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**Cultural values manifest in Hong Kong and Korean
television commercials**

Keywords: cultural values --- Hong Kong --- Korea --- television advertising--- content analysis

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Abstract

This study examined cultural values in a sample of 803 television commercials broadcast in prime time programs in Hong Kong and Korea using content analysis. Literature suggests that Hong Kong and Korean cultures share some similarities and differences in the Hofstede's (1991) framework of the cultural dimensions. Results of the study showed significant differences between the two countries in terms of product profile and cultural values. Contrary to what is expected from the Hofstede's framework, Hong Kong television advertising contained more uncertainty avoidance cultural value "safety". Hong Kong and Korean television commercials had no significant difference in the occurrence of cultural values related to the masculinity/femininity, the power distance and the individualism/collectivism dimensions. The culture-reflecting quality of advertising was supported for two of four hypothesized similarities/differences. Hofstede's framework was partially supported for the prediction of cultural values in television advertising.

Cultural Values Manifest in Hong Kong and Korean Television Commercials

INTRODUCTION

The transfer of international advertising strategies to the Asian market is becoming popular due to the rising living standards and the growing similarity of consumer tastes in the region. It is observed that there are more and more homogeneous cross-cultural groups with similar needs, which can be approached in the same way in Asian countries. People are more educated now and, with the fast development of communications, the cultural gap between Asian countries themselves is getting narrower and narrower. As individual Asian markets become much closer to each other in terms of aspirations and there is more flattening of income, education, opportunity to travel and exposure to other cultures, many multinationals start to view Asian countries as a single regional market. However, Asia is really a series of localized markets with their own characteristics, rather than a region (Tai, 1997).

Asian markets have different economical and cultural settings due to historical effects. The culture, language, advertising rules and regulations are significantly different in some Asian markets, such as Hong Kong and Korea. They have their own unique aspects of history, cultures and consumption patterns, including variations in personal values and interest in feminist issues that could differentially affect advertising content.

Cultural differences between Hong Kong and Korea suggest hypotheses about the value portrayal in advertising. Among Hofstede's (1980) framework of cultural dimensions, Hong Kong and Korea are both collectivistic and with high power distance. However, Hong Kong and Korea

differed significantly in two dimensions, namely uncertainty avoidance and masculinity/femininity. Hong Kong is a society of low uncertainty avoidance and masculinity while Korea is a society of high uncertainty avoidance and femininity (Hofstede 1991). The objective of the current study is to investigate to what extent Hong Kong and Korean television commercials are different, and how the society's culture in terms of Hofstede's dimensions is reflected in its advertising content.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cultural values in advertising

As a form of social and cultural communication, advertising is a carrier of cultural values (Leiss, Kline, and Jhally 1990; Pollay 1983, 1986; Pollay and Gallagher 1990). There has been a continuous scholarly interest in the need for relating advertising to culture over the past four decades (Cheng 1994, 1997). In the early 1980s, Pollay (1983) developed a framework for measuring cultural values manifest in advertising that facilitate a systematic analysis of the advertising content.

Based on their focuses, these studies can be roughly categorized into four groups (see Chan and Cheng 2002 for a review). The first group of the studies attempts to compare advertisements from Eastern and Western cultures. For example, Belk, Bryce, and Pollay (1985), Belk and Pollay (1985), and Belk and Bryce (1986) compared American and Japanese advertisements and reported that although Americanization was increasing in Japanese advertisements, deep-rooted Japanese cultural values still remain strong. Hong, Muderrisoglu, and Zinkhan (1987) observed that Japanese advertisements were more emotional and less comparative than their U.S. counterparts. American advertising was found significantly different from Japanese advertising in appeals and execution

styles (Mueller 1987; Zandpour and Qian 1992; Lin 1993; Lin and Salwen 1995).

Cheng and Schweitzer (1996) compared American and Chinese television advertising and found that Chinese commercials more frequently used symbolic cultural values while U.S. commercials tended to use both symbolic and utilitarian ones. Albers-Millers and Gelb (1996) concluded that “[e]ven with a relatively homogeneous audience of business and professional readers, variation in advertising across culture is observable” (pp. 67-68). Lin (2001) compared American and Chinese television advertising and found that the portrayal of traditional Chinese cultural values remain stable. However, the youth/modernity appeal trend became more prominent in Chinese advertising.

The second group of studies focuses on cultural values carried in advertising focuses on one selected country. Countries and societies studied include Philippine (Marquez 1975), Japan (Mueller 1992), India (Srikandath 1991; Sengupta and Frith 1997), China (Cheng 1994, 1997; Wang 1995; McIntyre and Wei 1998; Dong, Day, and Cao 1999), Taiwan (Tsao 1994) and Hong Kong (Chan 1999). Some of these studies are cross-sectional and some are longitudinal. Most of the studies analyze the values in the Eastern and Western, and utilitarian and symbolic dimensions.

The third group of studies focuses on the cultural values reflected in one particular product category or one particular cultural value reflected in advertising from different countries. Tansey et al. (1990) reported that values concerning work, leisure, and urban life evidently different in Brazilian and U.S. car advertisements. Frith and Sengupta (1991) found significant differences in the use of the value “individualism” in the magazine advertisements from India, the United Kingdom, and the

United States.

The fourth group of studies focuses on the cultural values reflected in advertising of regions that share a similar culture. By comparing advertisements in Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, Tse, Belk, and Zhou (1989) found that Mainland China advertisements emphasize utilitarian appeals, and Hong Kong advertisements stress hedonistic values. Taiwan advertisements fall between these two extremes, but are converging toward Hong Kong advertisements in consumption appeals over time. Pasadeos and Chi (1992) reported that advertisements from both Hong Kong and Taiwan used more Western than traditional cultural values. Chan and Cheng (2002) found that Hong Kong commercials use more Western values whereas Mainland Chinese commercials use more Eastern values.

Frith and Wesson (1991) reported significant differences in the use of individualism, egalitarianism, and direct speech in British and U.S. magazine advertisements. Similarly, Mehta (1992) found that advertisements in U.K. and U.S. lifestyle magazines were significantly different. Katz and Lee (1992) further suggested that although cultural differences were important, product categories were more influential for advertising formats used in U.K. and U.S. television commercials.

Cultural dimensions and cultural values

Culture is the “collective mental programming” that distinguishes one society from another (Hofstede 1983, p.76). In the past two decades, one of the major frameworks for understanding culture has been Hofstede’s (1980; 1983) typology of cultural dimensions. This typology provides a

rationale for cross-cultural differences in advertising (e.g., Albers-Miller and Gelb 1996; de Mooij 1998; Taylor, Miracle, and Wilson 1997). Hofstede's (1980) original work mainly described four cultural dimensions: individualism /collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance and masculinity/femininity and later included long-term/short-term orientation (Hofstede 1991). The current study adopts Hofstede's (1980) framework as the four cultural dimensions were well established and validated. Individualism/collectivism refers to a country's cultural position with respect to the importance of the individual or the group. Power distance captures the desire within a society for hierarchy versus egalitarianism. Uncertainty avoidance is a society's tolerance for ambiguity. While masculinity stands for a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness, and material success, femininity refers to a preference for relationships, modesty, caring for the weak, and the quality of life (Hofstede 1983). Femininity is distinct from collectivism (Hofstede 1998). Collectivism deals with group ties, whereas femininity applies to relationship enhancement regardless of group membership (Moon and Franke 2000).

Abers-Miller and Gelb (1996) used Hofstede's cultural model as a tool for analyzing cultures and using advertising appeals identified by Pollay (1983). After coding 1807 advertisements in business publications from 11 countries, they computed correlation coefficients relating the proportional use of each appeal and Hofstede's cultural dimensions: individualism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and masculinity. The culture-reflecting quality of advertising was supported for 10 of 30 hypothesized relationships. Similarly, some of the studies indicate that the Hofstede's cultural dimensions were partially supported to predict cultural values manifest in

advertising (e.g., Cho et al. 1999; Taylor, Wilson and Miracle 1994).

To summarize, research literature indicates the interest in comparing cultural values manifest in societies with similar cultures. Previous studies indicate partial support of the use of Hofstede's cultural dimensions to predict the cultural values manifest in advertisements. This study attempts to use Hofstede's cultural dimensions to predict similarities and differences in the cultural values of Hong Kong and Korean television commercials. For the cultural values, the current study adopts Cheng and Schweitzer's (1996) framework. Largely originated from Pollay's (1983) and Mueller's (1987, 1992) studies, their operational definitions of 32 cultural values are presented in Table 1.

[TABLE ONE ABOUT HERE]

HYPOTHESIS

The current study attempts to answer two broad research questions "How does the manifestation of cultural values differ in Hong Kong and Korean commercials?" and "How are the differences, if any, attributed to the cultural dimensions of the two societies?"

The Hofstede's model of cultural dimensions provides a framework for the prediction of cultural values. The scores of Hong Kong and Korea on the four cultural dimensions are summarized in Table 2. It shows that Hong Kong and Korea differed the most in the uncertainty avoidance and the masculinity/femininity dimensions. The two societies shared similar scores in the individualism/collectivism and the power distance dimensions. The next step is the matching of the cultural dimensions and the culture values. We have made references to Albers-Miller and Gelb (1996), de Mooij (1998) and Ji and McNeal (2001) in identifying cultural values that are related to a

specific cultural dimension.

[TABLE TWO ABOUT HERE]

The uncertainty avoidance dimension represents the degree to which society is unwilling to accept and cope with uncertainty. This dimension is related to anxiety, need for security, dependence on experts and the application of information (Hofstede 1980, 1991). Albers-Miller and Gelb (1996) predicted that high uncertainty avoidance societies would use more safety, tamed and durable appeals while low uncertainty avoidance societies would use more adventure, untamed, magic and youth appeals. We therefore relate the high uncertainty avoidance dimension with “technology”, “safety”, and “tradition” cultural values and relate the low uncertainty avoidance dimension with “adventure”, “magic”, and “youth” cultural values. The following hypothesis is formulated:

H1: Values of high uncertainty avoidance will occur more frequently in Korean commercials and values of low uncertainty avoidance will occur more frequently in Hong Kong commercials,

Specifically,

H1a) The “technology” value will occur more frequently in Korean commercials.

H1b) The “safety” value will occur more frequently in Korean commercials.

H1c) The “tradition” value will occur more frequently in Korean commercials.

H1d) The “adventure” value will occur more frequently in Hong Kong commercials

H1e) The “magic” value will occur more frequently in Hong Kong commercials.

H1f) The “youth” value will occur more frequently in Hong Kong commercials.

The Hofstede’s masculinity dimension refers to the preference for masculine or feminine values

in a culture: masculine societies strive for material success, performance, achievement and productivity whereas feminine societies value relationships. Thus, commercials in feminine countries are predicted to carry more values about personal and family relationships whereas commercials in masculine countries are predicted to carry more values about material success, wealth, effectiveness and work. Therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H2: Hong Kong's television commercials will use more masculine values and Korean television commercials will use more feminine values. Specifically,

H2a) The "competition" value will occur more frequently in Hong Kong commercials.

H2b) The "effectiveness" value will occur more frequently in Hong Kong commercials.

H2c) The "wealth" value will occur more frequently in Hong Kong commercials.

H2d) The "work" value will occur more frequently in Hong Kong commercials.

H2e) The "courtesy" value will occur more frequently in Korean commercials.

H2f) The "family" value will occur more frequently in Korean commercials.

H2g) The "nurturance" value will occur more frequently in Korean commercials.

The individualism dimension refers to the degree to which individual decision making and actions are encouraged by a society. In an individualistic society, everyone is entitled to his or her own opinion (Hofstede 1980). Therefore, the self-sufficiency and distinctive appeal will be related with the individualism dimension. Also, products benefit one's appearance or robustness of the body will also be promoted. We therefore relate individualism dimension with "individualism", "uniqueness", "beauty", and "health" cultural values. On the other hand, a collective society places

high value on the group decision-making, and emphasize belonging (Hofstede 1980). Those people have an emotional dependence on organizations and communities. We therefore relate collectivistic dimension with “collectivism”, “popularity”, and “patriotism” cultural values. As both Hong Kong and Korea are collectivistic societies, we hypothesize that:

H3: There will be no significant difference in occurrence of individualistic values and collectivistic values in commercials between Hong Kong and Korea. Specifically,

H3a) There will be no significant difference in occurrence of “individualism” value between Hong Kong and Korean’s television commercials.

H3b) There will be no significant difference in occurrence of “uniqueness” value between Hong Kong and Korean’s television commercials.

H3c) There will be no significant difference in occurrence of “beauty” value between Hong Kong and Korean’s television commercials.

H3d) There will be no significant difference in occurrence of “health” value between Hong Kong and Korean’s television commercials.

H3e) There will be no significant difference in occurrence of “collectivism” value between Hong Kong and Korean’s television commercials.

H3f) There will be no significant difference in occurrence of “popularity” value between Hong Kong and Korean’s television commercials.

H3g) There will be no significant difference in occurrence of “patriotism” value between Hong Kong and Korean’s television commercials.

The power distance dimension explains how different societies have addressed basic human inequalities in social status and prestige, wealth, and sources of power (Hofstede 1980). Societies with high scores on the power distance dimension use symbols of status acquired through conspicuous consumption to show power. The society also honors the elderly for their high status through the possession of experience. We therefore relate the power distance dimension positively with “social status” and “respect for elderly” cultural values. As both Hong Kong and Korea have high power distance, we hypothesize that:

H4: There will be no significant difference in occurrence of power distance values between Hong Kong and Korean’s television commercials. Specifically,

H4a) There will be no significant difference in occurrence of “social status” value between Hong Kong and Korean’s television commercials.

H4b) There will be no significant difference in occurrence of “respect for elderly” value between Hong Kong and Korean’s television commercials.

METHOD

The following section reports on how data were collected, coded, and analyzed in this comparative study of Hong Kong and Korean television advertising.

Sample collection: The Hong Kong sample was obtained from the commercials of prime-time programming broadcast on the two free-to-air Chinese-language terrestrial channels (TVB-Jade, and ATV-home) in Hong Kong during the two weeks in mid-November and the two weeks in early December 2001. Cable television was not selected as the amount of subscribers and advertising

volume was still low. Thirty-six broadcasting hours were videotaped and 406 unduplicated commercials were selected. The Korean sample was obtained from the commercials of prime-time programming broadcast on the three free-to-air terrestrial channels (KBS2, MBC, SBS) in Seoul during the two weeks in November 2001. Fifty broadcasting hours were videotaped and 423 unduplicated commercials were selected.

Coding frame. The unit of analysis was each complete television commercial. Any duplicated commercials were not included in order to eliminate any redundancy that may have skewed the results (Stern and Resnik, 1991). Station identification and promotional messages were also excluded from the current study.

Coding procedure. Two pairs of trained coders coded a sample of 829 television commercials, 406 from Hong Kong and 423 from Korea. During the coding procedure, the coders attempted to identify the most dominant value in each commercial, which was decided mainly by the overall first impression or the key elements in the visual or audio messages. All disagreements between the two coders were solved through discussion. The Perreault and Leigh's (1989) measure for inter-coder reliability was adopted as it is considered as the best choice by various researchers (e.g. Kolbe and Burnett 1991). The inter-coder reliability measure for the Korean sample was 0.98 and that of the Hong Kong sample was 0.94. The reliability indexes for both samples exceeded the critical value of 0.80, as suggested by Perreault and Leigh (1989); therefore, the coding reached the satisfactory requirement.

Data analysis. Twenty-six Korean commercials having no cultural values were dropped in the

analysis. The final Korean sample contained 397 commercials. The dependent variables in this analysis were the occurrences of cultural values. The independent variables were Hong Kong and Korea hypothesized to indicate the cultural value differences. Product category was employed as the control variable to help explain the cultural value differences.

FINDINGS

Sample profile. Table 3 shows the distribution of the two samples among different product categories. The Hong Kong sample contained mostly household goods, food and beverages, leisure commercials and public services announcements. The Korean sample contained mostly household goods, food and beverages, services and finance commercials. Both samples had a high share of household goods, and food and beverages commercials. Result of the Chi-square test indicated that the two samples differed significantly in product profiles. The Hong Kong sample had a higher proportion of leisure and retail advertising, and public service announcements. The Korean sample had a higher proportion of automotives, computers and accessories, and clothing commercials.

[TABLE THREE ABOUT HERE]

Differences in cultural values of Hong Kong and Korean television commercial. Table 4 shows the cultural values contained in the sampled commercials. The five values most commonly found in Hong Kong commercials were “enjoyment” (15.8%), “economy” (10.6%), “effectiveness” (8.9%), “quality” (7.6%), and “beauty” (6.7%). The five values most commonly found in Korean commercials were “effectiveness” (13.1%), “enjoyment” (10.3%), “quality” (9.6%), “family” (9.1%), and “individualism” (5.5%). The two samples shared three common dominant values (i.e.,

“effectiveness,” “enjoyment” and “quality”). Chi-square tests were conducted to examine the differences in the cultural values manifested in Hong Kong and Korean commercials. Among the 31 non-zero cultural values, 14 had significant F statistics. Eight values occurred more frequently in Hong Kong commercials. These included “beauty,” “economy,” “enjoyment,” “leisure,” “modernity,” “safety,” “wisdom”, and “work”. Six values occurred more frequently in Korean commercials. These included “courtesy,” “family,” “individualism,” “natural,” “technology,” and “uniqueness”.

[TABLE FOUR ABOUT HERE]

Hypotheses testing In order to test the hypotheses, we need to compile the relative occurrence of cultural values related with a specific cultural dimension. For example, high uncertainty avoidance dimension was positively related with “technology”, “safety”, and “tradition”, and negatively related with “adventure”, “magic”, and “youth”. The following formula will give the cultural values related with the uncertainty avoidance dimension:

Relative occurrence of values related with the uncertainty avoidance dimension

= percentage occurrence of technology + safety + tradition – adventure – magic – youth

Results of the hypothesis testing are summarized in Table 5. Hypothesis 1 was not supported as the Hong Kong sample contained a higher percentage of the high uncertainty avoidance cultural value “safety”. Although the value “technology” occurred more frequently in the Korean advertising, it failed to balance out the more frequently occurred “safety” value in the Hong Kong’s advertising. Hypothesis 2 was not supported as the more frequently occurred feminine values “courtesy” and “family” in the Korean sample were balanced out by the frequent occurrence of the

mascular value “effectiveness”. The Hong Kong sample had a higher proportion of the mascular value “work”. However, the frequency of occurrence was not big enough to make an impact in the specific cultural dimension. Hypothesis 3 was supported as the more frequently occurred “individualism” and “uniqueness” values in Korea were balanced out by the more frequently occurred “beauty” value in Hong Kong. Hypothesis 4 was supported as there was no significant difference in the occurrence of high power distance values in both samples.

[TABLE FIVE ABOUT HERE]

Cultural values and product categories. Previous studies indicated that the manifest of cultural values also depend on the product category. It is of interest to investigate whether which variable has greater impact. Two-way ANOVA F-tests were conducted to determine the individual as well as the combined effects of product category and society on the manifest of cultural values related with the four cultural dimensions. Partial F-values were compiled for the interaction of society and product category, the main effect of society alone, the main effect of product category alone, and the combined full model. The full model refers to an additive effect of the two main effects and the interaction effect. The results are presented in Table 6.

Three cultural dimensions showed significant partial F-values by product category, and only one showed significant partial F-values by society. This result indicates that product category had greater influence on the manifest of cultural values than the society variable.

The power distance dimension was not affected by either the product category or the society. The result indicates that power distance values occurred to similar extent in both

societies for all product categories. Uncertainty avoidance dimension was mainly affected by the product category alone. The interaction of product category and society as well as society alone had no significant effect on the manifest of values. This indicates that the manifest of uncertainty avoidance dimension mainly depended on product category and did not depend on the society. By examining the Tukey pairwise t-tests among different product category groups, uncertainty avoidance values occurred most frequently in finance commercials and occurred least frequently in leisure, retail and services commercials.

The individualistic dimension showed significant interaction F-statistic and significant partial F-statistic for the product category alone. The result indicates that individualistic values occurred differently among different product categories in different societies. A close examination of the data found that food and beverages advertising in Korea often used the individualistic value “uniqueness” while food and beverages advertising in Hong Kong often used the “enjoyment” value.

The masculinity dimension showed significant interaction F-statistics, significant partial F-statistics for both the product category as well as the society variable. This indicates that the product category, society, and their interaction all contributed to the manifest of the masculine/feminine values. A close examination of the data found that finance advertising in Korea often used the feminine value “courtesy” while finance advertising in Hong Kong often used the “safety” value. Public service announcements in Korea often used the feminine value “nurturance”

while public service announcements in Hong Kong often used the “safety” value.

[TABLE SIX ABOUT HERE]

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The role of cultural values in advertising has long been debated. Arguments have been made whether advertising reflects or influences cultural values. If advertising differences across cultures can be predictable, the task of the advertiser facing audiences in multiple cultures can be much simplified (Albers-Miller and Gelb 1996). If the results show a perfect prediction between the culture of the society and the cultural values manifest in the advertising, we can conclude that advertising reflects the cultural dimensions of the society.

Our study indicates that two out of the four hypotheses were supported. The following paragraphs attempt to explain why the hypotheses for the uncertainty avoidance and the masculinity/femininity dimensions were not supported. Although Hong Kong is a low uncertainty avoidance society, Hong Kong’s advertising contained a higher proportion of uncertainty avoidance value “safety”. In the Korean sample, “safety” values occurred most frequently in automobile commercials. In the Hong Kong sample, “safety” value occurred most frequently in finance commercials and public service announcements. In a finance commercial, a man’s mother and wife are both drowning in the sea. He got one life buoy and could not decide which person to save first. The voice over said, ‘Bad things happen unpredictably. We help to make your life safe.’ In a public service announcement, a man went home by taxi after he drank in the banquet. The voice over said that for your own safety, don’t drive and drink. Finance commercials in Korea seldom used

“safety” value. They often used “courtesy” and “family” values instead. In a finance commercial, a mother and her kid with heavy shopping bags were trying to catch a taxi on the street. Someone took a coming taxi first and they were very disappointed, however, a company employee yielded his taxi to them, accompanied by a narration “You first always.” In a car-insurance commercial, a mother was driving her car and fastening her baby’s seat belt, saying “I should be more careful as a mother.”

Hong Kong’s sample contained a higher proportion of public service announcements.

According to the television license agreement, television stations are mandated to devote one minute of free airtime in every broadcasting hour for government’s public service announcements. During the prime time period, each broadcasting hour carries a maximum of ten minutes of commercials.

This accounted for the approximately ten percent of public services announcements in the Hong Kong sample. The Promotions Sub-division of the government’s Information Department is responsible for the production as well as the scheduling of government messages in different time period. Most of the messages are about public health, environment, and safety, such as drive safely, prevention of fire, waste recycling, and occupational safety. Public service announcement ads in Korea usually occur in fringe hours and therefore the sample did not have a high proportion of public service advertising. Hypothesis testing was conducted when public services announcements in both samples were removed. Result remained unchanged because of the high occurrence of the “safety” value in finance commercials in the Hong Kong sample.

Although Korea is a feminine society, its commercials carried a balance of masculine and feminine values. The masculine value “effectiveness” was employed frequently in household items

commercials. This reflects the desirable versus the desired value paradox (de Mooij, 1998). Caring for the family is important, but demonstrating the product's performance is equally important.

Individualistic values occurred more frequently than collectivistic values in both societies. This finding is consistent with past studies (Belk and Bryce 1986; Huang 1995; Tse, Belk and Zhou 1989), which have noted that both advertising content and practice in East Asian cultures are moving toward those of the West (cf. Cho et al. 1999). In Hong Kong commercials, beauty and health values are the most frequently used while in Korean commercials, individualism and health values are the most frequently used. This may reflect the increased individualism in both societies because of an increased focus on individuality in behavior and communication. While collectivistic values remain strong in Hong Kong and Korea, both societies are more individualistic and put more focus on the needs of the individual. This also reflects the desirable versus the desired (de Mooij, 1998).

Collectivism is important, but it is individualism that is desired in order to be competitive. The distinction between the desirable and the desired leads to seemingly paradoxical values within one culture. There is a great deal of focus on teamwork in individual societies. Because too much individualism also creates loneliness, the desired or actual behavior is opposed to the desirable: belonging.

Regarding the power distance dimension, 'respect for elderly' value was not found at all in commercials of both societies. It seems because prime-time commercials are mainly targeted toward young audiences as well as a booming youth market.

The Hofstede's framework of cultural dimensions is valid in predicting similarities and

differences in two out of four cultural dimensions. The conclusion is helpful for international advertisers to design cross-cultural advertising campaigns. An advertiser can use Hofstede's result to gain insight into salient values that may be appealing to the target audiences. Previous research in international advertising often used western values or eastern values for differentiating across countries. The current study provides a possible theory for testing societies of a similar cultural background.

The current study had three limitations. Firstly, the Hofstede's (1980; 1991) theory of culture is the output of an extensive study of work-related values that represents basically the value system of the majority of the middle class (Albers-Miller and Gerb 1996). On the other hand, the cultural values manifest in the sample of television commercials should represent the value system of the general population of the society because the target audience of the advertising includes all walks of life, not just the working population. Secondly, some dominant cultural values such as 'quality' and 'economy' that occurred frequently in both societies were not cultural specific. Thirdly, Hofstede's model was based on research conducted nearly 20 years ago. It is possible that the culture of the society has undergone changes since then.

Future study can be conducted in two directions. The current study can be repeated by selecting different groups of countries with different degree of similarities and differences in the cultural dimensions. Audience survey can be used to compare the effectiveness of campaigns using cultural values in congruent to the society's cultural dimensions versus using cultural values that are opposite to the society's cultural dimensions. For example, will finance advertisement using "safety" value be

more appealing in a high uncertainty avoidance society than in a low uncertainty avoidance society?

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Table 1
Operational Definitions of Cultural Values

Adventure ^a	This value suggests boldness, daring, bravery, courage, or thrill.
Beauty	This value suggests that the use of a product will enhance the loveliness, attractiveness or elegance of an individual.
Collectivism ^b	The emphasis here is on the individual in relation to others typically in the reference group. Individuals are depicted as integral parts of the group.
Competition ^b	The emphasis here is on distinguishing a product from its counterparts by aggressive comparisons. While explicit comparisons may mention the competitor's name, implicit comparisons may use such words as "number one" or "leader."
Convenience ^a	A product is suggested to be handy and easy to use.
Courtesy	Politeness and friendship toward the consumer are shown through the use of polished and affable language.
Economy ^a	The inexpensive, affordable, and cost-saving nature of a product is emphasized.
Effectiveness ^a	A product is suggested to be powerful and capable of achieving certain ends.
Enjoyment ^a	This value suggests that a product will make its user wild with joy.
Family ^a	The emphasis here is on the family life and family members. The commercial stresses family scenes: getting married, companionship of siblings, kinship, being at home, and suggests that a certain product is good for the whole family.
Health ^a	This value commends that the use of a product will enhance or improve the vitality, soundness, strength, and robust of the body.
Individualism ^b	The emphasis here is on the self-sufficiency and self-reliance of an individual or on the individual as being distinct and unlike others.
Leisure ^a	This value suggests that the use of a product will bring one comfort or relaxation.
Magic ^a	The emphasis here is on the miraculous effect and nature of a product, e.g., "Bewitch your man...;" "Heals like magic."
Modernity ^a	The notion of being new, contemporary, up-to-date, and ahead of time is emphasized.
Natural	This value suggests spiritual harmony between man and nature by making references to the elements, animals, vegetables, or minerals.
Neatness ^a	The notion of being clean and tidy is stressed.
Nurturance ^a	This value stresses giving charity, help, protection, support, or sympathy to the weak, disabled, young, or elderly.
Patriotism	The love of and the loyalty to one's own nation inherent in the nature or in the use of a product are suggested here.

Popularity ^a	The focus here is on the universal recognition and acceptance of a certain product by consumers, e.g., “Best seller;” “Well-known worldwide.”
Quality	The emphasis here is on the excellence and durability of a product, which is usually claimed to be a winner of medals or certificates awarded by a government department for its high grade or is demonstrated by the product’s excellent performance.
Respect for the elderly ^b	The commercial displays a respect for older people by using a model of old age or asking for the opinions, recommendations, and advice of the elders.
Safety ^a	The reliable and secure nature of a product is emphasized.
Sex ^a	The advertisement uses glamorous and sensual models or has a background of lovers holding hands, embracing, or kissing to promote a product.
Social Status ^a	The use of a product is claimed to be able to elevate the position or rank of the user in the eyes of others. The idea of prestige, trend-setting, and pride in the use of a product is conveyed.
Technology ^a	Here, the advanced and sophisticated technical skills to engineer and manufacture a particular product are emphasized.
Tradition ^b	The experience of the past, customs, and conventions are respected. The qualities of being historical, time-honored, and legendary are venerated, e.g., “With eighty years of manufacturing experience”; “It’s adapted from ancient Chinese prescriptions.”
Uniqueness ^a	The unrivaled, incomparable, and unparalleled nature of a product is emphasized, e.g., “We’re the only one that offers you the product.”
Wealth	This value conveys the idea that being affluent, prosperous, and rich should be encouraged and suggests that a certain product or service will make the user well-off.
Wisdom ^a	This value shows respect for knowledge, education, intelligence, expertise, or experience.
Work	This value shows respect for diligence and dedication of one’s labor and skills. A typical example is that a medication has regained a desperate patient his or her ability to work.
Youth ^a	The worship of the younger generation is shown through the depiction of younger models. The rejuvenating benefits of the product are stressed, e.g., “Feel young again!”

^a Adapted from Pollay (1983)

^b Adapted from Mueller (1987, 1992)

Table 2 Hofstede's Scores

Cultural dimension	Hong Kong	South Korea
Uncertainty avoidance	29	85
Masculinity/femininity	57	39
Power distance	68	60
Individualism/collectivism	25	18

Source: Hofstede (1991)

Table 3
Profile of Hong Kong and Korean Commercial Samples

Product Category	Hong Kong		Korea	
	N	%	N	%
Household goods	114	28.1	116	29.2
Food and beverages	83	20.4	100	25.2
Leisure	52	12.8	7	1.8
Public service announcement	43	10.6	6	1.5
Retail	33	8.1	14	3.5
Services	28	6.9	42	10.6
Finance	28	6.9	41	10.3
Real estates	12	3.0	10	2.5
Computers and accessories	7	1.7	21	5.3
Clothing	4	1.0	15	3.8
Automotives	2	0.5	17	4.3
Others	0	0	8	2.0
Total	406	100.0	397	100.0

Chi-square = 110.1, $p < 0.000$

Table 4
Manifest of Cultural Values in Hong Kong and Korean Commercials

Cultural Value	Hong Kong		Korea		Chi-square Statistics	p
	N	%	N	%		
Adventure	3	0.7	9	2.3	3.2	n.s.
Beauty	27	6.7	10	2.5	7.8	0.005
Collectivism	2	0.5	6	1.5	2.1	n.s.
Competition	7	1.7	6	1.5	0.1	n.s.
Convenience	12	3.0	13	3.3	0.1	n.s.
Courtesy	4	1.0	15	3.8	6.8	0.009
Economy	43	10.6	17	4.3	11.6	0.001
Effectiveness	36	8.9	52	13.1	3.7	n.s.
Enjoyment	64	15.8	41	10.3	4.7	0.03
Family	19	4.7	36	9.1	5.5	0.019
Health	23	5.7	20	5.0	0.2	n.s.
Individualism	7	1.7	22	5.5	8.4	0.004
Leisure	12	3.0	0	0	11.9	0.001
Magic	2	0.5	3	0.8	0.2	n.s.
Modernity	23	5.7	2	0.5	17.7	0.000
Natural	4	1.0	13	3.3	5.1	0.024
Neatness	7	1.7	10	2.5	0.6	n.s.
Nurturance	4	1.0	5	1.3	0.1	n.s.
Patriotism	3	0.7	3	0.8	0.0	n.s.
Popularity	8	2.0	14	3.5	1.8	n.s.
Quality	31	7.6	38	9.6	1.0	n.s.
Respect for elderly	0	0	0	0		
Safety	22	5.4	4	1.0	12.5	0.000
Sex	8	2.0	8	2.0	0.0	n.s.
Social status	7	1.7	5	1.3	0.3	n.s.
Technology	3	0.7	11	2.8	4.8	0.028
Tradition	2	0.5	6	1.5	2.1	n.s.
Uniqueness	1	0.2	15	3.8	12.8	0.000
Wealth	2	0.5	2	0.5	0.0	n.s.
Wisdom	13	3.2	3	0.8	6.2	0.013
Work	4	1.0	0	0	3.9	0.047
Youth	3	0.7	8	2.0	2.4	n.s.
Total	406	100.0	397	100.0		

Table 5 Results of hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Hong Kong (%) N=406	Korea (%) N=397	t-statistics/ Chi-square Statistics	Supported
H1: uncertainty avoidance dimension	4.7	0.3	-2.2*	No
H1a: technology (+)	0.7	2.8	4.8*	Yes
H1b: safety (+)	5.4	1.0	12.5***	No
H1c: tradition (+)	0.5	1.5	2.1	No
H1d: adventure (-)	0.7	2.3	3.2	No
H1e: magic (-)	0.5	0.8	0.2	No
H1f: youth (-)	0.7	2.0	2.4	No
H2: masculinity dimension	5.3	1.3	1.1	No
H2a: competition (+)	1.7	1.5	0.1	No
H2b: effectiveness (+)	8.9	13.1	3.7	No
H2c: wealth (+)	0.5	0.5	0.0	No
H2d: work (+)	1.0	0.0	3.9*	Yes
H2e: courtesy (-)	1.0	3.8	6.8**	Yes
H2f: family (-)	4.7	9.1	5.5*	Yes
H2g: nurturance (-)	1.0	1.3	0.1	No
H3: individualistic dimension	11.1	11.1	0.0	Yes
H3a: individualism (+)	1.7	5.5	8.4**	No
H3b: uniqueness (+)	0.2	3.8	12.8***	No
H3c: beauty (+)	6.7	2.5	7.8**	No
H3d: health (+)	5.7	5.0	0.2	Yes
H3e: collectivism (-)	0.5	1.5	2.1	Yes
H3f: popularity (-)	2.0	3.5	1.8	Yes
H3g: patriotism (-)	0.7	0.8	0.0	Yes
H4: power distance dimension	1.7	1.3	-0.6	Yes
H4a: social status (+)	1.7	1.3	0.3	Yes
H4b: respect for elderly (+)	0.0	0.0	N.A.	Yes

* Significant at .05

** Significant at .01

*** Significant at .001

Table 6
Two-way ANOVA of Effects of Society and Product Category

Cultural dimension	Relative frequency of occurrence %	Sign. of interaction of society and product	Sign. of society	Sign. of product category	Sign. level	Full Model R square (%)
Uncertainty avoidance	2.5	n.s.	n.s.	0.05	0.001	3.7
Masculinity/femininity	3.3	0.0001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001	15.4
Individualism/collectivism	11.1	0.01	n.s.	0.0001	0.0001	5.5
Power distance	1.5	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	2.4

Full model is an additive model of the main effects of society and product category, and their interaction.