**Reflective Summary**

This group assignment gave us the chance to socialize, learn, and expand our thinking horizons through group discussions that provided an opportunity for brainstorming. Group learning is based on the principle of cooperative learning, which allows students in small groups to work together in the pursuit of new knowledge (Wahl, 1999). Cooperative learning is one of the most effective learning techniques, leading to greater achievement and productivity among learners because learners feel involved and ‘own’ the learning process due to the numerous opportunities that are present for self-expression (Beck, Chizhik& McElroy, 2005). In a cooperative learning environment, learners are more caring and supportive of each other, developing committed relationships and showing greater psychological health due to the reduced performance pressure. Research shows that a cooperative learning environment provides the necessary impetus that stimulates the connections between the tight interactions that are needed for the formation of new and complex concepts in learners (Neale, Carroll & Rosson, 2004). Our group assignment provided our group with the chance to establish and foster a cooperative learning environment, something that we implemented, helping us to achieve positive learning outcomes. However, cooperative learning presents some challenges, which if intervention measures are not implemented, that can reduce its effectiveness in some study environments (Dikici & Yavuzer, 2006). Although cooperative learning generally leads to positive outcomes, sometimes student achievement in cooperative environments is not significantly better compared to non-cooperative environments (Lou et al., 1996). In addition, the efficacy of cooperative learning depends on a group being cognizant of the need and value of the approach (Liang, 2004). Considering that we live in an individualistic society the biggest challenge was to ensure that none of the group members was freeloading and not contributing to the group work (Bower & Richards, 2006).

In group assignments, it is important that all group members engage fully in the group’s work by ensuring that everybody is motivated to become and remain an active participant because engagement leads to greater achievement (Akey, 2006). The motivation of members of our group could be described using the attributional theory of motivation framework that was developed by Weiner (1985). The attribution theory deals with the way people explain the events in their lives and how they deal with the consequent emotions and behaviors of their explanations. To enhance motivation, our group set clear goals and gave challenging assignments to each group member that a member had to research extensively on and present to the group. This is because when learners are tasked with completing tasks that are just within their abilities, they are likely to be more motivated than when engaging in easy tasks (Bandura & Cervone, 1986). The need for a learner to gain competence in a given task is one of the strongest bases for motivation (Newmann et al. 1992). By allocating each group member an area where she needed to be an expert so that she can share with group members, we were able to maintain the group’s high levels of motivation.

1. **Brand Analysis**
2. **Brand And Ad Summary**

Coca-Cola is one of the leading multinationals with a presence in virtually all the countries on earth and hence it is faced with the challenge of marketing the same product – the Coca-Cola soft drink – to people from different cultural backgrounds. To address some of the challenges posed by the cultural differences in each of the countries that Coca-Cola operates, the company has had to use a local approach to advertising by tailoring the advertising message to suit local preferences. Therefore, ads from each of the countries that Coca-Cola operates in are often different, containing features that are resonant with the local culture rather than having a one-size fits all ad.

1. ***Coca-Cola Rickshaw Ad India (2014)***

The 49-second ad is about two young women who have just missed a bus and are likely to be late for their exams. Lacking an alternative means of transport, they take an offer for rickshaw ride that is driven by a healthy young man who takes a sip from a bottle of soda before driving them to their destination, overtaking the bus that the women had missed along the way. The rickshaw’s driver had been sleeping on his rickshaw, which is surprisingly well-adorned, before being woken up by another man holding the bottle of coke, which he takes and pops open apparently with his thumb. One of the women holds the rickshaw’s driver bottle of Coke all the way through their perilous journey through the crowded streets and returns it to him as soon as they alight from the rickshaw. As the women walk away from the rickshaw, there is a closing shot of the driver taking a long draught from the bottle of Coke, and the ad ends with the hash tag ‘Open Happiness’

1. ***Coca-Cola “Big Game” Commercial – America Is Beautiful (2014)***

The one-minute ad has a background song sung by different people in different dialects accompanied by a series of scenic shots of the American country ranging from the forest, to the mountains as well as the sea in addition to shots of different people engaging in different activities. The ad has a diversity of faces as well as ages with faces of the young, middle aged and the old all represented in the panorama and ends with the hash tag ‘America is Beautiful’

* ***Coca-Cola Australian Summer Commercial (2010)***

The one-minute ad is set on the beach where a young couple is lying on the beach acting bored, with no communication between the man and woman. Suddenly a group of young people runs past the couple startling them, and rushes into the sea. The young couple joins the young people and all head to sea where apparently there is a Coke bottle-shaped platform built in the sea that also acts as a wind tunnel. The young people take turns to throw themselves on the wind and are blown upwards and away, dropping into the surrounding ocean. There is a shot of one of the young people unfastening a coke bottle while floating in the wind and creating a soda spray which washes some of his friends who are floating in the wind tunnel. There closing shots of the bored young man now contentedly taking a Coke as some of his new friends continue to be blown from the wind tunnel. The ad close with a shot of the young people sharing Cokes around the base of the tunnel and ends with the hash tag ‘Open Happiness’.

1. ***Coca-Cola Ad China***

The Coca-Cola ad in China plays on the perceived Chinese dominance in the production industry, where China is an acknowledged world leader in production. The ad celebrates the Chinese success in becoming the biggest and best producers of nearly every kind of good and service on the planet, from industrial goods to soft services like production of music. The ad begins with scenic shots of a busy motorway, a walkway full of busy people and a busy intersection where people with the ubiquitous motorcycle are rapidly moving. There is a scene of busy factory workers with a shot of Chinese characters standing for ‘Made in China’ and a busy port where the goods are taken for export. However the ad explores the question of whether the Chinese are as successful in creating happiness, just as they are in creating other goods and services, considering that happiness is something that can be created. There are scenes of public and intimate moments suggesting how the Chinese can create happiness. The ad ends with an exhortation for people to open Coke bottles and create happiness, suggesting that from the new year and moving forward, the Chinese should put their minds to creating happiness and be the biggest and best ‘producers’ of happiness in the world, just as they have conquered nearly every aspect of manufacturing.

1. ***Coca-Cola Hello Happiness Ad UAE***

The two minute and forty-eight second Coca-Cola ad for the UAE is unique because it is more of a story or documentary than a quick ad. It tells of the story of the immigrant South-Asian workers who come every year in their droves to work in the booming construction industry in the Arab country as a way of improving their livelihoods and those of their families back home. The ad focuses on one of the biggest problems that the immigrants’ face – the need to keep in touch with family and relatives back home and the prohibitive costs that are involved in calling, considering that the laborers earn an average wage of $6 per day while the cost of making an international call is on average $0.91 per minute. This makes it impossible for the laborers to keep inconstant touch with their families back home, although they would wish to call. The ad is a reflection of the corporate social responsibility initiatives of the Coca Cola company because it shows how the company designs a special phone booth that uses Coca-Cola bottle tops to make calls, rather than money. The booth allows a caller to call for a maximum time of three minutes every time they insert a Coca-Cola bottle top. The initiative, premised on the concept of bringing extra minutes of happiness for every coke taken, allows the laborers to call home for three minutes at the cost of a single bottle top.

1. **Cross Cultural Aspects In The Ads**

There are a number of cross-cultural aspects that are evident in the ads and one of the ways that cross-cultural analysis can be done is through the use of content analysis, which allows for the analysis of matter in an ad within the context in which the ad is made and aired (Krippendorff, 2004). Since all of the ads are audio-visual in nature, a linguistic approach is useful in analyzing how words are used in the ads to help pass the message overtly or subliminally (Myers, 1994). In addition, the semiotic approach is useful in analyzing the visual components of an ad with a view to relating them to the wider cultural themes and concepts within a given context (Ahmed, 2000). In the Indian ad, it is interesting to note that despite the apparently hot temperature, the woman does not take a sip from the Coke bottle that the rickshaw driver gives her. In India, it is culturally unacceptable to share bottles and the ad takes care not to offend the cultural sensibilities of Indians. In addition, the amount of contact between the men and women in the ad is extremely minimized because it is culturally wrong for people to have a public show of affection or even for the opposite sexes to have close public contact. Thanks to the success of Bollywood, the ad uses two well-known Indian film stars, giving it a touch of glamour and instant appeal in a country where the movie stars are revered.

It is interesting that the Australian Coca-Cola ad has only young white participants who are all healthy looking, which is a way of subliminally targeting consumers with the message that taking soda, which is medically unhealthy, is not necessary harmful to their health. The exclusivity of the images is also as an acceptance that mainstream Australia is not racially diverse and remains mainly white hence the targeting of the white population. In contrast, the Coca-Cola ad for the US is highly diverse, containing not only a variety of races but also a medley of dialects. This is an acknowledgement of the reality that America is a land of immigrants, who have come from all corners of the world to settle in the country. The ad also celebrates the unity of the country despite the diversity by implying that irrespective of race or ethnicity, every individual is an American first and anything else later. In all of the ads, there is an implicit suggestion that taking a Coke not only gives happiness but also is instrumental in giving a person the energy to be physically active.

The Chinese ad plays on the stereotypes of the Chinese people as being too numerous, working like ants and being extremely efficient in doing non-emotional tasks. There are shots of congested motorways, walkways and junctions which have been fast forwarded, creating the illusion of a place that is in hurry, and where frenetic activity is the norm. To the Western mind, it is difficult for the Chinese to be truly happy, considering that they live in a country with considerable restrictions on the freedom of people to express themselves. The ad is an attempt to ‘cheer’ up the Chinese in anticipation of the coming New Year, asking them to make a new year resolution of applying themselves in the pursuit of happiness as well as they do in the production of goods and services. The diversity of the Chinese is much better than that for UAE because there are people with different ages and sexes, although the predominant image is that of young Chinese.

The UAE ad reflects the social conservatism of the Arab countries and all the images that can be seen on the screen are exclusively of males with not a single image of a woman. The diversity of the ad is also relatively limited as all the people featured are able-bodied males who range between young adults to middle-aged. Although the men featured are laborers working in a desert with sweltering heat, it is interesting to note that all of the men are well-covered and there are no shots of the men at work. This may be a tactic by the company to avoid addressing the thorny issue of laborers rights and working conditions in the Middle East, as well as avoid the danger of showing ‘naked’ men working in the sites, images that the conservative elite will strongly disapprove.

1. **Ethics Of Meeting Customer Needs**

Consumer needs and preferences are varied and are shaped by the cultural context as well as the government regulations that may govern the choices that are available to individuals. With increasing  consumer awareness, there has been an increase in the need to link ethical conduct to the bottom line to ensure that companies conduct their business in an ethical manner (Sanyal, 2010). The assumption is that the market place ought to be a place where consumers have the ability to make their own choice on the products they want to purchase without being limited by the owners of production (Quinn, Mujtaba & Cavico, 2011). However, the phenomenon of globalization is increasingly leading to the homogenization of the market with ‘international standards’ being increasingly applied to production of goods around the world. Ethical considerations demand that companies are sensitive to customer expectations in terms of social issues and the environment such that the products that they bring to the market place are not offensive to consumers (Kotler, 2006). However, when a company uses one product to address different markets, it is not possible to be sensitive and responsive to customer’s needs because the standards or needs of one market may not be the same for another market. The denial of choice to consumers through the use of a single product with no local variations is unethical and needs to be addressed.

1. **Buyer Behavior Theories**

An analysis of the Coca-Cola ads shows that the cultural theory of buying behavior is one of the theories that form a framework on which the ad campaigns are built. The concept of culture is wide and varies from the micro-culture which is shared by the smallest social collectives to the supra-culture, which is shared by nations (Srnka, 2004). Culture is instrumental in forming a person’s behavior and moderating wants, making it necessary for firms to be cognizant of cultural nuances if they are to be successful. The Coca-Cola ad campaign is customized to reflect local cultural concerns, for example, the India ad is devoid of a public show of affection or sharing. Secondly, the campaign uses the theory of cognitive dissonance to obtain new customers, maintain current ones and grow its sales. Cognitive dissonance is created by logical inconsistencies, inconsistencies between attitudes and behaviors or between two sets of behavior, or through disconfirmation of strongly held beliefs (Loudon & Della, 2002). For equilibrium to be reestablished, the dissonance must be resolved to remove the tension that the individual experiences. The ads create dissonance by using images of healthy, happy beautiful or handsome people to promote drinking of the soft drink. This is in stark contrast to the medical warning that taking of soft drinks may be detrimental to an individual’s health and may lead to obesity.

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