

American Values Reflected in Names of US Supermarkets, the Top Five Values and American Dream

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This study based its foundation on a qualitative study of organizations that are closely related to people's daily life—supermarkets, more exactly supermarket names and analyzed values represented in these names. 211 supermarket names were collected and values were extracted from these subjects, then the frequency and frequency rates of each individual value were calculated by SPSS 17. At last, 20 values were obtained. Among them, the top five values were individualism, directness, nature, cultural identity, efficiency and practicality, which respectively took up 19.8%, 7.9%, 5.8%, 5.3% and 5.3%. Individualism, one of the dominant values in American society, ranked the first in terms of frequency rate, representing people's desire in memorizing their achievement and success as well as demonstrating personal responsibilities; directness showed people's straightforward way of expression; nature demonstrated the fervent love for nature and the original and simple ways of solving problems, and nature also symbolized the "return for nature"; cultural identity, also collective identity, meant people's identification as a member of a group; efficiency and practicality were to seek the fast and cheapest way of achieving a goal. What was surprising was the reflection of nature and cultural identity, which were rarely mentioned as belonging to core American values. Besides, the American Dream values, covering individualism, competition, freedom, pioneering spirit, superiority and nationalism, constituted about 27% of the totality of frequency rate, which proved the unwavering charm of American dream in American society.

Keywords: Supermarket Names; American Dream; Individualism; Directness; Nature; Cultural Identity

Introduction

Studies on American values were mostly based on logical reasoning on existing historical, cultural, religious reasons (Kohls, 1988; Gary, 1999). American values include the following according to L. Robert Kohls, 1988: personal control over the environment, change/mobility, time and its importance, equality/egalitarianism, individualism, independence and privacy, self-help, competition and free enterprise, future-orientation/optimism, action and work orientation, informality, directness/openness/honesty, practicality/efficiency and materialism/acquisitiveness. While Peppas (2001) noted that "it is generally accepted that within US society, dominant values include individualism, self-reliance, equality of opportunity for all, competitiveness, hard work, materialism, informality, directness, timeliness, and a belief that change is good (Daniels & Radebaugh, 1995: pp. 51-66; Griffin and Pustay, 1996: pp. 478-486; Harris & Moran, 1996: pp. 209-218; Hofstede, 1983)." However, these conclusions were mostly drawn on the foundation of historical events, cultural reasons and general tradition. Hardly have any researchers used solid proof in American daily life to support their conclusions.

Nevertheless, supermarkets, bearing super fancy names, have emerged everywhere in the United States and have attracted customers to consume with the convenience economy and others. Meanwhile supermarket names perform the function of

brand names, which differentiate one supermarket from others and leave an appealing impression on customers, resulting in the customer's preference in shopping in that specific supermarket. In fact, names of supermarkets reflected what aspects of the supermarket are decided to be presented by a nomenclator, which means that supermarket names reflect values of the nomenclators and the majority of the customers. Presently, there are around 23,662 supermarkets in the country. Consequently, there are certainly a considerable number of supermarket names, presenting themselves in various forms and with different enchantment—people's values. Just as Williams (1979) and Bennett (1980) note, values are always associated with sets of beliefs that link them to societal practices (Feldman, 1988). This study mainly focus on studying the supermarket names in the United States and analyzing, in a qualitative manner, the underlying reasons for the name-making of supermarkets, which in this case are deduced from a perspective of American people's values.

American Values

Values are closely related to the norms of culture. Matsumoto, Yoo, & Nakagawa (2008) noted that similar to norms, it has also been suggested that internalized culture influences behaviour (Bardi & Guerra, 2011). Values could be understood as the principles, standards, ethics, and ideals that companies

and people lived by (Edvardsson et al., 2008). “Values are not just words; values are what we live by”. “They’re about the causes we champion and the people we fight for.” (Senator John Kerry).

Likewise, the American values are values that guide the American people’s attitudes towards what is right and what is wrong and they are used to rationalize any action of American people.

Guo (2007) concluded that the American value was different because of its multiple ethnicity group, and American value should be divided into three types: traditional value, modern value and post-modern value and that the American value originated from the immigration of Puritans and the Declaration of Independence.

Apart from all above, the “American Dream” could not be missed for it influenced generations and generations of American people. To state it simply, the American Dream was that those who “work hard can find a good job and give their families a better life” (Matthew Warshauer, James Truslow et al.).

To dig into the American values, one cannot avoid studying the cultures, history and society of the United States. Jingqiong Zhou, generally described the American history and summarized six key values of the American people: individual freedom (the most basic of all values), self-reliance, equality, competition, material wealth, hard work. In addition, Zhou thought that America society should be divided into three classes: the upper class (with the most social wealth), the middle class and the working class (Zhou, 2002).

A much detailed list of central American values was made by Williams, Robin M. Jr. in 1970, as the following (Williams, 1970: pp. 454-500): Achievement and Success, Activity and Work, Moral Orientation (right or wrong), Humanitarianism, Efficiency and Practicality (fastest and cheapest), Process and Progress, Material Comfort, Equality, Freedom, External Conformity, Science and Rationality, Nationalism, Democracy, Individualism, Racism and Group Superiority.

An editorial published on AmericanHospitals.com which belongs to Spindle Publishing Company, Inc and written by Thomas E. Grouling, said that the core American values were individual freedom, education, family and privacy. In the journal of Peppas (2001), he noted that “it is generally accepted that within US society, dominant values include individualism, self-reliance, equality of opportunity for all, competitiveness, hard work, materialism, informality, directness, timeliness, and a belief that change is good (Daniels & Radebaugh, 1995: pp. 51-66; Griffin & Pustay, 1996: pp. 478-486; Harris & Moran, 1996: pp. 209-218; Hofstede, 1983).” In addition, Peppas argued that among different subcultures in the United States, different values were emphasized.

Cerulo (2008) admitted that during the 1980s and 1990s, scholars wrote of rising selfishness, declining civility, of suburban isolation, and the loss of community. By the millennium’s end, many saw Americans as hopelessly disengaged—from everything but themselves. Indeed, political scientist Robert Putnam (1998, 2000; Putnam et al., 2004) declared the “death of Civic America”. Sociologists Miller McPherson, Lynn Smith-Lovin, and Mathew Brashears (2006) warned that the United States was quickly becoming a nation of social isolates.

Levy (2006) had pointed out the vertigoes of America: the perplexities of memorial phenomenon, the overgrown of certain American institutes like churches, supermarket, the division

social, political sections and increasing segregation of social groups.

In conclusion, the American society was experiencing a downward change under the current situation.

As to the central value of the United States, in the 2006 Klett Magazine article “The American Dream Then and Now” (2006), the status quo of today’s American Dreams was described to have been reduced to mere materialism and individualism, and it cared less about the social community.

Presently, researches and articles wrote about how American Dreams had turned into a delusion and how it should be changed (Butler, 2011, the Pew Charitable Trusts, et al., 2007).

However, as to the present study, there should be a considerably complete list of American values so that there could be criteria for analyzing values represented in supermarket names. Unfortunately, list of values from previous researches were incomplete in that they did not encompass every aspect of American people. In order to attain such a complete list, values from previous researches were selected and combined. After a comparison of all values presented above, a comparatively complete list of values were as follows: personal control over the environment, change/mobility, time (and its importance), equality/egalitarianism, individualism, independence and privacy, self-help, competition, future-orientation/optimism, action and work orientation, informality, directness/openness/honesty, materialism/acquisitiveness, achievement and success, moral orientation (right or wrong), humanitarianism, efficiency and practicality (fastest and cheapest), process and progress, equality, freedom, external conformity, science and rationality, nationalism, racism and group superiority. This list was mainly based on value list by Kohls (1988), Williams (1970) and Daniels and Radebaugh, 1995: pp. 51-66; Griffin and Pustay, 1996: pp. 478-486; Harris and Moran, 1996: pp. 209-218; Hofstede, 1983, with some overlapping values erased.

Supermarket

The concept of supermarket was forwarded by M. M. Zimmerman (2011) of the United States. In his work, *The Supermarket and the Changing Retail Structure*, he noted that supermarket was a highly departmentalized retail store, managed entirely by the store-owner or by agents, that sold food or other products, which including dry foods, daily commodities were all sold by self-service. It was equipped with abundant parking lot and was rewarded with minimum annual revenue of 250,000 USD.

It was characterized by its physical appearance of its size, the huge stock inventories, its departmental character, the checking-out counters, and the carrier baskets, the freedom to shop at leisure through the tremendous floor space, and its location at the fringe of towns. Whereas, the location of supermarkets decided that advertising was the priority for attracting the traffic.

The first supermarket opened in the United States. It has been determined that the first true supermarket in the United States was opened by a former Kroger employee, Michael J. Cullen, on August 4, 1930, inside a 6000-square-foot (560 m²) former garage in Jamaica, Queens in New York City.

Studies on supermarket were rather limited given its brief history of about 80 years. There are studies about the influence of supermarket invasion on local cultures. Isaacs et al. (2010) researched into the changes happening to cultures surrounding

supermarkets in Thailand, and how the cultures were sustained, adapted and transmitted; There are others focusing on supermarket marketing and health issues (Berry & McMullen, 2008). There were also research into economy (Bird-David, & Nurit, 2009), religion (Gill, 2003), sexism and other connotations in supermarket.

The most comprehensive study about supermarket might be “The supermarket and the changing retail structure” by Zimmerman in 2011. In the study Zimmerman concluded two characters of supermarket: its physical characteristics, including its “size, the huge stock inventories, its departmental character, the checking-out counters, the carrier baskets, the freedom to shop at leisure through the tremendous floor space”, and its location at the fringe of towns. Besides, he researched into the rapid development of supermarkets (its expansion and others), the influence supermarkets had on general distribution, its development trend and its future.

On the other hand, a Chinese research into supermarket names was highly relative to this study—A Linguistic Aesthetic Perspective on the Naming of Supermarket by Liu (2011). In this study, LIU collected Chinese supermarket names from the Internet and then analyzed these names for the aspect of the phonological features, the character patterns and the charm of their semantic connotation. He found that there were repeated words and structures in the names and that the tones were bright and crispy. These characters, as a result, helped the temperament of supermarket names incline to be clangorous and metrical. Besides, the semantic aspect of supermarket names suggested that nomenclators of supermarkets chose words associated with happiness, fortune, goodness, talent, beauty, prosperity and other positive conceptions. In the end, he concluded that that under the broad background of a developing market economy, customers were longing for a happy, harmonious family life, and the supermarket owners took supermarket names as a bridge to communicate with customers by telling them of the advantageous characteristics and the promises they made to the customers. From Liu’s paper, it might be concluded that supermarket owners named supermarkets in a certain way so as to appeal to customers’ emotions and imply to them that they would attain certain spiritual things once they shop in that supermarket. However, this article just analyzed from language level rather than digging into the cultural reasons. However, this article served as a reference of how to carry out this study.

Having reviewed all accessible previous researches, the conclusion might be that few researches have been conducted to delve into the characteristics and qualities of supermarket except the ones made by Zimmerman (in his journal, *The Supermarket and the Changing Retail Structure*), most researches about supermarkets have been focused on the realm of economy, cultural influence, health issues, religion, sexism and all, which excluded the research into the relation between supermarket names and American values.

Methods

Research Questions:

- What American values are connotated in Supermarket Names in the United States?
- What are the frequency rates of each American Values and what are the implications?

Subject of this Thesis is names of Supermarket in the United States. The simplest access to supermarket names in the United States is the Internet websites, which in this case is an Ameri-

can website called the Supermarket Page (<http://supermarketpage.com/index.php>), on which supermarkets, totaling more than 20 thousand, including big scale supermarket chains, are listed by alphabetic order, or if browsers are interested they can be listed according to the local states. This kind of categorization benefits the process of data selection (which can be further explained in the next section), without which the data analysis will post a vastly time-consuming task to data processing.

On deciding the source of information, the subjects are perfectly identified: there are totally 23,662 supermarkets in the United States and many of them are under the same name and the control of the same group. However, our subjects are just the vast variety of supermarket names, therefore the final subject should be a list of certain chosen supermarket names. That means that certain repeated names should be eliminated and these names are called types.

Instruments for this Thesis and for the above subjects includes SPSS 17 for frequency description, WPS Office Excel 8.1.0.3163, Internet search engines, mostly Google, Wikipedia, and all other Internet resources that helps verify the true meaning of a supermarket name, as well as on-line dictionary Youdao Dict 5.0.33.3225.

To be exact, when identifying the reasons behind supermarket name, and then reveal the underlying values in it, the best thing happens if the access to the official website of the supermarket can be gained. Because, naming reasons can be attained in signs or symbols in company logo, or in website sections like Company History, or About Us etc.

If without luck of gaining the access, the next thing to do is to ensure that the American supermarket as is described on the Supermarket Page really exist by discovering any entry about the target supermarket with information at least covering the address of the supermarket so that there is evidence that the information provided by the Supermarket Page is authentic.

Then what is left is to implement a small on-line study in search of the elements that constitute the target supermarket names. For example, there could be a supermarket name, “Red Apple Supermarket”, if the attempt to log on the supermarket’s website fails, then the direction should be pointed at finding out the connotations in “Red Apple”, its cultural meaning and its indications in the supermarket field.

Regarding to Youdao Dict, it provides a vast variety of translations from various principles or difference jargons or slangs, which are important reference in data analysis.

On checking out the reliability of the information on the Supermarket Page, random sampling was the simplest and most feasible method. In this case, 30 supermarkets on the supermarket list are randomly selected, among which 30 supermarkets really existed and the target information, which in this case was names of supermarket, was clearly exact. Except that two supposedly different supermarket records in the sample, turned out to be the same supermarket, which means that there is an overlapping of information in the supermarket. Therefore, the conclusion was that the credibility of information from the Supermarket Page website is more than 96.667%, which earned the website enough credibility to be the data source of this Thesis.

Data Collection

First, as to data collection, the total number of supermarket names in the website was 23,662 and the manual work of

searching for naming reasons for each individual supermarket cast down a vastly time-consuming as well as energy-consuming mission to the Study. To reduce the workload and secure the credibility and effectiveness of this Study, we selected supermarket names and reduced the number of supermarkets under study. The selection was made according to the population density of local states or district of supermarkets. Due to the target of identifying the most typical of American values, the effective selection standard is population density, which is calculated based on 2011 census statistics publicized on the Census Bureau of the United States.

The ranking was as shown in **Table 1**.

Therefore, with population density raising up among the tops of states and district of the United states, District of Columbia along with seven states including New Jersey, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maryland, Delaware, New York are selected, and the supermarkets located in those respective states and the District of Columbia are listed into subjects for study. Besides, as some supermarkets have chains spreading over the nation, names of supermarket may reappear in other states or in the D.C. In order to get an accurate percentage of American values reflected in individual supermarket names, repetition must be cleared.

Therefore, the finalized data collection must be a list of supermarkets whose chains must be removed and whose location must be among the top eight in the population density ranking of the United states, which leaves only 1782 supermarkets and 211 supermarket names.

Information Integration

Information integration consists of information gathering, information analyzing, among which data gathering aims at locating and recording the reasons behind supermarket naming through Internet search engines and all other instruments mentioned above, and information analyzing targets at analyzing what American values are contained in it, and then comes a table comprised of list of values performed in supermarket naming and the utility rate of each values, which was the result of data processing.

To make the process conveniently understandable, an example of “Big Bear Natural Foods” is given. When dealing with this subject, the priority is to access to the official website of this

Table 1.
Population density ranking of states and districts of the United States in 2011.

Rank	State	Population in 2010	Land Area (Km ²)	Population Density
1	District of Colombia	601,723	158	3808.373418
2	New Jersey	8,791,894	19,211	457.6489511
3	Rhode Island	1,052,567	2706	388.9752402
4	Massachusetts	6,547,629	20,306	322.4479957
5	Connecticut	3,574,097	12,548	284.8339974
6	Maryland	5,773,552	25,314	228.0774275
7	Delaware	897,934	5060	177.4573123
8	New York	19,378,102	122,283	158.4693048

supermarket. In this case, the official website was available, and on the website, the supermarket logo was an idly walking bear with the supermarket name on the margin, and the About US section of the website failed to provide its naming reasons.

Then the next step, was to identify the symbolic meaning of bear and analyze the American values that contributed to this supermarket name. The context here included supermarket naming, the fact that the supermarket name was “Big Bear Natural Foods” and the image presented in the logo, a bear idly walking in a yellow background with radiating yellow lights.

Having searched information with Internet engines (in this case, Google.hk was preferred for its complete and resourceful information, especially English information), and obtained a website describing bear meaning from Native Americans’ views. Between information, related source presented itself about nature: Bear meanings were enhanced by observations made by tribal sages. These vital tribal figures were inclined to contemplate how nature communicated intent in all her forms. They found connection between human and beasts and endeavored to utilize it to produce fruits in human activities. A Shoshone sage once, in his trance walking, witnesses a group of bears, on their hind legs, dancing in the golden rays of the sun. He understood it as a way of expressing gratitude and payer for their children. At this enlightenment, Shoshone developed a Sun Dance, where the bear is a central figure of the ritual symbolizing protection, strength and continuation of the progeny of the tribe.

The above belonged to information gathering, and the next step was information analyzing, which should base on the given conditions like the supermarket logo, the company history etc.

The information provided reverberated with the images in the supermarket logo, and made sense in the context of supermarket naming. Therefore, the conclusion was that the value behind naming was nature worship.

Results

Concerning the context of the study, the supermarket names, it should be noted that supermarkets context had some influence on supermarket naming. As to supermarket, it was identified with its characteristic physical appearance like “its size, the huge stock inventories, its departmental character, the checking-out counters, the carrier baskets, the freedom to shop at leisure through the tremendous floor space. All these give the supermarket the atmosphere of beehive activity never seen before in food retailing units” as well as its essential parking lot. (Zimmerman in 2011) These meant that supermarkets were highly possible to use these classical characteristics which made a supermarket the supermarket that made itself popular world wide, to attract customers. Other major elements that forged the supermarket names the way they looked, most probably included the values the nomenclators had imprinted in their brains.

In **Table 2**, there are a total of 20 values, among them some were not from the complete list of American values concluded above, because they did not belong to any of those values. They are nature, family/hometown, cultural identity, happiness, healthy/safe, cultural tolerance, superiority and sports.

What was surprising was the notion of cultural identity, and cultural tolerance. Because cultural identity was seldom mentioned as one of American values, however, supermarket names indicated that American people use names of their community

Table 2.
List of values reflected in American supermarket names.

No.	Values	Definitions
1	Individualism	Individual names were used to memorize personal achievement or they used words associated with individual responsibility.
2	Nature	Supermarkets were named after plants, flowers, natural matters, natural phenomena as well as the word "Nature". It represented people's love in nature.
3	Directness	It shows attributes of supermarkets like the scale, completion, quality service or it may directly slogan the customers into shopping in the supermarket.
4	Cultural Identity	People use names of their local community, city or even states, which represents people's cultural or regional identity.
5	Efficiency and Practicality	The supermarket names attracted customers by indicating a low price for products and convenience of a general type.
6	Competition	Due to a desire to being the better one or the best one in a group, people gave supermarket names a touch of competition and the concept of win and lose.
7	Nationalism	The supermarket was named after national pride, or the name directly complimented the nation
8	Good	People tend to hope for the good and thus they use some good adjectives and nouns.
9	Superiority	People used words like king, president to suggest the supreme authority, the high quality of the supermarket.
10	Pioneering Spirit	People directly use "pioneer" or something related with pioneering spirit in the names.
11	Moral Orientation	The supermarket names indicated that customers should shop right and it was right to shop in their supermarkets.
12	Friendship	Supermarket directly used words like "friendship" or "friendly" in their names, indicating the importance American people put on friends.
13	Unity	The supermarket names directly used words related with teamwork and unity in their names.
14	Family/Hometown	Words related to family and hometown were used to appeal to people's positive feelings to the supermarket, which represent the importance of family.
15	Cultural tolerance	The nomenclators used exotic elements in supermarket names, which showed the cultural tolerance of American people.
16	Wisdom	Words like "wisdom", "smart" were adopted to show people's desire for wisdom.
17	Freedom	"Freedom" directed appeared in supermarket names.
18	Happiness	Nomenclators associated supermarket names with happiness.
19	Healthy/Safe	Supermarket names suggested that foods in the supermarket were healthy and safe, reminding the customers to keep fit and advertising for itself.
20	Sports	Supermarket names were associated with events, places or subjects related with sports.

and city to draw people closer. This value was shared by people who felt a strong regional or cultural identity. Besides, even though the United States was regularly referred to as a "melting pot", cultural tolerance was never mentioned as one of American values. In fact, nomenclators who named supermarkets with a thought of cultural tolerance in mind were mostly foreigners in America, like Koreans and Indians.

Frequencies of Each Reflected Values

The frequency rate was calculated by frequency description of SPSS, and the frequency rates of each value were listed in **Table 3**.

Table 3 showed the frequency rate of each value. This table was calculated by descriptive frequency in SPSS 17 with irrelevant information deleted.

As shown in **Table 3**, there was a gap between frequency rates of different values. For example, frequency of individualism was 75 while the next value in the rank just had a frequency of 30, less than half of 75. This might indicate that individualism was the most significant value in American society.

Likewise, individualism, directness, nature cultural identity and efficiency and practicality were the core values in the United States.

Discussion

According to the **Table 2**, values reflected in supermarkets in the United States were individualism, directness, nature, cultural identity, efficiency and practicality, competition, good, nationalism, superiority, moral orientation, pioneering spirit, friendship, hometown/family, unity, cultural tolerance, wisdom, health/safe, freedom, happiness and sports. This meant that values in American daily life were the 20 values as listed above. Among them, individualism, directness, nature cultural identity and efficiency and practicality were most valued.

Individualism

Individualism was rampant in supermarket naming in the United States, making up 19.8% of the total frequency rate. The common situation of how individualism came to influence the

Table 3.
Frequency rate of each value reflected in supermarket names in US.

Rank	Values	Frequency	Per Cent
1	Individualism	75	19.8
2	Directness	30	7.9
3	Nature	22	5.8
4	Cultural Identity	20	5.3
5	Efficiency Practicality	20	5.3
6	Competition	9	2.4
7	Good	8	2.1
8	Nationalism	6	1.6
9	Superiority	6	1.6
10	Moral Orientation	5	1.3
11	Pioneering Spirit	5	1.3
12	Friendship	4	1.1
13	Hometown/Family	3	0.8
14	Unity	3	0.8
15	cultural tolerance	2	0.5
16	Wisdom	2	0.5
17	Health/safe	2	0.5
18	Freedom	1	0.3
19	Happiness	1	0.3
20	Sports	1	0.3

naming of supermarket was like that, decades ago, a person or couples of persons was or were struck by the idea of starting up a supermarket which mainly sold food at that time, then he or they overcame various difficulties and had successfully opened one. When naming the brainchild of his or their efforts, a person's name was selected to be fused into supermarket name to commemorate his or their contribution and great endeavor, and to declare ownership to the supermarket. These people had imprinted the thought that individual endeavor and hard work could lead to success and wealth, which was the essence of the American Dream.

In fact, it was no surprising that individualism was list No. 1 in all reflected values, because individualism was long regarded as dominant values in the American society (Kohls, 1988; Pappas, 2001). In this study, individualism in supermarket context, mainly referred to the inclination to memorize individual achievement and success rather than individual responsibility (with a frequency of only one in this study).

Directness

Directness was shown by direct description of advantages of supermarkets like the large scale, quality service, and a complete collection of products. Sometimes the supermarket names even use slogans to ask people to "stop n shop". In 2007 Ph.D.

dissertation, Jia Xuerui wrote that "Unlike the English writings of the Chinese, those of the Americans adopt a direct style, or linear logic mode.", which indicated directness in American writing. Besides, Kim et al. (2010) wrote about the European American's tendency to give favorable self-evaluations in public and private situations, indicating that European Americans were direct.

In this Study, directness emerged as the second biggest values extracted in the subjects, taking up 7.9% of the totality of frequency rate, and was identified with a down-to-earth manner of exhibiting one's merits, virtues or unique characteristics without holding back in modesty. This ranking of directness conformed the importance position of directness in US central values.

Nature

Nature rated the third in frequency rate in **Table 3**, constituting 5.8% of the totality. In this study, supermarkets were named after plants, flowers, natural matters, natural phenomena as well as the word "Nature". It represented people's love in nature. Transcendentalists thought nature as a symbol of spirit and a cover of oversoul. According to their point of view, the vigorous vitality of nature could purify human heart (Lu, 2003). Besides, an article in China's Foreign Trade (1994, issue 1, Oversea Penchant volume), "American Return to Nature" had wrote "with an increasing consciousness of environmental protection among American people, a new trend has been quietly emerging—their quest for things simple and plain and a return to nature. If you make a trip to supermarkets in the United States, you will discover that what finds favor is no longer those well-made pastries and exquisitely-cooked fish and meat, nor those tinned food with beautiful labels. The favorite food are fresh produce just arrived from farms." "To meet people who have followed this trend, some supermarkets have set up special departments or counters selling 'green foods'". The same tendency to return to nature was also prominent in clothes market, toys and arts and crafts markets.

In this study, supermarket names with an emphasis over nature mostly have "nature", "natural", "farmland" in them. Others were named after plants, animals and fruits. Therefore, the conclusion might be that the overwhelming charm of nature in supermarket naming was due to American people's tendency to return to nature and probably, people turned to nature to retrieve vitality and wish to be purified.

Cultural Identity

In this study, cultural identity referred to the phenomenon where people use names of their local community, city or even states, which represents people's cultural or regional identity. The high frequency of cultural identity was unexpected, ranking the fourth with a frequency rate of 5.3%, because cultural identity, also called collective identity was considered a typical feature of Asian countries. However, according to this study, cultural identity occupied a prominent position in American values. Raymond Williams thought that one's social position and identity was decided by one's surroundings. Besides, in modern society, culture and identity usually combined to produce cultural identity which served as a group signal that helped a group of people to define themselves, to tell themselves from other group of people, to intensify people's sense of a group. It was a sign of shared cultural connotations of a

group. Moreover, cultural identity was an agreement on central local values of a community where the group of people had been living for a long time. It was a spiritual connection to gather the nation, region together (Guo, 2012). In this study besides the influence of cultural identity in both the nomenclators of supermarkets and the customers, there might be an influence of marketing on the high frequency rate, for the name of community or the city drew people closer together so that people of the same region preferred to shop in that supermarket. However, there was the irreversible impact of cultural identity on the naming of supermarkets. This showed an intense and clear cultural identity of American people.

Efficiency and Practicality

Efficiency and practicality was defined by Williams in 1970, as seeking the fast and cheapest way of achieving something. In supermarket naming context, the supermarket names indicated a low price for products and convenience of a general type to attract customers. In fact, this value was mostly reflected by emphasizing the low price of supermarket products. The high frequency rate of this value might be largely influenced by one of supermarket's attributes: big scale and low price. As a result, this value could not reflect how much significance this value was to Americans.

Good Wishes

Apart from the above top four values, there were other values with lower frequency rates. Among these values good, friendship, hometown/family, wisdom, healthy/safe, and happiness were common human wishes, constituting about 5.3% of the total utility rate. The deployment of these values in supermarket names was to imply that whoever shopped in these supermarkets could be blessed with good traits, happiness, family, wisdom and friendship. The considerably low frequency rate of these good wishes in this study might indicate an influence of American people's self-reliance or self-help. They inclined to strive for these by themselves.

The "American Dream Value"

Apart from these good wishes, there was considerably tradition and general values like competition, nationalism, superiority, moral orientation, pioneering spirit, unity, cultural tolerance and freedom. Among them, competition, pioneering spirit, nationalism, superiority and freedom belonged to the realm of American dream values. As was mentioned above, American dream was the core of American culture. In this study, competition, pioneering spirit, nationalism, superiority and freedom together with individualism, one prominent features of American Dream, constituted about 27% of the total frequency rate. If American Dream values were integrated into one value called "American Dream Value", then this value must be the No. 1 value in terms of its frequency rate or rather its importance in American people. These meant that American Dream was still the core of American culture and values.

Besides American dream values, moral orientation, unity and cultural tolerance were considerably traditional ones.

The last value to be discussed was sports with its frequency of one in all those supermarket names. Because, the frequency of this values was low and was not normally discussed, this study would not further discussed this value.

Conclusion

Values Expressed in American Supermarket Names

In summary, the values that were demonstrated through supermarkets in the United States were listed as follows in a top-down order: individualism, directness, nature, cultural identity, efficiency and practicality, competition, good, nationalism, superiority, moral orientation, pioneering spirit, friendship, hometown/family, unity, cultural tolerance, wisdom, health/safe, freedom, happiness and sports.

What was surprising was cultural identity or collective identity. As a typical feature of Asian countries like Japan and China, it was rarely mentioned in American culture. However, the high frequency rate of cultural identity was an evidence of the cultural belongingness and the collective ideals of American people.

Top Five Values in Supermarket Environment

The five most popular values in supermarket naming context were individualism, directness, nature, cultural identity, efficiency and practicality. Among these four values, the frequency rate of nature and efficiency and practicality might be greatly influenced by the supermarket's intention to use natural green food and the advantageous characteristic of low price in supermarket to advertise the safety and quality and economic nature of their produce. As a result, it could be concluded that the five values, only individualism, directness, cultural identity, were among the core values of American people.

Besides, among the five values, each one had its specific connotations as follows:

Individualism, meaning the belief in the importance of the individual and the virtue of self-reliance and personal independence, was most overly emphasized, and was also a primary part of the American Dream.

Directness emerged as the second biggest values extracted in the subjects, and was identified with a down-to-earth manner of exhibiting one's merits, virtues or unique characteristics without holding back in modesty.

Nature symbolized the fervent love of nature in American people and their desire of returning to nature. In the situation of this study, people injected natural elements in supermarket names including some plants, flowers, weather and all nature-related matters.

Cultural identity revealed American people's emotional need of belonging to a group and sharing signals or marks of a group.

Efficiency and practicality meant the fastest and cheapest way of solving problems, while in this study and situation of supermarket naming, this values paid special attention to the cheapest way of buying products.

The American Dream Values

The set of values ranging from individualism, freedom, nationalism, superiority, competition, pioneering spirit was categorized in the values that were embedded in the American Dream, called the American Dream values. According to statistics in **Table 3**, they constituted 27% of the values abstracted from all subjects. It suggested that the American dream was a significant part of the American value system and even today it still occupied a salient part in the American value system, with

an overwhelming emphasis on individualism.

Problems to Be Solved

The problem in this Study is that some values reflected in supermarket names were inter-related, thus making the frequency rate an inaccurate result. For example, the distinction between nature and healthy/safe in this study was blurry because in some names nature functioned as healthy and safe, but in another sense, natural did not necessarily mean healthy or safe. As a result, whether a name reflected the value of nature or the value of healthy/safe was at times controversial.

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