

Pathology of commercial advertising in Iranian Social and cultural magazines during 2001-2011

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Abstract

Projection of advertising process well suited to social culture of society to achieve maximum effectiveness in advertising can be known as the starting point in process of advertising. In this study, content of the advertisements published in Iranian magazines was examined and analyzed to propose the suitable strategies to achieve effectiveness in commercial advertising in Iranian Social and cultural magazines which are well suited to social culture of people. To achieve this goal, damages in advertising cases inconsistent with social and cultural values as well as the existing problems were detected and examined using library and field study and the required strategies were proposed to resolve them. Lack of definition and culture for advertisements, lack of advertising specialists, stereotyping, lack of professional organizations to analyze and examine advertisements have been recognized as the most important damages to Iranian magazines . Further, problems in economy, management and manpower, education and research, modern communication and media technologies, the problems due to governance, commercial advertisements, cultural challenges, media share of advertising, advertisement distribution, and insufficient growth of advertising trade bodies are the most important challenges to Iranian magazines . With regard to the results from analysis of advertising performance in the magazines under study, advertisements have not reflected cultural and social values of Iranian community and content of advertisements has grounded on beautiful values. Yet, the intelligent interaction and integration between these two values can raise a new advertising in terms of conceptual and aesthetic values and values well suited to culture of society.

Keywords: commercial advertising, Iranian magazines, advertising, effectiveness of advertising, social culture

Introduction

Nowadays, the world without advertising falls impossible stated that each individual intentionally or unintentionally exposed to hundreds of ads a day in his life. Why we are under influence of this mass of messages and information is due to the fact that the man always requires information, communication and good consumption. Nowadays industry owners and economic and administrative managers in the country have learnt that their ability in making effective and efficient communication with clients is a major factor in their individual and organizational success. For this, the managers have influenced the clients' mind with a serious approach to advertising, promotion of ideas, creation of a desirable image from their goods and products whether in marketing and sale or elections. Addressing social issues of life such as traffic culture and urban life or even in the realm of humanitarian assistance has paved the way to achieve salient progresses to gain the goals. Further effective role of advertisement has caused not neglecting any space and opportunity for advertising, but unfortunately in use of advertising techniques, this attention is made by imitation of Western countries regardless of Iranian-Islamic culture which naturally we face many damages at this area. Since commercial advertising with purpose of transfer of information and change in clients'

behavior intends to increase consumption of a specific good or spread the certain beliefs about goods or services related to it in the society, study on content of these messages is required. In our society, magazines among print media have been taken into account by young girls and mothers. For material benefit and continuity of publication, these magazines like other media have to assign parts of the magazine to commercial advertising. These advertisements in sake of themes, how to present, extent of repetition and other advertising tricks can influence the attitude, behavior, cultural values and ultimately lifestyle of clients who are almost young mothers and girls. The interesting point in this context lies on this increased effect considering educational role of mothers.

Theoretical background of research and literature review

Mohammadian examined status of advertising in Iran and introduced the most important problems related to it. Further, he examined the techniques to produce advertising in Iran and the barriers and limitations to it. In addition, he elaborated effect of advertising on people's mind as well as people's attitude towards services and advertisements related to it especially banking advertising (Mohammadian, 2004). Masoudi examined commercial advertising and the techniques used in commercial advertising. With regard to his studies, the first stage in a successful commercial advertising is to preoccupy the clients' mind to this advertising, i.e. if the strongest advertising is produced but it seems unsuccessful to clients, it will be just a waste of budget (Masoudi, 1956). Suterland has examined and discussed issue of psychology of commercial advertising. He has examined effects of advertisements in his studies and elaborated some of the fundamental psychological mechanisms in advertisements (Suterland , 2003). Rouhi has examined pathology of advertisements in Iran and mentioned the most important causes for lack of success in advertising in Iran. He believed that role of advertisements among various communications in Iran market especially at consumption markets is of great importance. Yet unfortunately with regard to attitude of some managers at economic enterprises, acceptable results from advertisements have not obtained in most of cases (Rouhi, 2015). Pathology of commercial advertising in Iran has turned to a social concern in constant. Social researchers have an outlook to it with a critical approach. Unfortunately advertisements in social and cultural magazines have been less likely studied from pathological perspective and a suitable scientific pattern provided based on social and cultural problems has not proposed for it. For this, the present research has intended to examine existing barriers and problems to commercial advertising used in social and cultural magazines and propose the factors related to effectiveness of a suitable commercial advertising regarding social and cultural problems of country. In other words, the present research has intended to avoid damages to commercial advertising in social and cultural magazines at this decade of Iran by proposing approaches and examining the relationship between advertisements and cultural values well suited to the society.

Research method

In this study, the subject of research has been selected based on pathology and study on barriers and problems to advertising problems in social and cultural magazines at the 1980s. hence, firstly existing status of advertisements, damages and challenges at this decade has been described and then the theoretical and analytical relationship between considered variables has been examined. Therefore, descriptive and analytical method has been used as the data collection method. Further, the required data have been collected via library method.

Findings of research

Pathology of commercial advertising in Iranian magazines

In our country, commercial advertising of magazines has faced several serious problems. These problems include:

1-lack of definition and culture for advertising, i.e. lack of spread of advertising practically and professionally and lack of planning at the stages of advertising

2-lack of advertising specialists, i.e. if assignment of affairs to low-experienced individuals comes successful, it will be transient and ends in future

3-stereotyping and lack of novelty at all the stages are the result of low experienced individuals at area of advertising. Multiple uses of advertising techniques to introduce and supply goods and services are no longer interesting to clients.

Challenges to commercial advertising in Iranian magazines

Commercial advertising in Iran has faced serious and numerous problems and difficulties. These problems include various economic, managerial, cultural and legal areas mentioned as follows:

1-economic problems: involvement of members of governmental companies at most of production and trade areas has caused the private and cooperative sector not to compete in most of production areas, because governmental companies less likely work on increase of sale and profit or use of mechanisms of economy at market. In this regards, it cannot expect advertising as one of the sub-sectors of industrial economy system with substantial growth and dynamism.

2-management and manpower: investigations indicate that a majority of directors or owners of industries have not the required profession at the area of advertising and just a limited number of these industries pursue advertising in a professional way.

3-education and research: currently, there is no specific field for commercial advertising in official universities of country and the graduates from fields of commercial management, marketing, graphics, painting, industrial design, film making and so forth are assigned with advertising activities.

4- modern communication and media technologies: another problem that the advertising industry has faced with it and restricted the investment by domestic media in publishing advertisement is expansion of modern communication technologies especially satellite and advertisement at cyberspace such as internet and so forth, so that nowadays we face growth in advertisement broadcasting through Persian language satellite televisions. Expansion of media board of these technologies and low costs of broadcasting through satellite televisions have raised increasing willingness in owners of goods and services.

5-problems due to governance, monitoring and rules: lack of integration in monitoring and lack of a comprehensive system for advertising which engages in standardizing advertisements with an emphasis on efficient rules and regulations have weakened the advertising.

6-commercial advertising and cultural challenges: since there are consistent and inconsistent outlooks about commercial advertising in Iran, outlook to advertisement from three perspectives of free economy, reforms and monitoring has raised a different range of outlooks in form of discourses grounded on advertising activities which this outlook has influenced the advertising activities.

7-media share of advertising and distribution of advertisements: discussion on distribution of advertisements and media share of advertisements are considered as the problems to advertisements. More specifically distribution of governmental advertising which is in contrast with the programs moving from cultural assistance to cultural management has raised numerous problems.

8-insufficient growth of advertising trade bodies: advertising trade bodies in Iran have not witnessed with increasing growth. This has caused the culture sector fails to found and continue the assignments pertaining to assistance for advertising grounded on power of these bodies (Rasouli, 2011).

Several proposed approaches to resolve damages

After concise study on the damages which threaten the commercial advertising of country, it requires proposing suitable approaches to optimize this industry. In following, the most important required approaches have been proposed and analyzed to resolve these damages:

a-propose definition and culture of advertising

As the first step, several approaches are proposed to create and propose culture and definition for advertisements:

1-remove pre-judgments that do not look into advertising with professional outlook and know it equivalent to the improper words such as mendacity, deception, Sham

2-consider supports for the individuals who can be useful by proposing scientific works which can assist for culturalization of advertising.

3-proposing a precise definition for advertising will be useful, and in this definition the advertising model, program and pattern should be proposed. Proposing this advertising program teaches the producers to engage in advertising and evaluate market and determine situation of competitors before production and to select the best media and instrument after production.

b-attention to technical and professional knowledge of advertising

Improper employment of low experienced individuals has caused stereotyping in advertising of country, however employment of well experienced individuals in this context can assist for optimization of advertisement.

Several suggestions have been proposed in this context as follows:

-to enhance professional knowledge of advertising, it requires teaching advertising as field of studies in university that three fields of management, consulting and design are of greater importance.

-the license for advertising activity should be provided for the individuals who have experimental knowledge in addition to scientific profession.

-advertising companies and institutes should oblige to employ well experienced individuals at each of advertising fields

-advertising experts who have the ability to establish advertising institute should enjoy financial support and so forth. This support increases the well experienced individuals' sensitivity to qualitative improvement of advertising products.

c-quantitative and qualitative improvement in advertising projects

Stereotyping and lack of novelty at all the stages of advertising is a major problem which a variety of approaches should be proposed to resolve it. By motivating to make competition among individuals, it can hope to optimization of quantities and qualities of advertising. In following, several suggestions have been proposed to achieve this goal:

-holding practical festivals to introduce the bests at all advertising fields can be a major factor to make competition among advertising designers.

-the institutes and companies who have worked successful in their advertising projects should enjoy some specific grants. But valuation of success or lack of success should be based on scientific and practical principles rather than non-fundamental treatments.

d-evaluation and analysis of advertising message

Outcomes of message are not analyzed after broadcasting among the clients so as to measure the feedbacks to message. Hence, it requires establishing an association consisted of the experienced individuals so as to evaluate the message after broadcasting it. These analyses depict the behavioral curve of the clients against message and examine the effect of message by measuring in exposure to competitor's messages.

Study on status of commercial advertising in social and cultural magazines during 2001-2011 in Iran from cultural and social perspective

Commercial advertising in magazines which advertise a variety of goods and services include various cultural values. These cultural values are categorized in two groups of traditional and modern cultural values (fig 1). Traditional cultural values refer to the values which have rooted in the past of the society and date back to one generation ago and develop the national and ethnical culture of that society. Yet, modern cultural values refer to the values which have emerged and extended as the result of social and cultural transformations due to trajectory of traditional society to modern society under industrialization of societies and creation of consumption societies. In figure 2, a sample of modern advertisements has been displayed in magazines days of life, green family and family. In this study, advertising contents of three sociocultural magazines of days of life, green family and family have been examined. In table 1, three magazines have been compared in terms of advertised cultural values. With regard to information in table 1, among 839 advertisements containing traditional cultural values, the highest advertisements have been reported in magazine family with 264 advertisements and the least advertisements have been reported in magazine green family with 105 advertisements. Further, among 1324 advertisements containing modern cultural values, the highest advertisements have been reported in magazine days of life with 401 advertisements and the least advertisements have been reported in magazine green family with 242 advertisements. These statistics indicate that the observed differences are significant.

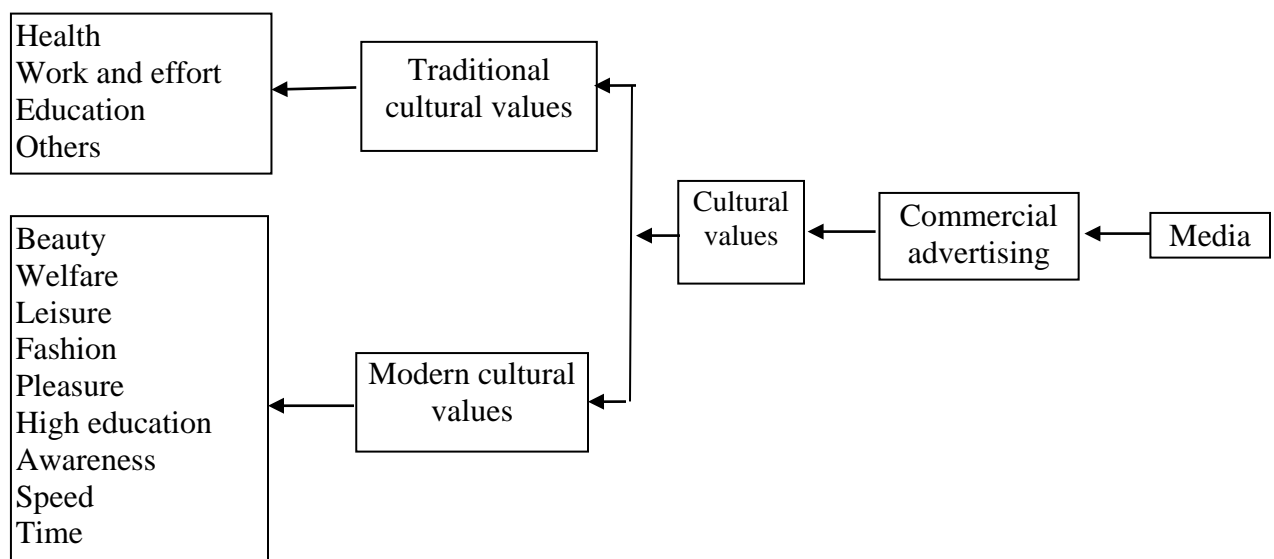


Figure 1: Commercial advertising in terms of values



Figure 2: A sample of modern advertising in a- magazine days of life, b-magazine green family, c- family

Table 2: Comparison of three magazines under study (days of life, green family and family) in terms of advertised cultural values

Names of magazines/cultural values		Green family	Family	Days of life	Sum
Traditional	No	105	264	213	582
	Row percent	12.5	21.5	25.4	59.4
	Column percent	28.2	26.6	27.1	21.8
Modern	No	242	310	401	953
	Row percent	18.3	23.4	30.3	72
	Column percent	64.9	43.0	51.0	50.2
Traditional and modern	No	26	147	173	346
	Row percent	5.5	24.1	36.6	100
	Column percent	7.0	20.4	22.0	17.9
Sum	No	373	721	787	1887
	Row percent	14.2	27.4	29.9	71.5
	Column percent	100	100	100	100

In table 2, three magazines under study have been compared in terms of traditional cultural values. With regard to table 2, among 1136 advertisements containing health value, the highest and least advertisements have been assigned to magazines family and green family with 372 and 95 advertisements, respectively. Further, among 100 advertisements containing work and effort value, the highest and least advertisements have been assigned to magazines 'days of life' and 'green family' with 48 and 9 advertisements, respectively. Among 46 advertisements containing education value, the highest and least advertisements have been assigned to magazines 'green family' and 'days of life' and 'family', respectively. With regard to these statistics, the observed differences are significant statistically.

Table 3: Comparison of three magazines under study (days of life, green family and family) in terms of traditional cultural values

Names of magazines/cultural values		Green family	Family	Days of life	Sum
Health	No	95	372	329	1136
	Row percent	8.4	32.7	29.0	100
	Column percent	72.5	90.5	85.2	86.6
Work and effort	No	9	27	48	100
	Row percent	9.0	27.0	48.0	100
	Column percent	6.9	6.6	12.4	7.6
Education	No	15	7	9	46
	Row percent	32.6	15.2	19.6	100
	Column percent	11.5	1.7	2.3	3.5
Others	No	12	5	0	30
	Row percent	4.0	16.7	0.0	100
	Column percent	9.2	1.2	0.0	2.3
Sum	No	131	411	386	1312
	Row percent	10	31.3	29.4	100
	Column percent	100	100	100	100

Table 3 displays comparison of three magazines under study in terms of modern cultural values. With regard to table 3, among 1543 advertisements containing beauty value, the highest and

least advertisements have been assigned to magazines ‘days of life’ and ‘green family’ with 514 and 156 advertisements, respectively. Further among 68 advertisements containing welfare value, the highest and least advertisements have been assigned to magazines ‘green family’ and ‘family’ with 31 and 3 advertisements, respectively. The statistics in this table indicate that the observed differences are significant statistically. The relationship between advertising content and the cultural values advertised in them has been examined in three magazines under study in table 4. With regard to information in table 4, among 41 advertisements combined of sports, cosmetic and food products, the men’s image has been used in 36 advertisements. Table 5 displays the relationship between advertising content and gender of the images used in them in three magazines under study. With regard to table 5, among 39 advertisements related to clothes and personal appliances, the women’s image has been used in 14 advertisements. The statistics in table indicate that the observed differences are significant statistically. In figure 3, a sample of the published advertisements with women’s image has been displayed.

Names of magazines/cultural values		Green family	Family	Days of life	Sum
Beauty	No	156	421	514	1543
	Row percent	10.1	27.3	32.3	400
	Column percent	58.2	92.1	89.5	85.9
Welfare	No	31	3	29	68
	Row percent	45.6	4.4	42.6	100
	Column percent	11.6	0.7	5.1	2.8
Leisure	No	7	0	0	8
	Row percent	87.5	0.0	0.0	100
	Column percent	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.4
Fashion	No	7	13	2	23
	Row percent	30.4	56.5	8.7	100
	Column percent	2.6	2.8	0.3	1.3
Pleasure	No	17	2	2	22
	Row percent	77.3	9.1	13.6	100
	Column percent	6.3	0.4	0.5	1.2
High education	No	8	10	10	45
	Row percent	17.8	22.2	22.2	100
	Column percent	3.0	2.2	1.7	2.5
Advertising	No	17	2	7	25
	Row percent	37.8	6.7	15.6	100
	Column percent	6.3	0.7	1.2	2.5
Speed	No	14	3	9	26
	Row percent	53.8	11.5	32.6	100
	Column percent	5.2	0.7	1.6	1.4
Time	No	11	2	0	17
	Row percent	64.7	11.8	0.0	100
	Column percent	4.1	0.4	0.0	20.9
Sum	No	268	457	574	1797
	Row percent	14.9	25.4	31.9	100
	Column percent	100	100	100	100

Table 4: study on the relationship between advertising content and cultural values advertised in them in magazines of days of life, green family and family

Advertising content/the advertised cultural values	Cultural	food	Health	Cosmetic	Medical and the rapeutical	Educational	Video and digital	sports	Personal and automotive appliances	Clothes	Service institutes	Cosmetic, sports and food	Sum	
Traditional	No	0	3	90	0	649	68	0	5	3	0	21	0	839
	Row percent	0.0	0.4	10.7	0.0	77.4	8.1	0.0	0.6	0.4	0.0	2.5	0.0	100
	Column percent	0.0	7.5	89.1	0.0	41.7	29.5	0.0	14.7	3.9	0.0	77.8	0.0	31.8
Modern	No	41	36	0	370	530	44	45	24	73	15	6	140	1324
	Row percent	3.1	2.7	0.0	27.9	40.0	3.3	3.4	1.8	5.5	1.1	0.5	10.6	100
	Column percent	95.4	90.0	0.0	95.4	34.1	25.6	100	70.6	96.1	100	22.2	100	50.2
Traditional and modern	No	2	1	11	18	276	60	0	5	0	0	0	0	472
	Row percent	0.4	0.2	2.3	3.8	79.5	12.7	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100
	Column percent	4.7	2.5	10.9	4.6	24.2	36.9	0.0	14.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	17.9
Sum	No	43	40	101	388	1555	172	45	34	76	15	27	140	2636
	Row percent	1.6	1.5	2.8	14.7	59.0	6.5	1.7	1.3	2.9	0.6	1.0	5.2	100
	Column percent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 5: study on the relationship between advertising content and the advertised cultural values in them in magazines days of life, green family and family

Advertising content/ gender	Cultural	food	Health	Cosmetic	Medical and therapeutical	Educational	Video and digital	sports	Personal and automotive appliances	Service institutes	Cosmetic, sports and food
man	No	15	2	145	121	16	30	14	16	7	36
	Row percent	3.7	0.5	36.1	30.1	4.0	7.5	2.5	4.0	1.7	9.0
	Column percent	71.4	18.2	81.9	58.2	48.5	81.1	41.2	41.0	87.5	87.8
Woman	No	1	2	23	54	9	0	7	14	0	0
	Row percent	0.9	1.8	20.9	49.1	8.2	0.0	6.4	12.7	0.0	0.0
	Column percent	4.8	18.2	13.0	26.0	17.3	0.0	20.6	35.2	0.0	0.0

Advertising content/ gender	Cultural	food	Health	Cosmetic	Medical and therapeutical	Educational	Video and digital	sports	Personal and automotive appliances	Service institutes	Cosmetic, sports and food
Man and woman	No	5	7	9	33	8	7	13	9	1	51.212.2
	Row percent	5.2	7.3	9.3	34.0	8.2	7.2	13.4	9.3	1.0	41
	Column percent	23.8	63.6	5.1	15.9	24.2	18.9	38.2	23.1	12.5	6.7
Sum	No	21	11	177	208	33	37	34	39	8	100
	Row percent	3.4	1.8	29.1	34.2	5.4	6.1	5.6	6.4	1.3	
	Column percent	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	

Discussion and analysis of findings

Since commercial advertising aiming at transferring information and changing the clients' behavior intends to increase consumption of a specific good and spread the certain beliefs about goods or services related to it in the society, study on content of these messages is required. In other words, it is of great importance to know whether the major issues considered in advertisements in sociocultural magazines reflect cultural values with Iranian society? To give response to this question, advertising content of magazines including days of life, green family and family has been examined. With regard to the results from study on advertising content in the magazines under study, the number women's images is far less than men's images that the most important reason can be known in the rules related to ban in use of women's images. In the meantime, the most use of men's images relates to the advertisements combined of cosmetic, sports and food products and goods. This is in line with expansion of such thinking that despite the past when the identity of men was found meaning based on job structure or manufacturing structure, in today's society men are obliged to manage their body like the identity media for social differentiation. On the other hand, women's images have been more likely used in advertisements related to clothes and personal and automotive appliances than rest of commercial advertising. Use of women's image in advertisements related to a variety of refrigerators, kitchen appliances and so forth indicate emphasis by these advertisements on traditional role of women as housewives. Among the traditional cultural values advertised in magazines, value of health has the highest contribution. With regard to industrialization of societies and increase of pollutants and on the other hand increase in urbanization and as the result increase in suffering from diseases related to such lifestyle, mental and physical health of individuals have been threatened. Therefore, people have paid more attention to health cares, while the highest contribution has been given to beauty among modern cultural values. This relates to advertising medical services and goods as well as cosmetic goods and services, because these goods and services have been given with the highest number of commercial advertisements. Nowadays, greater willingness of individuals especially women and youth to use cosmetic products and surgical operations aiming at getting beauty is evaluated as the factor of power and success in social interactions. With regard to the people's willingness to monitoring and manipulating their appearances under influence of modern cultural values, we face increase of advertising in this context. In general, with regard to obtained results, it can say that advertisements from sociocultural perspective tend to modernization and modern cultural values including beauty, welfare, awareness, pleasure, fashion, leisure and so forth seem superior to traditional content values such as health, work and effort, education and so forth. Indeed, advertising in this period between 2001-2011 has not indicated sociocultural values of Iran and content of advertising has grounded on

beautiful values. Yet, intelligence integration between these two values, formation of beautiful values besides advertising content based on needs of today's society and maintenance of cultural values of society can avoid imitation in advertising and weakening religious values and raise new advertising in terms of beautiful and conceptual values in order that the space to present work in magazines had been considered well suited to transfer of content in work.

Conclusion

-lack of definition and culture for advertising, lack of advertising specialists, stereotyping, lack of professional associations to analyze and examine advertisements are the most important damages to Iranian magazines

-problems in economy, management and manpower, education and research, modern communication and media technologies, the problems due to governance, commercial advertising and cultural challenges, media share of advertising and distribution of advertising, insufficient growth of advertising trade bodies are the most important challenges to Iranian magazines.

-it can take effective steps to resolve problems for lack of definition and culture for advertisements by the provisions such as removing public definitions and impressions come to people's mind from advertising, 2-creation of an academic and scientific support for those who take effective steps in culturalization of advertising, 3-proposing a precise and modern definition for advertising to propose model, pattern and program for advertising.

-it can take effective steps to resolve technical and professional knowledge problem which have led to lack of advertising specialists by the provisions such as accepting the advertising as a science and creating it in universities as field of study, the necessity to employ specialists in the context of advertising in advertising companies

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