas.net
https://www.ehime-u.ac.jp