Whose cultural values? Exploring public relations' approaches to understanding audiences

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Abstract

As global public relations practice gains momentum, the need to understand and work with culturally diverse internal and external audiences becomes more critical. Global public relations practice requires a reconsideration of audience segmentation frameworks in light of highly mobile, diasporic and multicultural communities. Assuming that global public relations audiences behave based on a singular set of national values is problematic. By interrogating existing audience segmentation frameworks based on the presence or absence of cultural values, this paper examines how multicultural audiences were considered in the development of Australian public relations campaigns.

Introduction

Public relations strategies have focused a great deal on understanding audiences, publics and stakeholders. Public relations process models such as RACE, ROPE and others emphasise the need to analyse audiences to effectively tailor communication strategies to specific audience groups. Several scholars have developed various approaches to define target publics (Grunig, 1997; Cutlip, Center & Broom, 2000; Heath & Coombs, 2006). While these approaches have been useful in describing publics based on their involvement in issues, they seem to neglect the increasing mobility, diaspora and multicultural mix of global public relations audiences. Global public relations audiences are assumed to enact behaviours based on a singular set of national values. But global public relations audiences comprise people of multicultural backgrounds, or who may have migrated from another country, or have parents born overseas. How do we account for these groups of people in developing public relations campaign strategies? How do existing audience segmentation models account for cultural variability? Whose cultural values predominate multicultural audiences?

For countries with multicultural populations such as the US and Australia, audience segmentation requires a more sophisticated understanding of cultural variables and values that would impact on behavioural change. In reviewing the various audience segmentation models that currently exist in public relations literature, this paper will argue that the current models make too many assumptions in its functionalist approach to audiences. To further this argument, this paper will discuss how Australian public relations campaigns approach audience segmentation by focusing on 2008 Golden Target Award winners.

Global, mobile and multicultural publics

Globalisation refers to "changes in technology and the expansion of the economic environment to the world as a whole" (Cheney & Barnett, 2005, p. vii). According to Chase-Dunn (1999, cf. Cheney & Barnett, 2005, p. vii), globalisation has five dimensions namely: common ecological constraints; cultural globalisation; political globalisation; globalisation of communication; and economic globalisation.

The co-existence of people of various cultures and ethnicity is not necessarily a new trend. However advancements in transport, technology, the opening up of national borders, and economic opportunities due to globalisation have increased the mobility of people around the world.

Whether it is because of globalisation or their increased mobility around the world, citizens of different cultural backgrounds now populate the US, Europe and Australia. The US Census Bureau (2004) predicts that by 2050, about half of the US population will be composed of Hispanic, Asian and non-Hispanic whites. In Europe, the OECD (2005) states that Italy and Britain recorded an increase of about 26 percent in migrants. Furthermore the OECD reports that the opening of the European Union has increased migration between European countries. As such, the OECD indicates that people from Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco primarily reside in France, Spain and the Netherlands. The statistics suggest that in the OECD people born in North Africa equal those born in China (OECD 2005, p. 120). The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2006 Census reports that one in four Australians was born overseas and 44 percent of Australians were either born overseas or have at least one parent born overseas. Australia, along with Canada and the United States, is one of the global migration labour markets that recognise that more skilled migrants bring economic benefits to the country (Bonifazi, Okolski, Schoori & Patrick, n.d.).

People who move across different cultures to work or live bring about a different perspective to issues. Instead of a singular perspective, their mobility extends, broadens and expands their views and understanding of the world (Beilharz & Hogan, 2002). Therefore it cannot be assumed that because an individual resides and works in one country, that s/he is originally from that country and necessarily observes the cultural values of their 'adopted' country, a concept referred to as "third culture" (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

Communication practitioners have remarked how segmentation is a major priority especially for those whose companies operate globally (*Strategic Communication Management*, 2006). A 2006 Melcrum study found that 83 percent of its respondents segmented audiences and that more than half felt that segmentation has become a bigger

priority than it used to be. The same study, however, found that most organisations are still "sticking with the traditional methods of segmenting by division, grade, location and access to communication channels" (Thatcher, 2006, p. 26).

A study on Intel's approach to employee segmentation involved focus groups and questionnaires from various employees in nine countries. The project leaders found that the six segments, drawn from combined psychographic and demographic information, were unhelpful in targeting their communication more effectively. Instead, they segmented by country and by business groups (Thatcher, 2006, p. 29). While an improvement from previous segmentation models, particularly in acknowledging the value of language issues, this approach still assumes that people from the same country will respond to similar cultural values. For example, Malaysia, which is one of the countries Intel focused on, has a population comprising 50 percent Malay, *bumiputra*/Indigenous 11 percent, Chinese descent 24 percent, Indian descent 7 percent, and others 7.8 percent (*Index Mundi*, 2008). Moreover, the Malaysian Population and Census 2000 cites that despite 60 percent of the population practising Islam, Malaysia is a multi-faith society where 19.2 percent of followers observe Buddhism, 9.1 percent Christianity, 6.3 percent Hinduism and 2.6 percent traditional Chinese religions (Index Mundi, 2008). Aside from ethnicity and religious differences, there are also regional differences that impact on how people respond to messages.

Acknowledging these differences underpin how multiculturalism is defined: "of or relating to or constituting several cultural or ethnic groups within a society" (Hughes, Michell & Ramson 1992, p.740). And the Australian Government's commitment to multiculturalism is reflected in its policy:

> Australian multiculturalism recognises, accepts, respects and celebrates cultural diversity. It embraces the heritage of Indigenous Australians, early European settlement, our Australian-grown customs and those of the diverse range of migrants

now coming to this country (*Multicultural Australia: United in Diversity*, 2003, p. 6).

A new policy discussion paper refers to multiculturalism as a "policy designed to manage, foster and celebrate cultural diversity" (Victorian Multicultural Commission, 2008, p. 3). Furthermore, the discussion paper continues to suggest that multiculturalism recognises "the diversity of its different cultures within the context of a society that not only respects its members' rights to their culture, faith and identity, but also increases their range of choices as well as contributing to their development and well-being" (p. 3).

Multiculturalism as a concept is usually synonymous with cultural diversity and ethnicity and being multiracial. However, Appelbaum and Ford's (2005) US-based Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) survey seems to have defined multiculturalism by race which assumes that culture is a function of race and vice versa. This assumption is problematic because one's race does not necessarily reflect one's culture. For example, a Chinese person from Mainland China will have a different set of values from a Singaporean Chinese. Similarly a Kenyan national may have a different set of cultural values from a Jamaican. Other terms associated with multiculturalism include diversity, ethnicity, cultural diversity and pluralism. Several scholars (Banks, 2000; Sriramesh, 2007) acknowledged this lack of definitional consensus and observed that the IABC Excellence Project (Grunig, 1992) did not address multicultural issues in public relations.

To establish statistical data on the Australian population's diversity mix, the ABS 2006 census included a category on Cultural and Language Diversity (CALD). This category included variables such as ancestry, birthplace of individual, birthplace of parents, religious affiliation, proficiency spoken in English, language spoken at home, and year of arrival in Australia (ABS 2006).

Combining mobility of publics and globalisation of markets with the fragmentation of mass media further strengthens the question of whether current audience segmentation models are still appropriate. How are cultural variables accounted for when segmenting audiences? How are public relations campaigns acknowledging the multicultural backgrounds of their audiences – or are they? How are the current audience segmentation models recognising the changing and fragmented audiences?

Culture and segmentation

Segmentation attempts to categorise and homogenise groups of people based on several dimensions. However management and communication scholars and practitioners realise that globalisation of markets and mobility of people demand a more sophisticated approach to segmentation.

Several scholars have attempted to relate culture with segmentation; albeit most come from the marketing discipline. Marketing scholars acknowledge the value of understanding cultural nuances, particularly in the context of global business (Blodgett, 2008; Lindridge & Dibb, 2003; Mooij, 2009; Mueller, 2008; Yaprak, 2008). Because contradictions exist on whether 'culture matters' in international business, scholars suggest to focus research not on whether or not national culture makes a difference but "how and when it makes a difference" (Leung, Bhagat, Buchan, Erez and Gibson, 2005, p. 368). These authors also warn against errors of universal and cultural attributions, which public relations scholars must heed. Universal attribution errors "assume that all workers share the same orientations and will respond similarly to managerial practices" while cultural attribution errors "involve establishment of stereotypes based on nationality" and assume that "all members of a particular nation (or ethnic group) will behave in accordance with that stereotype" (Leung, et al., 2005, p. 370).

In arguing that the role of experience and representation of place are somewhat neglected in segmentation theory, Bauder (2001) suggests defining culture beyond the "objective or fixed

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categories of behavior, traits, or values" (p. 40). Instead he posits that culture is defined, negotiated and resisted. He also distinguishes cultural identity as being self-ascribed or imposed by others. Cultural identity that is imposed by others tend to reflect a notion of domination, while cultural identity as lived experience "should not be conflated with class, race, ethnicity or gender" (Bauder, 2001, p. 43). This idea that cultural identity is dynamic resonates with the view that culture is sensitive to environmental influences (Leung et al., 2005).

In developing an intercultural theory of public relations, Sha (2006) explored the notion of cultural identity vis-à-vis the segmentation of publics. In particular she examined how cultural identity related to elements of the situational theory of publics, namely level of involvement, constraint recognition, communication behaviours, and active publics. She found that cultural identity linked with four of the five elements of the situational theory except for constraint recognition. Sha emphasised that "Intercultural public relations also facilitates the process of stakeholder segmentation because organisations are encouraged to learn the salient cultural identities avowed by publics, rather than merely ascribing identities to various publics" (p. 61, italics by this author). Sha further suggests that by acknowledging cultural identity of segmented publics, intercultural public relations allows organisations to communicate in a more culturally sensitive and more effective manner. In her study, she calls for further research in the area of culture and audience segmentation. This current paper responds to this call.

Culture, diversity and public relations

Diversity in public relations scholarship is not new. Where previously diversity in public relations was discussed in terms of gender and race, the impact of diverse groups on domestic and international practice has finally been acknowledged (Toth, 2009). The interactions of culture and public relations are discussed in the context of practice in different countries (Culbertson & Chen, 1996; Sriramesh, 2004, 2007; Sriramesh & Vercic, 2009; van Ruler & Vercic, 2004). However, recent attempts to extend international public relations scholarship emerged from a need to understand the practice in a more globalised context (Curtin & Gaither, 2007; Molleda, 2009). But Sriramesh (2002) posed the strongest call for multicultural public relations practice and scholarship by suggesting "to establish a holistic and multicultural body of knowledge of PR that truly reflects the political, social, economic and cultural differences that make non-Western regions such as Asia a different, and challenging, environment for PR practice" (p. 65). In a later piece, he defined the opportunities for future research in public relations and culture as follows: expand the dimensions of societal culture, include interpersonal trust, and understand relationship patterns (Sriramesh, 2007). As he noted, most studies on public relations and culture solely focused on Hofstede's cultural dimensions. While useful and easy to replicate, those studies tend to find commonalities rather than nuances across cultures. Furthermore, Sriramesh (2007) felt that quantitative measures cannot adequately provide an understanding of cultural variables such as values, behaviours and attitudes. For example, while relationships in Western societies are usually defined based on 'business' networks, relationships in Asian and other cultures tend to integrate business and familial relationships.

Earlier attempts at diversity studies in public relations tended to focus on gender and racial issues and the impact of societal culture on public relations excellence (Sha & Ford, 2007). However they argue that diversity goes beyond those two areas. They recognise that diversity has two dimensions: primary (age, race, sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity, and physical abilities) and secondary (language, income, marital status, parental status, hobbies, interests, values, geography, religion, and military experience). The authors lament the lack of public relations research using these secondary dimensions. Moreover, they suggest two additional dimensions that need to be

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integrated in diversity studies – avowed identity (how we see ourselves) and ascribed identity (how others perceive us) (Sha & Ford, 2007).

Similarly, the notion of context as it relates to communication and culture, is an integral and yet least examined area of public relations. Sriramesh (2007) observes that "despite its importance to success in communication, the relationship between high and low context in culture remains one of the under-researched concepts in public relations" (p. 520). Edward Hall (1976) introduced the notion of low context and high context cultures. According to Hall, high context cultures rely on the physical environment or internal social context to understand the message. In high context cultures such as Japan, messages are almost always implicit and indirect. Communicators in high context cultures tend to use symbols, tone and other contextual devices to convey what they mean. Conversely, people in low context cultures rely on the explicit meaning of the words to express their ideas. Communication is direct and does not rely on symbols or contextual factors. Germany is an example of a low context culture.

This paper hopes to address this gap by focusing on how cultural contextual factors are considered by Australian communication practitioners. If one in four Australians is either born overseas or has at least one parent born overseas, 25 percent of the population is likely to have other cultural values that influence their understanding of and response to messages.

Audience segmentation

Public relations scholars have developed several models for segmenting audiences and stakeholders. These models range from the mass communication segmentation models used in advertising and marketing to the issue-based situational theory of publics. A 2006 Melcrum Study revealed that most communication practitioners still segment using traditional methods (*Strategic Communication Management*, 2006). Practitioners, however, seem to prefer using the stakeholder approach (Freeman, 1998) or Esman's linkages (cf. Grunig & Hunt, 1984). **Table 1** presents some of the key segmentation models that appear in most public relations textbooks.

Table 1: Summary of Segmentation Models in Marketing & Public Relations Literature

Type of segmentation	Scholar/s	Segmentation categories
Mass perspective	Cutlip Center & Broom (2000)	Demographics Psychographics Geographics Media usage Covert power Position/roles Reputation (influentials)
Marketing Advertising	Kotler & Keller (2006)	Demographics Product Usage Values Attitudes & Lifestyles (VALS) Preferred media usage Emotions
Stakeholder	Freeman (1998)	Management Owners Suppliers Employees Customers Local community

Situational theory of publics/Issue based	Grunig (1997);	All issue Apathetic publics Single issue Hot issue
	Dewey (in Grunig & Hunt, 1984)	Non publics Latent publics Aware publics Active publics
	Hallahan (in Kim et al., 2008)	Active Aroused Aware Inactive
	Rogers (in Kim et al., 2008)	Innovators Early Adopters Early Majority Late Majority Laggards
Linkages	Esman (in Grunig & Hunt, 1984)	Enabling Functional input/output Normative Diffused

Linkages

Esman's linkages classify publics based on their functional relationship with the organisation (cf. Grunig & Hunt, 1984). There are four key linkages: enabling; normative; functional input and functional output; and diffused. Enabling linkages are groups of people who allow the organisation to exist, and these include governments who allow public sector organisations to operate, or investors for private sector firms. Normative linkages represent groups that experience similar issues as the organisation. Functional input linkages comprise groups of people who bring something into the organisation, such as suppliers and employees, while functional output linkages are described as those who take something from the organisation, such as students and customers. Diffused linkages represent other groups of people not belonging to the other three linkages. This segmentation model is useful to describe first order functionality but how do we distinguish between employees with varying cultural and professional backgrounds? Would they not respond and react to organisational messages

differently? Would their occupation and employment be sufficient to make assumptions of their perspectives and predicted response to messages? What if their individual values do not align with their organisational values?

Freeman's stakeholder theory

Another common segmentation framework is drawn from Freeman's Stakeholder Theory (1998). Freeman defines stakeholders as "those groups who are vital to the survival or success of the corporation" (p. 129). He also offers a broader definition to include groups or individuals who "can affect or is affected by the corporation" (p. 129). These stakeholders include the following: management, owners, suppliers, employees, customers and the local community. This framework shares commonality with Esman's linkages in that it focuses on the role individuals have in relation to the organisation. Critiques on this form of segmentation include a neglect of possible role overlaps such as employees who are residents of the community, and the assumption that their 'professional' values override their individual and cultural values.

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Situational theory of publics

This theory argues that publics can be identified based on how an issue or problem affects them. Grunig and Hunt (1984) drew from Dewey's typology of publics: latent public are groups of people who face similar issues but do not detect a problem; aware publics are those who recognise there is a problem; active publics are those who organise, discuss and do something about the problem; and non-publics are those who do not belong to any of the other groups. Grunig (1997) built on these concepts and developed the situational theory of public: all issue publics who are active on all problems and issues; apathetic publics are those who do not care about any of the issues; single issue publics are interested in only one part of the issue; and hot issue publics are active on issues that already generate extensive media coverage. Determining whether an issue needs attention can be partly influenced by one's cultural values, however the generality of the categories, and the process by which issue identification occurs, have not discussed the impact of cultural values.

Mass communication and marketing

Another common approach to segmentation used by public relations and communication practitioners includes the standard demographic, geographic and psychographic information. While this framework may provide the closest reference to cultural variables, most public relations campaigns would only go so far as describing race/ethnicity, nationality or religious backgrounds of the target publics. These demographic descriptors do not necessarily account for how individuals perceive particular messages. Psychographics, which aim to describe people's values, attitudes and lifestyles, may provide a cultural reference, however the early categories derived from this refer mainly to how quickly individuals adopt a new idea. Thus, psychographic segmentation has produced labels as 'early adopters', 'laggards', etc.

A recent review of current theories of segmentation argued that different strategic management stages require either the cross-situational or situational approaches (Kim, Ni & Sha, 2008). Cross-situational or static approaches refer to identifying groups of people who have an interest in the organisation and who have resources and power to help the organisation, and require a stable environment. Included in this category are approaches used in marketing/sociology (demographics, psychographics, geographics, covert position, reputation, membership and role in decision process), business management stakeholders (employees, consumers, investors, community) and public relations linkages (enabling, normative, functional, and diffused).

Situational or dynamic approaches, on the other hand, refer to identifying publics based on how issues impact on them. These include Grunig's situational theory of publics (all issue, apathetic, single issue, hot issue), Dewey's typology (latent, aware, active and non-public), Hallahan's involvement-knowledge matrix (active, aroused, aware and inactive) and Rogers' diffusion of innovation groups (innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards) (Kim et al., 2008).

The authors (Kim et al., 2008) propose a two-stage segmentation process that either builds on or combines both approaches. This review highlights the simplicity of current segmentation models and the need for more sophisticated approaches. While the authors' proposal to apply combined approaches is commendable, they still do not seem to acknowledge that people's response to issues may be influenced by their cultural values.

While the current segmentation models are useful for first order identification of potential markets, audiences and publics, the descriptions do not necessarily account for cultural influences brought about by one's upbringing, travel and/or experiences in life. So the current segmentation models tend to assume audiences who live in the same neighbourhood, go to the same church and have the same colour skin, will think alike; and if they have the same values they will tend to behave and respond to messages in the same way. But is this a safe assumption? What if these same people have different educational backgrounds? What if some of them regularly travel overseas and

some don't even have a passport? Will their attitudes towards media messages not be influenced by their travels and/or exposure to radical university lecturers? Is segmentation an attempt to homogenise groups rather than allow for diversity?

In developing public relations and communication campaigns and strategies, identifying key audiences is a vital component of the process. Budgets and decisions are made based on these crucial information. But how much time and effort is really put into identifying and prioritising publics? To what level of segmentation and description are audiences segmented? How are cultural variables accounted for in the process of understanding audiences?

To further explore these questions, I examine recent Public Relations Institute of Australia (PRIA) Golden Target Award winners. In particular, I focus on the campaigns' approaches to identifying target publics based on the nature of their campaign and how they addressed these issues in their campaign strategies.

Methodology

The Golden Target Award (GTA) winning entries were accessed via the PRIA website which has a direct link to the University of Technology Sydney Library electronic database (http://www.lib.uts.edu.au/gta/). Using the search filters 'Golden Target Award' for award type and '2008-2008' for the year, 12 links emerged. These 12 entries were the winners in their respective categories, namely: Corporate Social Responsibility; Environmental, Investor Relations, Health Organisation, Prescribed Medicines, Low Cost/Pro Bono, Public Affairs, Consumer Marketing, Special Event/Observance, Internal Communications, Government-Sponsored Campaign, and Community Relations.

For the purpose of this analysis, this study examined language, religion, citizenship and ancestry as cultural factors based on the ABS definition of cultural diversity. While the four factors are still rather general, they are reasonable indicators to consider when developing campaign messages, particularly

those that aim to change behaviours. For example, if 16 percent of the population spoke a language other than English, how is this considered in developing a public relations campaign that targets community residents? Or in planning for a special event, how are diverse cultural traditions addressed?

Results and discussion

Of the 12 entries, only three entries specifically mentioned cultural variables in their campaign entries: i-did Campaign (Prescribed Medicines); Opening of Mandurah Line (Special Event/Observance); and Western Sydney Cycling Network (Community Relations). The other campaigns did not mention acknowledging cultural variables in their research, situation analysis, target publics and communication strategies. Most notable in its absence were the campaigns that related to corporate social responsibility (Bluescope Steel's Tank a Day Challenge), environment (Sustainability Victoria's Don't be a Tosser, Bin your Butts), health (National Prescribing Service Limited's Get to know your Medicines), and consumer marketing (Sanitarium's National Vegetarian Week). All of the campaigns used the stakeholder approach in segmenting their audiences. Five of the campaigns nominated 'media' as a target public.

The three campaigns that referred to some understanding of cultural nuances among its target publics were: i-did Campaign, Opening of Mandurah Line, and Western Sydney Cycling Network. These campaigns are briefly discussed.

The first campaign, i-did Campaign, was undertaken by Edelman for their client CSL Biotherapies. As a supplement to an advertising campaign, Edelman developed a "strategic media consumer campaign" to encourage 18-26 year-old women to visit their doctors and ask about the free cervical cancer vaccination. The campaign document defined three main target publics: consumers (all women aged 18-26; influencers of women aged 18-26—family and friends); healthcare practitioners (general practitioners); and stakeholders (partners Johnson & Johnson and Stayfree; advisory

board members, federal government). Although they are rather general segments, the use of 'influencers' seem to suggest an awareness that health issues, particularly regarding vaccination and doctors, may be subject to cultural predispositions or cultural traditions. Quite interestingly, the Implementation section described the i-did Ambassadors as "selected 10 celebrities and 'everyday' Australians from various cultures, professions, and ages." Of these 10 female ambassadors, one was an Aboriginal Young Australian of the Year and another was an Asian music journalist. Diversity was defined based on their ethnicity and occupations, although the ambassadors' cultural backgrounds were not included in any of the messages.

The second campaign, Opening of Mandurah Line, was a special event undertaken by the Public Transport Authority's communication team. The event was organised to celebrate the completion of the 72-kilometre railway between Perth and Mandurah and to encourage the community to patronise the railway line. The target publics included: PTA staff; contractor companies; local government, Members of Parliament, representatives of other stakeholders and advisory committees; general public; and media. These groups were targeted primarily to acknowledge their contributions to the project. As part of third segment, the campaign document specified 'environmental advisory groups, liaison committees for each station, Aboriginal groups and railway historical groups'. In the Western Australian context, however, this segmentation may be justified because the majority (68 percent) of the population is Australian-born (ABS 2006). Furthermore, the overseas-born people come primarily from the United Kingdom and New Zealand and English is spoken by 80 percent of the Western Australian population. The indigenous community represented 3 percent of the state's population and is higher than the overall Australian representation of 2.2 percent.

The third campaign, Fairfield City Council's Western Sydney Cycling Network, was billed as a Community Relations programme. The campaign aimed to encourage local residents to use the cycle network through the city to address health, recreation and transport issues. The campaign document identified that the residents have lower than average incomes, relatively poor health and rely on cars because of the lack of public transport. The Situation Analysis acknowledged that more than half of its residents were born overseas, mostly in non-English speaking countries. The project also involved residents and unemployed people to repair bicycles donated by residents for use in the scheme. Measures of success were identified as the number of bicycle donations, number of project volunteers, number of bicycles borrowed, and media coverage. The target publics included: state and local government agencies and officials; local schools; local and high profile cyclists; local and broader community; non-English speaking members of the local community; and media. The communication strategy included a media strategy and a 'parallel ethnic communication strategy'. The media campaign comprised media releases translated into Arabic, Chinese, Italian, Spanish and Vietnamese and distributed to community language media with photographs. It also included an article in the Council newsletter, which is translated into seven community languages.

Although the campaign seems to be premised on translations as the basis of the ethnic communication strategy, it is still the only 2008 GTA award winner that acknowledged the cultural diversity of the community. Understandably it is a community relations campaign so it would be extremely remiss of the Council if they were not aware of their constituents' backgrounds. While the research component of the communication campaign recognised the importance of using ethnic languages, it does not seem to have investigated how the ethnic communities thought about bicycles as an alternative means of public transport. While bicycles are common means of transport in China, cars are also viewed as a status symbol in many developing countries. Furthermore, the research did not identify, nor did the implementation state, how the community views cycling as a health solution. Although the evaluation noted a 100

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percent success rate in terms of lending all 100 bicycles within the first three months, the longer term issue of improved health and residents' mobility may need to be further evaluated. It would also be interesting to find out the ethnic community's response vis-à-vis the overall community response.

Reviewing these cases demonstrate how public relations campaigns apply very basic and simplistic frameworks in audience segmentation. Most of the campaigns analysed in this study used Freeman's stakeholder or Esman's linkages frameworks. Furthermore, identifying 'media' as a target public also reflects a media relations orientation and is itself problematic because 'media' are not the groups of people whose behaviours need to be changed, but rather are the conduits for sharing the information with the community. Factors such as cultural identity and diasporic influences that impact on media usage or issue salience are not currently considered. For a particular group or public to be communicated with requires an understanding of what media they use. However none of the campaigns reflected this. For example, assumptions are made that a particular ethnic group will necessarily read an ethnic community newspaper regardless of their age group. What if younger Chinese Australians prefer to use online newspapers or respond better to Facebook events?

Conclusion

The results of this analysis confirm earlier assertions that Australian public relations campaigns apply very basic functionalist approaches to segmentation. Although three of the 12 award winning campaigns made some references to acknowledging cultural diversity, cultural factors were limited to representations of race and language. Even more worrisome is that the cultural perspectives relating to vaccination, cycling, and public transport were assumed.

Despite the success in achieving communication goals and objectives, it is worth asking whether the campaigns strategists themselves ever considered segmentation strategies beyond the basic stakeholder

framework. As expected, community and health communication programmes tend to recognise the multicultural audiences and their varying communication needs. While ethnic representation and translation are useful tactics to getting the messages understood, research into the community's cultural perspectives need to be undertaken first. For example, how do the different community members view vaccinations for women? What could be the religious and ethical considerations among young women from particular ethnic communities, or second-generation families regarding vaccination? How will these issues be addressed in the campaign? What are the cultural implications of using 'influencers' for health-related issues?

This paper highlights that despite Australia's pride in being a multicultural society, multicultural publics are hardly addressed in Australian public relations campaigns. It would be useful to ask whether this 'neglect' is based on the assumption that migrants assimilate and should not be 'targeted' for their difference. Or do migrants 'suppress' their values in order to assimilate to the host country's values? Or could it be that 25 percent is not considered a 'big' enough market to allocate resources? Admittedly public relations educators and scholars are also guilty of this omission. The frameworks that appear in key public relations textbooks do not acknowledge cultural variables beyond the descriptive factors of race, religion, language and values.

However, these results must be approached with some caution. Because this paper is of an exploratory nature, certain limitations must be considered. The GTA case studies on the UTS database are shorter documents without the necessary attachments. As such, the analysis was constrained by what was available on the online database. Furthermore, the campaign documents do not necessarily reflect the 'processes' that could have occurred in the research and development phases. So while cultural variables may have been considered, they may not have made the final strategy when faced with the practicalities of budget and time. Nevertheless, analysing Australian public relations campaigns for their approaches to

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segmentation, and in particular cultural factors, provides a useful start in exploring this area further. As mentioned earlier, the complexity of multicultural and diasporic communities require far more sophisticated approaches to audience identification. Unfortunately more sophisticated segmentation requires more time, money and resources, to which many practitioners have limited access. The question is not whether we can afford to put any more time or resources into segmentation, but whether we can afford not to. Further research needs to develop these sophisticated frameworks to acknowledge our more global, more mobile and multicultural communities, especially in the context of increasingly fragmented audiences.

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