

# Effects of TV Commercials on Social and Cultural Norms: An Analysis of Viewer's Perceptions

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#### **Abstract**

The present study aim is to highlight the role of advertisements on the audience and violation of social and cultural values. In citing people to purchase goods and services is the main role of advertising. To illustrate the violation of social and cultural values in TV advertisements and measure its impact on the audience, this study employs two different data sets. First, the data consisted of TV advertisements which have been released during the last five years. These ads were analyzed to see the actual instances and measure the extent of violations of social and cultural values in the ads. These ads lead to see the contents of violation of social and cultural norms in our society. The second data base is obtained through questionnaires. SPSS was used for systematic evaluation of the data.

**Keywords:** Commercials, SPSS, questionnaires and audience.

#### Introduction

Advertising is a mirror which reflects the reality in general except for the distorted image of reality at situations. Advertisers promote the beneficial attributes of the product according to the values of society ignoring the harmful attributes of the product which corrupt the purpose of advertising and enables society to digest new values created by the advertiser as explained in recent study by Raza, Bakar, and Mohamad, (2017). While creating an advertisement an advertiser must be very careful, strictly observing the norms and the values of the society, public opinion, traditions and contemporary laws (Chan, Tsang, & Ma, 2015).

For some, Media is yet a threat to local cultures and beliefs. The texts and contents of modern mass media are challenging the generations old customs, traditions, and religious beliefs, which are sacred and not compromise-able. Advertisement present lifestyle of a specific class of society which do not reflect the norms and values of masses, they have nothing to do with this lifestyle, dressing and immoral presentation. Advertising influence consciously and unconsciously our social norms and moral values (Okazaki, & Taylor,(2013). Specific dressing, pop culture and obscenity badly destroying. Social and ethical fabric of society as noted by Devedi, (2017).

In Pakistan, there was the time when it's seemed very strange for a girl or daughter to appear in front of her father, brother without ascarf (*dupatta*). Now a day due to the strong effects of media particularly of advertisement girls are not much concerned to follow their specific social and cultural values.

Ads of cellular companies have immensely affected the old social and cultural set up. In Pakistan commercials of cellular companies are changing the social cultural values frequently at large. For example:few years back a girl having contact with anybody was considered a taboo of Muslim society but at present the commercials of cellular companies have represented this relation openly and as a common practice. Not only cellular companies rather TV ads of different companies are openly showing the clear and free violation of the norm and values of Pakistani society (Raza, & Hussain, 2016). The other sad picture of the reality is that, that no strict action or implementation is done against this violation of social values by TV ads. This research is an attempt to study the audience perception, about violation of social and cultural values in TV advertisements in the perspective of Pakistani culture (Raza, Kaharal, & Bhatti, 2017).

# **Justification of the Study**

It is an area of concern that TV ads are violating social and cultural values and this violation affecting our traditions and norms. Some foreign brands TV ads promoting the western and Indian culture in Pakistan. There is a general perception that TV ads are violating the social and cultural values and it is need of time to aware the people about this. For example: *Ice Lolly - Moore Ice Cream Advertisement* in which a child eats ice cream in washroom sitting on the commode, which is an open violation of our social and cultural values. So, it is very important to study the responsibility of the media with regard to maintaining the social and cultural order of the society. So, the study is unique and is helpful in determining the role of media.



#### **Objectives of study**

The objectives of the study are:

 To analyze the audience perception about the violation of social and cultural values in TV advertisements.

# **Definitions of key Concepts**

The important concepts involved in the present study are defined below:

- Values: Values are collective conceptions of what is considered good, desirable and proper---- or bad, undesirable and improper, in a culture.
- Culture: "Culture is the totality of learned socially transmitted behavior"

#### **Research Questions**

**R.Q** 1-What is the audience perception about the effects of TV ads on social and cultural values?

# **Research Hypothesis**

The hypothesis for the present study is:

• "Audience perceive TV ads influencing cultural and social values negatively"

#### Literature Review

Kerr, Schultz, Kitchen, Mulhern, and Beede, (2015) described that all over the world, consumers play a vital role in sales promotion in marketing. As authors describe in their book that as price -oriented promotions like coupons, price discount, and rebates increase the sale and Marketing managers try to enhance share in marketing to encourage buyers to switch one brand to other. Non -price promotions like sweepstakes, user clubs and premium add excitements may encourage the loyalty of the consumer tothe brand.

Déterminants, et al., (2010) discussed that sophisticated perspective of children lacks in literature displayed on children Television advertising. In many research it is concluded that children watch TV programs & advertisements of their interest with more curiosity than adults (Giles, Liang, Noels, & McCann, 2001). Richardson, Ganz, and Vallone, (2015) further argued that the advertisements displayed on TV leave a colossal impact on the minds of children.

Caillat, and Mueller, (1996) examined the similarities and differences of printed advertising in the United Sates and Sweden. Some 20 years earlier in Untied States of America the content of advertisements was analyzed depicting the significant shift of the values portrayed in commercials of 10 highest paid circulation magazines. 269 American and 275 Swedish ads were incorporated in the study in total, coded by five code forms. In this study, both countries' ads have same variables as, body shape, racial distribution levels of undress depicted, youthfulness, leisure activities, childcare activities, housework and, individuals and their relationships and product categories. The authors concluded that advertisers explore the different aspects of life with private life matters, leisure, and life of individuals and to a lesser extent as families or couples, youth and slender body were the ideal and life is best when there are no racial differences (Hung, & Cant, 2017).

"The influence of Culture on American and British Advertising" compared US and British beer advertising focusing on one product in comparing cultural variables. Beer was considered the most culturally bond product in their study by examining 62 TV advertisements presented by domestic companies on domestic Television channels sample was based on 24 commercials of 12 American brands,38 commercials of 19 British brands. Consequently these were examined for their rhetorical style, cultural values, the occasion of the product usage and advertising appeals (Miles, 1994).

In a research Ritson, Mark and Elliott (1999) explored a contrast between great numbers of prime-time advertisements from the major networks in the 616 US commercials with 486 commercials from Chinese television stations. The commercials were coded and were used two pairs of coders for their representation. They were treated as traditional values. In their findings, in Chinese commercials "individualism", "technology", "economy" and "family" were dominant values while "family" and "tradition" were linked with "modern values" in American Television commercials (Raza,& Waheed 2016).

Twitchell, (1997) and Song, Ahn, and Sung, (2014) in their studies observed a deteriorating trend in work ethics which can be highly supported by examining business journals, advertising in a study entitled "An Advertising Test of Work Ethics in U.K and U.S"., an economic repression is claimed by many U.K and U.S social commentators. Work achievement is less regarded than the pursuit of leisure and affiliation in workforce is a major cause of indigenous decline cause by liquor, published in 'Economist' and 'Forbes' from 1971 to 1981 to test this hypothesis. They analyzed a total of 1757 ads for affiliation, achievement, work and leisure themes Using three coders, one UK male, one US male and one US female.

Sung, (2014) examined perceived culture. In a grand survey of 946 consumers in which they were asked about six media, television, radio, newspapers, magazines, direct mail and yellow pages. Television and direct



mail were found highest rated in perceived culture. Television and magazines exhibited the highest level of adrelated communication problems and the demographic variables had little effect on perceived ad culture (Zia, Raza, & Ifthikar, 2017).

#### **Methods and Materials**

### **Survey Method**

Quantitative research is commonly used to investigate research questions (Abu Bakar, & McCann, 2016). There is a potentially infinite array of possible quantitative research designs, and in the human sciences particularly, it can be difficult to do pure, experimental research. Thus, a great many adaptations of experimental designs, called quasi- experimental and non- experimental designs have been developed. It is important to consider a range of possible quantitative research designs and their strengths and weaknesses as noted by Jamal, and Abu Bakar, (2015). The present study is quantitative research.

Survey research is one of the most important areas of measurement in applied social research. The broad area of survey research encompasses any measurement procedures that involve asking questions of respondents. A "survey" can be anything forms a short paper-and-pencil feedback form to an intensive one-on-one in-depth interview.

# The Size of Sample

The sample size is simply the number of people or units available to be studied. In this study a stratified random sample of 150 respondents was drawn.150 TV viewers were selected from Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

80 TV viewers were selected from the F/6-1 Block of Islamabad and 70 TV viewers were selected from the C Block of Satellite town Rawalpindi.

# **Characteristics of Respondent**

Only educated TV viewers were selected for the present study, because an uneducated person may have no idea regarding the social and cultural values and he many not understand the questionnaire well.

So, that 75 educated males and 75 educated females were the respondents for this particular study. For the present study the researcher has made five categories of educated people.

1-M. A/MSC or above, 2-B.A/BSC, 3-F.A/FSC, 4-Matric, 5-below Matric

The age limit for the present study was above 20 years. The researcher has made four categories regarding the age of the respondent.

1- 16-21 years, 2- 22-26 years, 3- 27-31 years 4- 32 and above

# **Data Collection**

In the present study questionnaire was selected as a tool for data collection because of the response rate was 100% and respondent was of different sex, age and educational qualification. It was difficult to distribute questionnaire among the respondents because there was a greater possibility of missing the respondents. The researchers himself visit the TV viewers for the collection of data.

The Questionnairewas consisted of 24 questions. For this study, researcher designed questionnaires in English language.

# **Pretesting**

The questionnaire was pre-tested for the later study. For this purpose, researcher took 20 TV viewers of Rawalpindi.

In this process, few questions were found inapplicable to the proposed universe. The wording of few questions was modified to make them clear to understand. Some new questions were added in the questionnaire. In all, there were 24 questions in the questionnaire after pre-testing.

#### **Data Analysis**

Analysis is mainly divided into two major sections. The first section presents the descriptive statistics while second part is regarding inferential statistics.



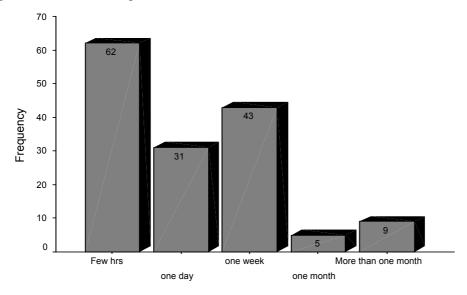
Table 1.	<b>Descriptive</b>	statistics
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Respondents		Categor	y	Frequen	cy	Percentage
Gender	Male	75	50%			
	Female	75	50%			
Age	Category		Frequen	cy	Percenta	ige
	16-20	19	12.7			
	21-25	30	20.0			
	26-30	60	40.0			
	31 and a	lbove	41	27.3		
Qualification	Category Master and above		y	Frequen	cy	Percentage
			e62	41.3		
	BA/BSC	C65	43.3			
	FA/FSC	19	12.7			
	Matric and below 4		4	2.7		
Profession						
	Business	s7	4.7			
	Services	52	34.7			
	Students	s 47	31.3			
	Others	44	29.3			

# Frequency Distribution of impact of TV Ad

TV advertisements have great impact on our lives. In this regard the researcher asked viewers "How long does the impact of an advertisement last on your mind?" The output of this question is mentioned in the table 4.7 (See table 4.7 in appendix) and figure 4.2. As per its analysis 41.3% (62) viewers answered that the impact of advertisement lasts within few hours and 20.7% (31) responded that its impact remains for one day among the viewers. 28% (43) said that the impact of TV advertisements ends within one week. Only 3.3% (5) viewers answered that it last in one month and the viewers who responded that impact of TV advertisements remains for more than one month their percentage is 6 (9). The results show that majority of responded belongs to category

Figure 1: Bar chart of impact of TV Ad



How long Impact of TV Ad

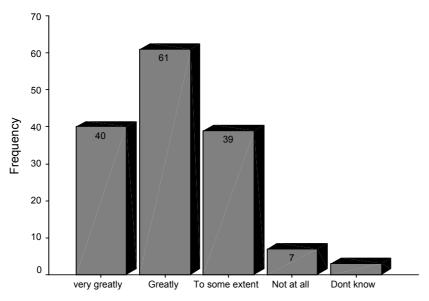
# Frequency Distribution of TV ads against social norms and values

Cultural and social values are true index of our society. TV advertisements as effective means of Media can played their pivotal role in promoting social and cultural values within society. Besides merits TV advertisements have also demerits. Without hesitation we can say it that TV advertisements are promoting anti cultural and anti-social values. The table 4.9 (See table 4.9 in appendix) and Figure 4.4 indicate that out of 150



responded 40.7% (61) have the view that some TV advertisements are against our social and cultural values **greatly.** Among the viewer's 26.7% (40) responded that TV advertisements are promoting anti cultural values **very greatly**, 26% (39) marked the option **to some extent**. Only 4.7% (7) were in the favor of option **Not at all** and 2% (3) responded marked the option don't know.

Figure 2: Bar chart of TV ads against social norms and values

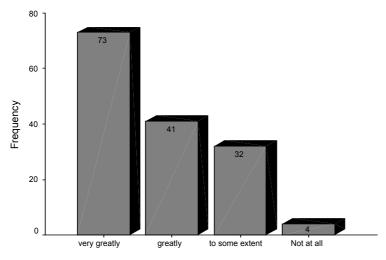


TV Ads gainst social norms

# Frequency Distribution of TV ads promoting anti-cultural values

In modern media TV advertisements are playing a very important role but at the same time it is influencing our cultural and social values negatively. Most of the time they don't give a true picture of our society. The Cultural presented in advertisements is not realistic. This negative side of advertisements is affecting the mind of viewers. The table 4.10 (See table 4.10 in appendix) and figure 4.5 indicates that 48.7% (73) responded said that TV Commercials influence our cultural and social values negatively at **very great extent**, 27.3% (41) responded for **greatly**. Among the viewers who showed their interest for the option **to some extent** are 21.3% (32). And the very less viewers with the percentage of 2.7(4) totally negated it.

Figure 3: Bar chart of TV ads promoting anti-cultural values



TV Ads promoting anti cultural values

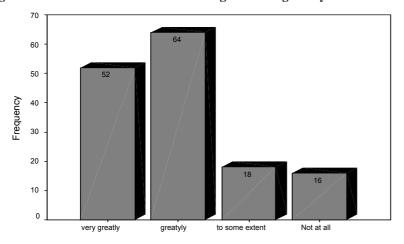
#### Frequency Distribution of TV Ads influencing values negatively

It is matter of great concern that weather TV ads are influencing cultural and social values negatively or not. In this regard researcher asked question "to what extent in your opinion TV ads are influencing cultural and social



values". As apparent Table 4.11 (See table 4.11 in appendix) and figure 4.6 shows that out of 150 respondents 34.7% (52) have the opinion that TV ad are influencing values negatively. The result shows that majority of the responded with 42.7% (64) have the view that TV ads are influencing values negatively. Only 12% (18) marked the option "to some extent" and 10.7% (16) responded voted in favor to TV advertisement and they marked the option "not at all".

Figure 4: Bar chart of TV Ads influencing values negatively

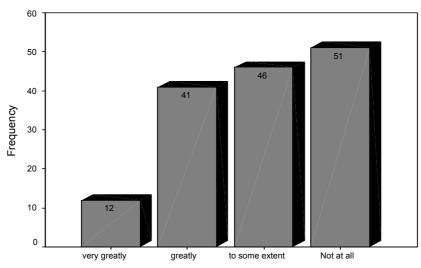


TV Ads influencing values negatively

#### Frequency Distribution of TV ads urges to copy shown actions

TV advertisement has great impact on our routine life. Viewers try to copy their ideals and various ways of life style represented in these. They are much interested to adopt latest ideas and actions of commercials. The following percentage is collected from the given question such as 8% (12) marked the option **very greatly**. Those who considered that TV ads urge us **greatly** to copy are with 27.3% (41). 30% (46) shows their response for the option **'to some extent'** and majority of the viewers marked **'not at all'** and their percentage is 34 (51). The result of table 4.12 (See table 4.12 in appendix) and figure 4.7 shows most of the TV viewers have the view that TV ads urge them to copy the shown actions to some extent.

Figure 5: Bar chart of TV ads urges to copy shown actions



TV Ads urge you to copy shown actions



# Frequencies Table 2.

# / Ads influencing Social and Cultural values negative

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
very greatly	52	37.5	14.5
greatyly	64	37.5	26.5
to some extent	18	37.5	-19.5
Not at all	16	37.5	-21.5
Total	150		

#### Chi-Square Test Table 3.

#### **Test Statistics**

	TV Ads influencing values negatively
Chi-Square <sup>a</sup>	46.800
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than
 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 37.5.

# Chi – square ( $x^2 = 46.800 P = .000$ )

When the data was analyzed it was found that the TV ad has a negative impact on the audience perception. A statistical test chi square was applied on the data Chi - square (x = 46.800 P = .000). According to the X value there is a significant difference was found so that the hypothesis was supported.

#### Summary

The study was designed to find out the "Audience perception regarding the violation of social and cultural values in TV advertisements". The major objectives of the study were (a) to analyze that how audience perceives about the violation of social and cultural values in TV commercials. (b) To understand whether the TV ads are violating the social and cultural values or not. (c) To determine that, at what level TV advertisements are affecting the social norms. (d) To find how much time people of different status spend on watching TV channels. After the data collection, basic information was tabulated and analysis was made by calculating the percentage. SPSS was used for analyzing the data. When the data was analyzed it was found that the TV ads have a negative impact on the audience perception. A statistical test chi square was applied on the data Chi – square (x = 46.800 P = .000)

# Major findings of the study

By the analysis of data, the following findings have emerged. The details are as under:

- 1. It is observed that most of the TV viewers spend 1 to 2 hours daily in watching Television. As the result shows that out of 150 respondents 38.7% (58) spend 1 to 2 hours daily in watching Television. 24.7% (37) used to watch television 3 to 4 hours and 18.7% (28) spend only half hour in watching TV. 10% (15) respondents are those who spend more than 6 hours in watching television. Only 8% (12) spend 5 to 6 hours in watching Television.
- 2. In this study the received information clearly depicts that informative impact of TV commercials appeals the most to the viewers, receiving the percentage of 74 (111). Clearly enough, information aspect dominates all other aspects of advertising such as emotions 15.3% (23), moral or ethical values 6.7% (10) and rationale 4% (6) approach by responded respectively.
- 3. After the results of the study without hesitation we can say that TV advertisements are promoting anticultural and anti-social values. The result indicates that out of 150 respondents 40.7% (61) are of the view that some TV advertisements are against our social and cultural values greatly. Among the viewer's 26.7% (40) responded that TV advertisements are promoting ant- cultural values very greatly,



26% (39) marked the option to some extent. Only 4.7% (7) were in the favor of option "Not at all" and 2% (3) participants marked the option "don't know".

# **Answers of Research Questions**

**R.Q** 1-What is the audience perception about the effects of TV ads on social and cultural values?

In present study, the received information depicts that TV ads are influencing cultural and social values negatively. The result shows that majority of the responded with 42.7% (64) have the view that TV ads are influencing values negatively. Only 12% (18) marked the option "to some extent" and 10.7% (16) responded voted in favor to TV advertisements and they marked the option "not at all". (See table 4.11 in appendix I)

#### Discussion

In the light of findings, we can say that majority of the TV viewers have perception that TV ads are violating social and cultural values and promoting anti-Islamic culture. Advertising companies are distorting values just to promote their business. In Pakistan, there is lack of social responsibility in every walk of life. Media and advertising companies are also responsible for this because they are presenting any sort of programs and commercials just for the sake of their business (Raza, & Khan, 2014; Raza, & Liaqat, 2016). Advertising companies are making such ads in which western and Indian culture is presented. They are showing glamour and culture which does not exist in Pakistan.

It is revealed from the result that majority of the TV viewers answered that impact of any TV advertisement lasts within few hours. So that's why Majority of the advertising companies particularly cellular companies repeat their ads many times in a day and sometimes many times in an hour to remain their product or message alive in the minds of viewers.

It is observed that most TV ads are influencing our cultural and social values negatively and promoting anticultural and anti-social values (Aaron, Jayne, & Fam, 2013). Most of the time advertisers don't present true picture of our society. The Cultural presented in advertisements is not realistic. It is a matter of great concern that whose culture is portrayed in TV commercials? Advertising companies and media are introducing a new culture which doesn't match our norms and is against our social and cultural values. TV commercials reflect a culture which is practiced by a very few affluent Unbans, ignoring a large majority of rural people. Media is not fulfilling its responsibility to the required pattern (Abu Bakar, Mustaffa, & Mohamad, 2007). Under the hurricane of constantly changing values of what the media has declared as Fashionable, healthy, and even what is needed or not, the human mind begins to lose sense. Another destructive trend of sophisticated advertising propagated by the electronic media in quantities unparalleled in history, is the trend of the rise depression. Media are busy in making money rather to fulfill their social responsibility and are doing no effort to save or promote the cultural and social values (Abu Bakar, & McCann, 2015).

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#### It is declared that,

- 1. The submission is original,
- 2. The submission is not being considered elsewhere,
- 3. There is no conflict of interests and,
- 4. The authors agree to grant the first editing / publishing rights to the journal upon acceptance.