

Are Values Betokened in Filipino Television Advertisements?

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ABSTRACT

Humanity needs values to direct their daily activities since they offer the ethical bearings of their behavior. Television advertisements are rooted in specific values. The advertisements have dual purposes of influencing and encouraging the audience to adopt the products or services, and the attitudes and values embedded inside them. This paper determined the contemporary values betokened in the top-rank Filipino television advertisements from 2010 to 2017 based on online reviews. A complete enumeration [N=100] of freshman college students who were enrolled in the subjects handled by the researchers were the respondents of this study. They watched the advertisements (for familiarity) thrice and watched for the fourth time to identify the contemporary values embedded in each advertisement. The results revealed four contemporary values embedded in the advertisements, such as personal values, spiritual values, moral values, and technological values. Hence, advertising a product is not just an indication of an emerging economy, but it also addresses injecting specific values, attitudes, and ideologies that form the new society. Moreover, the community subconsciously adopts contemporary values betokened in the advertisements circulated through mass media, especially that young and old are exposed daily to technology. Furthermore, increasing the number of respondents who will identify the contemporary values present in TV advertisements in the Philippines, including the number of commercials to assess, are the recommendations of this study.

Introduction

Values are essential to human existence because they provide the moral foundations of our actions. These values are socially accepted desires and long-term goals that have been established, learned, or shaped via socialization and aspirations (Chatterjee, 2018). Al-Dahash (2012) stressed that values play in society's development and cohesion and serve as fundamental concepts in society, economy, and politics. Likewise, a values system propagated within the community describes how individuals behave in everyday life, consisting of values, beliefs, norms, convictions, etc. In fact, positive human conduct and behaviors depend on people's values within the society they inhabit. However, the cultural factors in modern civilization, including brutality, exploitation, political corruption, terrorism, indicate that humanity appears to have lost its values. Hence, values are deteriorating at the international, national, and local levels since these cultural factors exist anywhere. Kaur (2016) expressed that today's generation faces innumerable value problems because of corrupted values within their society facilitated by technology.

Through the Philippine Republic Act (RA) No. 11476, the country's education standards require institutionalizing positive behaviors, appropriate conduct, and values in the Department of Education K to 12 curriculum. Its Section 5 states that essential parts of values education cover universal human, moral, and ethical values. Through this RA, the academic institution has to instill respect for all humanity as well as intercultural diversity, gender, fairness, ecology, the integrity of creation, justice, and peace, along with the obligation to obey the law, nationalism, and adherence to universal values of patience, perseverance, industry, honesty, and integrity (Republic Act No. 11476). The academe has the crucial responsibility to influence values through instruction. However, with the influx of

advanced technology, most individuals, young and old, can easily access various social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, watching news and movie series. Mass media advertisements utilize visual images, music, cultures, values, and gestures to impact how individuals think and behave towards themselves, others, and the world (McGivern, 2016). The mass media, such as the press, radio, and television, are prominent influencers at home to shape most people's values.

Frolova (2014) argued that people have no longer seen the effects of advertising on them since society is enveloped and saturated by many advertisements influencing certain philosophies and principles. The audience exposure to competing brands of products and services escorts to contract with distinct values, lifestyle, or faith, leading to compromise the values acquired through instruction. In fact, Amiry, Mosadegh, and Sanaei (2017); and Dumlao and Pitichanoknan (2020) stated that individuals' attitudes, behaviors, values, and cultural appreciations are influenced by products and brands broadcasted using technology. Sindhya (2013) even underscored that advertisements had become a crucial factor in determining the style and the functioning of one's life in various contexts. Also, according to Ozkan (2014), ads change and convey specific values and attitudes to target groups. Ads' messages command, draw attention, hold the interest, arouse desires for possession of the product, and elicit actions from the viewers (Gupta, 2012). Various advertisements flashed on television screens are accused as the source of the negative impact on one's value system. In their research (Shubha & Narayana, 2017), the authors claimed that ads mislead the public since they are used to entertain, inform, distract, frighten, or warn people, which has a detrimental societal effect on the population. This finding suggests that television advertising is used to both manipulate and control society.

In today's society, according to Sinclair (1987, as cited in Abdelaal & Sase, 2014), advertising is an integral part of a person's daily life for the exchange and creation of opinions, imitation of specific roles which viewers play as influenced by their favorite stars, and adoption of values and principles. In this regard, the use of mass media should conform to judicial restrictions. Mass media, thus, must make an effort to provide content that incorporates ethical principles and judicial limitations. In addition, the advertising agency is held liable (Ozkan, 2014), especially in the contextual meaning transmitted to the general audience.

Mass media has a profound impact on the values and worldviews of its audience. Singh (2011) believed that excessive exposure to mass media, like television, could significantly influence everyone around it. The new society takes new values from ads promoted through the media, specifically in TV ads. Commercial TV channels have penetrated even the remote areas, and thousands of ads are brought to homes every day to young and old individuals. This scenario might have ramifications on the ethics and values conveyed by television advertisements in one's personal life and society. According to Singh and Sadhu (2011, as cited in Tibus, 2021), the world is constantly evolving. And humanity is facing a detrimental dilemma, causing values in both the social and moral realms to shatter.

Timbreza (2010) has enumerated human values in various realms, interests, concerns, undertakings, and pursuits, along with the unique characterization of each type. The classifications of contemporary values, according to him, are anchored on the Filipino values that are evident in our cultural heritage. This study was conducted since no study has been recorded to determine the incorporation of Timbreza's (2010) contemporary values in local television advertisements. Thus, this paper

aimed to discover whether contemporary values are present in commercials aired on Filipino television based on the students' perspectives. The respondents explored specific contemporary values deeply embedded in the 2010-2017 Filipino TV commercials ranked number one in media online.

Purpose of the Study

This study was conducted to determine the specific contemporary values that are betokened in the top-rank Filipino TV commercials.

Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on media theory. The theory's contention reflects on the role of the media in broadcasting ideals, philosophy, norms, and society. Generally speaking, mass media responsibilities are compatible with other principles and structures in a particular culture. The book *'Four Theories of the Press'* stated that "the press takes on the form and coloration of the social and political structures within it operates" (Kuypers, 2002, p. 13). Also, the print media and other mainstream press should represent society's fundamental beliefs, principles, and values. These values encompass equality, equal treatment of the laws, social solidarity and integration, cultural diversity, active participation, social responsibility, empathy for other citizens, fairness, and so forth. Thus, this study determined the values betokened in the Filipino ads shown explicitly on television based on the perspectives of freshman college students. The result might indicate that varied contemporary values are disseminated through TV ads that might influence humanity's cognition, values, and behavior.

Methodology

Research Design

This research adopted a descriptive research design. The study focused on determining the values embedded in the top-rated Filipino TV commercials from 2010 to 2017.

Respondents

This study utilized a convenience sampling of 100 first-year college students in Southern Leyte who voluntarily participated in the study. Likewise, three teachers, a Social Science, an English, and Professional Education, were invited to validate the data provided by the students. The three validators were selected using the following criteria: teachers with varied specialization to minimize interpretation biases and master's degree holders.

Research Instrument

The research instrument used in the data collection was a researcher-made checklist consisting of two tables presenting the general types of contemporary values of Timbreza (2010) and the Filipino TV ads. The first table shows the three general types of contemporary values categorized as sets A, B, and C. Set A has seven contemporary values, and both sets B and C have 10 types. Each contemporary value under each group has an explicit description to guide respondents in identifying the values embedded in the TV advertisements. The second table has four columns, where the first column consisted of Filipino television advertisements rated by media online as top 1 from 2010 to 2017. While the remaining three columns are for the respondents' top three contemporary values they believed are betokened in a particular ad.

The Filipino television advertisements rated by media online as top 1 were: *Head and Shoulders with Angel Locsin (2010)*,

McDonald's: Karen Po (2011), *PLDT myDSL Anna Banana Revealed (2012)*, *Nescafe Classic, Para Kanino Ka Bumabangon (2013)*, *Globe Creating a Wonderful World (2014)*, *Coca-Cola: The Happiest Thank You (2015)*, *A Mommy's Sacrifice NIDO FORTIGROW Nestle (2016)*, and *Downy: 24 Hour Freshness Extended (2017)*.

After conducting the pilot-test, the checklist reported an internal consistency (α) of .8, indicating high reliability.

Data Collection

Before the viewing session, the students [N=100] from a state university in Southern Leyte were assembled in one location to attend the orientation on the contemporary values of Timbreza (2010) and sought their consent to participate in the study. All the 100 students present in the student center were given a consent form to affix their signature to demonstrate their commitment to participate.

Respondents' familiarization with the different types of values was essential in this study. Hence, the researchers commenced the orientation by giving the respondents a copy of the checklist of the contemporary values with explicit descriptions. They were given enough time to read and comprehend the definition of each value. They were also encouraged to ask for some clarifications if they find some confusion in the descriptions. Since the checklist also served as the answer sheet in identifying the values in the top-rated TV ads, they were oriented on how to fill it out.

After the orientation, the respondents altogether watched the eight Filipino television advertisements three times each. Then during the fourth viewing, the respondents identified the top three contemporary values present in ads. After the respondents filled out the answer sheet, the results were collected and collated.

The following day, teachers of the Social Science, English, and Professional Education gathered in one room with the researchers to watch the eight advertisements to validate the students' responses. The teachers' validation led to identifying the top 1 per contemporary value that best-captured respondents' overall analysis with the consensus of the validators. Thus, the determined top 1 contemporary value present in every advertisement are the only ones presented and provided with a discussion in the subsequent pages.

Data Analysis Framework

The data were analyzed employing descriptive statistics and a qualitative description of the identified contemporary values present in the Filipino TV ads. The percentages and frequencies of respondents' responses of their top three distinguished contemporary values were tallied. Then the values which gained the highest number of responses were discussed qualitatively.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the respondents' views on the advertisements they see on TV on the ideals they believe are prominent in advertising. The value(s) that have the highest percentage of responses is only the focus of the discussion presented in the subsequent pages. Table 1 lists the contemporary values and the number of respondents who selected the values found in the advertisements.

Based on Table 1, the contemporary personal value is evident in *Head and Shoulders with Angel Locsin (2010)* and *Downy 24-hour Freshness Extended (2017)*. Most participants (34% and 29%) identified the contemporary personal value in *Head and Shoulders* and *Downy* advertisements. Timbreza's (2010) characterization of personal values refers to the individual's choice to achieve one's own goal, e.g., purchasing a specific product or own values preferences (as to what to choose and to buy) upon one's interests and desires.

Table 1

Contemporary Values in Television Advertisements Identified by Participants

Filipino TV Advertisements	Top-rated Contemporary Values	(Percent of Students) [N=100]
2010: <i>Angel Locsin, Head, and Shoulders</i>	personal	34
2011: <i>McDonald's Commercial, "Karen Po"</i>	spiritual	56
2012: <i>PLDT MyDSL's Anna Banana</i>	technological	37
2013: <i>Nescafe Calssic: "Para Kanino Ka Bumabangon Sa Umaga"</i>	spiritual	39
2014: <i>Globe: Creating a Wonderful World</i>	technological	43
2015: <i>Coca-Cola, Happiest-Thank you</i>	moral	29
2016: <i>Nido: A Mommy's Sacrifice NIDO FORTIGROW</i>	spiritual	54
2017: <i>Downy 24-Hour Freshness Extended</i>	personal	29

Based on respondents' perspectives, these two advertisements are embedded with contemporary personal values. These ads reach the audience's cognition to achieve one's personal goal: dandruff-free, smooth, and shiny hair. Likewise, to maintain a good smell despite having been exposed to sweaty and strenuous activities. These goals are observed both in these two advertisements. This idea suggests that consumers often have a favorite brand and are more inclined to adhere to it. Connectedly, Defever, Pandelaere, and Roe (2013) acknowledged that personal values have an important role in acquisition choices. Likewise, in Adarza (2014), personal values are implicitly related to a person's option, and it serves as their standard in making decisions. Gutman's Means-End Theory (1982) reinforced this finding, hypothesizing that buyers weigh how certain goods will assist them in meeting their highest goals and principles before purchasing a product or service. Hence, personal value serves as an instrument that guides individuals to patronize a specific brand, product, or service offered in the community by using any promotional strategies. In addition, this value is an essential determinant in achieving success and meaningful life (Guth & Tagiuri, 1965, as cited in HBR, 2021).

The contemporary spiritual values are embedded in the advertisements of *McDonald's: Karen Po (2011)*, *Para Kanino Ka Bumabangon (2013)*, and *A Mommy's Sacrifice: NIDO Fortigrow Nestle (2016)* according to 56%, 54%, and 36% of the respondents, respectively. As depicted in these ads, Filipinos, in general, value family relationships. Timbreza (2010) pointed out that spiritual values correspond to spiritual feelings, such as those characterized by the highest qualities of the human mind. Likewise, Nazam and Husain (2016) believed that altruism, humanism, personal, divinity, and love compose the spiritual values of the human soul. These values are cultivated in the home with the family.

The advertisement of *McDonald's Karen Po* touched the hearts of millions of Filipino viewers, especially the last line of the commercial portrayed by Karen's grandfather. The grandfather has Alzheimer's disease who kept on saying, "*Ito (hamburger), para sa paborito kong apo, si Karen, (This hamburger is for my favorite granddaughter, Karen)*" even if he has a good time with Karen at the moment. The commercial is a tangible illustration of spiritual values in the act of love between a grandfather and a granddaughter. It likewise exemplifies that families are bound together despite any circumstances and makes life worth living. The effectiveness of this advertisement is shown by both communicating the importance of educating the younger generation about their seniors and guiding and advising them to care, respect, and understand their elders. It also encourages awareness to identify the present circumstances of the elders. According to Arsel, Rindfleisch, and Thompson (2006), this kind of marketing employs emotional branding that primarily appeals to consumers' emotions to help foster stronger relationships. As the subconscious is emotion-related, the advertisement and its contents linger on the viewers' conscience. Furthermore, Karnes (2020) expressed that ads' use of emotional branding intends to create a strong bond between a consumer and a product, brand, or service by stimulating the consumer's emotions, desires, wants, and ambitions. It is an effective way to convince the audience to patronize the products.

The ad, *A Mommy's Sacrifice: NIDO, Fortigrow Nestle (2016)*, depicts the mother's genuine and inexhaustible love for the family, especially her child. The mother in the ad portrays innumerable responsibilities, from washing the dishes up to educating the child. A hands-on mother performs all these tasks without any complaint. Midgley (2013) said that the child's inner world - instinct, drives, or dispositions - is anchored on their daily

exposure to quality experiences with the mother. Such implies that a mother is being looked up to as a model by the child. The mother has a vital role and is accountable for developing a child's personality. According to Ng, Fischer, Au, and Lu (2020), the child's holistic development is associated with maternal engagement throughout the early childhood years. Parental involvement, especially the mother, must incorporate values of wholeness, interconnectedness, and spirituality (Nazam & Husain, 2016) because these values become the automatic standard that the child subconsciously inherits. There is an automaticity of applying these values in the child's own family in the later years. This promotional strategy strongly influences the spiritual values of the general audience. Such ads provoke the audience to be conscientious about performing their duties and responsibilities in the family and their people. Besides, both ads consistently appeal to spread a love for humanity as a product of spiritual values.

The commercial, *Nescafe Classic: Para Kanino Ka Bumabangon? (Who do you wake up for?)*, depicts the Filipino masses (e.g., teachers, indigenous people, students, police officers, construction workers, etc.) as the stars and the real faces of the Filipinos in a real-life context. They are the ones who could easily relate to the people on the screen and be moved by the message conveyed in the ad. In an individual's mentality, one sees the Filipinos with motivation and determination to work. As shown by the suggested reasons to get up, one tends to be tied deeply within their family or community. One seems to value their loved ones or the *Bayanihan* (a traditional system of mutual assistance) spirit above oneself and others. In the study of Aguilong-Dalisay and Sarmiento-Enrile (2011), they asserted that *Bayanihan* is a concept deeply rooted in the Filipino culture and is associated with the spirit of volunteerism camaraderie, and kinship. They further explained that *Bayanihan* is working together to achieve a common

purpose and equitably sharing the fruits of labor regardless of existing social ranking, leadership roles, and authority relationships. Furthermore, they (Aguiling-Dalisay & Sarmiento-Enrile, 2011) pointed out that *Bayanihan* is the spirit that binds everyone together as one community and one nation committed to helping those in need.

Another approach to see the advertisement's message is to focus on the benefits of getting out of bed every day and feeling confident and excited to be ready for work, no matter what obstacles one may face in life. The TV commercial charms the audience on the primary purpose of the advertisement. It encourages people to focus on what is most important to them and their families. In addition, the amount of effort used and the amount of time invested reveal how someone views their priorities. Every day, the choices one makes reflect the essence of his heart and his goals. Similar to the previous commercial, this ad also appeals to the audience's spiritual ideals. An individual cannot extend help, compassion, and build a strong relationship with others if spiritual values are absent.

Meanwhile, about 29% of the respondents identified the *contemporary moral value* in the advertisement *Coca-Cola: Happiest Thank You* (2015). The result shows that moral value plays a significant role in maintaining one's social obligation as a human being and preserving a meaningful existence for smooth interpersonal relationships. A human being is a social individual who lives and connects with other individuals. According to Timbreza (2010), moral value exists within the family where each member lives, eats, plays, and sleeps with other members. An individual is a citizen who lives, works, and associates with other citizens in the government or the community. He further argued that to live harmoniously in a community with others is a fundamental right and duty that constitute moral values. The advertisement

conveys that individuals in the community where moral values exist shared feelings with others and are committed to one's responsibilities and actions towards others (Chowdhury, 2016). Expressing gratitude to a person's good rendering of service is a moral value that each one should cultivate. Reiss (1999) and Chowdhury (2016) believed that people are not entirely isolated, living their lives separated from others' moral frameworks. Thus, as part of the community, one has to exhibit morals. Besides, only a well-informed, cultured, and morally upright individual can reap the benefits of liberal democracy (Althof & Berkowitz, 2006). This commercial communicates to the audience the importance of having morality play a significant role in society.

Both advertisements in 2012, *PLDT My DSL's Anna Banana*, and in 2014, *Globe: Creating a Wonderful World*, have incorporated *technological value* as perceived by 43% and 37% of the respondents, respectively. Timbreza (2010) defined technical value as applying scientific and technological advances in the industry, engineering, commerce, and the arts. It means that anything related to the advancement of technology is scientifically important, insofar as it relates to the progress in technological science; hence, the technical importance of smartphones, cellphones, the Internet, machines, computers, etc., are seen in the two commercials. Such ads promote technological development. With the help of science, many inconceivable things that once seemed utterly unattainable are now a reality. New technologies, such as automobiles, gadgets, money, and other current technology-based equipment and appliances, are new technological values developed for man's convenience and comfort. Sullins (2021) argued that technological advancement could impact and enhance human values and ethics if used correctly.

Moreover, Kapur (2019) communicated that people worldwide are heavily dependent on modern technology in their current lifetime, and its application is vast, such as in education, medicine, engineering, science, etc. Technology aids in completing work tasks quickly, so individuals can handle issues and obstacles and stay organized. Both the ads remind the audience that communication technologies, such as mobile phones, the Internet, and social networking sites, play an essential part in influencing the lives of individuals (Hertlein & Ancheta, 2014). Likewise, technology is used primarily for communication purposes, but individuals, young and old, can send documents, pictures, videos, and other information in the present existence. In this manner, communication technologies help achieve not only academic goals but also all aspects of humanity.

Conclusion

There have been no efforts to see whether local television ads adhere to the contemporary values championed by Timbreza (2010). Thus, the contents of Filipino TV advertisements through the student's perspectives were studied. The respondents determined the contemporary values that are betokened in the TV advertisements of 2010-2017.

Based on the college students' perception, specific contemporary values are present in the TV commercials broadcasted to the general audience. The results revealed that personal values are in advertisements *Head and Shoulders (2010)* and *Downy: 24 Hour Freshness Extended (2017)*; spiritual values are in *McDonald's: Karen Po (2011)*, *Nescafe Classic: Para Kanino Ka Bumabangon (2013)*, and *A Mommy's Sacrifice NIDO Fortigrow Nestle (2016)*; moral value is in *Coca-Cola: The Happiest Thank You (2015)*, and technological values are in *PLDT myDSL*

Anna Banana Revealed (2012) and Globe Creating a Wonderful World (2014).

Television advertising has become popular in today's society because everyone is constantly exposed to the media. Advertising aimed at the general public is effective, according to them. Ads also serve as vehicles for advertising messages. Still, they are also used to promote brand images, create associations with other influential personalities, and facilitate sharing similar experiences in the audience. The mirror image of mass media profoundly affects society's social, cultural, and moral values by showing it from the opposite perspective.

Thus, advertising must be tailored not only to address the economic needs of a given population but must also imbed specific values and ideas that will contribute to the new social order. Consciously adopting these contemporary values can be attributed to Filipino advertisements circulated through the mass media.

As for recommendations, there is a need to increase the respondents and the advertisements to assess. Additionally, commercials might be subjected to content analysis where the respondents will be asked to explain their identified contemporary values present in the advertisements.

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