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Adoption of Social and Moral Values through Advertising: An Analysis from the Literature

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1. INTRODUCTION

The interest in knowing the drivers behind consumer attitudes and behaviour has encouraged marketing researchers to investigate their possible causes. Human values and their relationship with opinion and attitude are prominent lines of investigation in this area. Studies suggest that values are related to the way one behaves in society or to final states of existence that, once internalised become—consciously or unconsciously—a criteria that guide attitude and actions toward relevant situations. A value is therefore a reference people use to judge themselves and others, or to influence the values, attitudes and actions of other people (like children, for example). Despite the numerous definitions for the word values, almost all of them have some elements in common: values are concepts or beliefs, about desirable behaviours or end states of existence, transcending specific situations, guiding selection or evaluation of behaviour or events, and according to an order of importance (Anana and Nique, 2010). When acting as a consumer, besides values, every one of us has his/her own attitudes toward products, services, advertisements, brands or ideas (Clawson and Vinson, 1978. Attitude expresses the most intimate feelings regarding an object (a brand, a service or an idea, for example). Consequently, it is highly important that universities, as service providers, correctly understand students' evaluations of their facilities, human resources capacity, academic career structures and orientation. But even more important than accurately understanding the students' likes and dislikes, is the correct comprehension of what makes them like or dislike such things. India, as a country, is so heterogeneous in nature that it is complex for a marketer to identify common threads of Indian culture and core values. There are many different sub-cultures coexist in Indian society with their own distinctive values, norms, beliefs and behaviors. So, In India, people are socialized by getting input from their cultures and core values. Some studies state that culture has two fundamental

components: Abstract and Material. In terms of abstract components, one may consider values, attitudes, ideas, type of personalities, symbols, rituals and summary constructs like politics and religion. Material component represents visible cultural objects which represent the society as a whole. Cultural values are classified into three categories: other, environment, and self. Firstly, Other-oriented values tell about a society's viewpoint about the appropriate relationships between individuals and groups within that society. Individual/collective, extended/limited family, competitive/cooperative, diversity/uniformity, masculine/feminine and youth/age are some of the relevant values of this nature. Secondly, Environment-oriented values depict a society's associations with its economic, technical, and physical environments. Factors under consideration of environment values are cleanliness, performance/status, tradition/change, risk taking/security, problem solving/fatalistic and nature. Thirdly, Self-oriented values frame the objectives and approaches to life that individual members of society aspire for. These include active/passive, material/nonmaterial, hard work/leisure, postponed gratification/immediate gratification, sensual gratification/abstinence and religious/secular. (Banerjee, 2008).

We are all aware of our current inability to cope with such challenges as the spread of ethnic violence, including both the use of terror against the heartlands of industrialized nations and the use of actual and threatened violence by those nations in their efforts to "pacify" the world and keep it safe for trade. The growing income gap within industrial societies and between such societies and the rest of the world, and the deteriorating environment, equally resist easy solutions. The principal cause may well be an increase in the gaps between kinds of knowledge. If the social sciences fail, those in the natural sciences will become more contemptuous of them, and as the cultural lag between science and technology and the understanding of values increases, workers in the humanities will become ever more fearful of "scientism" and its consequences. Certainly the unification of knowledge is made difficult by the strong tendency for some kinds of knowledge to accumulate rapidly while others languish. Fragmentation and what has been called "cultural lag" go together. Furthermore the growth of technical and scientific knowledge which increases our powers to destroy one another and which is apt to transform the

environment in unexpected ways forces our applied social sciences to focus on repairs. They become patchy, and theory languishes or lapses into the anti theory of "deconstruction". One cannot unify theoretical physics with theoretical sociology unless theoretical sociology is well developed. Another cause of the failure to attain unity in virtually all fields is an apparent failure to integrate our knowledge of universals with our knowledge of particulars. We know quite a lot about physics and chemistry, and much of what we know can be expressed as scientific laws. We can translate or develop this into knowledge about geology and to some extent into biological knowledge. But when we pass from geology to geography there are serious problems. Each of us knows the way around a few cities and knows the elements of the environments to which we are attached. But we are not very good at connecting these kinds of knowledge (Armour, 2003).

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The specific objectives of the present study are:

- i. To understand the concept of social and moral values.
- ii. To review and analyze the previous studies/literature on the subject of different social and moral values depicted and adopted through advertising.
- iii. To identify the gaps in the previous studies and suggest implications for future research.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON SOCIAL AND MORAL VALUES

Powney *et al* (1995) opined that there are three principal ways in which schools transmit values: through the curriculum (both formal and informal); through the so-called hidden curriculum; and through the personal interaction between teachers and their pupils. Pang (1996) discussed and defined values in this study as "taken-for-granted beliefs about the proper functioning of a school". They may mean "the ways we do things here", "what ought to be", and "the ways a school should be operated". The results indicate that cultural linkage in schools promotes teachers' feeling of commitment, job satisfaction, sense of community, order and discipline. Nicholsan and Stepina (1998) examined work- related cultural values for a sample of nearly four thousand managers, professionals, and business students across three culturally distinct nations- the USA, Venezuela, and the People's Republic of China. Revision of work related culture scales were used to examine cross- national differences in: Individualism (versus collectivism); masculinity (versus femininity); uncertainty avoidance; power distance, and paternalism. Multiple analyses of variance revealed significant differences in value structures across the three nations. Implications for current theory, directions for future research and practical applications were

discussed. Carlo *et. al.* (1999) focused on social and contextual processes in young adolescents' pro-social and moral behaviors. In this introductory article, a brief review of the research on parents or family, peers, school environment, culture, and nationality as resented. The research indicates that the social context plays an important role in pro-social and moral development. However, research on the social and contextual correlates of pro-social and moral development in early adolescence is at an embryonic stage. Research is needed that integrates analyses of individual and social contextual processes to fully understand pro-social and moral development. It is hoped that researchers focus more attention on the positive processes and behaviors associated with the various social contextual transitions in early adolescence. N.N. Prahallada (2000) has beautifully explained the role of moral values in education. To quote him, "Indian Culture is rooted deeply in her spiritual values and unless these values find their way into the life of students, education will lose its significance and will not fulfill its function of endowing the students with a vision to life and by and with ideals to work for, therefore, indifference to the cherished goals of democracy, socialism, humanism and secularism, it is very essential that our education system should evolve a new positive morality which could effectively be built into the school, under graduate/post graduate curriculum. Wakefield *et. al.* (2000) summarized the results of empirical studies on cigarette advertising and promotions, anti-smoking advertising, product placement in movies, on television and in music media and news coverage about smoking. It concluded that the media both shape and reflect social values about smoking; media provide new information about smoking directly to audiences; media act as a source of observational learning by providing models which teenagers may seek to emulate; exposure to media messages about smoking also provides direct reinforcement for smoking or not smoking; the media promote interpersonal discussion about smoking; the media can influence 'intervening' behaviors that may make teenage smoking less likely, and; anti-smoking media messages can also set the agenda for other change at the community, state or national level. Williams (2000) identified that emotional advertisements have a substantial impact on consumer attitudes, as well as upon purchase intentions. However, research on the influence of emotional appeals on memory has been somewhat mixed, with some researchers asserting that they result in poor consumer memory, while others argue that if tested properly, they have a substantial impact. Gunilla *et al.* (2001) identified the ability of children to differentiate between advertising and programme content. It is found that children as young as two could differentiate between advertising and programme content. However, it is pointed out that it is not until late childhood – from 8 to 12 years – those

children completely understand the aim of advertising. The study also claimed learning is a continual process that depends upon family and friends. *Blandina (2002)* investigated that the age at which children learn to understand the aim of advertising, is linked on the one hand to the parents' attitude and level of education, and on the other to the ability of school teaching to explain and discuss advertising with children and young people. The study also suggests that when a request for a product (just advertised) is made, the connection between advertising and request is cemented in the minds of parents. *Perkins (2002)* articulated a review of conceptual and empirical studies on the role of social norms in college student alcohol use and in prevention strategies to counter misuse. The normative influences of various constituencies serving as reference groups for students are examined as possible factors influencing students' drinking behavior. The study focused that there is significant potential for engaging norms to serve in prevention efforts to reduce problem drinking among students. Work on correcting misperceived student norms to constrain problem drinkers and empower responsible students, in particular, holds great promise based on theory and research to date. *Greenfield (2004)* identified that the genesis of the moral leadership concept in educational administration and examples of studies exploring this idea during the 1979-2003 period. The study recommended more contextually sensitive descriptive studies with a focus on the social relations among school leaders and others, giving particular attention, in a phenomenological sense, to the meanings, perspectives, and espoused purposes of school leaders' actions, social relationships, and interpersonal orientations. *Kapoor and Verma (2005)* provided a study with an increase in the age of the child, the parents' perception of the children's purchase request being influenced by TV advertisements tended to decrease. Parents' response to children's purchase request is also found to be strongly influenced by the family income. The results further implied that parent-child interaction plays an important role in the children's learning of positive consumer values and parents' perception of the influence as positive on their children's buying response. *Gulcin (2008)* explored that children's age is important to understand the TV advertisements. Their comprehension of television commercials increases with age. As children become older, their comprehension of TV advertising increases. Young children have a low awareness of what commercials want to communicate and they can be persuaded easily than older children. *Anana and Nique (2010)* analysed how human values can be used to enhance the academic courses according to the profile of each group. The sample consisted of 1,609 students attending a large Brazilian university, whose values are measured using the Rokeach values survey. The data are firstly submitted to

exploratory factor analysis to identify a set of factors later used to construct perceptual maps. Finally, the careers are grouped and typified according to the predominant values in each one. The results suggested that students of some careers are more prone to be classified through their values than others, but in general terms each professional group shows some particularity. *Ray and Jat (2010)* illustrated that media has demonstrated potentially profound effects, both positive and negative, on children's cognitive, social, and behavioral development. It is widely accepted that media has profound influence on child health, including violence, obesity, tobacco and alcohol use, and risky sexual behaviors. Simultaneously, media may have some positive effects on child health. The study is aimed at finding ways to optimize the role of media in our society, taking advantage of their positive attributes and minimizing their negative ones. *Singh and Sandhu (2011)* discussed that although there exists no consensus about the impact of television commercials on the social and moral behavior of viewers, the accusations that we come across in past research are grave. This study is an attempt to examine the same in India. An empirical analysis of the views of 520 respondents revealed that television commercials undermine social, moral and religious values and negatively influence human behavior. They violate ethical norms and disrespect the integrity of cultures, the consequences of which manifest themselves in the form of degradation of women, sexual preoccupation and boost to materialism. Degradation of relationships in Indian families and the misleading and untruthful content of television commercials are yet other points of concern highlighted by the study. *Walker (2011)* opined that parents often lack a clear understanding of the ways in which their children are being influenced and so lack the ability to make an informed choice regarding what is best for their children. The key difficulty, therefore, is not necessarily one of content material, though much modern content is certainly offensive to human dignity, but that parents are not empowered with the necessary knowledge and understanding needed for deciphering the dangers and traps posed by the virtual world to their children. Such knowledge is incredibly valuable and greatly needed to facilitate the righteous transition of a child entering into adulthood. *Torelli et al (2012)* conducted a study to assess the reliability, validity, and cross-cultural invariance of a measure of brand concepts as representations of human values, as well as to identify the dimensional structure of this measure. The study included eight countries located on five continents, specifically, it selected four individualistic countries—Norway, the United States, Australia, Canada and four collectivistic countries—Turkey, China, Mexico, and Brazil. To analyse the data, factor analysis test and multidimensional scaling analysis was used. *Hattemet. al. (2013)* examined how life roles and values relate to

each other. Moreover, the possible role of gender within these associations is explored. The paper analyzed cross-sectional survey data of 114 employees of the Dutch public sector. Frequency tables, factor analysis, correlation and regression techniques were used for the analysis of data. Values were operationalized according to the Dolan et al.'s dimensions: emotional-developmental; ethical-social; pragmatic-economic; life roles were measured as "parental" and "occupational". The study found no direct association between life roles and values but it found gender differences suggesting that the more parental role oriented a woman is, the less occupational role oriented she is. In addition, the results show a negative association between emotional-developmental values and ethical-social values. Jose and Maritza (2013) discussed some considerations about the formation values at mid-superior value. The design of the investigation was based on a documental analysis in Mexico. The study indicates that a child learns values from his society, teachers and parents. Educational institutions help in eradicating societal diseases like racial discrimination, violence, frauds etc through values like prudence, justice, strength and temperance, protection of the environment, respect, love, mercy, solidarity and equality. Tolmacheva (2013) revealed main aspects of the influence of advertising on the formation of value orientation of the youth and conducted the sociological survey in which young people at the age of 14 to 30 took part. The survey was carried out in two stages in 2006 and in 2012. The results of the survey allowed among all the rest to reveal the primary resources of the formation of value orientation of the youth: family, mass media and advertising. Respondents consider that advertising fulfills not only information and commercial function but also aesthetic, cognitive and developing which, in turn, orientate towards moral values and definite behavior acquiring more and more significant position in life activity of young people, determine common outlook of the youth. Dhesi (2015) ascertained the impact of modernization on moral behaviour in village communities in North India. The empirical analysis results suggest that in-group, inter-group and generalized trust are not exclusive and the significant sources of inter-group trust are trust in neighbours, trust in village council, development/modernization and education. The sources of generalized trust seem to be inter-group trust, trust in village council, development and education. The study pertains to village communities in Indian Punjab embedded in region's evolved syncretic culture and it concludes that majority of individuals in the evolved, heterogeneous communities are inclusive and subscribe to moral values that persist with modernization. But core values may become dormant in a situation of social disequilibrium. Inclusive development and spread of

education in a conducive local institutional framework is required to restore them. Kostyukova et. al. (2015) opined that traditional moral values are, first of all, the initial values that were chosen by a certain people in the course of its history and formed its culture and traditions. These values or the moral standards are like 'the aspiration to the good, justice, honour, dignity, charity, humanism are important both for the world society and for every person. The study was carried out during the academic year 2013-2014 in Russia and frequency percentage method was used to analyse the data. Stoeber and yang (2015) discussed that personal moral standards showed unique positive relationships with moral values/virtues like empathy, resourcefulness, order, serenity and judgments in terms of gratitude, indebtedness and willingness to help others; whereas concern over moral mistakes did not. Personal moral standards (but not concern over moral mistakes) showed unique positive relationships with moral values, virtues, and judgments and a unique negative relationship with moral disengagement. The present findings suggest that moral perfectionism is a personality characteristic that is relevant in both Asian and Western cultures and explains individual differences in moral attitudes beyond general perfectionism. Lisievici and Andronie (2016) explored the perceptions of teachers on the effectiveness of values clarification techniques versus traditional moral education methods currently used in Romanian education, after receiving training and applying the new techniques. The study found motivation of teachers and willingness of students to participate in making moral education more effective. A deductive category content analysis was used to identify teachers' perceptions and judgements, motivation for improving moral education, as well as relevant comments and suggestions for the same.

a) Comprehensive Summary of the Literature available

The study covers the comprehensive summary of the literature available worldwide on the subject of adoption of social and moral values by children through advertising. Table 1 presents as many as 25 studies conducted across different periods of time and covering Asian as well as other countries of the world.

S.No	Author	Year of Study	Period under Study	Markets under study	Tools used	Results
1.	Powney	1995		Scotland (UK)	Frequency distribution	Teachers foster values in students through their curriculum and personal interaction and carry on what parents began in educating their children.
2.	Pang	1996	1994-1995	Hongkong	Principal component analysis, Structural equation modeling	Cultural linkages in schools promote teacher's feeling of commitment, job satisfaction, sense of community, order and discipline.
3.	Nicholsan	1998		USA, Venezuela, People's republic of China	MANOVA, mean. Standard deviation, correlation	Cross-cultural values based aspect is required as cultural values vary among distinct nations.
4.	Carlo et al.	1999		United States of America	Secondary data review	Social context plays an important role in pro-social and moral development. However, research on the social and contextual correlates of pro-social and moral development in early adolescence is at an embryonic stage.
5.	Prahalada	2000		India	Secondary data only	Without Indian cultural value in the life of students, education will lose its significance and students a vision to life. Therefore, our education system should evolve a new positive morality for the goals of democracy, socialism, humanism and secularism.
6.	Wakefield et al.	2003	2000-2002	USA, Australia	Experimental analysis	The study suggested that anti-smoking advertising appears to have more reliable positive effects on children in pre-adolescence or early adolescence by preventing commencement of smoking.
7.	Williams	2000		USA	Factor analysis. Chi-square test, ANOVA.	Intense emotional appeal in advertising is superior to milder appeal and can have a substantial impact on consumer's memory.
8.	Gunilla	2001	1999-2000	Europe	Secondary data only	Children become able to differentiate between advertising and other TV content and understand the intent of advertising as they get older, which is linked with children's cognitive development.
9.	Blandina	2002		Ireland	Secondary data only	The age at which children learn to understand advertising, is linked on one hand to the parents' attitude and level of education, and on the other to the ability of

						school teaching to explain and discuss advertising with children and young people.
10.	Perkins	2002		Geneva(New York)	Experimental analysis	Student peer norms to be the strongest influence on students' personal drinking behavior. There is significant potential for engaging norms to serve in prevention efforts to reduce problem of drinking among students.
11.	Greenfield	2004	1979-2003	USA	Secondary data only	The results focus on the social relations among school leaders and others, giving particular attention to the meanings, perspectives, and espoused purposes of school leaders' actions, social relationships, and interpersonal orientations.
12.	Kapoor and Verma	2005		India	Frequency distribution.	The results implied that parent-child interaction plays an important role in the children's learning of positive consumer values and parents' perception of the influence as positive on their children's buying response.
13.	Gulcin Uyan	2008		Halmstad (Sweden)	Frequency distribution, correlation.	Children's comprehension of television commercials increases with age. Parental control is weaker and children have pester power.
14.	Anana and Nique	2010		Brazil	Rokeach values survey, factor analysis.	Different Careers require different social and personal values.
15.	Ray and Jat	2010		India	Secondary data only	Media has profound influence on children's health, including violence, obesity, tobacco and alcohol use and risky sexual behaviors. Simultaneously, media may have some positive effects on child health.
16.	Singh and Sandhu	2011	2009-10	Punjab (India)	Factor analysis, regression.	TV commercials undermine social, moral and religious values and negatively influence human behavior. They violate ethical norms and boost materialism. Degradation of relationships in Indian families and the misleading and untruthful content of television commercials are yet other points of concern highlighted by the study.
17.	Walker	2011	-	United Kingdom	Secondary data only	Parents must themselves accept ample responsibility in ensuring that their children are safe from the ill effects of television, advertising and the targeted sexualisation of

						children. After all, parents are responsible for the food consumption, consumer purchasing, and TV intake of their children.
18.	Torelli	2012		Norway, US, Australia, Canada, China, Mexico, Brazil, Turkey	Kruskal- wallis test, factor analysis.	Brand concepts established on the basis of emotional and motivational meanings induce more favourable consumer responses than functional attributes based meaning.
19.	Hattem	2013	2011-2012	Dutch public sector	Frequency distribution, factor analysis, correlation, regression, t-test.	There is no direct association between life roles and values.
20.	Jose and Maritza	2013		Mexico	Documental analysis	Moral value education of students prevents the felonies such as fraud, corruption, racial discrimination, pollution, terrorist acts, violence and murders.
21.	Tolmacheva	2013	2006-2012	Tyumen (Russia)	Frequency distribution	Advertising fulfils not only information and commercial function but also aesthetic cognitive and developing which orientate towards moral values and definite behaviour in youngsters' life.
22.	Dhesi	2015	2007-2008	Punjab(India)	Mean, correlation, regression.	Trust and cooperation are crucial for the existence of civilized humanity.
23.	Kostyukova	2015	2013-2014	Russia	Frequency distribution	Traditional moral values are important both for world society and every person.
24.	Stoeber and Yang	2015	2015-2016	China	Correlation and Regression	Moral perfectionism explains individual differences in moral attitude beyond general perfectionism
25.	Lisievi and Andronie	2016		Bucharest, Romania	Deductive category Content analysis	Moral education and development requires the support of both the teachers and students.

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we can articulate that the previous studies reveal a considerable shift in the Indian society with regard to the social and moral values of today's children who are in a great dilemma regarding what is right to do. Today, things are not what they use to be in terms of discipline, respect for elders and constituted authority, humility, hard work, honesty, faithfulness and love for others. Many studies discussed that missing morality in the society is the most deterring factor of crime, antisocial behavior, terrorism, assault, cyber crime, corruption etc. It is imperative to realize the potential perpetuating threat of deteriorating social and moral values in children. Such orientation of children needs to be strengthened to build up a harmonious society. Although, major portion of the studies is done in

other countries than India and Indian perception is weak to identify. Whatever studies have been done on India, most of them have concentrated at the inter-relationship of values with children. Therefore, in a nutshell, we can say that it is very much required to make and implement some constructive approaches like proper execution by censor board in case of children advertising, social audit of advertisements, teaching value education to the young students through their curriculum, on which the country's present and future depends; also parents must themselves accept ample responsibility in ensuring that their children are safe from the ill effects of television, advertising and the targeted sexualisation of children. Otherwise it will be too difficult to make a positive and harmonic atmosphere of morality and humanity among children. The paper concludes through a few lines of Mahatma Gandhi "If wealth is lost nothing is lost""If

health is lost something is lost, If character is lost everything is lost".

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