

Educating the Youth in Norms and Values through TV Commercials: A Study of College Students

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Abstract

Educating the viewers and public is one of the core objective of the media and in modern times TV commercials is one of its major tool to pass on the information and educate the masses. The current study is an attempt to find out how media through TV commercials educate the youth about the norms, values and general information. 1000 students participated in the current study from various colleges of district Lahore and they were selected through multistage sampling technique. A survey was conducted for data collection and regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between TV commercials and educating the norms and values of the society to the youth. The study concluded a direct and positive relationship between the variables i.e. contents and educating the youth in norms and values.

Key Words

TV commercials,
cultivation theory,
Regression.

Introduction and Background

Media performs different functions for the society and most important is educating it. For this purpose media uses different tools and one of which is TV commercials. Education is a process of learning normally associated with books, schools colleges and other educational institutions. However, in the modern world education and educational processes are not confined to schools and books. (Crick & Wilson, 2005). In this modern world a few educational institutes have started to launch their courses through internet and social media. Social media networks have gained in importance for educating and creating awareness among public. It is easier to disseminate information to a larger portion of people as compared to regular class rooms (Clarke, 1994). Hence, media has become a very good source of educating people and spreading information. There are different tools that media uses and TV advertisement is one of them. In the modern area there are multiple advertisements that viewers observe and they effect the minds and actions of the viewers (Wang et al, 2002). In the same manner TV ads have both positive and negative implications for the society. It can hamper the normative structure of the society or it can teach the norms to the youth of the society (Jam, et al., 2010). TV ads contain contents pertaining to the sex, violence as well as the value system of the country. Therefore, the youth of a society tend to idolize the models and message of these ads (El Hattab, 2008). Media and youth are associated with each other as media contents are very important in shaping the consumer behavior among youth and guide the way youth think and behave in a particular manner. It has been widely accepted that media contents are very important to change the value system among youth (Krish, 2009).

Media in the form has become a vital part in the contemporary culture and has taken the society by storm. There are multiple functions that social media is performing for the society and now it has taken the role of educating the people (Trubitt, & Overholtzer, 2009). The Advertisement in the TV has many benefits for the youth. The education purpose of the TV commercials is very much observable for the young children and youth as it boosts the confidence of them (Thompson & Austin, 2003).

Exposure to the media has increased to a greater extent and children constitute a major part of this audience. The further stated that it is important to regulate the TV ads as children get most of it both negatively and positively. However, modern TV ads are shaping the way our children behave and respond to different situations (Miller, & Jensen, (2007). Social media has helped the people in establishing on line libraries which boosts their level of education. Youth is easier in accessing the information and knowledge through media (Bushman & Huesmann, 2001). TV ads

have a positive role in educating the people specially the children of our society. Children tend to learn more about violence, belief system and cultural norms. Hence, the study concluded that TV ads is an important source of teaching norms to the children (Devi & Gupta, 2008). This is exactly the scope and objective of the study. TV ads are more important than other content presented on the media as children focus more on the TV ads than other contents. Children love to watch ads as they are more appealing towards the children and have more potential to persuade the children (Knupfer, 1994).

Theoretical Basis of the Study

Social researches are always conducted by adopting and following a particular theoretical framework. In the current study the researcher is following cultivation theory which was presented by George Gerbner in 1960s when he was working on a project. According to Cultivation theory the exposure to the TV advertisement directs the likelihood of a particular perception about a reality. The theory further elaborates that the depiction of the reality is closely linked with the media contents (Zaharopoulos, 2001). People who are more exposed to the media contents suffer from its contents more easily. This theory has the following two major postulates.

- Media has become very active in our routine life which implies that most of us are frequently exposed to the media contents and most of us spend lots of time in watching TV ads (Shrum, Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2003).
- The second assumption asserts that media contents are deeply rooted in our day to day life and we are very much inclined towards the media contents (Eisend, 2009).

Hence, it is quite evident that the media contents in the name of TV ads have become a way of life in modern area and we are very much influenced by the media contents. In the modern world the use and influence of media has increased to a greater extent.

Statement of the Problem

In the current modern world where media has taken the social life with a storm the role of TV ads has become more vital in educating the society. Youth of any country is more exposed to media contents particularly TV ads. The empirical literature has suggested the TV ads are hampering many aspects of social life and also hurt the normative structure of the society (Alwitt, 2000).

The ever-increasing importance of the TV ads has both positive and negative implications on the lives of the youth. Media is fulfilling many functions in the name of education and entertainment but at the same time it has altered the normative structure of the society and value system. Hence, it is very important to counter and observe the media contents so that positive values and norms are inculcated to the youth. The current study is an attempt to explore the use of media for educating the societal norms and cultural values.

Objectives of the study

The current study meets the following objectives.

- To examine the association between TV commercials in educating the norms, values and general information to the youth.
- To observe the way TV commercials hurt the norms and values of a particular society

Methodology

On a broader sense the study is being conducted under the paradigm of quantitative strand. In this type of study the researcher intends to establish the relationship between two variables under the study (Catherine & Hakim, 2000). In addition to that the study under investigation explain how TV ads are educating the youth with regard to the cultural norms and values (Neuman, 2006).

Population of the Study

The researcher decided to include college youth as the population of the study. In addition to that and observing the feasibility and accessibility issue in view all colleges in the Lahore district were included in the sample. Selecting college youth was more appropriate for the study under consideration. There are 48 colleges as per the list provided by director of education Lahore division comprising of both genders and as per enrollment the total population is 75837

Sample Size

Determination of the sample size is very important as it guides the research findings and generalizability of the

research findings to the entire population. Therefore it is very important that the sample must be representative of the population (Ardilly, 2006). Hence, selection of the sample size is not a random activity rather it is based on scientific calculations. In the current study the researcher adopted Researcher Advisor formula to determine the sample size. The study population is 75837 and according to the above mentioned formula the sample size was calculated 1000 keeping 95% confidence interval and 3% margin of error.

Sampling Technique

After selecting the sample size it is important to identify the respondents for the study with particular focus on representativeness. This is done by adopting a particular sampling technique that helps the researcher to reach the target sampling unit. The current study uses multistage cluster sampling to reach the desire sampling unit. Following are different stages that were carried out by the researcher to reach the desire population. Basically the researcher adopted four stages in the entire process of selecting the unit of analysis.

- In the first stage list of college students was obtained from the concerned authorities.
- Colleges were segregated by gender of both male and female.
- The researcher proportionated the sample size to the each college
- In the final step simple random sampling was adopted by collecting the enrollment of each college to identify the respondent.

Hypothesis

The current study tries to establish the relationship between two variables i.e. independent and depend variable and hence one hypothesis is formulated.

- TV commercials educate the youth with regard to cultural norms and values and ultimately alter it

Ethics of the Research

Current study is based on find out a sample research question and does not involve any political goal. The study does not include any controversial issue but despite that the researcher observed all the relevant codes of ethics such as anonymity, confidentiality and informed consent. Respondents were not forced to participate in the study or remember any difficult information which may cause psychological harm to them.

Analysis of the Study

The analysis of the study was based on both descriptive and inferential statistics computed through SPSS latest version. For the purpose of descriptive statistics frequency distributions and socio-demographic features of the respondents were computed. And for the inferential statistics Regression analysis was applied to establish the association between the TV ads and norms of the society.

Variables Construction in the Study

The study is based on the determination of relationship between two variables i.e. independent and dependent variable. Following is the detail of both variables.

- Independent variables of the study is exposure to the TV advertisement which was measured by multiple questions pertaining to how much youth is watching or exposed to TV ads.
- The dependent variable of the study is educating the norms and values to the youth. The education purpose of the TV ads was also measured in three major domains i.e. educating the norms, educating the values and educating the general information.

Results and Findings of the Study

In the first place demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented. The following table no.1 shows the age and gender of the respondents who participated in the study.

Table 1. Age of the Respondents (Years)

	Age in Years	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16.00	1	.1	.1
	17.00	23	2.3	2.4
	18.00	270	27.0	29.4

19.00	241	24.1	53.5
20.00	152	15.2	68.7
21.00	101	10.1	78.8
22.00	142	14.2	93.0
23.00	14	1.4	94.4
24.00	46	4.6	99.0
25.00	10	1.0	100.0
Total	1000-	100.00	

With regard to the gender the researcher made sure that both the genders are equally represented in the current study. There were 500 male and 500 female students who participated in the study. This validates the results of the study with regard to the equal participation and true representation of the population.

Inferential Statistics

The following table presents the inferential statistics and shows the relationship between TV ads and educating the norms and values to the youth.

Table 2. Regression Analysis of Role of TV Ads for Educating Norms and Values

Variable	Coefficient	p-values
Edu. Norms	0.182315	0.0000
Edu. Values	0.121401	0.0000
Edu. Info.	0.253577	0.0000
LAGE	0.006161	0.000
GENDER	0.259442	0.0000
Diagnostics		
Adjusted R-squared	0.658729	
Akaike Info Criterion	2.3161	
Schwarz Criterion	2.3259	
Durbin Watson Test	1.6320	

The above Table shows the relationship between educating norms, values and latest information obtained from media. In the same manner the R-Square value of 0.65 shows that all the variables that have been included in the model is explaining 65% of the variation in the dependent variable. These results are quite high keeping in view the survey nature of the study. This reflects that all included variables i.e. educating the norms, values and latest information come from TV Advertisement. Furthermore, it was the task of the study to determine how much TV ads educate each of the above three categories. 18% of the norms are being educated by the TV ads. This proportion of the statistics is significant in nature and being a survey study this helps in approving the study hypothesis that media in the form of TV ads educate the norms to the youth.

In addition to that 12% of the values are being educated by the TV ads. This proportion of the statistics is significant as the probabilistic value is in the range of acceptance. The study also shows that TV ads provide latest information by 25% of total media contents presented to the youth. In the end the study also explored the difference between age and Gender on the amount of norms and values taught by the TV ads. The study statistics show that with the increase in age the 0.6% of information with regard to all the included variables information also increases. However, male respondents have 25% higher level of learning norms, values and latest information on account of TV ads exposure. All the above statistics show that TV ads are educating our youth with regard to the norms and values of the society.

The following table shows the inferential statistics about the association between TV ads and norms and values of the society.

Table 3. Impact of TV Ads

Name of the variable	Coefficient value (probability Value)
TV advertisement	0.6343 (0.0000)
Results of Diagnostic Tests	

R-Square Value	0.2333
Adjusted R – Square	0.2326
Akaike Info Criterion	2.3161
Schwarz Criterion	2.3259
Durbin Watson Test	1.6320

The above table shows that the relationship between the dependent and independent variable is significant as the probability value is (0.0000). In the same manner the coefficient value of 0.6343 illustrates that TV ads are changing the norms and values of the society and educating the youth with regard to the norms and values of the society. The coefficient value shows that one unit increase in the independent variable i.e. TV ads will change the dependent variable i.e. norms and values by 65% on average.

The R-Square value of the current study i.e. 0.233 shows that all the included variables in the independent variables are explaining the dependent variable by 23%.

Findings of the study

- TV ads are educating the norms to the youth and findings also reveal that youth is very much influenced by the TV ads and change the norms of the youth.
- Similarly TV ads educate the value system of the society to the youth and in doing so they also alter the value system by prompting western value system to some extent.
- The study also showed significant relationship between TV ads and teaching the new latest information.

Discussion

The findings of the current study are totally in line with what has been found in the existing literature. Most of the studies in the field of media and its impact have found a positive and significant relationship between TV contents and its association with the norms and values of the society (Hassan & Daniyal, 2013). The same findings have been explored by the current study where the study shows a positive and significant association between TV ads and norms and values of the society. The current study found that youth is mostly exposed to the TV ads and media contents and are most frequently influenced by it. Therefore, current study used youth as the population of the current study because most of the studies in the field of media has been conducted on the youth. The current study used a sample size of 1000 students which is quite high keeping in mind the other studies in the field of media and find out how media contents affect the youth. Harmoon (2001) explored the media contents in accordance with the cultivation theory which was based on a sample size of 500 respondents. Another important study used a sample size of 1200 respondents for the study of youth and media (Story et al, 2002). Hence, the study under discussion used a relative adequate sample size to see the impact of TV ads on youth sub culture and norms adopted by the youth. These findings are in line with what has been found by Andersson and Patterson (2004) that youth is the most vulnerable group when it comes to find out the association between the youth and media contents. It has also been observed that youth lifestyle is mostly effected by the media contents which increases the importance of the media contents and how they influence the thinking and behavior of the youth (Baig, Javed & Khan, 2010).

Media is playing a very vital role in educating the people pertaining to the norms and other important information (Crick & Wilson, 2005). The similar findings were obtained in the current study where quantitative findings significantly showed that TV ads is an important tool of teaching the norms and other information to the people and youth. Education is the foremost function of the media contents and TV ads playing a vital role in promoting the education (Clarke, 1994).

Results of the study are totally in line with findings of the existing literature and further increases the understanding of the reader pertaining to the topic being investigated. The study rightly adds to the existing body of knowledge with particular focus on how TV ads promote the educational function and teaching the norms and values to the youth. The study explains the phenomenon of TV advertisement and its influence with normative structure with particular focus to the Pakistani society.

Limitations of the Study

Despite having a comprehensive approach the study has certain limitations regarding the conceptualization and process of the study.

- The study only took 3 variables namely norms, values and latest information to demonstrate the educational functions of the media. Other variables regarding education are not included.
- A sample size of 1000 youth does not represents the entire population. Hence, this creates the issue of generalizability. However, this was done due to lack of time other constraints encounter by the researcher.

- Only college going youth was included which also limits the generalizability. However, this was due to the scope of the study as the study tries to explore the educational function of TV ads hence it was necessary to include the educated youth.

Conclusions

The study was directed towards addressing the role of TV ads in educating the norms to the society along with assessing how latest information's are passing to the next generation. It is concluded on the basis of the data and statistics that media is inculcating the norms and values of the society to the youth through TV ads. It means that media is educating the norms and values of the society and other latest information.

Whether or not the TV ads alter the norms/values of the society is the second objective of the study. The study concluded that there is positive relationship between exposure to the TV ads and norms of the society. Both objectives of the study are inter-related with each other and function step wise. The first step is the teaching of norms and values to the youth and at the second step it shows how youth alter and change the norms and values of the society on the basis of TV ads.

The study addresses only one hypothesis to see the association between the variables. On the basis of the quantitative analysis and regression table it can be easily inferred that increase in the TV ads have direct association with the dependent variable.

The social research is conducted in an order to present certain policy implications that could bring positive social change. Same is the case with the current study where study strongly implies following modification and improvements in the existing system. The findings of the study strongly shows the relationship between both the variables and hence it is an important tool to teach positive values and norms to the youth.

- The study will help the policy makers to see how media is educating the youth with regard to the societal norms and values.
- Media contents can be judged, evaluate and monitored by the regulating authorities. This will help media houses in shaping their policy and contents.
- Media contents should be furnished in an order to smoothly fetch and inculcate the norms and values to the youth.

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