

Impact of Television Commercials on the Social and Moral Behavior of Indian Viewers – Empirical Evidence

Dr. Jaspal Singh

Associate Professor

Department of Commerce and Business Management
Guru Nanak Dev University Amritsar, India

Namrata Sandhu, Ph.D. Student

Department of Commerce and Business Management
Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, India

E-mail: sandhunamrata@gmail.com, Phone: +918427080222

Abstract

Although, there exists no consensus about the impact of television commercials on the social and moral behavior of viewers, the accusations that we come across in past research are grave. This study is an attempt to examine the same in India. An empirical analysis of the views of 520 respondents revealed that television commercials undermine social, moral and religious values and negatively influence human behavior. They violate ethical norms and disrespect the integrity of cultures, the consequences of which manifest themselves in the form of degradation of women, sexual preoccupation and boost to materialism. Degradation of relationships in Indian families and the misleading and untruthful content of television commercials are yet other points of concern highlighted by the study.

Key words: Ethics; human behavior; social responsibility; television commercials; values

1. Introduction

Every day, one comes across innumerable images and commercials for various products. This excessive amount of media in our day to day lives cannot be side lined and impacts all those surrounded by it. It is an expression of the society of which we are a part, its mirror-image for all practical purposes and has a far reaching influence on the social, cultural and moral values of its inmates (Ciochetto, 2004). The world is changing rapidly today and in its footsteps our core values are changing too. The last two decades on account of globalization have seen an unparalleled change, which has expressed itself in the form of diminishing community values. Social values are getting eroded, moral values have become fragmented and the society is facing an unprecedented cultural evasion. Our society today is taking on new values which are at loggerheads with the time tested and religiously accepted principles of our society, a large part of the responsibility for which must be borne by the television commercials (henceforth TVCs) and also the unethical practices of the business and corporate houses which sponsor them. Today, the reach of television is widespread. Commercial television channels have penetrated even the remotest of areas and most adults are exposed to thousands of advertisements annually. It is thus natural for the ramifications of the violations of ethics by TVCs to be seen in our personal lives and also on the society as a whole (Pollay, 1986).

Advertising, now a days is big business and many industries like magazines, the cable TV industry, newspapers and many other media, non media and communication industries survive only on the inflow of money due to advertising. It is because of this that corporate houses use all possible tactics to get our attention first and money ultimately. Some times these attempts involve illegal, dirty or underhand tricks, making untrue claims (Burns *et al.*, 2005) and reliance on false information (Drumwright and Murphy, 2009).

Off late, a number of debates have been going on about the social issues in advertising and the catastrophic consequences of improper advertising have been brought to the forefront. The social effects of improper advertising generally manifest themselves in the form of an adverse effect on child psychology (Haefner, 1991), human behavior (Lavine *et al.*, 1999), value system and perception (Roy, 2006), boost to materialism (Richins, 1995), rise of consumerism and corruption (Nuta, 2009), decreased integrity and self confidence of women (Chatterji, 2005; Schaffter, 2006) and degradation of relationships in families. This study is an attempt to examine the extent to which these claims are true.

2. Literature Review

During a study of relevant literature, one comes across a number of studies which deal with the extent of value degeneration promoted by TVCs. A review of some of the major studies carried out across different countries, during different periods, on the same has been done.

On the basis of the reviewed literature, it has been found that advertisements are generally criticized for targeting children (Kunkel, 1988; Haefner, 1991; Kunkel, 1992; Browne, 1998; Graves, 1999; Pechmann and Shih, 1999; Childs and Maher, 2003; Saffer and Dave, 2003; Sinha, 2005), excessive use of sex appeals (Pollay, 1986; Henthorne and LaTour, 1994; Ford *et al.*, 1997), stereotypical presentations of women (Chatterji, 2005; Schaffter, 2006), negative psychological effects on the viewers (Richins, 1991; Fay and Price, 1994; Nuta, 2009) and promoting materialism (Richins, 1995; Roy, 2006; Chan and Cia, 2009; Nuta, 2009). While investigating the influence of ads directed at children, it has been found that they have an adverse influence on child behavior. Since, there are a large number of TVCs that are directed at children, critics have expressed many concerns about them (Haefner, 1991). Kunkel (1988) conducted a study in which the values of the advertisers who target children were questioned. It was suggested that ads which target children were unethical because children were not in a position to evaluate commercial persuasion. Critics have put forth the arguments that ads directed at children are harmful because they serve to glamorize the use of alcohol and tobacco (Pechmann and Shih 1999; Saffer and Dave, 2003; Sinha, 2005) make the children aware of their sexuality at an early age (Kunkel, 1992) and perpetuate stereotypes of gender among them (Browne, 1998; Graves, 1999; Childs and Maher, 2003).

Moving from children to women, critics and feminists for a long time now have been voicing their opinion against the way women are portrayed in ads. Although, critics are worried about the stereotypical portrayal of women in ads (Chatterji, 2005; Schaffter, 2006), they are particularly troubled about the undue focus on them as sex objects (Pollay, 1986; Henthorne and LaTour, 1994; Ford *et al.*, 1997). Some researchers are of the opinion that the way women are portrayed in ads, is a challenge to the established standards of decency and is essentially pornographic in nature (Pollay, 1986). Examining the impact of television on the psychology of the viewer, Richins (1991), in a study found that the ads which target young women lead them to compare their own attractiveness with the idealized images in the ads, resulting in dissatisfaction with their own attractiveness. A study with almost similar findings was conducted by Fay and Price (1994). It dealt with slimming, dieting and body control advertisements directed at women. The study found that it was normal for adolescent girls and young women to compare their bodies with media images. The study concluded that to a greater extent than non-sufferers, anorexics were influenced and their self-image diminished, by advertising images.

Further, many critics of advertising hold the contention that advertising promotes materialism and consumerism in society. In a study conducted by Richins (1995), it was pointed out that on exposure to advertisements, comparison with advertising images takes place which enhances the materialistic desires of the viewers. A number of other studies have also established a significant and positive relationship between consumerism and advertising (Roy, 2006; Chan and Cia, 2009). Taking this argument a step ahead, some critics are also of the view that in order to buy the advertised products, people are ready to take loans beyond their repayment capacity or are even ready to commit crimes and resort to corruption (Nuta, 2009). As we can see, past research has claimed that advertising is harmful for the society and negatively influences its viewers. The present study is an attempt to test the validity of this claim.

3. Need of the Study

The direction in which TVCs are moving today, has generated enormous social tension to which we have not been able to find appropriate solutions. The situation as on date is that via these commercials, power has been transferred to business houses that have consistently ignored the social implications of their actions. The problem is fundamental, as on the basis of the review of literature, it has been established that the content of TVCs is damaging for not only society, but morality too. Complaints and concerns about TVCs have been extensive since their advent. Although some substantial research has been done on the negative consequences of TVCs across the world, the behavioral consequences and distortion of values caused by exposure to them is yet an unexplored area. The researchers have not come across much research on this issue in India. This study is, therefore, timely as the society needs to be made aware of the influence of TVCs on the social and moral turnout of the viewers. Via this study, an attempt has been made to evaluate the social implications of inappropriate commercials being aired on television in the light of the moral outrage caused by these recent unethical trends.

4. Objective of the Study

Past research has accused advertising of influencing the social and moral behavior of viewers by corrupting their values (Roy, 2006), promoting materialism and consumerism (Nuta, 2009), degrading women (Ford *et al.*, 1997; Chatterji, 2005), promoting the use of harmful products like cigarettes and alcohol (Pechmann and Shih, 1999; Saffer and Dave, 2003) etc. Although, there exists no consensus about the impact of TVCs on the social and moral behavior of viewers, the accusations that we come across in previous research are grave.

This study is an attempt to examine the same in the state of Punjab in India. Furthermore, this study is an attempt to understand what sets of values or core beliefs the viewer might draw when contemplating the ethics of controversial practices in TVCs.

5. The Study

5.1 Questionnaire Development

A questionnaire was developed that had statements on the potentially troublesome impact that TVCs have on the social and moral behavior of the viewers. The statements were developed by reviewing the existing

Table I: Statements used in the questionnaire

Statement Number	Statement in the Questionnaire
S1	The use of sexual appeals in TVCs produces potentially negative side effects, e.g. sexual obsession and gratuitous sex.
S2	TVCs foster teenage sexuality.
S3	Sexuality in TVCs is a mirror of acceptable social behavior about sexuality.
S4	TVCs lead to rise in crime and violence against women.
S5	TVCs encourage children to circumvent parental authority.
S6	TVCs create conflict between parents and children over purchase of products advertised.
S7	TVCs designed for one country are fit to be aired in another country.
S8	TVCs portray women as the weaker sex, e.g. portrayal of women as emotional and dependent.
S9	TVCs perpetuate negative stereotypes of women, e.g. portrayal of women as sex objects, homemaker etc.
S10	New openness in TVCs, such as in commercials for feminine hygiene products is embarrassing and these TVCs are not fit to be watched with the entire family.
S11	TVCs confront the time tested and religiously accepted principles of our society.
S12	TVCs exploit society.
S13	TVCs can be accused of lacking social responsibility.
S14	Comparison with idealized images in TVCs lowers satisfaction with the self.
S15	TVCs undermine traditions and culture.
S16	TVCs are manipulative.
S17	TVCs create confusion over product distinctions.
S18	TVCs promote unsafe behavior among children.
S19	TVCs contain statements that are false, deceptive, untruthful, or misleading.
S20	TVCs promote conspicuous consumption.
S21	TVCs lure/coerce consumers to buy products beyond their capacity.
S22	TVCs encourage adoption of unethical ways of fulfilling materialistic desires.
S23	TVCs disappoint with exaggerated claims.
S24	TVCs encourage us to spend money on goods and services, which we do not really need.

The responses to the statements were anchored on a five-point scale. The questionnaire also included respondent profile questions. The questionnaire was pretested for validity and clarity on respondents conveniently selected from the relevant population.

5.2 Sampling and Data Collection

The study was conducted in the state of Punjab in India. Data was collected with the help of a survey from October 2009 to March 2010. The sampling technique used was convenience sampling. A total of 600 questionnaires were administered out of which only 520 were found usable.

5.3 Methodology Used

The data collected was analyzed in two steps. In step1, the data reduction technique of Factor Analysis was used to analyze the perceptions of the respondents. The extraction method was Principal Component Analysis, which was followed by Varimax with Kaiser Normalization (Malhotra, 2007 p. 592, 596). In step 2, with the help of a Regression Model (Alagheband, 2006), the influence of the factors that emerged after step 1 was studied on the social and moral behavior of the viewers. The hypothesis: television advertising viewing significantly influences the social and moral behavior of the viewers (H1) was tested in this step.

5.4 Profile of Respondents

Table II presents the demographic profile of the 520 respondents. As shown in table II, the gender split was almost equal (46.35 percent females and 53.65 percent males). Further, 11.54 percent of the respondents were younger than 20 years, about 51 percent were between 20 and 35 years and 26.35 percent respondents were between 35 and 50 years. About 8 percent respondents were between the age group of 50 and 60 years and 3.46 percent respondents were older than 60 years. As far as the marital status of the respondents was concerned, about 37 percent respondents were unmarried, about 57 percent respondents were married, 2.31 percent respondents were divorced and 4.23 percent respondents were widowed.

Table II: A demographic profile of respondents (N =520) (in percentages)

Gender	
Female	46.35
Male	53.65
Age	
Less than 20 years	11.54
20-35 years	50.77
35-50 years	26.35
50-60 years	07.88
Above 60 years	03.46
Marital status	
Unmarried	36.73
Married	56.73
Divorced	02.31
Widowed	04.23

6. Data Analysis and Discussion

6.1 Step 1: Factor Analysis

In the first step, Factor Analysis was used for analyzing the perceptions of the respondents regarding ethical controversies in TVCs. The results are shown in table III and table IV. The extraction method was Principal Component Analysis, which was followed by Varimax with Kaiser Normalization (rotation method). The factors which were retained had an Eigen value exceeding or equal to 1.0. Further, only the items which loaded clearly on one factor with loadings greater than 0.45 were retained (Malhotra, 2007, p. 598). The analysis was conducted with the help of SPSS 16.0. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .857. The seven factor solution that emerged had a total variance of 56.50 percent.

Table III: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.857
Bartlett's Test of Approx. Chi-Square	1950.809
Sphericity Df	325
Sig.	.000

Table IV: Rotated Component Matrix

Variable	Factors							Communalities h ²
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	
S1	.287	.015	-.012	.049	.742	-.057	.127	.655
S2	.102	.193	.136	-.019	.771	.166	-.109	.700
S3	.102	.077	.175	.084	.289	.524	.153	.436
S4	.625	.112	-.034	.244	.054	.181	.047	.501
S5	.168	.032	.228	-.072	.013	.020	.585	.537
S6	.252	.181	.026	.129	.046	.197	.667	.599
S7	.215	.038	-.118	-.175	-.043	.713	.049	.605
S8	.607	.309	.026	-.302	.077	-.100	.237	.628
S9	.730	.196	-.118	.145	.030	-.119	.195	.660
S10	.687	-.123	-.049	.134	.214	-.213	.173	.629
S11	.475	-.178	.279	-.030	.237	.138	.052	.414
S12	.701	.115	.178	.154	.002	.258	-.144	.647
S13	.039	.286	.482	-.092	.088	.129	-.229	.593
S14	.185	.749	.033	-.003	-.050	-.090	.076	.613
S15	.528	.057	.168	.053	.002	.083	-.121	.502
S16	.062	.135	.710	.010	-.049	-.247	.040	.656
S17	.115	.085	.038	.725	.080	-.085	.225	.613
S18	.172	.165	.611	.153	.168	.156	.066	.510
S19	.187	.093	.272	.516	-.233	.008	-.083	.560
S20	-.020	.122	.543	.176	-.001	.006	.244	.489
S21	.149	.650	.276	.159	-.013	.110	.105	.570
S22	.153	.649	.277	.090	.227	.111	.021	.594
S23	.106	.189	.072	.591	.015	.003	-.073	.490
S24	.120	.534	-.021	.105	.172	.079	.023	.534
Eigen Value	5.626	1.934	1.594	1.292	1.166	1.072	1.051	13.735
Cumulative Variance %	15.796	25.425	33.443	40.587	46.515	51.507	56.495	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
 Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

Naming the Factors

On the basis of the variables associated with each factor, names have been given to the factors. The seven factors have been named as follows:

- F1: TVCs undermine value system.
- F2: TVCs promote materialism.
- F3: TVCs negatively influence human behavior.
- F4: Information contained in TVCs is misleading.
- F5: TVCs enhance sexual preoccupation.
- F6: TVCs do not respect integrity of cultures.
- F7: TVCs negatively affect family ties.

Each of the factors along with the associated variables associated, have been discussed one by one.

F1: TVCs undermine value system.

This is the most important factor that has emerged out of the analysis. With an Eigen value of 5.626, this factor has 7 variables loaded on it. The variables loaded on this factor, along with their labels and loadings are given in table V.

As can be seen from table V, the variable, ‘TVCs perpetuate negative stereotypes of women, e.g. portrayal of women as sex objects, homemakers etc.’ has got the highest loading of .730, followed by the variable, ‘TVCs exploit society.’ with a loading of .701. The third variable loaded on this factor, ‘New openness in TVCs, like in commercials for feminine hygiene products is embarrassing and these TVCs are not fit to be watched with the entire family.’ has a loading of .687. The next variable loaded on this factor, ‘TVCs lead to rise in crime and violence against women.’ has a loading of .625. The variable, ‘TVCs portray women as the weaker sex, e.g. portrayal of women as emotional and dependent.’ has a loading of .607. The last two variables, ‘TVCs undermine traditions and culture.’, and ‘TVCs confront the time tested and religiously accepted principles of our society.’ have loadings of .528 and .475 respectively. The loadings of the variables show the relative importance the respondents attach to these variables.

The portrayal of women in TVCs is a matter of great concern. The stereotypical portrayal of women in TVCs (servile to men, dependent, limited decision-making authority etc.) wounds the integrity of women. However, the most disturbing of these issues is the portrayal of women as sex objects. Scantly clad women can be seen in many TVCs irrespective of their relation with the product advertised. Some critics (Pollay, 1986) categorize these TVCs as pornographic in nature. Nudity in advertising falls in this category of pornography, even if suggestively so. These sexually explicit ads, employed for a myriad of products, negatively portray women solely in terms of one narrow and stereotypically presented aspect of their gender roles: as sex objects. This has encouraged crime and violence against women. As we can see, this factor reinforces this situation and it can be safely concluded that TVCs lead to degradation of women. The Indian value system is known for upholding the integrity of women and TVCs are attacking its very essence.

It is believed that unethical advertising exploits society and contributes towards the weakening of its social, religious and moral fiber (Pollay, 1986). Many critics of advertising believe that advertising has the power to influence or change the basic values of the viewers (Haefner, 1991). In synchronization with these findings, this factor clearly indicates how TVCs are injurious to our values. The Indian society for ages has been known world wide for its social, religious and moral values and the findings suggest that TVCs are sending our entire value system down the shaft. Furthermore, new openness in TVCs renders them inappropriate to be watched with the entire family. The Indian tradition and culture does not permit it and hence it can be said that the findings support the contention that TVCs are at loggerheads with our social traditions and culture.

Table V: TVCs undermine value system.

Labels	Variables	Loadings
S9	TVCs perpetuate negative stereotypes of women, e.g. portrayal of women as sex objects, homemaker etc.	.730
S12	TVCs exploit society.	.701
S10	New openness in TVCs, such as in commercials for feminine hygiene products is embarrassing and these TVCs are not fit to be watched with the entire family.	.687
S4	TVCs lead to rise in crime and violence against women.	.625
S8	TVCs portray women as the weaker sex, e.g. portrayal of women as emotional and dependent.	.607
S15	TVCs undermine traditions and culture.	.528
S11	TVCs confront the time tested and religiously accepted principles of our society.	.475

F2: TVCs promote materialism.

This is the second most important factor that has emerged out of the analysis. It has an Eigen value of 1.934 and has four important variables loaded on it. Table VI shows the various variables loaded on this factor along with their labels and loadings. The first variable (as can be seen from table VI) loaded on this factor is, ‘Comparison with idealized images in TVCs lowers satisfaction with the self.’ and has a loading of .749. This variable is followed by the variable, ‘TVCs lure/ coerce consumers to buy products beyond their capacity.’ and has a loading of .650. The third variable loaded on this factor, ‘TVCs encourage adoption of unethical ways of fulfilling materialistic desires.’ has a loading of .649. The last variable loaded on this factor is ‘TVCs encourage us to spend money on goods and services, which we do not really need.’ It has a loading of .534.

This factor draws our attention to a central question regarding ethics and advertising. This question focuses on whether an advertisement is meant to only passively educate and persuade or to coerce the viewer into purchasing a product and thereby taking away his freedom of choice.

Research has shown that most advertisements “fall between education/persuasion and coercion in an area termed manipulation, in which the viewer purchases the advertised products by coercion” (Arrington, 2004). Critics have also pointed out that advertising leads viewers to compare, often unconsciously, their own lives with those represented in idealized advertising images and repeated exposure raises viewer’s expectations and influences their perceptions of how their lives ought to be, particularly in terms of their material possessions. This leads to consumer discontent and an increased desire for more (Richins, 1995). This factor reaffirms these arguments and we can conclude that advertising very definitely leads to need creation, where such a need does not exist or the consumer does not have the capacity to buy such a product. This either draws the consumer deep into the debt trap, thereby creating financial stress or boosts corruption.

Table VI: TVCs promote materialism.

Labels	Variables	Loadings
S14	Comparison with idealized images in TVCs lowers satisfaction with the self.	.749
S21	TVCs lure/ coerce consumers to buy products beyond their capacity.	.650
S22	TVCs encourage adoption of unethical ways of fulfilling materialistic desires.	.649
S24	TVCs encourage us to spend money on goods and services, which we do not really need.	.534

F3: TVCs negatively influence human behavior.

This is the third factor that has emerged out of the analysis. It has an Eigen value of 1.594. It has four variables loaded on it. Table VII shows the various variables loaded on this factor along with their labels and loadings. The first variable that is loaded on this factor is, ‘TVCs are manipulative.’ It has a loading of .710. The next variable loaded on this factor is, ‘TVCs promote unsafe behavior among children.’ This variable has a loading of .611. The last two variables loaded on this factor are, ‘TVCs promote conspicuous consumption.’ and ‘TVCs can be accused of lacking social responsibility.’ These variables have loadings of .543 and .482 respectively. In continuation with the previous factor, this factor yet again reaffirms the contention that advertising has the power to influence/modify the behavior of the viewers and in certain cases force them to act against their free will.

This factor also suggests that advertising has profound consequences because of its manipulative nature and enhances preoccupation with consumption. Depiction of various products in TVCs instills in the viewer a desire to possess these products. TVCs therefore promote a culture which boots consumerism. This again is in conflict with the basic values of our society, which endorse ‘simple living.’ Further, examining the impact of TVCs on children, it can be said that they encourage unsafe behavior among children as they try to imitate what they see in TVCs. This has been viewed by many as unethical as TVCs here are targeted towards a vulnerable group, less able to resist manipulative persuasion.

This factor thus indicates how TVCs abuse society by swaying human behavior.

Table VII: TVCs negatively influence human behavior.

Labels	Variables	Loadings
S16	TVCs are manipulative.	.710
S18	TVCs promote unsafe behavior among children.	.611
S20	TVCs promote conspicuous consumption.	.543
S13	TVCs can be accused lacking of social responsibility.	.482

F4: Information contained in TVCs is misleading.

The fourth factor that has emerged out of the analysis has been named as, ‘Information contained in TVCs is misleading.’ With an Eigen value of 1.292, this factor has three variables loaded on it.

Table VIII shows the various variables loaded on this factor along with their labels and loadings. The first variable loaded on this factor is, 'TVCs create confusion over product distinctions.' This factor has a loading of .725. Followed by this variable is the variable, 'TVCs disappoint with exaggerated claims.' with a loading of .591. The last variable loaded on this factor is, 'TVCs contain statements that are false, deceptive, untruthful, or misleading.' This variable has a loading of .516. This factor shows that, although they might be avoiding outright falsehoods, the carefully chosen words and images in TVCs mislead and deceive people. As an example, let us consider the TVCs designed for weight loss products. The glamorous models and images depicted in these ads and the exaggerated claims made, misinform the target audience. The unrealistic and inaccurate information conveyed is accepted by the viewers as fact. Research shows that every year overweight people spend millions of rupees on these products without any benefit (Cleland *et al.*, 2002).

Furthermore, it can be said that TVCs confuse the target audience. In an attempt to undermine the products of the competitor, rivals unnecessarily degrade their products and make claims which are unsubstantiated and quite often false. The confusion thus created in the minds of the viewers, interferes with their purchase decisions. All these practices, as one can see are unethical and confuse and mislead the viewers.

Table VIII: Information contained in TVCs is misleading.

Labels	Variables	Loadings
S17	TVCs create confusion over product distinctions.	.725
S23	TVCs disappoint with exaggerated claims.	.591
S19	TVCs contain statements that are false, deceptive, untruthful, or misleading.	.516

F5: TVCs enhance sexual preoccupation.

'TVCs enhance sexual preoccupation.' is the name that has been given to the fifth factor. This factor has an Eigen value of 1.166 with two variables loaded on it. Table IX along with their labels and loadings shows the two variables that have been loaded on this factor. The first variable loaded on this factor is, 'TVCs foster teenage sexuality.' This variable has a loading of .771. This variable is closely followed by the next variable, 'The use of sexual appeals in TVCs produces potentially negative side effects, e.g. sexual obsession and gratuitous sex.' This variable has a loading of .742.

Ever since advertising emerged as a profitable industry, sex and ads have been tied together. Images that are sexually suggestive have been used to sell just about every thing and have become the advertiser's best friend. Sex in ads has stirred controversies for a long time now and this factor points to a situation which highlights the emotional responses that sex in advertising evokes. The use of sexual appeals in advertising makes children aware of their sexuality at an early age and plays an important role in shaping adolescents' sexual attitudes, values and beliefs. Also, the variables loaded on this factor bring out the negative effects of the use of sexual appeals (sexually explicit dialogues and images) in advertising. Children and often adults respond to the sexual cues in ads and the common side effects are sexual obsession and gratuitous sex.

Table IX: TVCs enhance sexual preoccupation.

Labels	Variables	Loadings
S2	TVCs foster teenage sexuality.	.771
S1	The use of sexual appeals in TVCs produces potentially negative side effects, e.g. sexual obsession and gratuitous sex.	.742

F6: TVCs do not respect integrity of cultures.

This is the sixth factor which has emerged out of the analysis. It has an Eigen value of 1.072 and has two variables loaded on it. The two variables loaded on this factor along with their labels and loadings are shown in table X. 'TVCs designed for one country are fit to be aired in another country.' is the first variable loaded on this factor. It has a loading of .713. The other variable loaded on this factor is, 'Sexuality in TVCs is a mirror of acceptable social behavior about sexuality.' This variable has a loading of .542.

This factor draws our attention to the fact that TVCs must respect the culture of the countries in which they are aired. Globalization- the great demon which has struck our economies is an idea which comes from outside and has its own genetic traits. In its wake it has brought advertisement campaigns to the Indian markets not originally designed for our markets. The question now arises; is it fit to air advertisements in India, not originally designed for our markets? Talking about the primacy of the customer, the fourth Minnesota principle suggests, 'respect for the integrity of the cultures of our customers.' Is this not a gross violation of this principle? The advocates of globalization presume that "once economic fundamentals are corrected, social issues will resolve themselves of their own free accord." (Wing, J.P., 1990) What they refuse to see is the enormous social tension caused by a thoughtless opening up to the global markets.

Globalization in its footsteps has brought to the Indian markets products and commercials not originally meant for our market. While they may have been appropriate for their home country/society, they are definitely inappropriate for India. As an example here, the advertisement of Fa (a brand of deodorant from Henkel, Germany) can be quoted. Unwanted exposure of a woman and nudity (acceptable in certain cultures, but definitely not in India) is apparent in the TVC and it may be pertinent to point out that this TVC was not developed and designed for the Indian markets. The same TVC is being aired in a number of different countries.

Table X: TVCs do not respect integrity of cultures.

Labels	Variables	Loadings
S7	TVCs designed for one country are fit to be aired in another country.	.713
S3	Sexuality in TVCs is a mirror of acceptable social behavior about sexuality.	.542

F7: TVCs negatively affect family ties.

This is the last factor which has emerged out of the analysis. It has an Eigen value of 1.051 and has two variables loaded on it. The variables loaded on this factor along with their labels and loadings are shown in table XI.

Table XI shows that the first variable loaded on this factor is, 'TVCs create conflict between parents and children over purchase of products advertised.' This variable has a loading of .667. The other variable loaded on this factor is, 'TVCs encourage children to circumvent parental authority.' This variable has a loading of .585. Another serious contention that we come across in previous research is that TVCs lead to degradation of relationships in families (Atkin, 1987). This factor reaffirms it. The last two decades have seen the rise of the "kid consumer" and TVCs targeted at children have played a pivotal role in it. Children are more susceptible to and less in a position to evaluate commercial persuasion (Kunkel, 1988), therefore when exposed to fancy products in ads, a desire to possess them develops in children and they wish to purchase these products. This encourages conflicts with parents, who might not consider the product suitable or appropriate. As a result, more and more children bypass parental authority and start taking independent decisions at an early age. All this does not go hand in hand with the basic values of the Indian society.

Table XI: TVCs negatively affect family ties.

Labels	Variables	Loadings
S6	TVCs create conflict between parents and children over purchase of products advertised.	.667
S5	TVCs encourage children to circumvent parental authority.	.585

On summing up the above analysis, it can be said that the respondents believe that TVCs undermine social, moral and religious values and negatively influence human behavior. They are also concerned about the violation of ethical norms and the disrespect shown towards the integrity of cultures, which in their opinion manifests itself in the form of degradation of women, sexual preoccupation and boost to materialism. Degradation of relationships in Indian families and the misleading and untruthful content of TVCs are yet other points of concern highlighted by the study.

6.2.1 Step 2: Regression Analysis

In the current study, application of factor analysis was an important first stage, but to predict the dependent variable (the social and moral behavior) on the basis of the independents (the 7 factors that emerged after factor analysis) was equally important. Towards this end, it was hypothesized that TVCs have a significant impact on the social and moral behavior of the viewers (refer to table XII).

Table XII: Hypothesis Development

Null Hypothesis (H0)	Alternate Hypothesis (H1)
There is no significant impact of TVCs on the social and moral behavior of the viewers.	There is a significant impact of TVCs on the social and moral behavior of the viewers.

After the development of the hypothesis, linear regression analysis was used to predict the dependent variable on the basis of the independents (Alagheband, 2006). A model with all the predictor variables (the 7 factors which emerged after factor analysis) that were considered useful in predicting the response variable was created. It not only explained the influence of the factors on the social and moral behavior of the viewers, but also determined the percentage of variance in the dependent variable explained by the independents (variables). Table XIII, table XIV and table XV show the results of linear regression applied on the seven factors which emerged after the factor analysis.

Table XIII: Results of linear regression

Factor Labels	Unstandardized Regression Coefficients		Standardized Regression Coefficients	T	Significance (p-value)	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Standard Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
F1	-.278	.048	-.413	-5.781	.000*	.531	1.884
F2	.014	.041	.023	.350	.726	.619	1.615
F3	-.091	.047	-.124	-1.911	.057	.639	1.566
F4	-.001	.039	-.001	-.022	.982	.707	1.414
F5	.053	.037	.082	1.459	.146	.866	1.155
F6	.004	.034	.007	.118	.906	.881	1.135
F7	-.078	.035	-.133	-2.199	.029*	.738	1.354
Intercept (constant) = 2.584 R-square = .279 Adjusted R-square = .261							

*Significant at 5 percent level of significance

Table XIV: Model summary

R Square	Adjusted R Square	Intercept (Constant)
.279	.261	2.584

Table XV: ANOVA for regression

Sources of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	Computed F	Significance
Regression	15.946	7	2.278	14.740	.000
Residual	41.109	266	.155		
Total	57.055	273			

6.2.2 Results of Hypothesis Testing

In the assessment of the influence of TVCs on the social and moral behavior of the viewers, the overall regression model is significant. The adjusted R square is .261, which implies that 26.1 percent of the variation in the dependent variable is explained by the seven independent variables (the seven factors). Also, the overall significance of the model assessed by ANOVA suggests that the model is significant (p=.000) and the seven factors together significantly influence the dependent variable. In other words, viewing of TVCs significantly influences the social and moral behavior of the viewers. As a result, H0 was rejected. Further, it can be said that factors 1 and 7 individually were significant factors. On the whole, it can be said that TVCs are a potent device that not only shape attitudes, but influence human behavior too. They have rightfully been viewed as moulds shaping human values (Pease, 1980). Not only is their impact on the social and moral virtues of the viewers disturbing, but also the distortions in human behavior caused by them wary of concern.

7. Conclusion

From the current research it can be concluded that TVCs undermine social and religious values, which leads to the deterioration of the moral fiber of the society. They perpetuate ideologies which are at loggerheads with Indian traditions and norms and in doing that, they impair them. They not only show disrespect towards integrity of cultures but also promote undesirable value schemes like materialism, consumerism, independent decision making etc. Further, it can also be said that TVCs abuse society by negatively influencing human behavior. Their adverse consequences are pervasive and can be seen in the form of degradation of women, shaping of negative sexual attitudes, consumer discontent, loss of confidence, purchase of goods against the will and better judgment of consumers and degradation of relationships in families.

It may be of interest to point out here that the findings of the current research are in tune with the findings of past studies. The conclusions of past research: advertisements promote materialism (Roy, 2006), exploit women (Pollay, 1986), coerce viewers to buy unwanted products (Richins, 1995) and mislead viewers (Drumwright and Murphy, 2009) were found to be valid in the Indian context too, and thus reinforced. However, while strengthening the findings of previous research, the current research further builds upon them and provides evidence on how TVCs influence, manipulate and modify the behavior of individuals. A cue is thereby provided to the administrators to act firmly and timely check the unethical advertising practices by business and corporate houses.

8. Suggestions

As evident from the study, TVCs are a potent social device. They must as a result, enact the part of a public helper and informer, be accountable to the society and serve people. They must honor facts and not twist them to bring business to corporate houses. Business houses and marketers keen to remain socially conscious must always remain critical of their practices and communication strategies. They must be philanthropic and see the picture in entirety. They must, no matter what, address their social obligations along with their commercial obligations. The call of the hour is to ensure that business and corporate houses build moral and ethical considerations into their public communication. They must make sure that their actions remain pro social and 'humanistic.' Towards this end, they must balance their bottom line and welfare of public at large.

9. Scope for Further Research

Further research may be undertaken to define what marketing integrity is and to define the ethical boundaries of the business houses. The plea today is to find the free spaces that are available to the corporate houses for ethical choices. Future research can also deliberate on finding means to prevent cultural evasion caused by unethical and inappropriate advertising.

References

- Alagheband, P. (2006). Adoption of electronic banking services by Iranian customers. Master thesis, Department of Business Administration and Social Sciences, Lulea University of Technology, Sweden.
- Arrington, R. (2004). Advertising and Behavior Control. Ethical Theory and Business (eds.) Beauchamp Thomas and Norman Bowie, Prentice Hall, 649-656.
- Atkin, C. (1987). Alcoholics beverage advertising: its content and impact. In Control Issues in Alcohol Abuse Prevention: Strategies for States and Communities, Advances in Substance Abuse, Suppl. 1, Greenwich, CN: JAI Press Inc. 267-287.
- Browne, B. A. (1998). Gender stereotypes in advertising on children's television in the 1990s: a cross-national analysis. *Journal of Advertising*, 27 (4), 9-46.
- Burns, R.; Ferrell, J. and Orrick, E. (2005). False advertising, suggestive persuasion, and automobile safety. *Southwest Journal of Criminal Justice*, 2 (2), 132-152.
- Chan, K. and Cia, X. (2009). Influence of television advertising on adolescents in China: an urban-rural comparison. *Young Consumers*, 10 (2), 133-145.
- Chatterji, S. A. (2001). How advertisements exploit women (online). Available: <http://www.gather.com/viewArticle.jsp?articleId=281474976719311> (July 18, 2006).
- Childs, N. M. and Maher, J. K. (2003) Gender in food advertising to children: boys eat first. *British Food Journal*, 105 (7), 408-419.
- Ciochetto, L. (2004). Advertising and globalization in India (online). Available: <http://termpapers.org.1123456bc/89> (July 11, 2006).
- Cleland, G.; Koss, D. and Muoio. (2002). Ethics of weight-loss advertisements (online). Available: <http://www.ethicsscoreboard.com.1234/a/45> (July 11, 2006).
- Drumwright, M. E. and Murphy, P. E. (2009). The current state of advertising ethics. *Journal of Advertising*, 38 (1), 83-107.
- Fay, M. and Price, C. (1994). Female body-shape in print advertisements and the increase in anorexia nervosa. *European Journal of Marketing*, 28 (12), 5-18.
- Ford, J. B., La Tour, M. S. and Honeycutt, E. D. (1997). An examination of the cross-cultural female response to offensive sex role portrayals in advertising. *International Marketing Review*, 14 (6), 409-423.
- Graves, S. B. (1999). Television and prejudice reduction: when does television as a vicarious experience make a difference? *Journal of Social Issues*, 55, 707-727.
- Haefner, M. J. (1991). Ethical problems of advertising to children. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics*, 6, 83-92.
- Henthorne, T. L. and LaTour, M. S. (1994). Ethical judgments of sexual appeals in print advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 23, 27-29.
- Kunkel, D. (1998). The evolution of children's television regulatory policy. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 31 (Fall), 367-389.
- Kunkel, D. (1992). Children's television advertising in the multichannel environment. *Journal of Communication*, 42 (3), 134-152.
- Lavine, H.; Sweeny, D. and Wagner, S. H. (1999). Depicting women as sex objects in television advertising: effects on body dissatisfaction. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 25 (8), 1049-1058.
- Malhotra, N. K. (2007). *Fundamentals of Marketing Research*. Sage Publications, 586-607.
- Nuta, C. (2009). Does advertising promote excessive consumerism? (online). Available: http://articles.famouswhy.com/does_advertising_promote_excessive_consumerism/ (May 25, 2010).
- Pease, O. A. (1980). Teaching Americans to consume: a re-appraisal of advertising as a social force. In *Advertising and the Public*, Kim B. Rotzoll, ed., Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press), 1-15.
- Pechmann, C. and Shih, C. (1999). Smoking scenes in movies and antismoking advertisements before movies: effects on youth. *Journal of Marketing*, 63 (3), 1-13.
- Pollay, R. (1986). The distorted mirror: reflections on the unintended consequences of advertising. *Journal of Marketing*, 50 (April), 18-36.
- Richins, M. L. (1991). Social comparison and the idealized images of advertising. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 18 (1), 71-83.
- Richins, M. L. (1995). Social comparison, advertising, and consumer discontent. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 38 (4), 593-607.
- Roy, S. K. (2006). Advertising and its discontents (online). Available: <http://www.icfaipress.org/906/AE.asp> (October 11, 2006).
- Saffer, H. and Dave, D. (2003). Alcohol advertising and alcohol consumption by adolescents. Working paper No. 9676, National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge.
- Schaffter, S. J. (2006) *Privileging the privileged: gender in Indian advertising*. Promilla & Co., Publishers in association with Bibliophile South Asia, New Delhi and Chicago.
- Sinha, D. N. (2005). Gutka advertisement and smokeless tobacco use by adolescents in Sikkim, India. *Indian Journal of Community Medicine*, 30 (1), 124-126.
- Wing, J. P. (1990). States of disarray: the social effects of globalization (online). Available: <http://www.termpaperslab.com/term-papers/61002.html> (October 16, 2006).