CULTURAL VALUES IN MAGAZINE ADVERTISING: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE ARAB WORLD AND THE UNITED STATES

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ABSTRACT

The current research examined differences and similarities in content and appeal of magazine advertisements in the Arab world and the United States. The motivation behind this research resides in the fact that the Arab culture is going through increasing change that affects consumers' perception and behavior (Kalliny & Gentry, 2007). The change may create confusion and ambiguity in the international marketing environment of this region. This raises two main research concerns: first, previous research findings will have to go through a rigorous review to account for the changes that are sweeping the Arab region. Second, future research must capture those changes and assess their impact on the Arab society and culture. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to examine the current cultural values used in magazine advertisements in the Arab region and compare them to those used in magazine advertisements in the United States. The results of this study should be interpreted with caution due to the limitation of the sample and the dependency on coders' accuracy. Future research should focus on expanding the sample and investigate these cultural values in other advertising medium such as digital and TV advertisements.

Keywords: Cultural Values, International Marketing, Magazine Advertisements.

INTRODUCTION

Cultural values that are depicted in magazine advertisements are not similar across cultures. Comparisons have been made by a variety of cultures including Japan, Soviet Union, China, Hong Kong, Brazil, Mexico, and of course the United States. Mueller (1987) stated that U.S. and Japanese commercials tended to reflect individualism that is reflective of Western cultures. Building on this research, there were two studies that examined Japan and the U.S. One study by Zandpour & Qian (1992) supported Mueller's findings while the other by Han and colleagues 1992 reported large differences between the two countries. A study conducted by Lin demonstrated that there is a common ground among approaches used in advertising media (Lin, 1993). This common ground is based on contemporary materialism that is ingrained across cultures. Building on Lin's previous study, Lin & Salwen (1995) found that the U.S. used rational and emotional appeals in their advertisements whereas the Japanese applied appeal based on the sex and nudity to stimulate customers and give information about the product (Lin & Salwen, 1995).

The Arab world, consisting of 22 countries with over 90% of Arabs living in the Arab region, has Arabic as the official language and Islam as the official religion. (Central Intelligence Agency, 2012). A majority of a population of over 300 million in the Arab Middle East is

between age of 15 and 64. With a greater understanding of the cultural values, companies can start moving into this region and integrate the Arab world into the international marketplace. Organizations investing in the Arab marketplace will increase their bottom line, improve economic condition of the region and thus result in, better economic status and quality of life for Arabs (Al-Olayan & Karande, 2000; Kalliny & Gentry, 2007).

The current research examined differences and similarities in content and appeal of magazine advertisements in between the Arab world and the United States. The motivation behind this research resides in the fact that the Arab culture is going through increasing change that affects consumers' perception and behavior (Kalliny & Gentry, 2007). The change may create confusion and ambiguity in the international marketing environment in this region. This raises two main research concerns: first, previous research findings will have to go through a rigorous review to account for the changes that are sweeping the Arab region. Second, follow-up research must capture those changes and assess their impact on the Arab society and culture. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to examine the current cultural values reflected in Arab magazine advertisements and compare them to those in US counterparts.

Culture and Values

Culture helps people around the globe to communicate with and understand each other. Culture is not static and is handed down from generation-to-generation via a process of learning. A value system contains a group of values that are personal and diverge from individuals and their cultures. Values shape behavior and both behaviors and values influence culture (Belk et al., 1985). Culture influences each facet of our existence from our thoughts and sentiments to our mannerisms (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; McCort & Malhotra 1993; Triadis, 1995; Triandis & Vassiliou, 1972). Advertising and marketing literature argue that culture influences a variety of factors such as attitudes to promotion and media favorites (Han & Shavitt, 1994; Light & Somasundaram, 1994; Yin, 2003; Zhang & Gelb, 1996), dissemination and changes of new technology and product (La Ferle et al., 2002; Tansuhaj et al., 1991).

Value is an expression identified as

"An enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence" (Herche, 1994).

Likewise, this value system is

"*An enduring organization of beliefs concerning preferable modes of conduct or end-states of existence along a continuum of relative importance" (Rokeach, 1973).*

Rokeach (1968) identified two types of values: personal value which is applied to a person's own goals and behaviors in contrast to social values which is applied to a person's behaviors and goals for the society.

The Arab Culture

Arabs are individuals who communicate through the Arabic language or come from Arab kinfolks. A large number of the Arabs reside in the Middle East, which covers from Mauritania on the Atlantic Ocean to Oman on the Indian Ocean. All the Arab countries share language,

geography and Muslim as a major religion (Beeston, 1974; Cleveland, 1994). Merging structures of Arabs takes account of

"A common language, a common history and mentality, an all but-common religion, and common economic interests" (Faris & Husayn, 1955).

The foundations of the Arab-Islamic culture lie in the Holy Quran and the Sauna of the Prophet. The Holy Quran is the primary basis of Islamic disciplines and the Arabic language. It is the place in which the Muslim try to find assistance in his expedition for truths in the arenas of understanding, authenticity, values, thought, truth, moral, and behavior. Another source for truth is the Sauna (the sayings of Prophet Muhammad). Islam has five basic pillars that significantly impact the culture and behavior of Arab Muslims: the declaration of faith, praying five times a day, giving money to charity, fasting, and pilgrimage to Mecca (Chachula et al., 2009). In addition, to be a Muslim you have to have Iman (faith), which is the awareness to distinguish between good and evil. Several studies claim that the system of belief or Iman according to Islam consist of three parts; heart, verbal, and action (Daud, 1996). In other words, a Muslim who has a high level of Iman will believe in his heart, vocalize it through his words and his action will match what he says. This is clearly documented in the Quran:

The Arab traditional values and rules are constructed on Islamic religious philosophies due to their belief in a collectivistic society (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). The Islamic religion is reported to be the main source of influence on all Muslins life, which creates a culture that cannot be separated from religion (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005; Kalliny & Gentry, 2007; Luqmani et al., 1989; Nydell, 1996; Al-Olayan & Karande, 2000; Rice & al-Mossawi, 2002). Advertising research found that 70% of the population studied said that the Islamic culture has an influence on advertising to Muslims (Keenan & Shoreh, 2000).

Cultural Values Investigated

12 cultural values were investigated: beauty, ethics, freedom, guilt, happiness, health, honesty, modernity, nudity, pleasure, religion, and taboos. These cultural values were chosen after an extensive review of the literature indicating these cultural values have not been investigated much in the context of the Arab world although they have been investigated in other regions.

Beauty and Body Image

Culture defines, describes and classifies beauty in many different ways. Frith and colleagues described beauty as a paradigm that diverges from one culture to another while modifying culture over time (Frith et al., 2005; Greer, 1999). McCollum (2001) describes beauty as traits of an individual, estate, entity, or image that provide feelings of desire or enjoyment. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder and one's perception of beauty can be exacerbated by subjective, relational, and political influences (Olarts, 2010).

Over the past four decades, research on females in advertising has spanned the U.S. and Europe (Bordo, 1993; Courtney & Lockeretz, 1971; Gauntlett, 2002; Goffman, 1976; Kilbourne, 1987; Kilbourne, 1999; Lafky et al., 1996; Richins, 1991; Soley & Kurzbad, 1986). Research has derived that Western beauty standards have turned into worldwide standards gradually. Specifically, Asian women wish to look like Caucasian females (Takeuchi & Cullen, 2002). Conversely, reduced media consumption can indirectly help to rectify the women's perception

about body because it would decrease the exposure to the Western beauty standards (Massup, 2008).

While it is clear that the Arab world is significantly different from the U.S. in various respects, we argue that the recent exposure of Arabs to the Western media has influenced their cultural values in some significant ways. For example, while the Quran states that women should cover their heads, thus focusing more on the inner beautify, we believe that the media influence has been significant and that there is not much difference between how people in the Arab world and the U.S. see or value beauty. Thus,

H1: Arab and American advertisements will manifest similar use of the value of beauty.

Ethics

Understanding people's morals, philosophies and reasoning is important for companies. Both companies and individuals are responsible for ethical codes. Companies should not ignore individual ethics and the ability for individuals to make ethical choices (Ferrell, 2005). Recently, Western journals increased in the importance of business ethics studies (Armstrong, 1992; Beard, 2003; Bhuian et al., 2002; Dubinsky et al., 1991; Green, 1993; Gould, 1995; Jayasankaran, 1996; Naughton & Laczniak, 1993; Ralston et al., 1993; Rossauw, 1994; Triff et al., 1987; Erdem et al., 1999; Williams, 1983).

Ethics can vary from one culture to another, for example, interest rates are prohibited in Islam yet allowed in other countries (Quran Al-baqarah). Prophet Muhammad said in a hadith (a statement of Prophet Muhammad)-that in the Day of Qiamah, Allah (God) will not talk, look at and pardon those sellers (of goods) who falsely swear about the quality of their products so that buyers will buy a large quantity of their goods (Sahih Muslim Hadith Book). Cunningham (1999) stated advertising ethics as,

"What is right or good in the conduct of the advertising function? It is concerned with questions of what ought to be done, not just with what legally must be done".

Throughout the year's promotion and marketing interaction dispatches have generated an allotment of controversial ethical matters (Foley, 1999).

Since ethics in the Arab Muslim world is important, industries have to cope with the sensitivity of the issues when advertising in Arab countries. Islam is the foundation of determining people with an immense individuality and a praiseworthy moral (Masood et al., 2007).

H2: Arab advertisements will reflect more ethical appeals in comparison to their U.S. counterparts.

Freedom

Perceived freedom, freedom of countenance and media freedom are required circumstances for cultural assortment of products to prosper (Levy, 1959). Levy (1959) described in his book, Symbols for Sale, stating that consumers make purchasing decisions on what the product can do but also on what the product means. Therefore, product advertisements transfer values via advertising appeals. The influence of advertising creates conflict between freedom and control in the consumption domain. The capacity of consumers to deny the impact of advertising and in that way practice freedom has been decreased via the Socialist analysis of

its essential character in the upholding of free enterprise (Leiss et al., 1990) which functions across the invention of ideological hegemony. (Goldman, 1992).

While the U.S. perceives freedom and liberation as significant, the Eastern countries perceive collectivistic values such as supportiveness, obedience and graciousness as more significant (Leiss et al., 2005; Rokeach, 1973). The Arab culture also places more emphasize on obedience, graciousness and supportiveness (Kloss, 2001).

Islam defines and understands the concept of freedom differently than western cultures do. The western cultures view and understand the concept of freedom as freedom of actions and personal autonomy. In contrast, Islam culture views freedom merely in the context of social and religious sympathies excluding the completion of societal and religious indebtedness. The utilization of such sympathies is found all across the areas including health and behavior. This interpretation is the Muslim's notion of self presents fewer independent democratic viewpoints, nevertheless as an alternative democratic notion by the family and involvement in the Islamic society. However, obedience of the Islamic law of Allah (God) is considered the foundation of all freedom. Islam releases the opinion, essence, and manners the evil takes over the planet. Furthermore, it assists individuals to defeat repressive autocrats, unjustified laws, longings, divergence and mental multiplexes which enchain Allah's will.

H3: U.S. magazine advertisements will utilize the freedom appeal more than their Arab counterparts.

Guilt

Nicholas Rowe, a dramatist of the 17th century wrote the words Guilt is the source of sorrow, the avenging friend…with whips and stings. Guilt is a value like no other because the majority of its foundation is rooted which evokes one response. It stems from the knowledge that one has failed to fulfill their personal ideals as well as live and perform in a specific manner. Therefore, guilt is based on sensation and/or judgments. The sensation of guilt impacts and squashes your actual sensations, for instance infuriation, sorrow, want, or pleasure. Typically, a person arranges the sensations of guilt by rejecting them. However, denied feelings do not disappear; they eventually take over and lead a person to negative coping behaviors. Nevertheless guilt is a feeling of displeasure which is purely a response proving that individuals have the ability to change (Lindsay-Hartz et al., 1995; Lazar, 2008; Tangney, 1995; Erikson, 1985; Jordan, 1989; Lynd, 1958; Tangney, 1999; Tilghman-Osborne et al., 2010; Tracy & Robins, 2004).

Guilt befalls the minute person states regret for not wanting to behave in a certain way even though it is described to be *"must"* or *"should"* (Heidenreich, 1968). Guilt can encourage people to take the necessary action, such as stimulating positive social behavior (Carlsmith & Gross, 1969; Tangney et al., 1995).

Researchers also found that the presence of guilt in advertising messages is a vehicle of persuasion (Cotte et al., 2005; Coulter & Pinto, 1995; Pinto & Priest, 1991; Yinon et al., 1976). Guilt has not only capability of persuasion, but also the ability to evoke negative responses in consumers such as fury and bitterness (Baumeister et al., 1995; Rubin & Shaffer, 1987). Huhmann & Brotherton (1997) conducted a study analyzing 24 popular magazine advertisements and found that the appeal of guilt was at the forefront. The presence of guilt found in advertisement was similar to other appeals such as fear, shame, and nudity. The study also found that guilt appeals in advertisement were higher in charity and health product advertisements (Huhmann & Brotherton, 1997).

H4: Arab advertisements will utilize more guilt appeals than their U.S. counterparts.

Happiness

Several psychologists define happiness, what they term satisfaction or positive psychological well-being. For example, Veenhoven & Ehrhardt (1995) described happiness as the degree to which one judges the quality of one's life favorably. Others like Argyle, Martin (1998) defined three potential elements of happiness: positive feeling, gratification, and the lack of undesirable emotions such as melancholy or fretfulness. Several investigations showed that religious individuals are dedicated and devoted to their tradition, disregarding radicals, are likely to enjoy delight in healthier, equally corporal and psychological wellbeing (Koenig et al., 1997).

Islam encourages people to live a good and happy life. There are several factors contributing to more happiness: circumventing comparisons; keeping oneself busy and emphasizing personal success; therefore guiding oneself to superior happiness and pleasure (Lyubomirsky, 2008).

H5: U.S. advertisements will have more happiness appeals as compared to their Arab counterparts.

Health

Tse et al. (1989) stated that cultural values do play such a serious part in influencing the buyer's behavior that the buyer purchases products to maintain the quality of life, and in turn this quality of life is an indication of the culture in a specific society. The usage of high levels of fear in social advertising such as health is supported by an abundance of literature (Blumberg et al., 2000; De Turck et al., 1992; Donovan, 1991; Snipes et al., 1999; Witte et al., 1998). According to those who research advertising appeals, some have found a correlation between health benefits and nutrition (Byrd-Bredbenner & Grasso, 2001; Hickman et al., 1993; Harrison & Marske, 2005; Kotz & Story, 1994; Kunkel & Gantz, 1992; Parker, 2003; Warren et al., 2008). For example, a study conducted by Hickman et al. (1993) showed a 25% in nutrition appeals and health benefits.

Islam is known as a comprehensive system of life. It emphasizes the value of keeping up with one's virtuous health related techniques that deal with poor health. Islam supports a holistic method of maintaining health. Spiritual life is indivisible and earthly life is corporal as well as controversial, and religious health cannot be detached; they are three portions that create a wholly healthy individual (Stacey, 2011). For more than a few decades, it has established an agreement that religious faith and traditions have a noteworthy effect on both corporeal and emotive health. Therapeutic and technical examination have established that spiritual obligation supports in the preclusion and therapy of emotional anarchies, Confidence in and surrender to the will of God is the greatest vital element of decent health carefulness. The Prophet said: God Almighty has created no disease except for ones have treatments he created (Saheeh Al-Bukhari). The Quran includes numerous stanzas of recommendation concerning healthy dining useful for the communications between physical and spiritual health.

H6: Health appeals will be used more in Arab magazine advertisements than U.S. advertisements.

Honesty

Honesty refers to a facet of moral character and denotes positive, virtuous attributes such as integrity, truthfulness, and straight forwardness along with the absence of lying, cheating, or theft. Honesty in advertising is used to motivate others to have trust in, and be open toward unpredicted and startling chances in life. The act of being honest may considerably decreases anxiety in life through the ability to build self- respect and provides strength with concrete standards to live www.gentle-stress-relief.com, 2010. Advertising performs best when it speaks to the honesty and integrity while respecting consumers' core values, which means informing and protecting consumers through promotion of practices such as honest advertising (AcademicWritingTips.org, 2011).

Islam is viewed as a complete package of life and an inclusive code of collective manners setting all social relationships. It is contingent on the suitable obedience of the culture's value system grounded on concepts defined in Islam dominantly by honesty, truthfulness, integrity (Hasan, 2009). The basic fundamental rule in Islamic business is the concept of honesty and truth. Advertising should reflect commercials that depict high moral values by insisting on advertising not give false information about the product or service it is trying to promote (Lewis, 2006). The God of Islam commands that a Muslim be truthful and do not deceit others by words or actions (Stacey, 2011).

H7: Arab magazine advertisements will use more honesty appeals compared to their U.S. counterparts.

Modernity and tradition

One of the basic features of the Arab tradition and society (as a whole is) is openness. However, Arab tradition is not as open as that of Western societies. Islamic tradition is general and Arab tradition is precise, due to their ability to uphold tradition, religion, rule of law, and cultural values simultaneously (Amin, 2008). Moreover, the context of the Arab tradition is important; their charter is grounded on principles of regulation that are common to most countries that have regulation and structure. The charter also reflects culture and the values beholden in the Arab tradition. Charter requests an observation of commonly recognized values of politeness and lifestyle that mirror the traditional values of Arab society (Amin, 2008).

H8: Arab magazine advertisements will have more tradition appeals than U.S. advertisements do.

H9: Arab magazine advertisements will have more modernity appeals than U.S. advertisements do.

Nudity

Arab TV is required to review all advertisements before airing or printing them because of strict regulation originated from the Islamic principle demanding females cover their body to avoid male gaze. The number of advertisement related to nudity and sex appeal has increased around the globe. Some studies have surveyed consumers in the U.S. and some of the European countries. Paek & Nelson (2007) found visual and verbal advertisements being used. TV advertisements in countries belong to the Middle East and Asia are more conservative (Paek & Nelson, 2007). TV viewers are consumers with different age and demographic characteristic. For example, the prime-time viewer includes children, who get affected by the content of the advertisement (Paek & Nelson, 2007). The degree of sex or nudity varies from country to

country. Many factors affected the content of the ads: regulations, censorship, other sensitive issues that have to be respected in each country (Beetles & Harris, 2005; Nelson & Paek, 2008: 2005; Kalliny & Gentry, 2007). For example, Western countries have considerable freedom in advertising and in TV particularly (Nelson & Paek, 2008). This freedom in advertising is not available to Middle Eastern countries where regulation, culture and religion affect the type of advertisements being placed,

H10: Arab advertisements will depict fewer amounts of nudity in their product or service endorsements compared to their U.S. counterparts

H11: There will not be a statistically significant difference in the depiction of men and women in Arab magazine advertisements.

Pleasure

The notion of pleasure has been a multifaceted social and traditional phenomenon in investigations of media viewers since the 1980s. These investigations developed various meaning of pleasure acknowledged as clarifying viewers motion and obligation (O'Connor & Klaus, 2000). Marketing professionals and academic researchers that study new media assume that advertising has to offer more fun and pleasure than current or traditional media. Many researchers investigating pleasure report that seeking pleasure is a model of human motivation and at the behavioral level of consumer research focuses on choice and purchase decisions (Havlena & Holbrook, 1986; Laurent & Kapferer, 1985; Venkatraman & MacInnis, 1985). Patrons could exercise pleasure-seeking standards in their selection and appraisal of merchandises, which then develops self-concept, offer funs, and satisfies a person's mind (Bettman, 1979). According to the aforementioned statement, emotional promotion made reference to the communication method in which a shopper practices his/her assessment of the pleasurable affiliation. Furthermore, pleasure through the merchandise ought to be discriminated from pleasure resulting from the advertisement. However, the combination of both of them may lead to pleasure. Merchandise brings pleasure and pleasure is promoted as the result of acquiring merchandise (Gorn, 1982; Mitchell & Olsen, 1981). Consumers not only perceive advertisement as information but also derive pleasure and joy from them (Haller, 1974; Mittal, 1994).

H12: Arab advertisements will have a significant higher number of pleasure/hedonic appeals as compared to their U.S. counterparts.

Religion

Culture consists of many values that influence the behavior and attitudes of people; one of the most important influential values is religion (Belzen, 1999). Religion in a culture stems from an incorporated scheme of principles. In some countries, religion, endowed with great importance, have significant influence on the behaviors and attitudes of consumers. Schwartz & Huismans (1995) viewed religion as subsystem of culture and a value in itself. Strong values influence manners and behaviors. Religion is considered to assist people in everyday ideologies while influencing manners and behaviors. Researchers have not agreed on a set of values that connect religion, yet, they have decided that there are elements of religious practice that are connected to religion. These elements of practice are socialization actions spreading religious

principles, customs, formality, restrictions, and ethics (Berkman et al., 1997; Crystal, 1993; Wulff, 1997).

H13: Arab magazine advertisements will manifest a high percentage of ads that use religious appeals.

H14: Arab magazine advertisements will have a significantly higher number of religious appeals compared to their U.S. counterparts.

Taboos/haram

A taboo is something that humans believe in a way restricts themselves; to get an idea of right and wrong (Freud, 2005). The author adds that taboos are prehistoric embargoes inflicted in opposition to mankind's deepest primeval cravings (Freud, 2005). Open communication across cultures leads to more attention over the taboos and violation of the cultural values. This is shown more in advertising, codes censorship and self-censorship in US and Europe (Waller, 1999). Negative attitudes toward advertisement and brands that utilize taboos, resulting in decreases product sales, were examined (Spears & Singh, 2004). Researchers state that advertising taboos can be found and often seen among the presence of nudity, sex appeal, dirt, vulgarity, impropriety, ethics, offensiveness and religious taboos (Dahl et al., 2003; Manceau & Tissier-Desbordes, 2006).

Advertising to the Arab world and Muslim countries has to take into consideration the sensitivity of the Islamic religion and its huge impact in every aspect of the Arab people and culture. Many things are prohibited according to Islam Law such as, eating pork, drinking alcohol and gambling (Waller & Kam, 2000).

H15: U.S. magazine advertisements will have a significantly higher number of taboo appeals (i.e. sex, death, drug, poverty) compared to their Arab counterparts.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

We collected a total of 250 advertisements from Arab magazines and 250 advertisements of U.S. magazines. The Arab magazine sample came from five different magazines namely *Zahrat Al Khaleej*, *Laha, Anty, Lamasat*, and *Arabesque Déco. Zahrat-Alkhaleej* magazine is poised as a leading magazine in all Arab countries (United Arab Emirates). *Laha Magazine* is circulated every Wednesday across GCC, the Levant, Cairo, Europe and other countries. *Anty Magazine* covers a wide variety of topics such as entertainment, fashion, arts, culture, lifestyle, nutrition and more. It is also a magazine that includes opinion pieces and well known to intellectuals and is considered to have a journalistic readership. Its circulation is over 12,000 copies (Adeniyi, 2011). The diversity in readership and the high circulation rate was the reason for the selection of *Anty Magazine*. *Lamasat* is a magazine that is a high quality pan Arab publication with local home readership. It provides readers with information into the entire Arab world. *Arabesque Décor* magazine is the premier Arabic magazine specialized in decorating homes. In every issue, the magazine features the latest products and 148 outstanding projects and thus advertisements in this magazine are read by professionals in interior design, with marketing geared to a wealthy population.

The criteria for the selection of the U.S. magazines were that they had to be ranked at top ten circulations among all U.S. magazines, be founded before 1946, and have different audience categories. The samples of U.S. magazines were *Better Homes and Gardens* (Home Readership), *National Geographic* (Journalistic Readership), *Womens Day* (Female Readership), and *Family Circle* (Family Readership). *Better Homes and Gardens* with circulation rate of 7, 648,900, was founded in 1922. *National Geographic* was founded in 1988 and ranked 4th in circulation of magazines in the U.S. *Womens Day, with* a circulation rate of 863,710, is ranked number seven in circulation of magazines in the U.S and was founded in 1931. It is ranked number nine in overall magazine circulation in the United States. *Family Circle* was founded in 1932 and has a circulation rate of 3, 816 and 958. It is ranked number 10 in overall circulation in the United States magazines. We removed all duplicate ads.

Procedure

Six coders were recruited to code the ads for the analysis where we used three Arab coders to code the Arab magazine advertisements and three American coders to code the U.S. magazine advertisements. The three Arab coders were bi-lingual in Arabic and English so we were able to use an English coding sheet and training. The coders were asked to complete a sample coding of magazine advertisements to ensure the coding was completed accurately, using the operational definitions displayed in Table 1 and product categories shown in Table 2. This sample coding procedure was part of an intense training the six coders received. Afterwards, coders practiced coding by using a sample of twenty-five ads (depending on what country they were given to analyze), which was followed by a discussion session of the right method of coding. These sessions provided the ability with the coders to inquire and clear uncertainties that remained after their sample of coding was completed. After the six coders showed an adequate level of understanding of the coding process along with a high accuracy in coding, they were asked to start coding the ads. Regular meetings were held during the coding process to discuss any difficulties, or provide any additional interpretations. Using Cohen's Kappa to calculate inter-coder reliability as recommended in the literature (Bakeman, 2000; Dewey, 1983) we have a result of 0.93 for the Arab magazine advertisements and 0.98 for U.S. magazine advertisements.

RESULTS

Some products including personal care, financial service, technology, and specific product types, were re-coded by combining categories in order to assure that the minimum sample size was large enough for tests of statistical significance. The products presented in the advertisement were inserted into the coding table as 'Product Categories'. A total of 250 magazine advertisements were classified by product categories in which culture is considered important for the consumers' purchase decision.

Table 1 DISTRIBUTION OF MAGAZINE SAMPLE ON PRODUCT CATEGORY				
Product Category	Arab Ads	Arab percentage	U.S. Ads	U.S. Percentage
Alcoholic beverages	2	0.80	1	0.40
Appliances	5	2.00	6	2.40
Automobiles	4	1.60	1	0.40
Baby Products	7	2.80	0	0

Cleaning	6	2.40	24	9.60
Clothing/Accessories	72	28.80	17	6.80
Drugs/Medicine	0	0	39	15.6
Entertainment	5	2	0	0
Finance Services	1	0.40	6	2.40
Food/Beverage	15	6.00	55	22
Furniture	9	3.60	10	4
Institutional/Public Service	3	1.20	5	2
Personal Care/Beauty	102	40.80	67	26.8
Sport	0	0	0	0
Travel	3	1.20	0	0
Technology	12	4.80	3	1.20
Tobacco	0	0.00	0	0
Others	4	1.60	16	6.40
Total	250	100	250	100

Table 1 shows the distribution of product categories among the two countries included in the study. The products promoted most often were personal care and beauty products. This was found in both countries with the Arab magazine sample at 40.80%, and 26.8% for the U.S. magazine. The Arab distribution followed with 28.80% for clothing/accessories and food/ beverage with 6.00%. While the U.S. sample's second frequency; personal care and beauty with 26.8%, food/beverage with 22% and Drug and Medicine products with 15.6%. The result of the product category distribution shows that the product category best represented in both samples was personal care and beauty products.

Among the Arab sample, only 15 advertisement were representing food/beverages products, 12 advertisement for technology products, 9 for furniture, and 38 advertisement were divided among baby products, appliances, entertainment, cleaning, automobiles, financial services, institutional and public service, travel and others. However, none of the sport, tobacco, drug/medicine products was represented in the sample of advertisement. The U.S. sample shows advertisements for drug and Medication with 15.6% while the Arab ads show none; however, baby products, entertainment, sport, travel, and tobacco had zero representation in the U.S. magazine sample and six were not listed in our product categories.

Table 2 ADVERTISING APPEALS IN MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENTS				
	Arab		**U.S.**	
Cultural values	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**percentage**
Cannot code	1	0.05%	44	2.32%
Beauty and Body Image	106	5.58%	67	3.53%
Ethics	1	0.05%	2	0.11%
Freedom	0	0.00%	3	0.16%
Guilt	2	0.11%	24	1.26%
Happiness	57	3.00%	64	3.37%
Health	22	1.16%	78	4.11%
Honesty	28	1.48%	20	1.05%
Modernity	124	6.53%	2	0.11%
Nudity	50	2.63%	1	0.05%
Pleasure	80	4.21%	4	0.21%
Religion	12	0.63%	2	0.11%

Taboos/Haram	120	6.32%	0	0.00%
Tradition	9	0.47%	5	0.26%
Other	4	0.21%	111	5.85%

*Significant at the 0.05 level (P) 0.05
**Significant at the 0.01 Level (P) 0.01

Hypotheses Testing

Beauty and body image: H1 posited that Arab and American advertisements will manifest similar use of the value of beauty. Table 1 shows that the magazine mean score of the Arab ($\bar{x}$ =1.25) and U.S. ($\bar{x}$=0.532). There was a statistically significantly difference between Arab and U.S. in cultural values of beauty and body image at the 0.01 significance level indicating a lack of support for H1.

Ethics: H2 stated that Arab advertisements will reflect more ethical appeals in comparison to their U.S. counterparts. ANOVA results show that the magazine mean score of the Arab ($\bar{x}$ =0.004) and U.S. ($\bar{x}$=0.012) but the difference was not statistically significant, thus H2 was not supported.

Freedom: H3 stated that U.S. magazine advertisements will utilize the freedom appeal more than their Arab counterparts. ANOVA results show that the magazine mean score of the Arab ($\bar{x}$ =0.06) and U.S. ($\bar{x}$=0). There is a statistically significant difference between the Arab world and U.S. at the 0.01 significance level indicating a lack of support for H3.

Guilt: H4 stated that Arab advertisements will utilize more guilt appeals than their U.S. counterparts. ANOVA results show the opposite to the hypothesis that the magazine mean score of the Arab ($\bar{x}$ =0.02) is less than U.S. ($\bar{x}$=0.168) and the difference is statistically significant at the 0.01 significance level, thus H4 was not supported.

Happiness: H5 posited that U.S. advertisements will have more happiness appeals as compared to their Arab counterparts. ANOVA results show that the magazine mean score of the Arab ($\bar{x}$ =0.6) is less than that of U.S. ($\bar{x}$=0.63) but the difference is not statistically significant, thus H5 was not supported.

Health: H6 stated that health appeals will be used more in Arab magazine advertisements than U.S. advertisements. ANOVA results show that the magazine mean score of the Arab ($\bar{x}$ =0.256) was lower than that of U.S. ($\bar{x}$=0.82) and the difference was statistically significant at the 0.01 significance level which means H6 was not supported.

Honesty: H7 stated that Arab magazine advertisements will use more honesty appeals compared to their U.S. counterparts. ANOVA results show that the magazine mean score of the Arab ($\bar{x}$ =0.288) is higher than that of U.S. ($\bar{x}$=0.208) but the difference is not statistically significant, thus H7 was not supported.

Tradition: H8 posited that Arab magazine advertisements will have more tradition appeals than U.S. advertisements do. ANOVA results show that the magazine mean score of the

Arab ($\bar{x}$ =0.096) is higher than that of the U.S. ($\bar{x}$=0.052) but the difference was not statistically significant, thus H8 was not supported.

Modernity: H9 stated that Arab magazine advertisements will have more modernity appeals than U.S. advertisements do. ANOVA results show that the magazine mean score of the Arab ($\bar{x}$ =1.44) is higher than that of U.S. ($\bar{x}$=0.016) and the difference was statistically significant at the 0.01, thus H9 was supported.

Nudity: H10 posited that Arab advertisements will depict fewer amounts of nudity in their product or service endorsements compared to their U.S. counterparts. ANOVA results show that the magazine mean score of the Arab ($\bar{x}$ =0.54) is higher than that of the U.S. ($\bar{x}$=0.012) and the difference was statistically significant at the 0.01, thus H10 was not supported. H11 stated that there will not be a statistically significant difference in the depiction of men and women in Arab magazine advertisements. ANOVA results show the mean difference between the use of men and women, and thus H11 was supported.

Pleasure: H12 stated that Arab advertisements will have a significantly higher number of pleasure/hedonic appeals as compared to their U.S. counterparts. ANOVA results show that the magazine mean score of the Arab ($\bar{x}$ =0.8) is more than that of U.S. ($\bar{x}$=0.04) and the difference is statistically significant at the 0.05, thus H12 was supported.

Religion: H13 stated that Arab magazine advertisements will manifest a high percentage of ads using religious appeals. ANOVA results show that the magazine mean score of the Arab ($\bar{x}$ =0.104) and U.S. ($\bar{x}$=0.016), and the difference was statistically significant at the 0.05, thus H13 was supported.

Taboos: H14 stated U.S. magazine advertisements will have a significantly higher number of taboo appeals (i.e. sex, death, drug, poverty) compared to their Arab counterparts. ANOVA results show that the magazine mean score of the Arab ($\bar{x}$ =1.39) was higher than that of U.S. ($\bar{x}$=0), thus H14 was not supported (Table 3).

Table 3 ADVERTISING APPEALS IN MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENTS			
Advertising Appeal	**Arabs Magazine Ads N=250**	**U.S.A. Ads N=250**	**T-value DF=250**
Beauty &Body Image	0.012	0.364	0.72**
Freedom	0.06	0.00	0.06
Guilt	0.02	0.168	-0.1480**
Health	0.256	0.82	-0.568
Modernity	1.44	0.016	1.4280**
Nudity	0.54	0.012	-5.280**
Pleasure	0.8	0.04	0.7560**
Religion	0.104	0.016	0.880*
Taboo/Haram	1.39	0.00	1.388**

*Significant at the 0.05 level (P) 0.05
**Significant at the 0.01 Level (P) 0.01

DISCUSSION

The main objective of this study was to investigate the current cultural values used in Arab magazine advertising and compare it to that of the United States. Our attempt was to investigate long held views of the Arab culture and see if these views or values are being reflected in magazine advertising. For instance, it is widely known and even accepted that in the Arab region, promoters are required to be concerned with many taboos/haram ensuing as of conventional submissions to the Islamic religion. For example, alcohol and human nudity are not permitted in public places in the Arab world. In addition, the Arab society is often thought of as extremely conservative where women need to cover most of their body and in some situations all of their body except for their eyes while they are in public places. Does magazine advertising reflect these cultural values? The results of this study tell a different story in which we found many ads where women are in quite revealing western clothes and would certainly not meet the well-known dress code in the Arab region. In addition, there are many other cultural values found in this study that are not significantly different from that of the United States such as comfort, spending, beauty and body image. This poses interesting questions as to a) whether magazine advertising is challenging the well-known Arab culture and traditions? Or b) whether it is reflecting a growing change and acceptance of newly adopted or modified cultural values in the region?

Many of the results in this study indicate that there is no significant difference between the cultural values reflected in magazine advertising in the United States and in the Arab world. For example, it seems that the focus on modernity in the Arab region seems to mirror that of the United States instead of traditional Arab values and lifestyle.

Is it possible that the Arab culture is slowly changing? Is it possible that the Arab world is seeing the impact of globalization and being influenced by Western cultures? These are critical questions and answering them is beyond the scope of this study. However, if the Arab culture is indeed changing, what would that mean for businesses interested in doing business in the region? Will they have to shift their marketing strategies to accommodate this shift in cultural values? Will they have to change their marketing techniques to appeal to the Arab population? Research has shown that in order for advertisements to be effective, they should reflect current cultural values. Therefore, businesses longing for success in the region are not only understand the current Arab culture but learn how to appeal and work with it. In addition, while the cultural values may have become more similar to that of United States, it does not mean that transferring successful marketing strategies from the U.S. to the Arab region would yield the same success. Therefore, we strongly believe that more studies would be needed to understand what is happening in this region and what should be done to work with it.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study suggest that some cultural changes are taking place in the Arab world. Some of the changes are significant and challenging to the well-known cultural values in the region. We believe that the biggest value of this study is actually in the number of questions raised rather the number of questions answered. Therefore, we all on future researchers to dig deeper into the issues and attempt to answer the questions raised. For example, future studies could look at other medium of advertising such as TV, digital, etc. to see if a shift in cultural values is actually taking place. Moreover, we believe this area of research could greatly benefit

from a qualitative research approach where in depth interviews or focus groups could be used to dig deeper into these cultural values.

Globalization requires Arab advertisers to modify their appeals and pay more attention to making globalized companies in Arab region aware of what the Arab world might hold dear in terms of their cultural values. Our findings do not suggest that all values examined are similar to those of the United States but rather some of them. Some of these values may seem at odd with current practices in the region. For example, the number of women wearing the Islamic dress (hijab) has significantly increased in recent years, yet there seems to be a strong emphasis on beauty and body image in magazine advertising in the region. Could it be that the Arab region is developing their own view of beauty and body image, celebrated more in private rather than in public? Or could it be that there is an emphasis on both beauty and body image to compensation for women's inability to show off all of her beauty in public due to the required dress codes? These are all questions that would be interesting to investigate for future studies to help us understand what these cultural values mean in the region and how marketing strategies can be formulated to work with it.

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