Alcohol in Popular Culture in China and Mexico

Student Group #9
Introduction

Key Message:
• Alcohol consumption is defined by culture and reflected through advertising

Method:
• Compare and contrast cultural values and advertising related to alcohol in China and Mexico
Alcohol Use in China

- Improves communication
  
  “Alcohol can make you bold. Many people can speak out after drinking. Alcohol helps communication and allows people to speak in a more relaxed way.”

  - Anonymous student survey response

- Encourages and enhances friendship

- Used in business meetings and to consummate agreements
Chinese Cultural Expectations

- Part of everyday life; No substantial binging culture
- Don’t often consider the potential negative effects of alcohol
- Self-control and good behavior expected, even when intoxicated
- No “guilt” associated with drinking
Gender Roles

- Women are dramatically less likely to consume alcohol or become drunk than men

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drinking Patterns</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;50mL</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
<td>61.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-100mL</td>
<td>39.2%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;250mL</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With friends</td>
<td>60.7%</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With parents</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gender Roles in China

- Alcohol is generally associated with business and social interactions—Men’s beverage
- Women drink in small quantities and with their parents’ approval—Submission and dependence
- Drinking patterns are changing in places where traditional roles are also changing
China: Rural vs. Urban

Traditional values in urban areas are changing

Higher rates of alcohol abuse, intoxication, and drunk driving in larger cities than in rural areas

Western values are changing Chinese culture and the attitudes toward alcohol and responsibility
Alcohol Use in Mexico

- Relatively low consumption rate
  - Persons 15 and older average 5.4 L of pure alcohol per year
- High proportion of abstinence
  - 46.5% of study participants 18 to 65 years of age claim abstention from drinking
- Frequent / heavy drinking predominant in social situations
Mexican Cultural Expectations

**Drinking occasions**
- Family parties: Families are the building block of society; tight family unity
- With close friends – more common among men

**Attitude toward drinking**
- Little emphasis on negative effects of drinking
- Accepted and expected at gatherings of close groups of people
Gender Roles in Mexico

Breakdown of Abstinence by Sex

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>63.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Drinking population dominated by men

Machismo
• Focused outward demonstration of masculinity
• Reflected in heavier drinking among young and middle-aged men

Women more conventionally assume domestic role
• Expected to remain sober as hostess
Mexico: Socio-Economic

Graph removed due to copyright restrictions. Please see Fig. 1 in Soong, Roland. “Alcohol Consumption in Mexico.” Zona Latina, October 20, 2002.
Alcohol in Chinese Advertising

Before economic reform in 1978, production was kept to a low level and all advertising was prohibited.

Graph removed due to copyright restrictions. Please see Fig. 1 in Zhang, Jiafang. “Alcohol advertising in China.” Asia Pacific NGO Meeting on Alcohol Policy, September 2004.
Communism and Alcohol

In 1998, Ministry of Industry heavily restricted alcohol advertising on TV (2004 source)

Nevertheless, $357M spent on alcohol advertising in 2003, with 11% annual growth

Table removed due to copyright restrictions. Please see Table 1 in Zhang, Jiafang. “Alcohol advertising in China.” Asia Pacific NGO Meeting on Alcohol Policy, September 2004.
Advertising Trends in China

Often represent alcohol, especially beer, at sports events
  • Shows that alcohol encourages social interaction, no binging

Do not use women as advertising objects through sexual exploitation
  • Cultural conservatism, respect

Forbid explicitly advertised drinking
  • Conservatism

Western alcohols promoted with western cultural associations
  • People desire exotic products, willing to pay
China: TV Advertising

Advertise western alcohol with western culture: music, club scene, clothes

Culture and Alcohol

“ Luck” spirits – Jinliufu

• Sponsor of Chinese Olympic Committee

Celebrate Olympic win with Snow Beer

Images from Chinese TV ads removed due to copyright restrictions. Please see slides 8, 9, 13, and 14 in Zhang, Jiafang. “Advertising of alcohol in China.” Asia Pacific NGO Meeting on Alcohol Policy, September 2004.
Alcohol in Mexican Advertising

Pride in culture and diversity, united by Mexican beer


Views towards women

Tequila - Mexico’s unofficial National Drink

North America’s first indigenous spirit

Distilled from the Agave Plant

Descendent of a drink first distilled by the Aztecs called octli or pulque
Mexican Tequila Brands

Don Julio  Patron  Cazadores

Images of Don Julio, Patron, and Cazadores tequila removed due to copyright restrictions.
Conclusion

Consumption habits

In Mexico, alcohol consumption is less widespread but in larger amounts

In China, consumption is more widespread but also more moderate

Gender roles

In Mexico, a lot of male-dominated, machismo advertising

In China, better balance of gender roles: More conservative view of women

Nationalism

Mexico promotes nationalist pride in its advertising

China adopts western culture alongside its own
“The Mexican Spirit Knows No Boundaries”

Sources

7. Youtube!
21G.076 Globalization: the Good, the Bad, and the In-Between
Fall 2009

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: http://ocw.mit.edu/terms.