

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Now days, intercultural communication has grown in importance in the modern world makes it possible for individuals to communicate with people from other cultures. Intercultural communication is the concept of a variety of meanings and interpretation. Intercultural communication refers to the process by which individuals from different cultures exchange information and adapt to each other's cultural norms (Ting-Toomey, 2018). The concept includes a number of aspects, including values, language, literature, and art. Because that culture is growing and changes significantly between locations, it is important to understand and adapt to cultural differences in order to reduce the chance of conflicts caused by different perspectives (Zhu, 2021).

In the current globalized era, creating and implementing successful marketing campaigns in several international markets offers significant challenges for multinational companies like Unilever. To guarantee that messages are properly communicated to and understood by audiences with a variety of cultural backgrounds, intercultural communication is essential (Neuliep, 2020). Failing to resolve these communication issues may have an effect on how the campaign is received by customers as well as the performance of the business overall (Zhao, 2019).

The global company Unilever has created many successful international marketing campaigns. However, these successes are frequently followed by severe challenges in cross-cultural communication. The way that marketing communications are received and appreciated can be greatly influenced by different cultural rules, beliefs, and preferences. For example, the criteria of beauty in Asian and Western nations varies significantly, therefore companies such as Dove have to carefully adapt their marketing to these different regions (De Mooij, 2019).

International marketing activities that fail to take intercultural communication into consideration are losing because they don't connect with local audiences. As a result, the analysis of intercultural communication problems and strategies in Unilever's global marketing campaigns is the main goal of this study. This case study will provide understanding of the strategies Unilever employed to overcome challenges and adapt their ads for different markets.

In the context of marketing, intercultural communication refers to adapting messages, media, and delivery methods to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of communications in various contexts. Due to several aspects including language, customs, cultural values, and different perceptions, the challenge gets more difficult. The use of symbols or messages that are well received in one culture may be considered inappropriate or offensive in another culture (Fang, 2017). For companies to deal with cultural diversity, businesses have to develop flexible and adaptable communication techniques. This study aims to determine the essential components of Unilever's intercultural communication strategy by applying content analysis techniques to data obtained from their official website and social media account.

The research is important because it can help multinational companies create and carry out more successful campaigns in international marketplaces. Businesses can enhance their capacity to interact with global audiences more successfully by understanding the difficulties encountered and the strategies they have put action. This will eventually boost the effectiveness of their marketing efforts and overall performance.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

The aim of this study is to provide understanding on:

1. How are intercultural communication challenges analyzed in Unilever's marketing campaigns?
2. What are the strategies that Unilever use in increasing the acceptance of marketing campaigns?

1.3 Scope and Limitation of the Study

Doing study on the previously mentioned topics would be very hard for the researcher. Because of time and knowledge constraints, this research only focused on Unilever's globally marketing campaigns that have been implemented in various markets around the world, such as North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa, during the past five years (2021–2025). With information collected from Unilever's official website, social media platforms, annual reports, and case studies, the main focus is on intercultural communication issues and the strategies Unilever uses to overcome these challenges in the context of international marketing. This study aims to evaluate the success of Unilever's approach to intercultural communication in terms of message adaption, media use, and delivery techniques. But there are disadvantages to this research as well: subjectivity in the analysis, rapid market changes, limited results generalization, dependence on possibly incomplete public domain data, difficulties in understanding linguistic and cultural differences.

The study is limited by the scope of the campaigns analyzed. While it focuses on major global markets, it does not encompass all of Unilever's marketing efforts worldwide, which may include smaller or emerging markets with different cultural dynamics. This limitation restricts the comprehensiveness of the findings and suggests that further research is needed to explore Unilever's strategies in other regions and contexts. To maintain clarity and research feasibility, this study analyzes only a few representative examples from major Unilever brands (such as Dove, Lifebuoy, and Axe) in specific cultural markets. These campaigns were chosen because they are relevant to intercultural communication challenges and have publicly available content.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

Based on the background provided, this study aims to achieve two main objectives:

1. To examine how intercultural communication challenges are reflected and analyzed in Unilever's marketing campaigns.
2. To explore the strategies implemented by Unilever to enhance the acceptance

of its marketing campaigns across different cultural contexts.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research contributes in the form of references and views in the learning process and the world of education that are of value to the following parties:

1. For the Students

In particular, this research will optimize understanding and awareness about effective intercultural communication.

2. For the Researcher

Regarding the researcher in addition to stimulating the researcher's interest in carrying out additional research, the procedure and outcomes of this study offer experience and information that are highly valuable.