

The Impact of Advertising Attitudes on the Intensity of TV Ads Avoiding Behavior

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Abstract

This study seeks mainly to identify the impact of advertising attitudes on the intensity of TV advertisements avoiding behavior. It contributes to the very limited literature in the field of TV ads avoiding behaviour through comparing light and heavy TV ads avoiders in terms of their attitudes to TV ads. Discriminant analysis was used to discriminate between these two groups of TV ads avoiders and then t-test was used to investigate the hypothesis related to their attitudes to TV advertisements. Principal component factor analysis was also used to identify the different factors of attitudes towards TV ads. Six attitudinal factors were revealed: reliability of TV ads, value distortion, consumers' showing off, enjoyment, usefulness of TV ads, and embarrassment. The study shows that the more negative the attitudes to TV ads, the greater the intensity of TV ads avoidance and vice versa. Advertisers should consider that ads avoidance is a real fact which cannot be ignored. Therefore, they must take this avoidance into consideration in planning and executing advertising campaigns. Finally, this study offers a number of academic and practical recommendations.

Key words: TV ads avoidance, Zapping, Attitudes, Avoidance intensity, Heavy avoiders, Light avoiders, Egypt.

Introduction

TV advertising avoidance behavior represents a serious problem for advertisers. In October 2008, Tom Rogers the founder of CNBC in 1989 and currently is the CEO and president of TiVo warned the attendees of the Association of National Advertisers Conference that:

In the next two to three years the television industry is going to face an advertising crisis more severe than our current financial crisis. You have sufficient warning about television commercial avoidance and the growing epidemic of fast forwarding thru ads and if marketers do not quickly come to terms with the solutions to commercial avoidance, most viewers will be fast forwarding the majority of television ads (as cited in Myers, 2008).

In this study, the phrase 'TV advertising avoiding behavior(s)' refers to all actions by television viewers to reduce their exposure to the content of television advertisements (henceforward, TV ads) (Speck & Elliott, 1997). In this context, TV ads avoiding behaviors have been classified into *physical avoidance* (i.e., leaving the room during the presentation of ads) and *mechanical avoidance* (i.e., pressing a button on the remote control to change channel, muting or decreasing the volume, switching off the television during ads) and *cognitive avoidance* (i.e., engaging in other activities while ads are showing, such as talking to other people or performing household tasks) (Heeter and Greenberg, 1985; Kaplan, 1985; Abernethy, 1990; Zufryden et al., 1993; Clancey, 1994; Speck & Elliott, 1997; Tse & Lee, 2001).

Speck and Elliott (1997) conclude that ads avoidance was higher for TV than for other media, such as magazines and newspapers; therefore, it is useful for advertisers to study TV ads avoidance behavior and the attitudinal factors affecting it.

Literature Review

Although the importance of TV ads avoidance to advertisers, most studies of the subject have focused only on one form of TV ads avoiding behavior, namely, “zapping”: switching channels during ads (see for example, Heeter & Greenberg, 1985; Kaplan, 1985; Zufryden et al., 1993; van Meurs, 1998; Siddarth & Chattopadhyay, 1998). Little research has handled all methods for avoiding ads (Speck & Elliott, 1997; Tse & Lee, 2001).

Studies differ in the way in which they measure TV ads avoiding behavior. Some studies asked the respondents to recall their actual behavior when watching TV ads during program breaks or to recall the content of ads (Stout & Burda, 1989; Tse & Lee, 2001; Martin et al., 2002). However, this method of measuring TV ads avoiding behavior is limited by the respondent’s memory, especially when there is an excessive delay between watching and recall, the degree of repetition of the ads, and the respondents’ attitudes to advertising (Danaher, 1995). Other studies have relied on observing ads avoiding behavior in a judgmental environment (Cornin & Menelly, 1992; Gilmore & Secunda, 1993; Elpers et al., 2002). The problems here are the small size of the sampling units and the probability that behavior changed as a result of observation. In this context, an ethnographic field study (e.g. a camera on top of the television) could be another way of measuring TV ads avoiding behavior. This would be an in-depth study, producing a large amount of data. However, these data cannot be generalised beyond the group observed, and the process is very time consuming (Chandler, 1994).

The third type of study has applied people-meter research (Zufryden et al., 1993; Danaher, 1995; van Meurs, 1998; Siddarth & Chattopadhyay, 1998), in which respondents are asked to press a button on their remote control to start the observation and record their ads avoiding behavior. However, this procedure, too, may make some people change their behavior (Kent, 2002). In addition, people may make errors, such as pressing the wrong button or leaving the room without pressing the button in the meter to indicate that they have done so. The conclusion in these earlier studies is that there is no perfect method of measuring ads avoiding behavior.

In addition, different objectives have been achieved in different studies. For instance, some have assessed the influence of avoidance on the effectiveness of ads (Greene, 1988; Stout & Burda, 1989; Zufryden et al., 1993; Tse & Lee, 2001; Martin et al., 2002), while others have profiled TV ads avoiders and non avoiders (Heeter & Greenberg, 1985; Zufryden et al., 1993; Danaher, 1995). Others have studied the impact of particular ads features, such as the perceived value of ads and its frequency, timing, length and content on avoidance behavior (Patzer, 1991; Zufryden et al., 1993; Siddarth & Chattopadhyay, 1998; van Meurs, 1998; Singh & Cole, 1993; Newell & Henderson, 1998); or have segmented TV viewers according to their different forms of viewers’ zapping behaviors (Kim, 2002); or have considered the influence of moment-to-moment pleasantness on the zapping of TV ads (Elpers et al., 2002).

The impact of TV ads avoiding on the effectiveness of ads - measured by the ability to recall the brand being advertised- has also been investigated (Greene, 1988; Tse & Lee, 2001). The findings show that the ability of non avoiders to recall brands was higher than that of avoiders. On the same lines, Stout and Burda (1989) and Martin et al. (2002) analyze the impact of zipping (i.e., using the remote control to fast forward the video tape or disc in order to avoid ads) on the recall and recognition of brands and the content of ads.

They found that viewers who watched zipped commercials were less able to recall and recognize brand and ads content than those who watched ads at normal speed. In addition, Martin et al. (2002) investigate the impact of repeating and zipping ads on brand recall and recognition. They found that ads at normal speed produce better brand recall and recognition of the content of the ads than zipped ads, even if the latter are repeated many times. However, Zufryden et al. (1993) made a surprising discovery. They found that avoided ads were more effective than non avoided ads in influencing brand buying behavior. This has been interpreted as evidence that a high degree of attention was paid to the avoided ads, which consequently increased their effectiveness.

With regard to profiling, Heeter and Greenberg (1985) profiled TV ads avoiders in terms of demographic characteristics. They found that gender and age were the most influential demographic variables on TV ads avoidance.

In detail, they found that men tended more to avoid ads than women did, and young adults more than older people. However, other demographics, such as income, education, marital status, family size, and number of children were not significant as components of avoiding behavior. Speck and Elliott (1997) conclude that people are most likely to avoid TV ads if they are young or have high income. However, Danaher (1995) finds that most ads avoidance has not been interpreted through demographic characteristics and – to some extent – changed the stereotypical view that young men are the most prone to avoid ads. He also concludes that the most important variable of TV ads avoiding was having a remote control. This last result is consistent with Zufryden et al. (1993), who find that the possession of a remote control with avoiders was a significant variable in TV ads avoiding. They also find that the number of available channels was an important variable in ads avoiding.

The impact of ads features on ads avoiding behavior, such as the ads' perceived value, frequency, timing, length and content has also been investigated. Siddarth and Chattopadhyay (1998) clarify the point that a low perceived value of an ad raises the probability of avoidance. Many variables affect the ads' perceived value, such as the association of ads with consumers' needs and the frequency of watching the same ads. There is a high probability of ads avoidance the first time an ad is broadcast. This is because of the ad's being unfamiliar; however, frequent repetition increases the consumer's desire to watch an ad until a full understanding of its content has been reached. After this point, any exposure to this ad will not have any additional value for the consumer, will seem boring and will thereafter be avoided (Siddarth & Chattopadhyay, 1998).

Ads avoidance is also affected by the time at which an ad is broadcast. In this context, it is important to note that the timing of an ad's presentation could be at prime time, during the day or at any other time, and could be during a commercial break or within a program. Zufryden et al. (1993) state that most households switch channels during prime time because of the desire to explore what is being shown simultaneously on other channels. However, McSherry (1985) notes that ads avoidance through channel switching is low in prime time, as a result of fearing to miss any part of the higher quality programs available (as cited in Siddarth & Chattopadhyay 1998).

Regarding the impact of ads broadcasting in ads breaks on ads avoidance compared with the same thing during programs, Zufryden et al. (1993) find that most households switch channels during programs but not in ads breaks. This means that households are looking for program diversity, but not necessarily to avoid ads. This result contradicts the findings of Siddarth and Chattopadhyay (1998), who find a high probability of ads avoidance through switching channels in ads breaks every 30 minutes or every hour, compared with other times during programs. In this respect, van Meurs (1998) differentiates between ads breaks within programs and those between programs. He states that ads avoidance is lower in ads breaks within programs than between programs. This is because the desire not to miss any part of the program is greater than the pressure to switch channels.

He also indicates that the length of the ads break is one of the most important reasons for ads avoidance. The longer the break measured by time or by the number of broadcast ads, the higher the probability of avoiding the ads. Not only this but also the order of the ads during the breaks has an effect on ads avoidance. The probability of avoiding ads broadcast at the beginning or the end of the ads break is lower than of avoiding the ads in the middle of the break. This justifies the higher cost of broadcasting ads at the beginnings and ends of breaks (van Meurs, 1998).

In this respect, Chowdhury et al. (2007) conclude that the simultaneous presentation of advertising and TV programming reduce the intention to zap more than sequential presentation does. Also, the representation of the brand in the TV ads can play a significant role in reducing avoidance. In this concern, Teixeira et al. (2010) develop a conceptual framework about the impact of the audiovisual representation of brands in TV ads and concluded that brand pulsing (i.e. repeated brief images of the brand) can reduce TV ads avoidance significantly compared with showing the brand for long periods of time at the beginning or end of the advertisement. Moreover, the length of the ad also has an effect on ads avoidance. Many studies have concluded that 30 second ads are more effective in terms of brand recall ability than are 15 second ads (Putzer, 1991; Singh & Cole, 1993; Newell & Henderson, 1998). Although Siddarth and Chattopadhyay (1998) prove no significant difference between these two forms on ads avoidance, they conjecture that the use of 15 second ads may more often increase the risk of additional exposure and consequently the probability of avoidance.

The attitudes to advertising - in order to determine the direction of such attitudes (i.e., positive or negative; favourable or unfavourable) - have been covered in many studies (e.g., Alwitt & Prabhaker, 1994; Al-Makaty et al., 1996; Gordon & De Lima-Turner, 1997; Shavitt et al., 1998; Newell et al., 1998; Bush et al., 1999; Sonnac, 2000; Yang, 2000; Ramaprasad, 2001; Coulter et al., 2001, Ashill & Yavas, 2005). However, the relationship between advertising attitudes and avoidance behavior has received surprisingly little empirical attention. In more detail, Stout and Burda (1989) claim that viewers of zipped commercials tend to have more neutral attitudes to advertising. Lee and Lumpkin (1992) find that respondents who report more frequent zapping and zipping behaviors tend to have a more negative attitude altogether towards TV advertising.

Research Problem

Most of the previous studies have focused on one single avoiding behavior. Only a few studies have investigated all aspects of ads avoiding behavior. Moreover, it is noted that some of the previous studies compare ads avoiders with non avoiders, while other studies focus on the behavior of avoiders only. In practice, there are different behaviors in TV ads avoidance, as mentioned above, and as observed by the present author in the pilot study. Viewers can exhibit one or more kinds of ads avoiding behavior. Therefore, the problem is not to compare avoiders with non avoiders (since all viewers practise in one way or another at least one of the avoiding behaviors at some point) but the extent to which viewers avoid TV ads. This means that the problem rests on the intensity of avoidance. This conclusion is supported by Speck and Elliott (1997) in their recommendations for further research to investigate heavy and light avoiders of TV ads. Also, previous research has either investigated the impact of demographics on ads avoiding behavior or the impact of ads features on ads avoiding behavior, such as ads perceived value, their frequency, timing, length and content, but the impact of attitudes of light and heavy avoiders on TV ads avoidance has not been investigated in any previous study. Therefore, it will be useful to compare those who avoid TV ads intensively (heavy avoiders) with those who also avoid TV ads but to a lesser degree (light avoiders), to determine the impact of their attitudes on such avoidance.

The importance of this study appears to be that it contributes to the very limited literature in the field of TV ads avoiding behavior through comparing light and heavy TV ads avoiders in terms of their attitudes to TV ads. It is the first time that these two groups of TV avoiders have been investigated. This study also investigates many forms of TV ads avoidance behaviors, for most previous studies in this area have focused on only one or two forms of TV ads avoiding behavior.

Research hypothesis

'A significant difference between light and heavy TV ads avoiders could be found according to their attitudes to TV ads'

The relationship between attitudes and behavior is a controversial issue. Some researchers have shown that attitudes may not always be indicative of a consumer behavior (see Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005, for a review). Ajzen and Fishbein (2005) criticize studies which see no relationship between attitudes and behavior or find that attitudes are very poor predictors of actual behavior, possibly because these studies suffer from response bias or ignore the multi-dimensionality of attitudes. Other researchers see that consumers' behavior could be reflective of their attitudes (see Howcroft et al., 2002; Singh & Smith 2005).

Ajzen (1985) develop the theory of planned behavior (TPB), which is one of the most important psychological theories for predicting behavior. The core of this theory is that behavioral decisions are not made spontaneously but are the result of attitudes, norms and perception. On the same lines, Smith et al. (2008) use a revised model of planned behavior and find that attitudes are positively related to purchase intentions while intentions are predictive of behavior. That is, in the advertising context, consumers' behavior could be reflective of attitudes to advertising (Singh & Smith, 2005). Ajzen (1988) cites the opinion that general attitudes can have a strong impact on behavior, but says that this is to be expected under certain conditions or for certain types of individuals. In other words, the degree of attitude-behavior consistency is assumed to be moderated by factors related to the person whose behavior is being considered, the situation in which it occurs or the characteristics of the attitudes themselves.

The later view is supported by Olney et al. (1991), who find that attitudes to ads play the role of moderate variables between ads content and zipping or zapping. Lee and Lumpkin (1992) find that ads avoiders have negative attitudes to ads.

It is also worth noting that a person's affective state – which is a component of her/his attitudes – influences behavior (see Andrade, 2005 for more details of theories explaining the causal influence of affect on behavior and behavioral intentions). In this context, Garg et al. (2007) demonstrate that a person's affective state (sad versus happy) influences consumption (i.e. behavior) and show that this influence is moderated by factors such as information and the nature of the product (hedonic versus less hedonic). On the same lines, the affective state of TV ads viewers can also influence their avoiding behavior towards TV ads in general (avoider versus non avoider) and their avoiding intensity in particular (heavy avoider versus light avoider). That is, in a less hedonic environment, there may be more heavy avoiders than in a very hedonic environment. On this basis, it is expected that a significant influence of attitudes to TV ads on the intensity of ads avoidance will be found.

Methodology

This study is mainly based on a questionnaire survey. It was developed in the light of the study purpose, the researcher's observation of TV viewers and the survey of the literature. The format was exclusively of closed questions, so as to promote quick and easy responses and it was divided into two parts. The first part included questions about ads avoidance behaviors and attitudes to TV ads. The second part included the demographic characteristics of all respondents.

The questionnaire was pre-tested on a small convenience sample of 10 adult viewers of TV ads to check whether it was understandable, to make any necessary modification to it and to determine the time needed to answer it. The letter which accompanied the questionnaire and promised confidentiality was personally signed.

Egyptian adult viewers of TV in Greater Cairo represent the study population. Seven well-trained interviewers were employed to collect data from a sample of TV viewers in social clubs and shopping malls in Greater Cairo. Each interviewer was asked to collect the data from different social clubs and shopping malls on different days at different times. Each interviewer was also asked to collect data from the first respondent who arrived at his/her location and then the next respondent after 30 minutes, which allowed enough time for introducing themselves, filling the questionnaire and ending the interview. Data collection continued for about eight weeks.

A total of 400 questionnaires were collected. Of this total, 364 completed questionnaires were used in the data analysis. Of the 364 respondents, 43.4% were males and 56.6% were females. The age of 11% of respondents was less than 20 years; 25.3% were aged between 20 and 30 years; 33.5% were aged between 31 and 40; 21.2% were aged between 41 and 50; 6.5% were aged between 51 and 60 years; 2.5% of respondents was above 60 years. 30.5% of the respondents were single; 63.7% were married; 1.4% of respondents were divorced and 4.4% of the respondents were widowed. Regarding the occupation of the respondents, 8.3% were housewives; 18.7% were students; 4.1% were business men/women; 52.4% were government employees; 14.0% were private sector employees; 2.5% were retired. Concerning the educational level of the respondents, 1.1% of respondents were without qualifications; 45.6% had qualifications below university degree; 47.5% had a university degree; 5.8% were postgraduates.

Results

To determine the light and heavy avoiders of TV ads, respondents were asked about their behavior as they watched TV ads on a 7-point time frequency scale ranging from *always* (i.e., continue watching TV ads in 100% of situations) to *never* (i.e., stop watching TV ads in 100% of situations). Since the aim was to determine the proportion of light and heavy TV ads avoiders, therefore, we excluded 3 respondents who continued to watch TV ads (without moving) in 100% of situations. This is because they never avoided TV ads and consequently they are beyond the scope of the study, which investigates only TV ads avoiders.

Other respondents who usually, often, or sometimes continued to watch TV during the ads represent the first group (164 light avoiders), while those who seldom, rarely, or never continued to watch TV during ads represent the second group (197 heavy avoiders).

The discriminant analysis which was used to discriminate between light and heavy avoiders found a high degree of discrimination between light and heavy avoiders. This analysis was based on the attitudes of the respondents who practise one or more forms of ads avoiding behavior. Quality measures of discriminant analysis were Eigen value =1.19; Wilks' Lambda =0.457; the classification percentage =86%; and $p < 0.0001$. The high Eigen value is associated with good discrimination function and, conversely, the small value of Wilks' Lambda is associated with good discrimination function. Conversely, also, the high percentage of classification indicates the high level of discrimination between groups and vice versa.

Table (1) shows different types of ads avoiding behavior. It shows a significant difference between light and heavy avoiders in all types of avoiding behavior. Although there is a significant difference between light and heavy avoiders, there was a similarity between the two groups, as illustrated in Table (1).

Cognitive avoidance (i.e., engaging in other activities or talking to other people nearby) was the most frequent avoidance behavior, whether by light or heavy avoiders. In addition, switching off the television during the ads break (mechanical avoidance) was the least frequent avoidance behavior for both groups. Other mechanical avoidance behaviors, such as changing channels and muting or reducing the volume, came in the middle rank for both groups. Physical avoidance (i.e., leaving the TV room during the ads break) was rated differently for light and heavy avoiders.

Insert table (1) about here

Testing the study hypothesis

In order to extract the attitudes factors towards TV ads, a principal component factor analysis was performed. It revealed six factors which explain 54.24 % of data variability. As shown in Table (2), the factors were labelled by observing the items of which each was comprised. The first factor labelled '*reliability of TV ads*' contains six attitudinal statements related to the ability of TV ads to provide reliable information for buying decisions regarding the advertised products. The second factor includes five attitudinal statements which mainly focus on the undesired effect of TV ads on values; therefore, it is labelled '*value distortion*'. The third factor is labelled '*consumers' showing off*' and included three attitudinal statements reflecting the belief that TV ads encourage consumers to buy more products than they need or can afford for prestige alone.

The fourth factor, '*enjoyment*', reflects the interesting or enjoyable aspect of TV ads. The fifth factor, '*usefulness of TV ads*' included four attitudinal statements which concerned TV ads as a valuable source of information. Finally, the sixth factor, which was labelled '*embarrassment*', comprised two attitudinal statements only, explicitly, TV ads about intimate products (e.g., sanitary towels) and TV ads containing offensive scenes.

Table (3) shows that there was a significant difference between light and heavy avoiders in all attitudes to TV ads, except for one variable only. Regarding the reliability of TV ads, although there was a significant difference between light and heavy avoiders, it was found that both groups had negative attitudes to the reliability of TV ads. Consequently, both considered TV ads to be untrustworthy as a source of information. This result is consistent with the findings of other research which find negative attitudes to the reliability of TV ads (Alwitt & Prabhaker, 1994; Newell et al., 1998; Shavitt et al., 1998). This result, however, contradicts the findings of Li and Miniard (2006), who interestingly note that advertising is able to enhance the perceived trustworthiness of the advertised brand.

Concerning the effect of TV ads on society's values (values distortion); there was a significant difference between light and heavy avoiders on all variables in this factor. The attitudes of heavy avoiders were negative; they judged TV ads to corrupt young people's values and promote undesirable values in society. In contrast, light avoiders – to some extent – had positive attitudes to TV in relation to this factor. They did not see ads as promoting bad values, goods or services such as would harm society in general.

Regarding the consumers' showing off factor shown in Table (3), there was a significant difference between light and heavy TV avoiders in their attitudes to the TV ads variables in this factor. It illustrates that heavy avoiders – to some extent – had negative attitudes to TV ads in this factor. They believed that TV ads made people buy products above their purchasing power merely to impress others or for which they had no need. This had the effect of making people materialistic, since they were interested only in buying and possessing products. Light avoiders, for their part, were apparently neutral in their attitudes to TV ads in this factor.

Insert table (2) about here

Insert table (3) about here

On the factor of enjoyment, whereby TV ads represent a form of entertainment and fun, there was also a significant difference between the attitudes of light and heavy TV ads avoiders towards the enjoyment of TV ads. Heavy avoiders had a strong negative attitude to TV ads in this factor. They did not consider TV ads to be a form of entertainment but found them boring. This differs from the light avoiders, who viewed TV ads as a source of fun and enjoyment.

With regard to the usefulness of TV ads, there was a significant difference between light and heavy avoiders in all variables in this factor except for one variable only. In general, light avoiders had positive attitudes to TV ads as a useful source of information on two variables: 'TV ads are a valuable source of information about available products and brands in the market' and 'TV ads give me up to date information'. But they had neutral or negative attitudes on other variables in this factor. However, heavy avoiders had generally negative or neutral attitudes to TV ads as a useful source of information.

Finally, the factor of embarrassment from TV ads, as illustrated in Table (3) shows a significant difference between light and heavy avoiders in their attitudes to TV ads in this regard. Heavy avoiders feel much greater embarrassment when they watch these ads than do light avoiders.

Therefore, they avoided TV ads which contain offensive scenes and cues, especially when they were watching TV ads with others such as relatives and children. In contrast, the negative attitudes of light avoiders to TV ads in this factor were lesser. The embarrassment from TV ads about gender related products (e.g. women's sanitary towels, condoms, female contraceptives, male/female underwear, etc) or TV ads which contain sexual cues may be affected by the respondents' religion (Fam et al., 2004). In the present study, it should be noted that about 90% or more of the Egyptian population are Muslims. Fam et al. (2004) and Waller et al. (2005) find that more Muslims than the other three groups mentioned in their studies (i.e., Christians, Buddhists and non-religious persons) find such material embarrassing

From the above, it was clear that attitudes do affect the avoidance of TV ads. The more negative the attitudes to TV ads, the greater the intensity of TV ads avoidance and vice versa. Therefore, the study hypothesis is accepted.

Conclusions and Recommendations

It was clear from the results that all the respondents except 3 exhibited one or more of the TV ads avoidance behaviors. However, they could be divided on the intensity of their avoidance into light and heavy avoiders. Hence, advertisers should consider that ads avoidance is a fact which cannot be ignored. Therefore, they must take this avoidance into consideration in planning and executing their advertising campaigns. For instance, they should consider it in determining their ads budget, the targeting of ads viewers, designing their message, the length of ads, the repetition of ads, their timing, whether to put ads within programs or between them, their order in the break, the type of program in which they are included, the type of TV channel, etc.

Cognitive avoidance (i.e., engaging in other activities, such as talking to other people nearby or performing household tasks) was the most frequent avoidance behavior. Therefore, it is important to design TV ads to be attractive enough to seize the viewers' attention and to broadcast them in appropriate programs for the target viewers. In this context, Potter et al. (2006) conclude that, as expected, sad programs activate viewers' aversive motivational systems, whereas comedic programming activate their appetitive motivational systems.

In other words, when the mood of the programming is negative, the viewer responds negatively by activating the aversive system not only in relation to the programs but also to the ads within or between them. However, when the mood of the programming is positive, the viewer reacts positively by activating the appetitive motivational system. This could interpret why heavy avoiders do not want to be exposed to TV ads.

To reduce the incidence switching channels during ads broadcasting, it is important for advertisers to decide which program is most preferred by their customers and show ads during this, or only at the beginnings or ends of ads breaks, or to broadcast the same ad on different channels at the same time. Also, it is recommended that TV channels should shorten long ads breaks between programs by dividing them up and making short breaks within programs. Moreover, the simultaneous presentation of ads and TV programs by splitting the screen to include both ads and programs will also help in reducing zapping. Recently, Teixeira et al. (2010) find that repeated brief images of the brand have significant influence on reducing TV ads avoidance than showing the brand for long periods of time at the beginning or end of the advertisement.

The two groups of avoiders both had negative attitudes to the reliability of TV ads, seeing them as unreliable sources of information which demeaned the consumers' intelligence. Therefore, advertisers should consider the reliability of their ads and not make exaggerated promises about their products if they want to prevent consumers from expecting too much of the advertised products' performance. High expectations based on such exaggerated promises may reduce consumers' satisfaction and consequently increase their avoidance of ads. Advertisers should also keep in mind society's values. Heavy avoiders avoid TV ads, believing that most ads corrupt young people's values and are offensive.

Therefore, it is important for those who are in charge of ads in TV channels to check ads before broadcasting to make sure that they are compatible with society's values. They should not include in their ads sexual cues or scenes which represent a sensitive issue especially in Muslim countries. With regard to advertisements for certain special products, such as women's sanitary products or hair removal machines (razors), advertisers should use a professional manner, in programs targeted at women or late at night.

With regard to the enjoyment factor of TV ads, heavy avoiders found little to enjoy in them. Therefore, advertisers - in developing countries such as Egypt in particular - should use all possible means to make TV ads more attractive, interesting and enjoyable. This can be done by developing more than one ads design, pre-testing them before broadcasting and selecting the most enjoyable. The same ad should not be repeated to excess, to obviate boredom. Advertisers should also change ads more often, to reduce consumer boredom and should produce more creative advertising which breaks free from the advertising clutter (Rotfeld, 2006).

Advertisers should also take the information aspect of ads into consideration. Light avoiders had positive attitudes to TV ads as a valuable source of information which gave them up-to-date information about products available in the marketplace. Both sorts of avoider, however, had negative attitudes or tended to have negative attitudes to TV ads for not showing them products which were consistent with their personality or lifestyle. Therefore, advertisers should study their target viewers to discover their characteristics, interests, and lifestyles. Information about the target viewers can be useful for designing the messages in advertising and using people who can suggest similar characteristics and lifestyles to act in and introduce the ads. Moreover, to increase viewers' attention to TV ads and to enhance information recall, advertisers are recommended to use silence in TV ads (Ang et al., 1999).

Limitations and Further Research

This study is limited to Egyptian adult viewers of TV ads in Greater Cairo. Thus, it did not cover children who watch TV ads or viewers from outside Greater Cairo. In addition, this study also covered no ads avoidance in other media, such as magazines, newspapers, radio, the Internet, or video. The low reliability of the 'embarrassment' factor represents another limitation; further research is needed to explore its psychometric basis. This study used a questionnaire to investigate TV ads avoidance. Therefore, additional research is needed which would use other methods than questionnaires, such as a designed experiment, or personal or electronic observation, such as people-meter research.

Further research is also needed to investigate the determinants of ads avoiding behavior in other media, such as magazines, newspapers, radio, the Internet and video. In addition, further research is needed to compare the impact of other psychological factors (i.e., perception, affect orientation, and motives) on the intensity of TV ads avoidance in Egypt with that in other countries (both developed and developing). Finally, it is important to identify the impact of demographics and socioeconomic factors on the intensity of TV ads avoidance.

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Table (1)
TV ads avoiding behavior between light and heavy TV ads avoiders

Avoiding behavior during ads breaks	Light avoiders		Heavy avoiders			T-test**	
	Mean*	Standard deviation	Rank	Mean	Standard deviation		Rank
- Leaving room during the ads break	2.91	1.33	3	4.10	1.57	5	7.6
- Lowering TV volume	2.84	1.66	4	4.27	1.97	4	7.4
- Switching TV channel during ads broadcasting	2.70	1.47	5	4.61	1.68	3	11.4
- Talking to other people nearby	3.01	1.38	2	4.98	1.42	1	13.3
- Engaging in other activities	3.66	1.29	1	4.74	1.64	2	6.9
- Switching off television during ads breaks	1.59	0.99	6	2.54	1.57	6	6.8

* Scale ranges from Always (= 7) to Never (= 1)

** p < 0.0001

Table (2)
Factor loadings and reliability coefficients of attitudes to TV ads

<i>Factors</i>	<i>Attitudes to TV ads</i>	<i>Factor loading</i>
<i>Reliability of TV ads</i>	TV ads are a reliable source of information	0.750
	Products perform as promised in the TV ads	0.702
	TV ads help me to know which products that reflect my personality	0.580
	I learn fashion from TV ads and about what I should buy to impress others	0.573
	TV ads provide me with a real picture of the product	0.680
	Information provided by TV ads helps me in buying decisions	0.562
	<i>Eigen value = 7.226</i>	<i>α = 0.794</i>
<i>Value distortion</i>	TV ads promote undesired values	0.646
	I feel embarrassed when watching TV ads with others	0.603
	TV ads increase covetousness in our society	0.559
	Most TV ads distort young people's values	0.566
	TV ads promote goods that harm our society	0.484
	<i>Eigen value = 2.629</i>	<i>α = 0.719</i>
<i>Consumers' showing off</i>	TV ads make people buy products only for prestige	0.718
	TV ads encourage people to buy products which they don't need	0.817
	TV ads persuade consumers to buy products they should not buy	0.762
	<i>Eigen value = 1.664</i>	<i>α = 0.760</i>
<i>Enjoyment</i>	TV ads are a form of entertainment	0.624
	I feel bored watching TV ads (Reversed)	0.621
	Watching TV ads is more enjoyable than watching TV programs	0.839
	In general, I like watching TV ads	0.719
	<i>Eigen value = 1.347</i>	<i>α = 0.769</i>
<i>Usefulness of TV ads</i>	TV ads are a valuable source of information about the products and brands available in the market	0.572
	TV ads give me up-to-date information	0.741
	TV ads inform me about brands which meet my needs	0.506
	TV ads inform me about products bought by consumers whose lifestyle is like mine	0.620
	<i>Eigen value = 1.205</i>	<i>α = 0.700</i>
<i>Embarrassment</i>	I avoid watching TV ads about intimate products (e.g. sanitary towels)	0.447
	I avoid TV ads that contain offensive scenes	0.716
	<i>Eigen value = 1.116</i>	<i>α = 0.393</i>

- Note: Extraction method: Principal component analysis

Table (3)
Attitudes of light and heavy TV ads avoiders towards TV ads

Attitudes to TV ads	Light avoiders		Heavy avoiders		T-test	P
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation		
Reliability of TV ads						
- TV ads are a reliable source of information	2.65	1.31	2.08	1.07	4.56	<u>0.000</u>
- Products perform as promised in the TV ads	2.74	1.16	2.29	1.16	3.73	<u>0.000</u>
- TV ads help me to know which products reflect my personality	2.93	1.33	2.33	1.28	4.31	<u>0.000</u>
- I learn fashion from TV ads and about what I should buy to impress the others	2.46	1.42	1.95	1.20	3.73	<u>0.000</u>
- In general, TV ads provide me with a reliable picture of the product	3.02	1.20	2.40	1.15	4.99	<u>0.000</u>
- Information provided by TV ads helps me in buying decisions	3.28	1.19	2.41	1.19	6.92	<u>0.000</u>
Value distortion						
- TV ads promote undesired values	2.90	1.34	3.66	1.41	5.20	<u>0.000</u>
- I feel embarrassed when watching TV ads with others	2.71	1.36	3.59	1.34	6.16	<u>0.000</u>
- TV ads increase covetousness in our society	2.82	1.25	3.77	1.19	7.37	<u>0.000</u>
- Most TV ads distort young people's values	3.25	1.29	4.08	1.13	6.48	<u>0.000</u>
- TV ads promote goods which harm our society	2.25	1.10	3.32	1.23	8.61	<u>0.000</u>
Consumers' showing off						
- TV ads make people buy products only for prestige	3.07	1.37	3.65	1.30	4.14	<u>0.000</u>
- TV ads encourage people to buy products that they don't need	2.99	1.22	3.31	1.28	2.47	<u>0.014</u>
- TV ads persuade consumers to buy products they should not buy	2.93	1.20	3.47	1.26	4.51	<u>0.000</u>
Enjoyment						
- TV ads are a form of entertainment	3.44	1.34	2.58	1.37	5.96	<u>0.000</u>
- I feel bored watching TV ads (Reversed)	3.64	1.13	1.97	1.07	14.35	<u>0.000</u>
- Watching TV ads is more enjoyable than watching TV programs	3.10	1.31	2.14	1.17	7.37	<u>0.000</u>
- In general, I like watching TV ads	3.95	0.95	2.11	1.07	17.12	<u>0.000</u>
Usefulness of TV ads						
- TV ads are a valuable source of information about the products and brands available in the market	4.02	1.10	3.28	1.63	5.56	<u>0.000</u>
- TV ads give me up-to-date information	4.14	1.00	3.52	1.12	5.51	<u>0.000</u>
- TV ads inform me about brands which suit my needs	3.53	1.01	2.72	1.14	7.09	<u>0.000</u>
- TV ads inform me about products bought by consumers whose lifestyle is like mine	2.93	1.10	2.78	1.07	1.32	0.187
Embarrassment						
- I avoid watching TV ads about intimate products (e.g. sanitary towels)	3.23	1.35	3.64	1.38	2.90	<u>0.004</u>
- I avoid watching TV ads that contain offensive scenes	3.94	1.24	4.23	1.14	2.36	<u>0.019</u>

* Scale ranges from (strongly agree = 5) to (strongly disagree = 1)