



# Consumer Preferences in Cyberspace

## A Comparison of Websites Ranking Across the Globe



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### Introduction

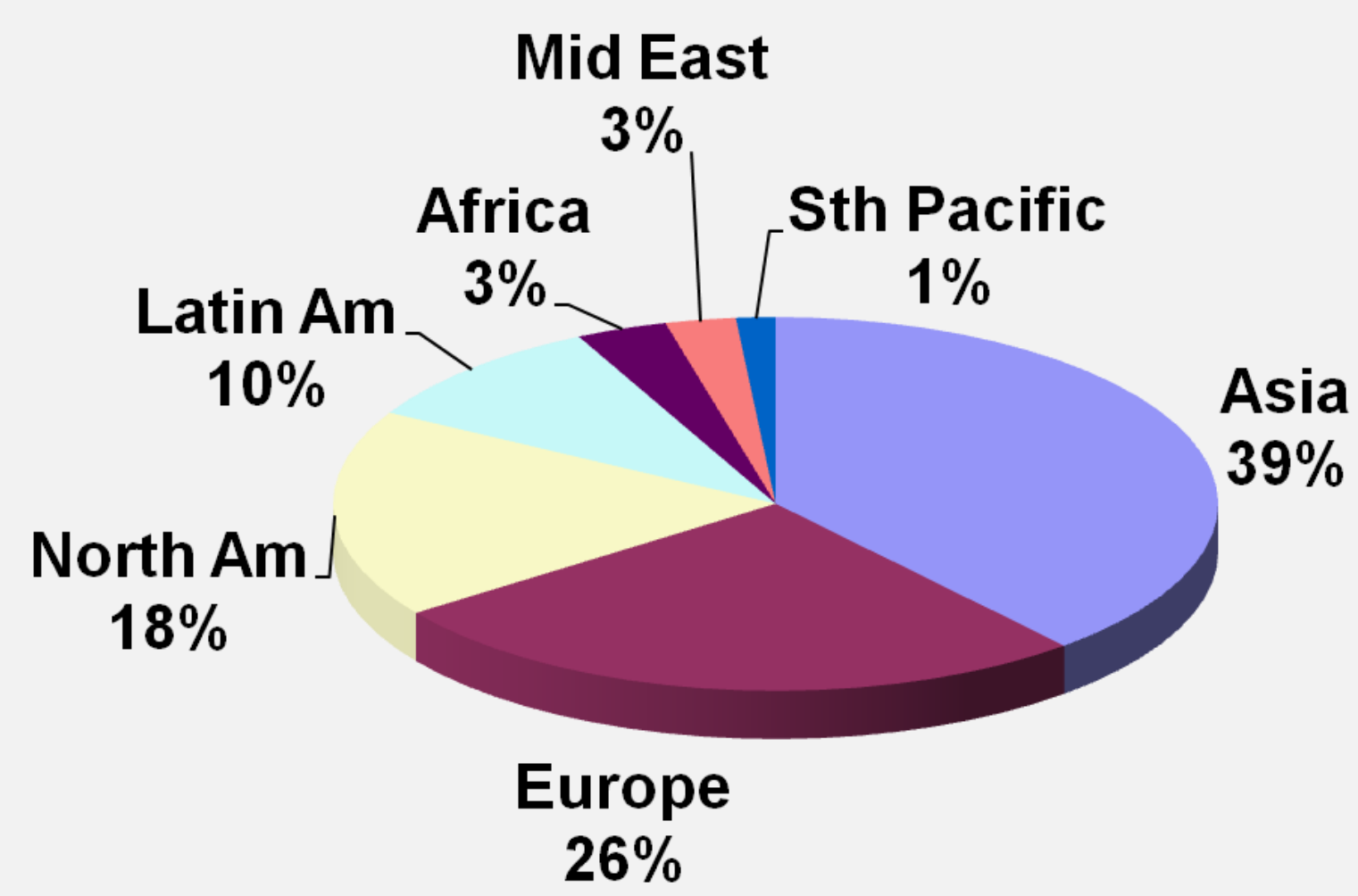
To market their products and/or services globally, transnational corporations are often faced with the question of to what extent they need to tailor their marketing message and their commodities to local culture and regional norms.

The challenge is whether to globalize or to localize. This study attempts to examine this dichotomy from a macro angle by observing international e-commerce websites.

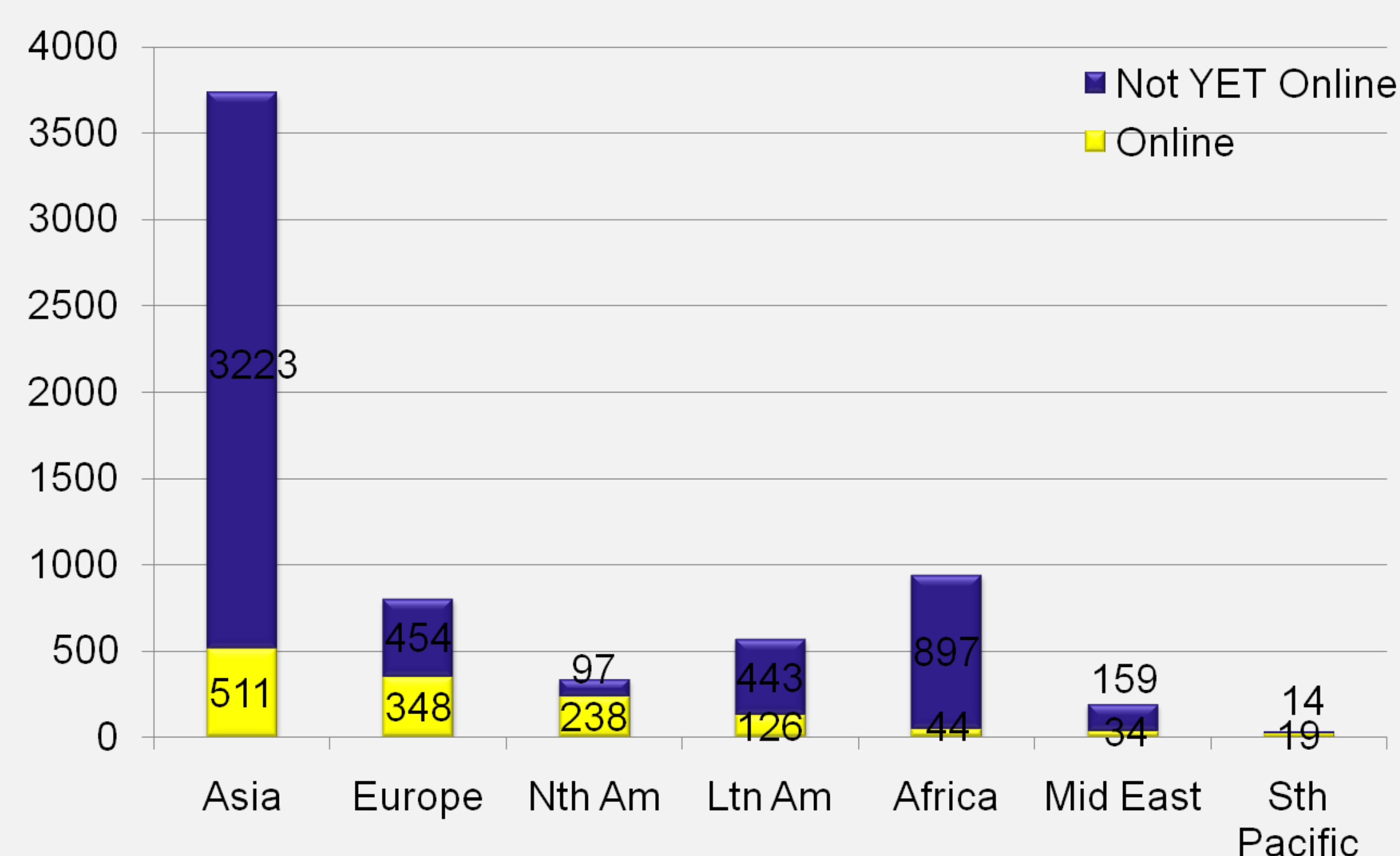
### Objective

To determine whether there are any differences or similarities in the ranking of the e-commerce websites as a result of consumer preferences in these countries. The purpose is to evaluate the global trends in cyberspace and the impact of a culture on cyber consumer preferences.

### How big is the online population?



### Growth potential?



### Methodology

This research compares the top ranking lists of e-commerce Websites from nine countries with diverse cultural background and different stages of national development. The countries included and the top 5 websites in each country are:

US	India	China	Mexico	Germany	France	Pakistan	Japan	Indonesia
yahoo.com	yahoo.com	baidu.com	google.com.mx	google.de	google.fr	yahoo.com	yahoo.co.jp	yahoo.com
google.com	google.co.in	qq.com	live.com	ebay.de	skyrock.com	google.com.pk	google.co.jp	friendster.com
myspace.com	orkut.com	sina.com.cn	msn.com	google.com	msn.com	orkut.com	fc2.com	google.co.id
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facebook.com	rediff.com	163.com	yahoo.com	youtube.com	live.com	google.com	youtube.com	blogger.com



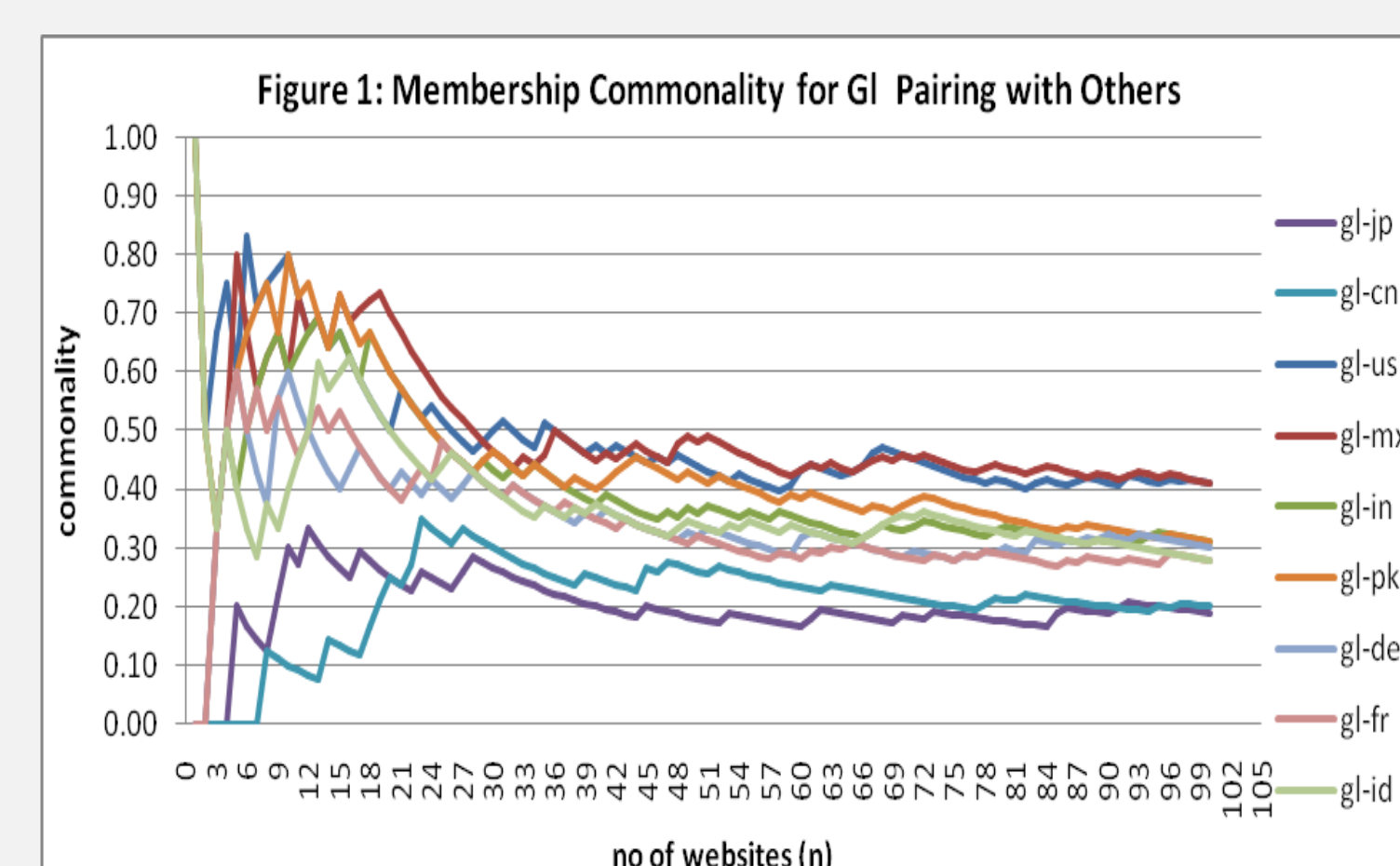
### Metrics used to measure similarities/ differences

#### 1. Membership Commonality Matrix

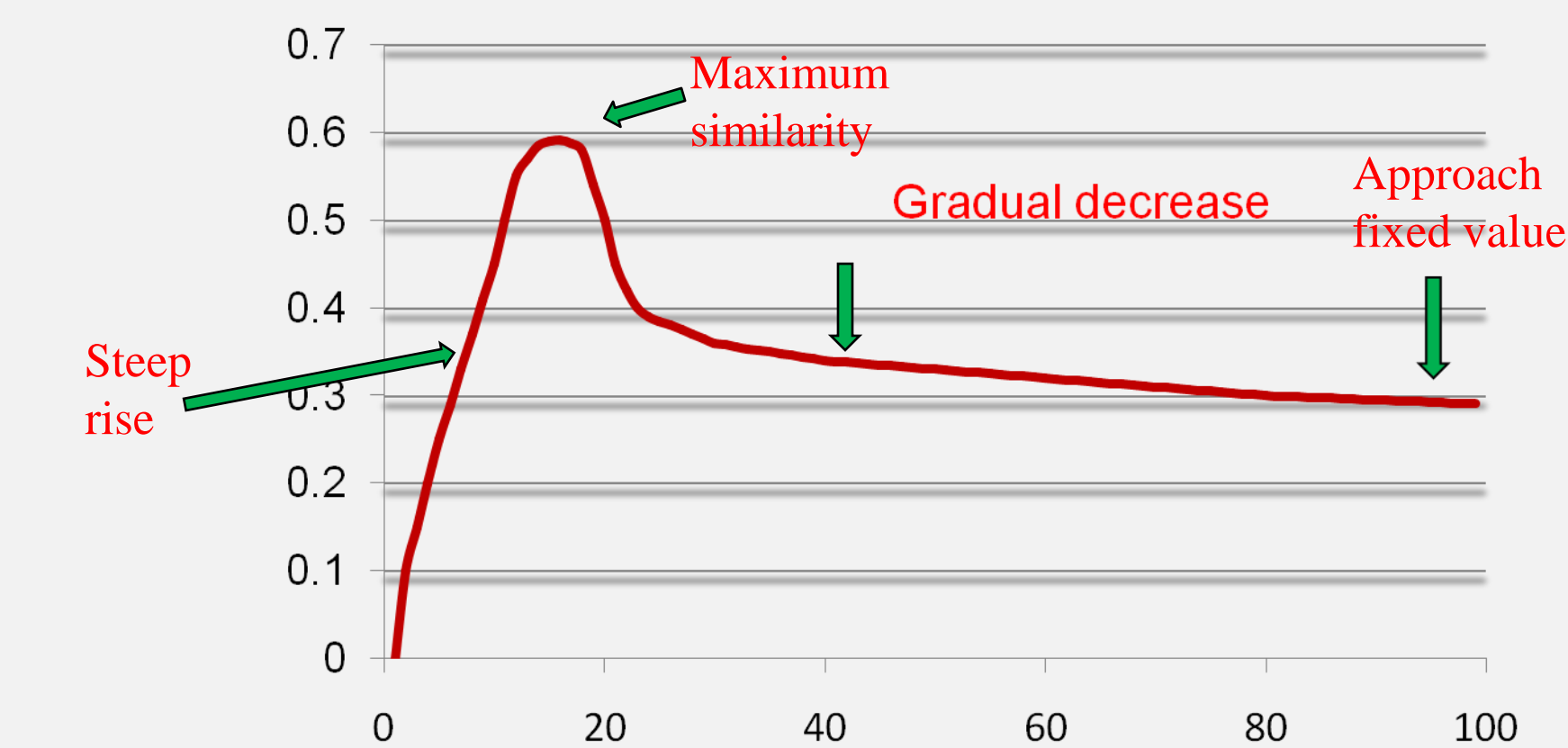
How many sites in two particular country lists are common ?

	us	mx	in	pk	de	fr	id	jp	cn
us	1	.39	.33	.35	.27	.22	.31	.16	.08
mx		1	.26	.29	.27	.25	.29	.16	.08
in			1	.46	.20	.19	.26	.12	.10
pk				1	.22	.20	.34	.13	.09
de					1	.19	.22	.12	.08
fr						1	.18	.13	.08
id							1	.12	.08
jp								1	.08
cn									1

#### Membership commonality graph



### A Global Trend: common feature of all curves



- Initial rise of commonality to maximum, till n=15
  - Dominated by Web giants-uniformity
- Decrease in correlation as n increases
  - Starts to show diversity
- Converge to groups of value when n is large
  - Regional culture/norms come into play

#### 2. Rank correlation of common sub-lists

- To what extent the ranks of 2 common sub-lists are similar?
- Kandall's Tau (Spearman's Rho)

#### 3. Degree of discordance in rank order

- To what degree do 2 sub-lists disagree with each other?
- A new metric was introduced

### Trends identified

- Small difference between USA & Mexico list
- Similar small difference between India and Pakistan, and Pakistan and Indonesia list
- Largest difference with Japan & China
- The remaining ones all in between.

### Conclusion

- The commonality between country specific website ranking is very high in first 15 ranks, demonstrating a global trend.
- There is an overall trend that the top 15 websites preferred by consumers in all countries are global websites
- As n increase, the proportion of global websites decreases and regional websites increases.
- The culture of a country has a significant impact on the consumer preferences for websites, and the content of the website
- Similar culture countries depict similar consumers preferences for website.

### Scope for further research

Based on the findings of our existing study, we would believe that there would be large differences in the design, as well as content, of websites in countries with different cultures. Therefore, to identify the impact of culture on website design, we plan to study country-specific websites of a particular transnational corporation. We expect to find differences in the websites in high-context cultures like Mexico and Arab countries, and those in the low context cultures like Germany or Scandinavian countries.