



Bridging Worlds: Exploring the Application of Cultural Dimensions in Cross-Cultural Advertising

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Abstract

This research explores the symbolic and linguistic components of advertising through a cross-cultural lens. Initially, the author reviews existing cross-cultural theories and synthesizes prior research on advertising within the context of cross-cultural interactions. Subsequently, the investigation focuses on advertisements from a series of globally recognized brands. Employing cross-cultural theories, with a particular emphasis on the cultural dimension theory, the author deconstructs the selected advertisements. The findings indicate that there are discernible differences in advertisements targeting Chinese consumers versus those in Western societies, attributed to varying cultural dimensions, including individualism versus collectivism and power distance, among others. The research concludes with actionable recommendations for businesses on crafting cross-culturally resonant advertising campaigns.

Subject Areas

Language Education

Keywords

Cross-Cultural Advertising, Cultural Dimensions, Linguistic Symbolism

1. Introduction

In the era of globalization, advancements in communication technology have significantly simplified the process of information exchange. Advertising, as an international marketing strategy, has emerged as a form of cross-cultural communication in our interconnected world. At its core, advertising is a cultural phenomenon that disseminates not only commercial messages but also influences and

shapes cultural values. Like news, advertising is crucial as it details a product's attributes and functions while also imparting cultural messages, which can profoundly influence consumer mindsets and behaviors [1].

Drawing on Hofstede's cultural dimension theory, which has been extensively applied to analyze cultural disparities and intercultural communication, this study will examine the cross-cultural communication elements within advertising by comparing the slogans of the same products in China and the US. According to [2], economic rivalries among major economies, especially those relevant to mainstream social values, ways of expressing ideas and cultural spirits, can be seen as cultural battles. It is, therefore, essential for scholars to scrutinize advertising from a cross-cultural perspective, leveraging it as a strategic advantage in economic, political, and other competitive arenas.

2. Literature Review

For this study, the author employed keywords such as "cross-cultural advertising," "cultural dimensions," and "linguistic symbolism," uncovering a substantial body of research articles, particularly from the period between 2014 and 2024. This suggests a growing interest in cross-cultural advertising research, yet indicates a scarcity of studies, highlighting the need for further exploration and development in this field.

After a meticulous review and filtration of the collected literature, it is evident that the majority of research papers on cross-cultural advertising are produced internationally. The following is an expanded discussion based on the provided context and search results, structured to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of cross-cultural advertising research.

In the dynamic landscape of global marketing, the role of culture in advertising has become increasingly pivotal. As brands strive to connect with diverse audiences, understanding the intricacies of cross-cultural communication has never been more critical. This systematic overview aims to provide a comprehensive synthesis of the literature on cross-cultural advertising research, highlighting key international and domestic contributions, and identifying areas for future exploration.

2.1. International Research Insights

Dahl's [3] systematic review of cross-cultural advertising research underscored the pervasive influence of Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory. This framework, which categorizes cultural differences along several axes, has become indispensable for advertisers seeking to navigate the complexities of cultural nuances. The reliance on Hofstede's work indicates a recognition of the need for a structured approach to understanding how cultural values can shape the reception and impact of advertising messages.

Majid's [4] comparative analysis of Swedish and Pakistani television advertisements illuminated the importance of cultural context in the content of advertising.

By examining the cultural similarities and differences, Majid's study underscored the necessity for advertisers to tailor their messages to align with the cultural norms and values of their target markets, thereby enhancing the relevance and effectiveness of their campaigns.

Amatulli *et al.* [5] delved into the cross-cultural strategies employed by enterprises in Anglo-Saxon countries, focusing on the integration of semiotic and linguistic elements. Their investigation revealed the importance of creating advertisements that are not only linguistically but also culturally resonant, suggesting that a holistic approach to cross-cultural communication is essential for achieving universal acceptance.

Okazaki and Mueller [6] identified cultural values as a central theme in cross-cultural advertising research. They noted a methodological preference for content analysis and surveys among researchers, which underscores the significance of gaining cultural insights to shape effective advertising strategies. This preference indicates a recognition of the need for a deep understanding of cultural values to inform the development of advertising campaigns.

Nilsson and McCahan [7] conducted a qualitative study on semiotics and cross-cultural marketing, discovering that visual aids, such as colorful images, significantly boost sales targeted at foreign customers in Sweden. Their findings highlight the power of visual communication in overcoming linguistic barriers and appealing to a diverse range of consumers, suggesting that visual elements can play a crucial role in cross-cultural advertising success.

Recent international research has demonstrated the extensive application of Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory in the realms of cross-cultural advertising and business English. A recent literature assessment reveals that Hofstede's framework is frequently utilized to evaluate advertising strategies and their outcomes within diverse cultural settings [8]. A meta-analysis has shed light on the influence of Hofstede's cultural dimensions within technology acceptance models, underscoring their relevance for the integration of technology in business communication and advertising [9]. Furthermore, the translation of business advertising slogans between Chinese and Western contexts has been explored under Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, aiming to surmount cultural barriers and facilitate effective message dissemination [10]. These research efforts have collectively enhanced our comprehension of the impact of cultural differences on advertising strategies, consumer behavior, and business communication. The application of Hofstede's theory has deepened our understanding of how cultural dimensions shape advertising and business communication and has provided empirical support for communication strategies in the global marketplace.

2.2. Domestic Research Contributions

The domain of cross-cultural advertising research in China has witnessed significant advancements, reflecting a nuanced understanding of cultural dynamics and their impact on advertising effectiveness.

Chinese scholars have actively integrated multiple theoretical frameworks to enhance cross-cultural advertising research. Notably, Hofstede's cultural dimension theory has been widely adopted, alongside conceptual metaphor and blending theories, to dissect the role of cultural factors in advertising language and metaphor [11]. This integrative approach has facilitated a more comprehensive analysis of advertising messages across different linguistic and cultural contexts, for the research has discussed the implications of the findings for advertisers, offering guidance on how to create more effective cross-cultural advertising campaigns, including recommendations on language use, visual cues, and the importance of cultural sensitivity.

Research has highlighted the importance of clarity and precision in advertising to prevent misinterpretation and cultural insensitivity. Quan and Zhu [12] have contributed to this understanding by analyzing vague language in Chinese and English advertisements, revealing disparities in cultural values and underscoring the need for advertisers to consider these differences.

The challenges of translating advertisements across cultures have been addressed by Zang [13], who proposed methods to bridge linguistic and cultural barriers. This research is particularly relevant in a globalized world, offering practical solutions for the accurate translation and cultural adaptation of advertising messages for different markets.

Li Juan [14] has enriched the comparative study of English and Chinese advertising languages by providing a framework that compares and contrasts the cultural elements embedded in advertising. This research has offered valuable insights into leveraging cultural factors to create more effective cross-cultural advertising campaigns.

Chen [2] has noted the relative lack of research in intercultural communication within mainland China, indicating a significant research gap. This observation suggests a rich opportunity for scholars to delve into the intricacies of cross-cultural advertising specific to the Chinese context. Future research is encouraged to focus on understanding China's unique cultural dynamics and their influence on advertising strategies and consumer responses, especially as the global landscape and consumer behaviors continue to evolve.

The systematic overview of cross-cultural advertising research in China underscores the pivotal role of cultural sensitivity in developing effective advertising strategies. It is evident that cultural values significantly shape consumer perceptions and responses to advertisements. Future research should continue to explore the intersection of culture and advertising, particularly in the context of globalization and increasing consumer market diversity. By doing so, scholars can contribute to the development of more nuanced and effective cross-cultural advertising practices. The current study aims to enrich the literature by employing qualitative methods to compare advertising slogans targeting Chinese and Anglo-Saxon populations, providing insights into the effectiveness of cross-cultural advertising strategies and enhancing the theoretical and practical understanding of

the field.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1. Definition of Culture and Cross-cultural Communication

Yu posits that culture encompasses a collection of shared ideas, experiences, and practices that are transmitted across generations within a society. Culture is characterized by Ning as “a negotiated set of shared symbolic systems that guide individuals’ behaviors and incline them to function as a group” (p. 6). Zeng [15] offers a succinct definition, viewing culture as a dynamic force capable of disseminating and spreading information, facilitating both vertical (inter-generational) and horizontal (among communities) information exchange.

Intercultural or cross-cultural communication is characterized by the exchange of information among individuals from distinct cultural backgrounds. Chen [2] describes cross-cultural communication as occurring when a message sent by an individual from one community is received by an individual from another. In the context of advertising, this involves multinational companies influencing customers across diverse cultural contexts to achieve various sales objectives.

A pivotal aspect of cross-cultural communication is the recognition of cultural differences between the communicating parties. Information encoded in one culture must be decoded within the framework of another. Zeng [15] emphasizes that the primary goal of studying intercultural communication is to understand how individuals from different cultures can step beyond their cultural comfort zones and attempt to convey their thoughts in a manner that resonates more closely with the cultural perspectives of their counterparts.

3.2. Hofstede’s Theory of Cultural Dimensions

Dutch psychologist Geert Hofstede proposed the Cultural Dimensions Theory in the 1970s, which provides a framework for understanding cultural differences among various societies. The theory defines several dimensions, including individualism versus collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity versus femininity. As research progressed and the theory was refined, Hofstede added a fifth dimension—long-term orientation versus short-term orientation. These dimensions reveal the differences in values and behavioral patterns between cultures by comparing the cultures of different countries and regions [16]. Therefore, mastering these dimensions is crucial for better intercultural communication, especially in the business environment.

This research primarily utilizes Geert Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions Theory, which warrants a concise overview.

1) Individualism vs. Collectivism: Societies with individualistic inclinations prioritize personal and familial well-being, while collectivist societies emphasize community relationships and shared interests.

2) Power Distance: This concept reflects the extent to which less powerful members of a society accept power inequalities. Western societies, valuing personal

ability, exhibit low power distance, whereas Asian societies, influenced by their social systems and values, often show high power distance, indicating a greater acceptance of power hierarchies.

3) Uncertainty Avoidance: It pertains to a society's strategies for coping with uncertainty, with some opting for formal procedures and others for more informal approaches.

4) Masculinity vs. Femininity: Masculinity is associated with traits like competitiveness and assertiveness, while femininity encompasses qualities such as modesty and care for others. This dimension also addresses the gendered division of roles within a society.

5) Long-term vs. Short-term Orientation: This dimension examines how cultures prioritize past experiences and future goals versus immediate concerns.

Hofstede's framework is instrumental for researchers in both quantitative and qualitative analyses of cultural differences, profoundly influencing the field of cross-cultural communication and marking a significant milestone in its study.

4. Case Analysis

This chapter aims to describe and elaborate on specific advertising examples by using Hofstede's cultural dimension indexes. A series of brands released advertisements targeting audiences from Western societies and those in mainland China. The author intends to extract cross-cultural elements in each advertisement by analyzing semiotic and linguistic information in detail. The decision to select the following advertisements as research targets was made for several reasons. Firstly, there are numerous research findings focusing on elaborating cultural differences and their effects on business, sales and consumption, which indicates that the research basis is strong and the research references are sufficient. Secondly, the discrepancies between Chinese culture and Western cultures are fairly distinct in terms of a vast array of aspects such as historical development, social structure, and so on. Thirdly, the comparison and contrast between Chinese advertisements and Western advertisements are meaningful, for they are beneficial for business and cultural communication between both Chinese society and Western society. Moreover, this research analysis is critical for scholars and businesspeople to explore Chinese and Western markets further.

4.1. Long-term vs. Short-Term Orientation

Samsung Galaxy S series mobile phone advertisements in the Chinese market, it often emphasize the lasting performance and durability of mobile phones as well as the continuous exploration and innovation of future technologies. For example, it will highlight the long battery life of mobile phones, which can meet the needs of users for long-term use, reflecting the attention to long-term use value. When promoting the mobile phone's camera function, it not only shows that clear and high-quality photos can be taken immediately, but also implies to consumers that this mobile phone can accompany them to record every important moment in life,

whether it is now or for a long time in the future. At the same time, the advertisement will also mention Samsung's continuous investment in technology research and development and how to bring more forward-looking functions and experiences to consumers. This reflects a concept that focuses on the future, pays attention to long-term development and long-term value, and conforms to the relatively obvious long-term orientation characteristics in Eastern culture. That is, people are more inclined to consider long-term interests and goals and are willing to invest and wait for future returns.

However, as to Samsung Galaxy Note series mobile phone advertisement, in advertisements in the US market, it may be more focused on emphasizing the direct and immediate experience and satisfaction that mobile phones can bring to users at present. For example, it will vigorously promote the idea that the powerful processing speed of mobile phones can allow users to immediately enjoy a smooth gaming experience and fast multitasking, highlighting that mobile phones can meet people's urgent needs for efficiency, convenience, and entertainment at present. The advertisement will also emphatically render the fashion sense and uniqueness of the mobile phone's appearance design to attract consumers to pursue the current individual expression and fashion trends, reflecting a greater focus on enjoying and being satisfied at present. This conforms to the relatively short-term orientation characteristics in Western culture, that is, paying more attention to immediate interests and enjoyment, pursuing immediate satisfaction and effects, and having relatively less long-term planning and consideration for the future.

4.2. Collectivism vs. Individualism

In essence, Coke Cola's advertising dichotomy reflects a nuanced understanding of cultural values, aligning with collectivist ideals for the domestic market and individualist ideals for international consumers, particularly in Western societies.

The beverage company's advertisement for Chinese customers in 2020 shows a scene of a family gathering to celebrate the Spring Festival. There are old people and children. Everyone is smiling and sitting around the table. The table is filled with a sumptuous New Year's Eve dinner. The Coca-Cola beverage is very conspicuous as it is placed in the center of the table. The advertisement highlights family reunion, the warmth of kinship, and the festive and joyful atmosphere. It emphasizes that Coca-Cola is an indispensable part of such a reunion moment. It can add joy and warmth.

This advertisement conforms to the values in Eastern culture that attach importance to family, kinship, and collective reunion. Creating a warm family scene, triggers emotional resonance among consumers and makes people buy Coca-Cola to celebrate reunion during the Spring Festival. It reflects the cultural characteristics of collectivism, that is, paying attention to collective interests such as family and groups. Individual consumption behavior is also influenced by the collective atmosphere and emotions.

In terms of the Coca-Cola "Mountain Top" advertisement for Western societies,

the scene of the advertisement is on a beautiful mountain top. A group of young people are vigorously engaging in various outdoor activities such as rock climbing, cycling, and skateboarding. During the sports process, they enjoy the refreshing feeling and happiness brought by Coca-Cola. Everyone shows a state of individuality and freedom. The advertisement's views are vivid in color, full of dynamism, and the background music is also very rhythmic. The entire advertisement emphasizes the individuality, vitality, freedom, and pursuit of self of young people, reflecting the values of individualism in Western culture, that is, paying attention to the uniqueness, autonomy, and self-realization of individuals. It encourages people to bravely show their individuality and pursue their favorite lifestyle. Coca-Cola is depicted as a beverage that can accompany and support this individualistic attitude towards life.

4.3. Power Distance

The following takes Mercedes-Benz as an example, in Mercedes-Benz advertisements in China, the brand's noble status and the respected experience brought by the product are often emphasized. The advertising picture may show a successful business person sitting majestically in the rear row of a Mercedes-Benz. The driver is focused on driving in the front. The rear row space is spacious and comfortable with luxurious configurations. People around cast envious and respectful glances. The creation of such a scene highlights the high status and authority of the owner of the Mercedes-Benz, which conforms to the relatively high power distance characteristic in Chinese culture. In China, people have a certain understanding and emphasis on status and hierarchy. Through such a presentation method, advertisements meet consumers' psychological needs to show off their status and enjoy the respect of others. At the same time, the advertising copy may also emphasize the century-old inheritance, excellent quality and leading technology of the Mercedes-Benz brand, implying that consumers who buy a Mercedes-Benz car not only own a means of transportation but also obtain a symbol of success and authority. This reflects that in the Eastern high-power distance culture, consumers have a strong demand and preference for products that can reflect their relatively high social status and identity.

In Mercedes-Benz advertisements in the United States, however, more emphasis is placed on the product's own performance, innovative technology and the sense of freedom and control it brings to the driver. The advertisement may show the excellent performance of the vehicle under various extreme road conditions, such as high-speed driving, sharp turns, and crossing complex terrains, emphasizing the vehicle's power, handling and safety. The driver in the picture is often in control of the steering wheel by himself or herself, enjoying the fun and passion of driving, without deliberately emphasizing the driver's special status or hierarchical difference with others. The advertising copy will focus on how the vehicle's advanced technology can enhance the driving experience and allow the driver to freely explore the road and pursue personal adventures and experiences. This

reflects that in the Western low-power distance culture, people pay more attention to personal abilities and experiences, pursue equality and freedom, and for product promotion, they focus more on the actual value and satisfaction that the product can bring to the individual rather than emphasizing obvious hierarchical and status differences through the product.

4.4. Uncertainty Avoidance

The following takes Apple as an example of advertising cases that reflect the differences in the cultural dimension of uncertainty avoidance in its launches in Eastern and Western markets:

In China, Apple's advertisements often emphasize the stability, reliability and perfect after-sales service of products. For example, when promoting the iPhone, it will highlight the fluency and stability of its system, and there will not be problems such as freezes or crashes easily, making consumers feel that using this mobile phone can avoid the uncertainty and troubles caused by equipment failures. The advertisement will also show Apple's extensive after-sales service outlets and professional technical support teams in China, conveying to consumers the message that there is no need to worry about subsequent use problems after purchasing Apple products. This fits the characteristic of relatively high uncertainty avoidance in Chinese culture, that is, people are more inclined to pursue stability and reliability and hope to reduce the risks brought by uncertainty by purchasing guaranteed products.

In Western markets such as the United States, Apple's advertisements may be more focused on emphasizing the innovative experience brought by products and the exploration of future technologies. In the advertising pictures, various imaginative and creative scenes will be presented to show how products break traditions and break through conventions and encourage consumers to try new functions and experiences. For example, when promoting the new MacBook, the advertisement will highlight how its powerful performance can help users carry out creative design, programming, and other innovative work, emphasizing that products can stimulate users' creativity and spirit of exploration. As for some minor flaws or uncertainties in product use, the advertisement will not be overly emphasized. This reflects the relatively low uncertainty avoidance characteristic in Western culture. People are more willing to accept a certain degree of uncertainty and even regard it as an opportunity for innovation and progress. They pay more attention to pursuing fresh, unique experiences and personal achievements rather than overly worrying about possible problems.

4.5. Masculinity vs. Feminism

Taking SK-II as an example. In SK-II advertisements in China, it often emphasizes the perfect transformation of women's skin and the magical effects brought by products to meet women's pursuit of beauty. For example, it will show a woman who originally had some skin problems (such as dullness, roughness, etc.). After using SK-II products for a period of time, her skin becomes crystal clear and radiant.

The female image in the advertisement is usually gentle and elegant. Through the use of SK-II products, they not only obtain improvement in external skin, but also add confidence and charm, and can show a better self in life and work. At the same time, it will also emphasize the high quality and technological content of the product, so that consumers believe that this is a reliable skin care product that can help them realize their beauty dreams.

This is because, in Eastern culture, especially in China, women pay more attention to their own external image. Beautiful appearance is regarded as an important manifestation of value. This advertising method conforms to the expectation of the gentle and elegant image of women in Eastern culture and the pursuit of beautiful skin. It reflects the importance that women in Eastern culture attach to their own external image. By using high-quality cosmetics, they can enhance their charm and confidence, which meets the expectations of Eastern consumers for cosmetics to bring beautiful transformations.

In SK-II advertisements in the United States, it may place more emphasis on women's individuality and self-expression. The female image in the advertisement may be more independent and confident, and brave enough to break through traditional beauty standards. For example, it will show a woman who can show her charm with her unique style and confident attitude in various different scenes such as the workplace and social activities. SK-II products help her show individuality. The advertisement may highlight how the product helps women maintain healthy skin while not being bound by traditional aesthetic concepts, and encourages women to bravely be themselves and pursue the life and image they really want.

It is obvious that western culture pays more attention to individualism and the flaunting of individuality, and encourages people to break the routine and show their unique qualities. This advertising style reflects the admiration for women's independence, confidence, and bravery in expressing themselves in Western culture. It emphasizes that women should not be limited to traditional beauty definitions. Instead, they should use cosmetics and other products to show their individuality and unique charm, which meets the needs of Western consumers for cosmetics to help them achieve self-expression and individuality.

5. Strategies for Addressing Cross-Cultural Differences in Advertising

In the realm of global marketing, understanding and addressing cultural differences is paramount for success. This chapter will explore strategies to navigate the cultural divide between Eastern and Western markets, drawing on insights from Hofstede's cultural dimensions and qualitative analyses of advertising practices, including the seminal works of Amatulli *et al.* [5] and Dahl [3].

5.1. Long-Term vs. Short-Term Orientation

Eastern cultures, with a strong long-term orientation, value perseverance and

future benefits. Strategies should emphasize the longevity and enduring quality of products. For instance, Samsung's focus on the long battery life of its phones in China aligns with this cultural trait. In contrast, Western markets, with a short-term orientation, prioritize immediate gratification. Therefore, advertising in the West should highlight instant benefits and current satisfaction, as seen in Samsung Galaxy Note series' emphasis on immediate user experience in the US. Samsung's advertising campaigns in China and the United States exemplify the brand's strategic approach to aligning with the cultural orientations of long-term and short-term benefits. In China, where a long-term orientation prevails, Samsung's "Power Through the Day" campaign underscores the enduring quality of its smartphones, particularly the long-lasting battery life, which is a testament to the brand's commitment to perseverance and future readiness. The advertisements are designed to resonate with consumers who prioritize reliability and longevity in their product choices. In stark contrast, Samsung's "Do What You Can't" campaign in the United States is tailored to a market with a short-term orientation, emphasizing the immediate user experience and the ability to fulfill desires and achieve tasks on the spot. The focus on the Galaxy Note series features, such as the S Pen and large screen, is a direct appeal to consumers who seek instant gratification and value the current satisfaction that the product can provide.

5.2. Collectivism vs. Individualism

Eastern cultures, such as China, are collectivist, emphasizing group harmony and family values. Coca-Cola's Chinese advertisements, featuring family gatherings, resonate with this cultural norm. To cater to collectivist markets, advertisers should create narratives that celebrate togetherness and community. Western societies, with a stronger individualistic streak, value personal achievement and self-expression. Coca-Cola's "Mountain Top" ad, showcasing individual freedom, appeals to Western individualism. Another example is that in China, there is the "Reunion Dinner" campaign during the Chinese New Year, which resonates deeply with the cultural norm of collectivism, emphasizing the importance of family gatherings and the role of Coca-Cola in fostering communal harmony. The advertisement's narrative and visuals are carefully crafted to evoke the warmth and unity of family, which is a cherished aspect of Chinese society. In contrast, Coca-Cola's "Taste the Feeling" campaign in the West celebrates individualism by showcasing a diverse range of personal experiences and emotions associated with the brand. The focus on individual stories and the personal benefits of enjoying a Coca-Cola align with Western values that prioritize personal achievement and self-expression. The campaign's narrative and visual elements are designed to connect with consumers on a personal level, highlighting the brand's role in enhancing individual identity and life experiences.

Advertisers targeting Western audiences should thus highlight personal benefits and the enhancement of individual identity.

5.3. Power Distance

In high-power distance cultures like China, respect for authority and status is significant. Mercedes-Benz's Chinese ads portray the vehicle as a symbol of success and high status, catering to this cultural aspect. To succeed in such markets, advertisers should position their brands as symbols of prestige and accomplishment. In low-power distance cultures like the US, where equality and personal achievement are valued, Mercedes-Benz emphasizes the vehicle's performance and the driver's control, appealing to individual capabilities and freedom. Mercedes-Benz's advertising campaigns in China and the United States provide a compelling illustration of how a brand can tailor its messaging to align with the cultural expectations of high-power distance and low-power distance societies. In China, where deference to authority and status is a cultural norm, Mercedes-Benz's "Made in China, For the World" campaign leverages the influence of respected Chinese figures and celebrities to associate the brand with prestige and success. The visual narrative of the advertisements, which often places the vehicles in luxurious settings or alongside significant cultural symbols, reinforces the car's status as a symbol of accomplishment and respect. Conversely, in the United States, a society that values individualism and personal achievement, Mercedes-Benz's "The Best or Nothing" campaign focuses on the vehicle's performance and the driver's experience. The ads highlight the car's advanced technology and handling, celebrating the individual's skill and the freedom that comes with driving a high-performance vehicle. This approach appeals to the American ethos of self-reliance and personal excellence.

5.4. Uncertainty Avoidance

Eastern cultures, particularly China, exhibit high uncertainty avoidance, seeking stability and reliability. Apple's Chinese ads highlight product stability and comprehensive after-sales service, addressing this cultural need. In Western cultures, where uncertainty is more accepted, Apple emphasizes innovation and exploration. Advertisers should tailor their messages to either reassure or excite, depending on the cultural context. Apple's advertisements in China underscore the stability and reliability of its products, such as the iPhone, by showcasing how it serves as a dependable tool in various aspects of daily life. The "There's an iPhone for Everyone" campaign uses narratives that depict individuals thriving in their professional, educational, and familial roles with the aid of their iPhones, thereby instilling a sense of security and predictability that resonates with the Chinese audience. Conversely, in Western markets, where uncertainty is more readily accepted and there is a greater emphasis on individualism and self-expression, Apple's "Shot on iPhone" campaign celebrates the spirit of innovation and exploration. This campaign features compelling visual content created by users, highlighting the iPhone's advanced camera technology as a means to capture and share one's unique perspective of the world. By encouraging users to see themselves as creators and explorers, Apple aligns its messaging with Western values, promoting

a sense of empowerment and inspiration. These tailored advertising approaches not only meet the cultural expectations of their respective audiences but also demonstrate Apple's commitment to creating meaningful connections with consumers across different cultural landscapes.

5.5. Masculinity vs. Femininity

Eastern cultures often have a more masculine orientation, valuing assertiveness and material success. SK-II's Chinese ads focus on the transformational power of their products, aligning with the desire for visible success. In contrast, Western cultures may lean towards a more feminine orientation, valuing quality of life and individual expression. SK-II's US ads emphasize individuality and breaking traditional beauty standards, appealing to the Western value of self-expression. In the context of global marketing, SK-II's advertising strategy has cleverly adjusted to different cultural orientations. In the Chinese market, the "Change Destiny" (改变命运, which means "Change Fate" in English) campaign focuses on showcasing successful women, emphasizing the product's ability to help achieve professional and personal goals. This resonates with the Eastern culture's emphasis on achievement and material success. The portrayal of professional women and the use of red and gold colors in the advertisements echo China's pursuit of prosperity and good fortune. Conversely, in Western markets, particularly the United States, SK-II's "Bare Skin Project" campaign highlights individuality and challenges traditional beauty standards, aligning with Western cultural values that emphasize quality of life and individualism. The scenes of women removing their makeup in the advertisements symbolize a rejection of societal pressures to conform to certain beauty norms, conveying the importance of self-acceptance and the freedom to express one's true self. The use of soft natural lighting and a minimalist aesthetic in the ads presents a more authentic and natural concept of beauty, which is highly appreciated in the Western market. Through these strategies, SK-II has successfully bridged cultural differences and established a profound connection with consumers in different markets.

To effectively address cross-cultural differences, advertisers must understand the cultural dimensions and values of the target market, as detailed by Hofstede's framework and further explored by Dahl [3] in his cross-cultural advertising research. Moreover, advertisers should tailor messages to align with the cultural values and expectations of the audience, utilizing the insights from qualitative analyses such as Amatulli *et al.* [5] on luxury fashion advertising. Next, advertisers are supposed to employ symbols and language that resonate with the local culture, as emphasized by Nilsson and McCahan [7] in their study on semiotics in cross-cultural marketing. For example, colors such as red are flexibly exerted by designers to highlight cultural connotations of certain products in China with the purpose to express well-being and joy. In addition, it is advisable to adapt not only the message but also the visual and narrative elements to make the advertising relatable and effective, a strategy supported by the comprehensive review by Okazaki

and Mueller [6]. Finally, advertisers should continuously test advertising campaigns and refine them based on feedback and performance to ensure cultural relevance, aligning with the practical approach suggested by Majid [4] in his discussion on cultural influence in advertising.

By implementing these strategies, advertisers can bridge the cultural gap, creating campaigns that resonate with diverse audiences and drive global success.

6. Conclusions

Businesses should be attuned to the subtleties of cultural differences when targeting specific consumer groups. Chinese companies, in particular, must carefully design their cross-cultural communication media, as it involves decoding and re-encoding the original message within the target culture's context.

For advertisements aimed at Chinese consumers, it's advisable to highlight elements such as collectivism, high power distance, and long-term orientation, which resonate with their cultural values. Conversely, for international or Western consumers, advertisements should emphasize individual rights, freedom, low power distance, and short-term orientation. Given the dynamic nature of cultural evolution and exchange, companies are encouraged to maintain a flexible and evolving understanding of cultural nuances.

The scope of this study is limited by time constraints and resource availability, focusing on advertisements from only a few companies, which may not offer a comprehensive view of cross-cultural advertising's impact on diverse target audiences. In addition, this study does not fully consider regional differences between China and Western countries. For example, in this study, all Chinese advertising examples are written and spoken in Mandarin, while there are hundreds of dialects in mainland China. The vast field of cross-cultural communication and advertising requires collaborative academic efforts to delve deeply into the subject matter.

The author's focus on recent research interests may have resulted in an incomplete exploration of the topic, indicating a need for further research. With the advent of advanced technology and social media, personalized advertising may emerge as a promising area for future investigation. Future studies could examine how big data technologies can be harnessed to tailor advertisements for influencers and freelancers, such as YouTubers, from a cross-cultural communication perspective.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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