

Value-added Ads: An analysis of award-winning advertisements in the Philippines

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Abstract

Mass media impacts society in many ways - a fact which entails responsibility for practitioners. Advertising, being regarded as major lifeblood of the media industry, is not an exemption. As advertisers seek to gain profit, they are equally expected to adhere to corporate social responsibility or CSR. In the Philippines, the promotion of values has been one of the commonly expected CSR's, which in turn, gave birth to ARAW Values Awards, an award-giving body that recognizes advertisements that not just sell a product, but more importantly, integrate values in the ads. Thus, the researcher came up with this study to analyze the portrayal of values among the selected 2002 - 2012 winning advertisements of ARAW Values Awards. Content analysis, applying quantitative approach, was employed. This paper focused on identifying the values in the advertisements as well as its implications to the advertising industry. It was found out that the most common values among the television advertisements are family values, respect to human rights, and love for country, which highly reflect the Filipino culture. In a world which significantly breaks geographic barriers, advertisers are challenged to produce ads which not only seek to sell a product, but those that promote identity and connectedness of their target consumers as well, despite cultural diversity. It was recommended that further studies be conducted related to values in advertising particularly on how the advertisers comply with their corporate social responsibility.

INTRODUCTION

Media has created a big impact in society. It has been a part of the people's lives since it was introduced. It has been incorporated in all the functions, duties and responsibilities that humans need to fulfill. With the emergence of media, it has also paved the way for the establishment of various corporations and networks that handles and control them. Furthermore, it had introduced a variety of fields where media can be associated. One of these fields is advertising.

According to Claude Hopkins (2003), advertising is salesmanship where it applies the principles of salesmanship. Successes and failures in both lines are due to like a cause that is why, for every advertising question should be answered by the salesman's standards. Also, the only purpose of advertising is to make sales.

In this matter, corporations were able to gain profit in the use of media. But aside from the aim of these corporations in gaining profit, another important aspect of being a part of the business is dealing with corporate social responsibility (CSR).

Among the roles of CSR, one of the most important that should be given attention is the presentation of values that a culture has. Values are ones concept of what should be given importance. It serves as ones guide of what will be considered as good or bad.

With the transition of time, advertisements have been a very dominant factor in affecting the audience. It has affected the views of the people when it comes to gender, age, culture and other related factors. From this, the Advertising Board of the Philippines (ADBOARD) has been established on May 3, 1974. ADBOARD aims to uphold the progress of Philippine advertising through self-regulation. Their mission is to practice world class advertising along with advocating professional ethics through responsible and truthful advertising.

“The ARAW Values Awards program is founded on Seven (7) Cornerstone Values. The framework for its operations as defined, consisted of: (1) implementation on a biennial basis during a non-Philippine Advertising Congress year; (2) program undertaking by the AdBoard's Values Promotion Committee as its lead; (3) focus on recognizing advertising that promotes values, particularly on the ARAW 7 Cornerstone Values; and (4) hosting by various AdBoard member - associations on a rotation basis, similar to the biennial Philippine Ad Congress” (Gamboa, 2012).

The seven cornerstone values of the ARAW Values Awards include: love of God and respect for religious beliefs where it shows the importance of worship or living by the teachings of a religion or a superior being; commitment to truth, honesty, and integrity that showcase the value of truthfulness, the practice of fairness, and adherence to ethical principles; love of country and respect for national customs and tradition where it promotes the national pride and identity such as good cultural traits, history, achievements and the beauty of the country; reverence for family unity, marriage, and responsible parenthood where this promotes family togetherness, values the institution of marriage, and help people achieve a better, more responsible approach to parenthood; respect and care for human life and dignity and the rights of all that promotes physical, emotional, and psychological well-being; respect for law and authority and the

promotion of self-discipline that encourages good citizenship and good governance; and concern for preservation of environment that endorses the protection, proper management, or enrichment of our natural resources (Chongson, 2012).

From this, the researcher has observed that the commercials being aired in the television nowadays are not just merely promoting the product and services of different companies but also promotes values that are being practiced here in the Philippines. With the interest of the researcher on what he has observed from the television advertisements, the researcher decided to have the finalists of the ARAW Values Award to be analysed. From these, the researcher would like to find out how the core values set by ADBOARD are being portrayed by the advertisers here in the Philippines.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aimed to answer the question: what is the content of the selected winning television advertisements manifesting values in the ARAW Values Awards?

Specifically, it sought to answer the following objectives:

1. To identify the Filipino values that are portrayed by the television advertisement finalists of ARAW Values Awards; and
2. To explain the implication of the values identified in producing television advertisements in the Philippines based on the tones, issues, and approaches present in the advertisements.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The research used the Agenda-Setting Theory. The gatekeepers are represented by the advertisers who provide what the audience are supposed to get. They are the ones who provide us with the advertisement that shapes people's perception.

The media agenda are the advertisements that are categorized as according to the criteria of the decision makers. These advertisements contain issues that the advertisers want to address. The issues may include disasters, population growth, election, poverty, environmental problems, inequality, and family problems.

As based on these issues that are addressed, the decision maker in the study is the ADBOARD committee who sets the core values that are included in the ARAW Values Awards. The policy agenda includes the categories of values that they identified namely – religious, family, love of country, respect to human rights, respect to law and authority, protection of the environment, and truth, honesty & integrity. The public agenda is the perception of the audience to the images shown in the television advertisement. In this study, the media agenda is substituted by what is being promoted in the advertisements.

All these are of course, affected by the experiences that every individual of the society has. Also, these are all based on the cultural belief of a certain community or race.

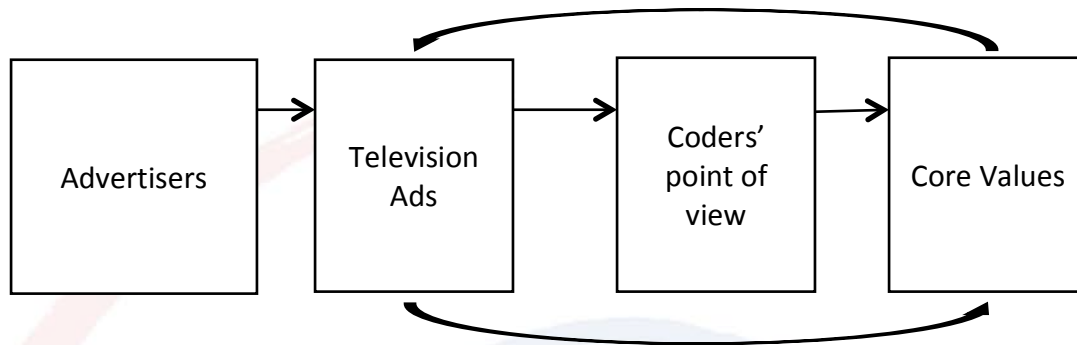


Figure 1. Diagram of the Conceptual Framework

In the conduct of the study the researcher used the Input-Process-Output Model. The input in the study is the advertisements that qualified as finalists/ winners in the ARAW Values Awards from 2002 to 2012 and the primary and secondary sources related with values presented in the advertisements applying content analysis to identify the values portrayed in the advertisements. These are all being analysed using a devised coding sheet that was answered by three coders. Then, the output of the study is the identified formula on presenting the dominant values applied in the presentation of the television advertisements.

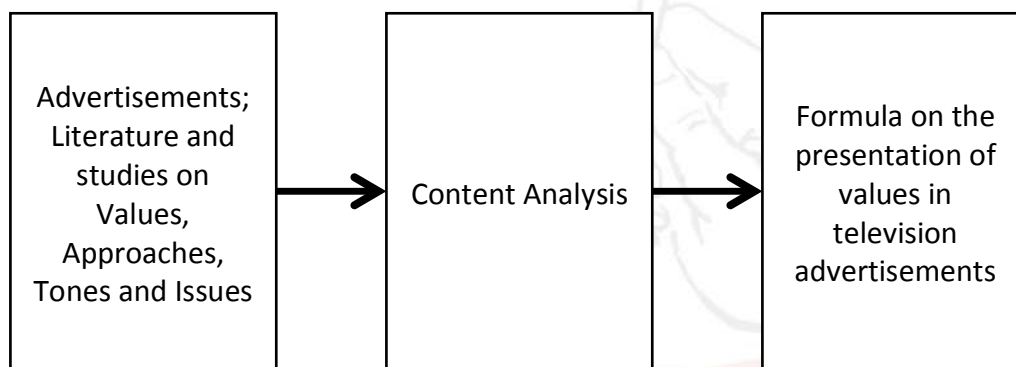


Figure 2. Schematic Diagram of the Input-Process-Output Model

METHODOLOGY

This study sought to analyze the television advertisements from the ARAW Values Awards using content analysis focusing on the values being depicted. The researcher used a quantitative approach. This focused on the recurrence of the data from the different advertisements analyzed in the study. As for the design, the researcher used descriptive design to answer the problems raised in the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Values portrayed in the television advertisements

Values	f	%
<i>Religious</i>	4	8.0
<i>Family</i>	17	34.0
<i>Love of country</i>	9	18.0
<i>Respect to human rights</i>	11	22.0
<i>Respect to law and authority</i>	1	2.0
<i>Protection of the environment</i>	1	2.0
<i>Truth, honesty & integrity</i>	7	14.0
TOTAL	50	100.0

Table 1 present the values that are being portrayed in the selected television advertisements. The values are Religious (includes images of the Cross, Church, people praying, and other religious groups), Family (depicts images of father, mother, children, complete member or house, and actions/activities being done by the family), Love of country (shows images of Philippine tourist spots, customs, traditions, culture, and trademarks), Human rights (includes pictures related with education, protection from harm caused by disasters or other human, and providing individual's needs), Government (depicts images of administration activities, and local and national affairs), Environment (shows images of nature, animals, plants and actions protecting the environment), and Truth, Honesty & Integrity (includes images of ways to identify the truth, telling what is seen or heard, and ones having honor).

Based on the gathered data, it could be seen that among the selected television advertisements, 34% portrays the family values. These are those advertisements that depict images of father, mother, children, or complete member or house and shows actions being done by Filipino families.

This is evident and is congruent with Javier et al.'s statement (2000) that "Filipino families being monogamous. They play the role for their children being the ones who give attention, affection, care and protection. It is considered as an institution that provides security that protects its members from external challenges."

This is followed by the values on the respect to human rights. 22% of the selected television advertisements shows pictures related with education, protection from harm caused by disasters or other human, and providing individual's needs.

This is in accordance with Hornedo's statement (1988), as cited by Talisayon, that "The authentic and truly classic EDSA people power was therefore: (1) popular and cutting across socio-economic lines; spontaneous and therefore unstructured, (2) joyful and humanitarian, (3) religious in temperament and persuasion, (4) pacifist and conciliatory, (5) non-confrontational as the third party go-between or namamagitan of traditional Filipino society and culture, and by this fact (6) rooted in the Filipino national consciousness and soul . . . (it was also) (7) pro-freedom" are being depicted.

This proves the assumption of the researcher that Filipinos are known to value the close family ties and other beliefs that were learned from home and that the values that are being portrayed in the television advertisements are family-related values.

Implications: Formula in Creating Television Ads in the Philippines

As observed from advertisements, a pattern can be used in producing values-sensitive television advertisements in the Philippines. The usual issue that is easily observable in the advertisements is about the issues that Filipino families are facing such as teenage pregnancy and separation from other family members. It is being addressed by the television advertisements by depicting situations where family members such as a father, mother, and/or children talk about their concerns to find ways to resolve it immediately.

Furthermore, to point out the importance of the product or service in the portrayal of values, the advertisers use the “Overcoming the Monster” approach in which the product or service is promoted to serve as the consumer’s side kick or could be the weapon in resolving the issue. Also, to make the television advertisements more retentive to viewers, the advertisers mostly tap the emotions of viewers as well as the straightforward tone for their advertisement to be easily understood by consumers.

CONCLUSION

Based on the gathered findings, the following conclusions were drawn. The television advertisements that qualified in the ARAW Values Awards from 2002 – 2012 were dominated by family values. This proves that Filipino culture gives importance to family unity, marriage and parenthood.

The advertisers can use the formula of having family members resolving the issues through the aid of the product or service portraying the close family ties that Filipinos have in a straightforwardly and emotional manner, in producing advertisements in the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions drawn, the researcher recommends that:

1. Advertisers should take into consideration the images that it presented to their audience using the television as a medium in advertising.
2. Advertisers can use the identified formula on the presentation of values in the television advertisements that they will create.
3. Consumers should be aware of the values that are being portrayed by the advertisements. Advertisements that are being viewed are not mere informative in nature but also have values that reflects human life.

4. Advertisements are considered already as a means to address different issues that a community or geographic location is facing. Thus, citizens should view advertisements as a tool for them to be aware of the situation of the country.
5. Since this study focused on the television advertisements only, future researchers should conduct another study on the other media used in advertising.
6. Future researches may also be conducted on the effect of these advertisements to different groups or set of respondents.

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