

SLOVAK UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE IN NITRA
FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT

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MARKETING COMMUNICATION ETHICAL ISSUES
RELATED TO CULTURE

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Declaration of Originality

I, the undersigned Petra Peciarová, solemnly declare that the thesis „Marketing Communication Ethical Issues Related to Culture” is a result of my own independent research and was written solely by me using the literature and resources listed in Bibliography.

I am aware of legal consequences in case the data are not true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

In Nitra 12th May 2011

Petra Peciarová

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Abstract

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The aim of this work is to analyse situations in advertising which have been unethical and they have been related with culture of a particular country. The theoretical part of the work is divided into three parts which consist of criticism of marketing, ethical aspects of marketing communication – especially advertising, and influences of consumer behaviour. The practical part is devoted to the unethical advertisements related to Slovak culture. There is described the Slovak Advertising Standard Council which is responsible for acceptance of complaints from natural or legal persons and analyses of these complaints in order to evaluate whether there have been broken some principles of the Code of Ethics for Advertising Practice or not. There are analysed three situations which have been considered as unethical and connected with culture of this area.

Keywords: Ethics, Marketing Communication, Advertising, Consumer Behaviour, the Slovak Culture.

Abstrakt

PECIAROVÁ, Petra: *Etické problémy marketingovej komunikácie súvisiace s kultúrou*. [Bakalárska práca]. Slovenská poľnohospodárska univerzita v Nitre. Fakulta ekonomiky a manažmentu. Katedra marketingu. Vedúci bakalárskej práce: prof. Dr. Ing. Elena Horská. Stupeň kvalifikácie: bakalár. Nitra: FEM SPU, 2011. 57 s.

Cieľom tejto práce je analyzovať situácie v reklame, ktoré boli neetické a súviseli s kultúrou danej krajiny. Teoretická časť práce je rozdelená na tri časti, ktoré sa skladajú z kritiky marketingu, etických aspektov marketingovej komunikácie – predovšetkým reklamy a vplyvov na správanie spotrebiteľa. Praktická časť je venovaná neetickým reklamám súvisiacim so slovenskou kultúrou. Je tu opísaná Rada pre reklamu ktorá je zodpovedná za preberanie sťažností od fyzických a právnických osôb a analýzu týchto sťažností pre následné vyhodnotenie, či boli alebo neboli porušené princípy Etického kódexu reklamnej praxe. Sú analyzované tri situácie, ktoré boli považované za neetické a spojené s kultúrou tejto oblasti.

Kľúčové slová: etika, marketingová komunikácia, reklama, správanie spotrebiteľa, slovenská kultúra.

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List of Abbreviations and Symbols

| | |
|------|---|
| CBR | Centre for B io-ethical R eform |
| EASA | the E uropean A dvertising S tandards A lliance |
| IAB | I nteractive A dvertising B ureau |
| ICC | I nternational C hamber of C ommerce |
| IDV | I ndividualism |
| LTO | L ong T erm O rientation |
| MAS | M asculinity |
| PDI | P ower D istance |
| SASC | the S lovak A dvertising S tandards C ouncil |
| SR | the S lovak R epublic |
| UAI | U ncertainty A voidance |

Introduction

Advertising is a term that everyone has met with and we consider it as unthinkable part of our lives. Nowadays, competition among businesses is increasing and that is the reason why they are trying to improve their marketing communication in order to catch consumer's attention. By means of advertising, businesses appeal to potential consumers through announcement of information about products in order to influence their behaviour and buying preferences. Consumers are surrounded by advertisements at every turn and that is the reason why they are often disgusted of them.

Advertising can often bring bad impact on people and this is the main reason for criticism of marketing. There are many issues why critics accuse marketing such as deceptive practices, obsolescence of products, pressure in selling, products which are not safe, poor service, etc. These bad practices often happen because producers concentrate on their own profit and in doing so they often forget about consumers' real wants. Marketing communication also causes cultural pollution through attacking people by mean of advertising, because we can see advertisement almost everywhere.

Fortunately, many people know about these bad practices of marketers and try to create movements. These movements make efforts to protect consumers – consumerism, or environment – environmentalism. The European Union and particular states also pay bigger attention to consumer protection as well by means of acts and articles. Issue of consumer protection is nowadays improving within the European Union.

And not only acts support good manner in marketing communication – advertising. There are also ethical norms in marketing which should be followed by businesses. For firms ethical behaviour can cause losing money because not all the companies do it as well. On the other side if unethical practices in advertising are revealed by consumers, companies can lose their reputation. In Slovakia these issues are solved by the Act on Advertising or the Codes of Ethics. The Code of Ethics for Advertising Practice contains ethical principles of advertising. It is very similar to Code for Advertising and Marketing Communication Practice published by International Chamber of Commerce.

In addition to impact of advertising on consumers, they are influenced by many other factors – personal, interpersonal and nonpersonal. These influences take place during decision making of consumers. What product consumers buy depends on their perception, learning, motivation, family, society, culture, time, place and environment.

The main purpose of this work is to get together issues of ethics in advertising and culture in the area of the Slovak Republic. Some advertising can often be unethical and simultaneously they can violate beliefs, customs, religions or other aspects of culture of a certain area.

1 Theoretical Background

1.1 Criticism of Marketing

1.1.1 Reasons for Criticism

Criticism of marketing deals with issues that are related to the balance between objectives of a firm and wants and needs of customers. **Exploitation** is one of the issues of marketing criticism and example can be increasing of the prices of products during a shortage. Second issue of criticism is **inefficiency** and it means that organizations use resources that are not necessary and it increases prices for consumers. There is also used a lot of money for promotion and distribution. Third issue is **stimulating unhealthy demand**. Marketers are accused that they support consumers or businesses to buy products which are harmful for them. The last issue is connected with **illegal behaviour**. Laws are prepared in such a way that they protect not only individuals and society, but also organizations. For example, price collusion is considered as a crime. It is conspiracy of some organizations in order to obtain higher profits and to get rid of competitor on the market. (Stanton, Etzel, Walker, 1991)

According to Kotler and Armstrong (1990) marketing criticism is based on bad impact on individuals, society and other business firms. Consumers accuse marketing because of „high prices, deceptive practices, high-pressure selling, shoddy and unsafe products, planned obsolescence, and poor service to disadvantaged consumers.“

In case of high costs of distribution critics claim that there are too many middlemen that are often unnecessary or provide poor, inefficient and duplicate services, which are overvalued. Marketers respond that middlemen do the work which is demanded by customers. They also reason that operating cost of stores is high and „competition is so intense“.

Increase of prices is also caused by high advertising and promotion costs. Promotion of products „adds only psychological rather than functional value to the product“. Marketers answer that buyers like feeling that they are beautiful and special and it can be caused by using a product that is promoted in such a way that people in the advertisement are beautiful and

special. Brand is also very important for them because it gives them confidence. Advertising is necessary for businesses also because competition uses these practises.

Critics of marketing are also concentrated on deceptive practices including:

- **deceptive pricing** – “falsely advertising wholesale prices, advertising a large price reduction from false high list price”;
- **deceptive promotion** – “overstating the product’s features or performance”;
- **deceptive packaging** – “exaggerating package contents through subtle design, not filling the package to the top, using misleading labelling, and describing size in misleading terms”.

Another reason for criticism is low quality of product or not adequate quality. Complaints deal with problem with production errors, little benefits of products, unsafe products, poor-quality products... Criticism of product is also connected with problems with warranties which are often refused by the firm because of inadequacy. (Stanton et al., 1991) These complaints can damage the reputation of a firm. (Kotler, Armstrong, 1990)

Planned obsolescence is a part of criticism. Firms replace products rapidly even though these products do not need to be replaced. Example can be “constantly changing clothing fashions”. (Kotler et al, 1990) As a result people still buy new products in spite of the fact that they are not worn out. (Stanton et al, 1991)

Criticism of marketers deals with the fact that marketers are only concentrated on the selling of the product and do not care whether a consumer wants that product. They are able to manipulate customer to make “unwanted purchase”. However, most of them know that this tactic does not lead to loyal and long-term customers. Critics of marketing claim that marketing is too much concentrated on possessions and it causes that success of people is considered according to what they own. “Marketing is seen as creating false wants that benefit industry more than benefit consumers.”

Marketers are often accused that public goods is required because of increase of private goods. For example when people buy more automobiles they require also “more highways, parking spaces, and police services”. (Armstrong et al., 2009)

Cultural pollution means that people are continually attacked by advertising. TV programs are interrupted by advertisements, articles in magazines are cut-off by others and beautiful scenery is hidden behind big billboards. Accusations against promotion are very common. It is usually focused on advertising and personal selling. (Armstrong et al., 2009; Stanton et al., 1991) In the case of personal selling it is because of “poor quality of retail selling and service”. And in the case of advertising we can divide it as:

Social criticism handles with materialism of people and devaluation of moral and cultural issues such as manipulating with more sensitive persons, for example children. It also accuses advertising because there are used many sexual and fear motives.

Economic criticism is concerned with increasing prices as more advertisements are used. Critics claim that advertisements just shift “demand from one brand to another” and it means that aggregate demand is not increased. They also criticize large firms which have more financial resources to improve their products and have better promotion. It causes that smaller firms cannot get into the market. (Stanton et al., 1991)

Critic of marketing, especially advertisement is Oliviero Toscani, who is famous for his controversial advertisements. He introduces a new vision of advertisements. He wants to bring a kind of advertisement which holds communion, explores and worries. He defined current advertisements as crimes:

- **Crime of Waste of Huge Amount of Money** – According to IAB Europe (2010) “total online advertising spend for the 23 countries, including Slovakia, reached € 14,7 billion in 2009 and it represents growth of 4,5% on the 2008 total of € 13,2 billion”. In 1994 European advertisements expenditure was about € 202 milliard invested in big media such as press, radio and television. In 2009 the UK was “the largest online advertising market” followed by Germany and France. Because of this huge amount of money, advertisements cover every corner of a street, places marked by history, squares, bus stops, subways, airports, cafés, chemists, lighters, they interrupt films on TV, take hold of us through radio, magazine sport, clothes.

- **Crime of Social Uselessness** – Marketers carry out big responsibility and they should inform public. For example automotive industry should inform wide public about air pollution, or ozone layer, traffic jams in the capitals. However, they are afraid of loss of consumers.
- **Crime of Lie** – Advertisements enforce us the world which wheedle us that youth, health, manliness or feminineness depend only on what we buy. Marketers use famous people to sell their products in order to persuade consumer of better life if they have their products.
- **Crime against Intelligence** – Many sociologists claim that people are up to the eyes in advertisements and have phobia of advertisements. People switch over TV when there is advertisement and turn the page when there is one.
- **Crime of Hidden Persuasion** – People persuade themselves that they will never live like people in advertisements and they are empowered by dreariness. Jacques Séguéla from Euro-RSCG said: “The mission of advertising is to accompany a consumer at his/her most hidden desires. It helps at their genesis, creates yearning, which is driving engine of our consumer society”
- **Crime of Adoration of Naivety**
- **Crime of Exclusion and Racism** – Advertisements do not contain miseries, immigrants, maimed, dissatisfied, obese, sad, unhealthy and drunken people.
- **Crime against Civil Peace** – Advertising invokes dejection and anxiety in people who cannot afford expensive products. It leads to the thefts and looting.
- **Crime against Language, Crime against Creative Thinking** – Many slogans of advertising use the same words like for example “quality” or “experience” and of course “you”. Advertisement persuades people that a product satisfies all their expectations.
- **Crime of Plagiarism** – Many advertisements imitate or parody scenes from the film. When something became popular, marketers immediately try to apply it in advertising. For example when ecology became current issue, many advertisements have contained beautiful environment, green grass, glad animals, etc. And still more and more products have been becoming similar.

“Advertisement is scented carcass. It is dead, but still smiling.” (Oliviero Toscani, 1996)

1.1.2 Responses to Problems

Consumer expressions of dissatisfaction with marketing have been through activists. There is the term consumerism which “was popularized in the 1960s”. Consumerism attempts to achieve equal relationship between buyer and seller. Consumerism is defined as „a social force“ that tries to protect and improve rights of consumers.

There are some basic consumer rights - “Consumer Bill of Rights” by President John Kennedy:

- “The right choose freely” – consumers can choose what they want from various products and services.
- “The right to be informed” – consumers should get enough information about bought product.
- “The right to be heard” – consumers should have possibility to express their dissatisfaction with a product.
- “The right to be safe” – consumers should be sure that the products are not dangerous for their health and life.

Nowadays there are two main movements which are centred on regulation of marketing. These are consumerism and environmentalism. **Consumerism** is a movement which tries to protect consumers against useless, inferior, or unsafe products, etc. Participants of consumerist movement think that businesses are influenced so much by the vision of high profit that they are able to make profit at the expense of quality and safety of products. (Winsor, 2004) **Environmentalism** is a movement which tries to protect environment. Environmental issue is the last three decades very popular, because many people as well as media have concentrated “on environmental problems such as ozone hole, acidification

of rivers, global warming or deforestation”. Even companies remarked that consumers are willing to pay more for green and healthier products. There are three Rs of environmentalism: “REDUCE”, “REUSE” and “RECYCLE”. (Yuvarani, Scholar, 2009)

Consumer protection in the European Union is gradually improving issue. Education and ensuring legal protection for consumers belongs among the biggest challenges. The Article 153 of the Treaty establishing the European Community amended by the Amsterdam Treaty established a legal basis for many actions. There is stated that Community supports the protection, health and safety of the consumer. Consumer policy is nowadays part of the strategic plan of the EU. If there is a single market consumer policy, it has to be considered as one of the main policies of the EU.

On the present consumer policy is aimed at:

- guarantee of basic health and safety norms in order to assure consumers that purchases and products from abroad are safe ,
- ensuring protection of consumers from unlawful practices,
- enabling to individuals to be informed and to understand policies which influence them,
- establishing common conditions within the EU for effective enforcement of standards relating to protection of consumer,
- ensuring that interests of consumers will be involved in many policies of the EU from environment and transport to financial services and agriculture. (Fulmini, 2006)

In Slovakia there is so called Association of Slovak Consumers. This organization protects rights of consumers and informs consumers. It also makes benchmarks of various products. There is also Act 250/2007 Collection on consumer protection. This act regulates rights of consumers and duties of producers, sellers, importers and suppliers.

1.1.3 Marketing Ethics and Social Responsibility in Marketing

Ethics is a basic part of the culture of society and it is also a criterion for measurement of forwardness. Ethical norms are connected legal norms, but those are usually more concise. They are valid for whole society and are fixed in the form of acts and violation of these acts is penalized by the state. Acts contain norms which people must follow, while ethical norms should be followed by people. (Horňák, 2001) Ethics studies moral issues. All people have tendency to behave ethically and it is easy for them when there are no problems and pressure. And these pressures can arise in all areas of life – marketing as well. It is very difficult to determine exactly what is ethical and what is unethical. It depends on each situation.

However, marketer can consider some point in order to avoid problems:

- whether he/she “would do this to a friend”,
- whether he/she would be able to do this to himself/herself,
- whether he/she would feel embarrassing if that situation is publicized,
- whether the action is right “from a long-run of view”.

According to Bovée and Thill (1992) there are two categories of ethical issues. The first one is ethical dilemma and the second one is ethical lapse. **Ethical dilemma** occurs when there are two sides of the issue which are conflicting and marketers have to decide what to do in a certain situation. It is not easy to solve such situations. The dilemma usually deals with the conflict between ethics and profit. For example an action which we have decided to do is on the one side unethical, but on the other side profitable. When we decide to be ethical we would lose money and some other companies would gain from this action because they use unethical practises. **Ethical lapses** occur when the marketers do not behave ethically. The most visible area of marketing is promotion. Some deceptive promotional activities might be legal, but they are not ethical for sure. That is also reason why the public is being more sceptical.

There are some reasons why marketers should behave ethically. The first reason is that reputation of marketers is broken because of for example misleading advertisements. That is why companies have to “set high ethical standards and then enforce them.” The second reason is avoiding that government will have to tighten regulations. Because regulations of government usually arise from the failures of marketing in order to protect society. Thirdly marketing ethics is important because people devote marketers a big social power “as they influence markets”. However power brings responsibility. “If marketers do not use their power in a socially acceptable manner, that power will be lost in the long run”. Finally, the image of the firm is influenced by behaviour of the marketers or any other persons employed. It means that unethical behaviour of employees in the firm can cause bad reputation of this firm. (Stanton et al., 1991)

1.2 Ethical Aspects in Marketing Communication

As a help for marketers to make right and ethical decisions companies, but also many association have created codes of ethics. In the USA it is the American Marketing Association’s Code of Ethics. It deals with responsibility of the marketers for the consequences of their actions. Marketers should honestly serve to customers. They should communicate truthfully and openly. In the area of promotion marketers must not use “false and misleading advertising“ and “high-pressure manipulation”. Social responsibility is connected with marketing ethics. It means that marketers are responsible for satisfaction and protection of its customers. “Social responsibility changes with the social climate.” (Bovée, Thill, 1992)

The big part of the marketing mix is promotion. It is considered as marketing communication or propagation. Advertising is also part of propagation as well as propagation is part of marketing. Advertising is considered as an action which is concerned with extension of information with an aim to sell a product, or service. Public relations are also extension of information, but with an aim to create positive relationships between seller and buyer. (Horňák, 2001)

There are many Codes of Ethics in Europe as well as bodies which monitor observance of the rules of codes. In the Slovak republic there is Act on Advertising No. 147/2001 that

deals with marketing communication as a complex while advertisement, public relation and direct marketing have their own codes. The body for monitoring observance of the rules in Slovakia is The Slovak Advertising Standards Council

The mission of the Slovak Advertising Standards Council is to ensure and enforce an extension of fair, polite, retiring, legal and truthful advertising in the area of the Slovak Republic. It was established in 1995. Ethical self-regulation of advertising means that the state or state organs do not intervene to advertising. The self-regulation does not displace a legal regulation, but it adds ethical rules which advertising industry has decided to follow voluntarily. (Slovak Advertising Standards Council, 2011)

According to Abraham Lincoln it is possible to lie world certain time, it is even possible to lie someone constantly, but to lie all constantly is impossible. We can say that this is also reason why the truth is in the first place in the Slovak Code of Ethics. (Horňák, 2001)

1.2.1 Ethics in Advertising

The Code of Ethics for Advertising Practice is published by the Slovak Advertising Standards Council. The main aim of it is to determine ethical principles of advertising practice in Slovakia and to contribute to advertising in the Slovak republic in such a way that it will serve businesses and consumers. Above all advertising should be truthful, fair and polite and it should also respect international principles of the advertising practice set by the International Chamber of Commerce.

The Code is asserted by the Council and Arbitration Committee which consists of seven natural persons. A complaint can be filed by any legal or natural person who is not the member of the Committee. Executive Director can also file a complaint on the basis of monitoring. (Code of Ethics, 2001)

Internationally valid Code for Advertising and Marketing Communication Practice is published by International Chamber of Commerce. The first code was published in 1937. The purpose of this Code is also related to self-regulation of marketing communication. The Code of Advertising and Marketing Communication Practice is very similar to the Code of Ethics published in the Slovak Republic.

The aims of international Code are:

- “responsibility and good practice in marketing communication across the world”,
- trust of people,
- responsibility regarding children in marketing communication,
- “freedom of expression according to article 19 of the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights”
- right solutions,
- minimization of governmental regulations. (International Chamber of Commerce, 2006)

Politeness of Advertising – Advertising must not contain such claims which counteract general norms of decency and it must not include elements which abase human dignity. Advertising of human body has to be done considering an impact on all consumer’s categories.

Honesty of Advertising – Trust of an ordinary consumer must not be abused. Advertising is not allowed to be hidden and it must not exploit lack of consumer’s experiences and knowledge.

Social Responsibility of Advertising – Advertising must not:

- use a motive of fear, create a feeling of fear or present the product as a suitable mean of elimination of fear;
- exploit prejudices and superstitions;
- include incentives to commit violate actions or support such actions;
- contain racial, national, political or religious insults;
- support any form of discrimination;
- propagate sexuality beyond measure.

Truth of Advertising – Deceptive advertising is inadmissible. Deceptive advertising:

- leads ordinary consumers to disrupt his/her economic behaviour in relation to a product;

- present information which are important for ordinary consumers in unclear, incomprehensible, ambiguous or unsuitable way. (Code of Ethics, 2001)

These are general principles of advertising practice from the Slovak Code of Ethics. Special requirements and specific rules for advertising practice are written in other parts of the Code. On the other hand General Provisions of the Code of Advertising and Marketing Communication contain much more articles. However we can consider that the reason of it is that General Provisions in the Code of Advertising and Marketing Communication are applied on all kinds of marketing communication while the Slovak Code is applied only on advertising.

Advertising must not contain any kind of deceptive statement, deceptive labelling of a product about place of origin or about producer, deceptive statement about kind, quality, measurement, volume or weight of a product. (Code of Ethics, 2001)

According to the Act on Advertising No. 147/2001 deceptive advertising is an advertising of goods, services, real estates, business names, trademarks, and statements of origin of products and other rights and liabilities related to doing business which misleads or can mislead persons to whom they are devoted and which in consequence of deception can influence economic behaviour of these persons or which deteriorate or can deteriorate another competitor or consumer.

In the Code of Ethics in the Slovak Republic there are other principles of ethics in advertising related to value of a product, price of a product, slander of competitors, comparative advertising, imitation of advertisements, protection of privacy, guarantees, identification, protection of health and environment.

In the case of value of a product, seller cannot use the words like “gratis”, “free of charge”, “without charge” if there is any kind of expense that is paid by consumer except for expenses for shipment, freights or postage. In an advertisement there cannot be used such superlatives like “the best”, “the cheapest”, “the fastest”, “the best quality” unless there is definite demonstration. It is not possible to use in an advertisement such features, slogans or visual presentation as are used in other advertisements because it can mislead and confuse consumer and it also must not denigrate other person, advertisements and products.

Advertising should not contain any kind of visual or described dangerous practices, but it should contain safety and health warnings where it is necessary. (Code of Ethics, 2001)

In Slovakia there is not devoted big consideration related to environmental issues in marketing communication. To be precise in the Code of Ethics there are only a few rows devoted to this issue. However in the ICC Code of Advertising and Marketing Communication Practice environmental issues are included in one whole chapter consisting about 10 pages. Therefore we can consider that Slovakia does not regard environment as a big current issue.

1.3 Influences of Consumer Behaviour

People are constantly surrounded by advertisements which compete for their money. Advertising influences all groups of population positively or negatively. It tries to appeal to their feelings, psychic and it tries to sell them a product which they do not need. However, there are some differences in degree of impact of advertising in dependence on age, sex, education and domicile. On the one hand advertising can be very good source of information. On the other hand it can shift from informing towards influencing of consumer, manipulating with his/her minds, feeling and behaviour. Many advertisements use children as a very good tool of influencing people, because children are sensitive and advertisement forms their system and they consider advertisement as reality.

Many marketers, especially Americans try to apply the same marketing all over the world. However, European market and European consumer are different and it is also hard to group together more countries in Europe, because cultures are various across Europe. And culture is very important factor influencing consumer behaviour. Many people can think, that Belgium and Netherlands have the same culture, because they “share a language and a border, but no two other countries are more different than Belgium and Netherlands”. Kevin Roberts, CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi – advertising agency, stated: “Anyone who wants to go global has to understand the local – their own local and the locals of all their customers. People live in the local. I have never met a global consumer. I never expect to. We define ourselves by our differences. It is called identity – self, family, nation.” (Marieke, 2010)

Consumer behaviour is a study how consumers choose, buy, and use products and services to satisfy their needs. It includes the process “before, during and after a purchase”. It is important to study consumer behaviour within nations, because consumers are influenced by many factors from there. Advertisements should be suited according to country, its culture, values and customs. For example, in collectivistic cultures it should be concentrated on harmony and family. On the other hand in individualistic cultures in advertisements there should be individual benefits like personal achievements and success or independence. (Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard, Hogg, 2006)

At the moment when information from advertising is delivered to the customer there starts a process of decision-making. This process includes many other processes which are influenced by various factors. On the first picture there are shown such processes.

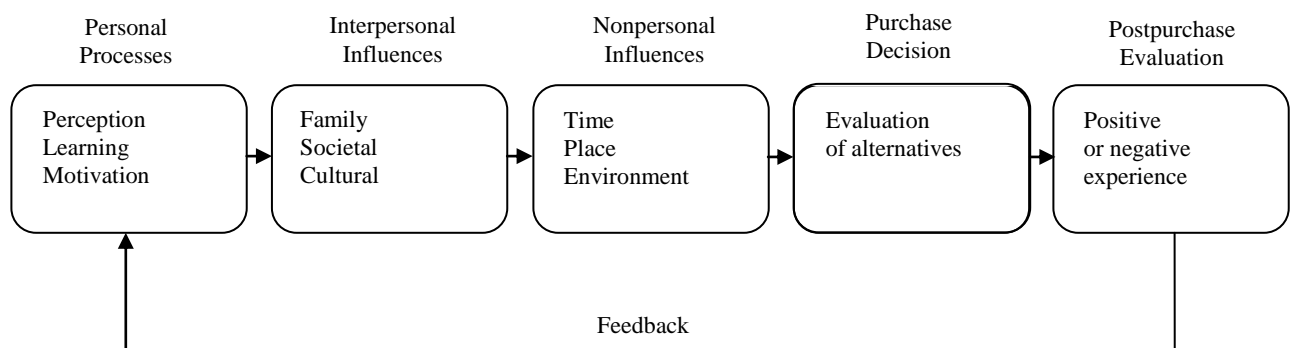


Fig 1

Fundamental Elements of Consumer Decision Making

Source: SOLOMON, R. Michael. 1999. *Consumer Behavior*. 8th edition. the USA: Pearson Education, inc., p. 132

1.3.1 Personal Processes

The first part of decision-making is personal process, where a person discerns the information and it is translated into “feelings, thoughts, beliefs, and actions”.

Perception is the greatest problem of marketers. Some marketers spend millions on advertising and later they can find out that consumers do not remember how their advertising

looked like. Consumers see “over 300 advertisements” daily and only a few of them are remembered. That is the reason why marketers should understand perception of consumers. (Solomon, 1999) “Perception is the interpretation of stimulus”. Stimulus is received by sense organs in the way of “seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting”. Perceptions of individuals are various and change over time and that is the reason why this is a big problem for marketers. Perception depends on our “feelings, prejudices, desires, attitudes and goals”. (Baker, Graham, Harker, 1998)

According to Solomon (1999) **learning** is considered as “permanent change in thought process or behaviour that occurs as a result of reinforced experience”. There are two categories of learning: cognitive and conditioning theory. **Cognitive theory** claims that learning is a memory process. Consumers are considered as problem-solvers and they use information from the environment around them to manage their decisions. **Conditioning theory** is applied on purchases of consumers made every day. In conditioning theory learning is based on rewards and punishments. A consumer learns to behave in such a way that brings positive outcome and learns to avoid that which brings negative outcome.

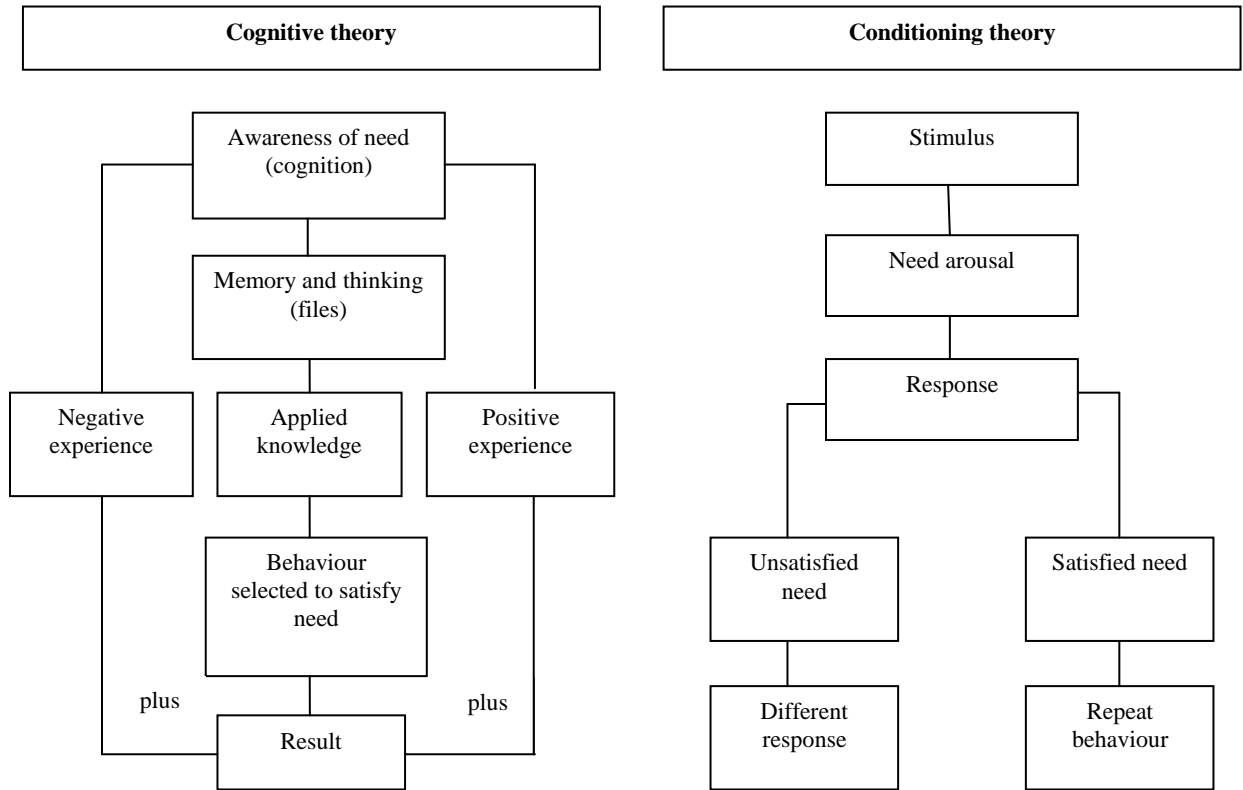


Fig 2

Process of Cognitive and Conditioning Theory

Source: SOLOMON, R. Michael. 1999. *Consumer Behavior*. 8th edition. the USA: Pearson Education, inc., p. 139

Motivation occurs when a need is induced and consumer wants to satisfy it. For better understanding of motives, Abraham Maslow made model called hierarchy of needs. (Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard, Hogg, 2006)

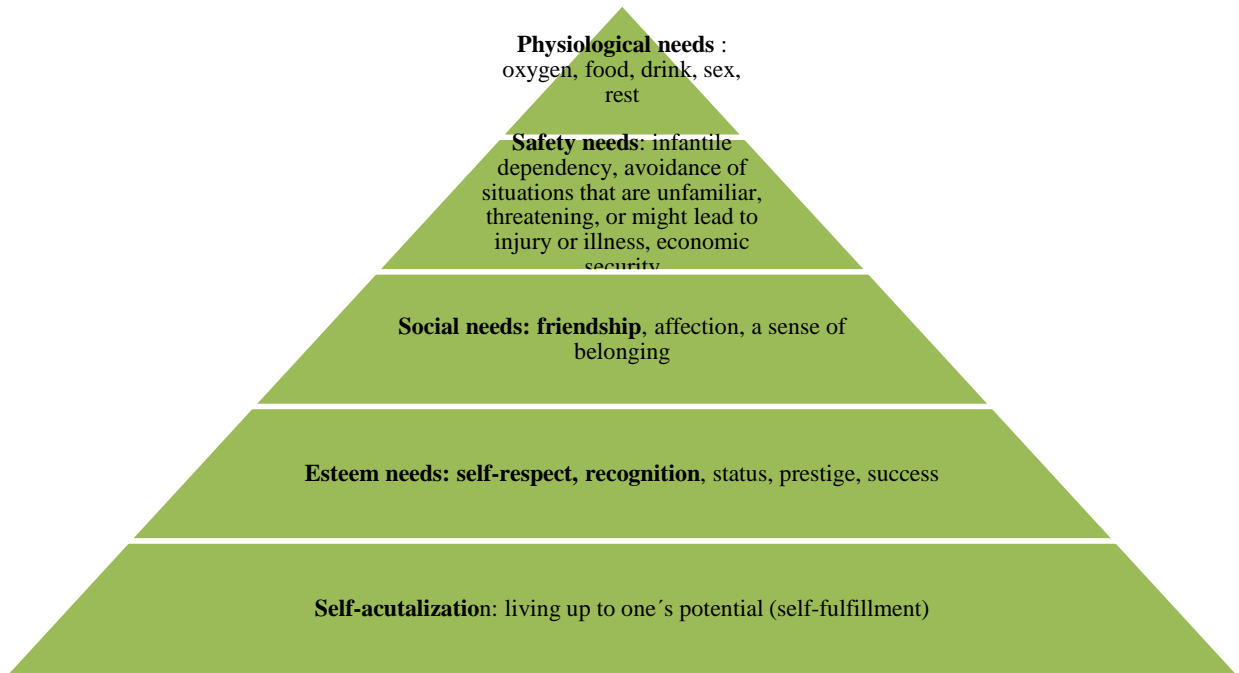


Fig 3

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Source: Own creation adapted from SOLOMON, R. Michael. 1999. *Consumer Behavior*. 8th edition. the USA: Pearson Education, inc., p. 141 - 142

1.3.2 Interpersonal influences

The second part of the process of consumer decision making includes interpersonal influences that affect consumer behaviour – “culture, society, and family”.

Culture is a set of beliefs, values, and preferences and tastes shared by group of people and transferred from one generation to another. Each marketer who wants to enter international market should know culture of the area where he/she wants to sell products. Marketing strategies which are effective in one area may be ineffective in another. (Kurtz,

MacKenzie, Snow, 2009) Although every individual is different, culture influences life of individuals in a high level. It shapes their opinions, attitudes, values towards products. How people within certain culture behave can be strange for people from outside of the culture, but it makes sense for those from inside of it. Culture and consumer's needs are connected and culture also effect satisfaction of needs and the way how the needs are met. Consumers behave in such a way that supports their culture and does not violate it. Marketers should also observe changes and shifts in cultures for immediate reaction on those changes in order not to have their marketing strategy obsolete. (Lake, 2009) According to Geert Hofstede we have five dimensions of culture:

- **Power Distance** – is an acceptance of unequally distribution of power.
- **Individualism** – is an independence of people from others. Opposite of individualism is collectivism.
- **Masculinity** – is concentrated on values such as assertiveness and achievement which are considered as men's values. Opposite of masculinity is femininity where relationships, care and quality of life are dominant values.
- **Uncertainty Avoidance** – relates with feeling of people in ambiguous situations.
- **Long Term Orientation** – is about long-term attitude towards work and life.

Society we live in has a big influence on us. Children are members of groups such as “friendship groups, neighbourhood groups, school groups”, etc. Adults are members of “groups at work and in the community”. Each of these groups has particular norms which are considered suitable for its members. And of course group members should follow these norms.

We can divide society into social classes:

- Upper-upper class
- Lower- upper class
- Upper-middle class

- Lower-middle class
- Working class
- Lower class

These classes are divided according to “occupation, income, education, family background, and residence location”. (Kurtz, MacKenzie, Snow, 2009)

Similar as in culture what is appropriate in one **family** can be inappropriate in another family. It means that family is another very important influence of consumer behaviour. As children we have learnt from our parents what is good for example when we have headache. However, family influence is not as strong as it was in past, because parents usually work very hard and “take a less active role in raising their children”. Parents have also delegated some purchases to their children, especially teenagers. Their purchase decisions are formed through TV or Internet. (Boone, Kurtz, MacKenzie, Snow, 2009; Solomon, 1999)

1.3.3 Nonpersonal influences

Next part is nonpersonal influences and these affects are usually from outside and cannot be controlled by consumer – time, place, environment.

Time is very important part of marketing and advertising. Marketer should know when the best time for advertising is in order to influence consumers in the way that they will buy products. Of course there are kinds of products which do not need to be advertised in certain time, for example marketer would not advertise “snow tires in the summer”.

Place is part of the marketing mix and thus marketers carefully take into consideration consumers’ demand and devote much time to deciding about right location of their products and advertisements.

Environment effects decisions of consumers. For example it is known that when products are located next to the cash register the sale is improved. (Solomon, 1999)

Both interpersonal and nonpersonal influences affect the personal processes – perception, learning and motivation. The fourth step involves evaluation of alternatives which consists of

choosing among “brands, sizes, styles, and colours”. After the purchase there is postpurchase evaluation where a customer considers his satisfaction and it has a big impact on another purchase, because when there is satisfaction and positive experience customer can choose the same brand next time. However when there is dissatisfaction and negative experience customer will prefer another brand. (Solomon, 1999)

2 Aims of the Thesis

All over the world marketers are always trying to improve their advertising. They use various practices in order to catch consumer's attention. Business would like to influence consumer behaviour and buying preferences of consumers and they are often even able to break bounds of morality. Marketers behaving morally right can lose their customers because they are lured by companies using unethical practices. That is the main reason of criticism of marketing. It has become a big problem and therefore some organizations such as Slovak Advertising Standards Council have decided to fight against it and they have developed the codices in order to protect consumer from unethical practices in marketing communication. These codices contain principles of marketing communication practice in certain areas.

The first objective of this work has been to provide review of current situation of solved issues in the area of criticism of marketing, ethical aspects of marketing communication, especially advertising practice in Slovakia, and influences of consumer behaviour. The bachelor thesis is not concentrated on all means of marketing communication, only on advertising because it is the biggest part of marketing communication and there is also big appearance of unethical practices.

It presents information about activity of the Slovak Advertising Standards Council in the area of unethical behaviour of companies. Another objective has been to describe the culture of Slovakia as an influence of people's perception of unethical behaviour of businesses. The last objective was to analyse three situations in the area of the Slovak Republic which were unethical and they were connected with break of some aspects of the Slovak culture.

3 Methodology of the Thesis

The Bachelor thesis called “Marketing Communication Ethical Issues Related to Culture” has been made by using freely available sources; it means literature of the Slovak and foreign authors, articles freely available on the Internet, websites of organizations, acts and codices of these organizations, etc.

The work is divided into two parts – theoretical and practical:

- Theoretical part devotes to the main reasons of criticism of marketing from the point of view of chosen authors and also definitions of these subjects of criticism. Big attention was devoted to principles of ethical practices in advertising under the patronage of the Slovak Advertising Standards Council and the International Chamber of Commerce. The last part of the theoretical part deals with the influences of decision-making of consumers, including culture.
- Practical part is associated with characteristics of the Slovak Advertising Standards Council which is responsible for acceptance and analyses of complaints from natural and legal persons. This part also involves the main signs of the Slovak culture. This information is consequently used for analyses of three unethical advertisements from the Slovak Republic.

During writing of this thesis it was chosen following methodological process:

- gathering and study of literature and works placed in books or on the Internet, which were used during the working on theoretical background of issues of this thesis,
- selection of particular unethical advertisements that were analysed by the Slovak Advertising Council and were connected with the culture of the Slovak Republic,

- obtaining of materials from the SASC which have been necessary for general description of this council, its mission and work and obtaining of materials necessary for determination of the main signs of the Slovak culture,
- analyses of obtained data including reading of particular complaints and detailed searching of aspects of the Slovak culture in the unethical advertisements,
- evaluation of obtained data,
- conclusion in which there have been briefly summed up situation of unethical advertising in the Slovak Republic and a few recommendation for people as well as marketers.

4 Results and Discussion

4.1 The Slovak Advertising Standards Council

The Slovak Advertising Standards Council is an organ of ethical self-regulation of advertising. The main aim of the SASC is to ensure and enforce extension of honest, polite, decent, legal and truthful advertising in the area of the Slovak Republic.

SASC associates subjects which actively enter the process of marketing communication – associations of clients of advertising, advertising agencies, media as well as businesses using propagation by means of advertising. These members undertake to follow the Ethical Principles of Advertising Practice in the SR and maintain good reputation of advertising.

SASC created independent external at least 7-member organ – the Arbitration Committee, for purpose of conformity appraisal of advertisements with the Code of Ethics. Members of the committee are experts from the area of the marketing communication. The committee consider complaints of public, natural and legal persons, associations, state organs about breach of Code of Ethics by certain advertisement. After appraisal of a complaint it accepts arbitral attest.

From the year 1995 the SASC is a member of the European Advertising Standards Alliance. It is alliance of self-regulation organs in the area of advertising with residence in Brussels. EASA associates 24 self-regulation institutions from 22 states of Europe and 4 organizations which are outside of Europe (from Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and the USA).

On the website of the SASC people can find form of complaints. It consists of:

- Name and surname
- Address
- Email
- Text of complaint
- Information about time and place of broadcasting (location of advertising)
- Proof (not obliged)

- Description of advertising
- Provisions of the Code of Ethics
- Type of media:
 - Television
 - Radio
 - Newspapers/magazines
 - External – billboards, leaflets
 - Fax
 - Electronic media – SMS
 - Electronic media – Internet
 - Direct marketing – Telephonic marketing
 - Direct marketing – Door-to-door
 - Direct marketing – Post
 - Cinema, DVD and video
 - Leaflets/Folders/Circuits
- Nature
 - Children and youth – Avoidance of harm
 - Children and youth – Presentation of children
 - Children and youth – Inexperience and trustfulness
 - Children and youth – Social value
 - Comparison
 - Decency
 - Environmental behaviour
 - Exploitation of good will
 - Deception
 - Warranties
 - Fairness
 - Identification of advertisements
 - Imitation
 - Shoddiness

- Safety and health
- Social responsibility – Racial discrimination
- Social responsibility – Discrimination on the basis of nationality
- Social responsibility – Religious discrimination
- Social responsibility – Discrimination on the basis of gender
- Social responsibility – Age discrimination
- Social responsibility – Discrimination on the basis of human dignity
- Social responsibility – Play of fear
- Social responsibility – Violence
- Social responsibility – Superstitions
- Social responsibility – Other
- Tact and decency – Image of men
- Tact and decency – Image of women
- Tact and decency – Attack
- Tact and decency – Other
- Shocking presentation
- Judgements
- Unmasked products
- Other
- Products and services
 - Alcohol
 - Audio-visual technics
 - Beauty and cosmetics
 - Trade (secretarial services, delivery and maintenance...)
 - Charitable advertising
 - Dresses and shoes
 - Computers
 - Employment/Business opportunities
 - Energy/Combustible
 - Banking (banks, insurance...)

- Food and Beverages – for children and youth
- Food and Beverages – other
- Hazardous games and lotteries
- Health
- Household (cleansing articles, garden services, electrical appliances)
- Internet
- Leisure time and entertainment (concerts, theatres, art galleries, films, thematic parks)
- Pharmaceuticals – without prescription
- Pharmaceuticals – with prescription
- Motorism/Transport
- Non-commercial
- Property (real estates, builders...)
- Publishing (books, newspapers, programmes in radio and on television)
- Weight loss
- Telecommunication (mobile phones, telephone services, internet connection...)
- Tobacco
- Toys
- Travelling and holidays (airlines, travel agents, sharing time...)
- Other

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| All | 24 | 16 | 28 | 48 | 69 | 79 | 74 | 65 | 14 | 80 | 69 |
| Positive attest | 9 | 10 | 9 | 14 | 18 | 33 | 22 | 25 | 4 | 37 | 22 |
| Negative attest | 15 | 6 | 19 | 34 | 47 | 42 | 51 | 40 | 10 | 43 | 47 |
| In the process of solving | | | | | 4 | 4 | 1 | | | | |

Tab 1

Complaints about Unethical Advertising Decided by the SASC

Source: Own creation adapted from *Nálezy: Rada pre reklamu*. 2011 [online] Bratislava : RPR, updated 2011.

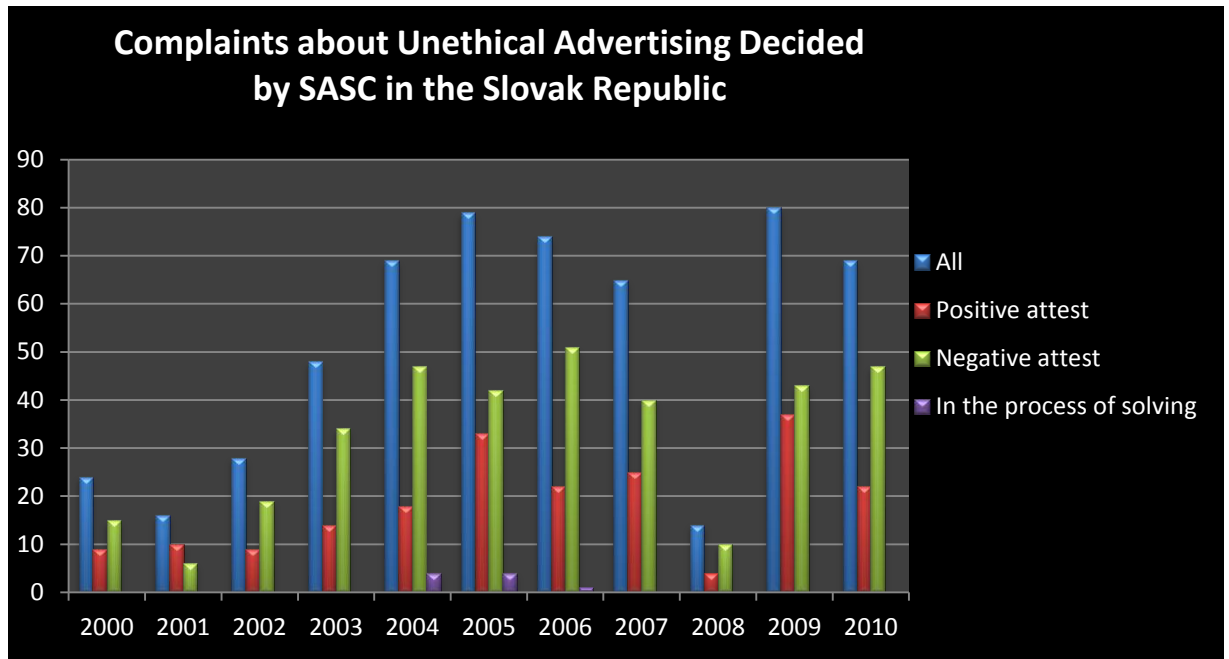


Fig 4

Complaints about Unethical Advertising Decided by SASC in the Slovak Republic

Source: Own creation adapted from Source: Own creation adapted from *Nálezy: Rada pre reklamu*. 2011 [online] Bratislava : RPR, updated 2011.

On the graph we can see, that the most complaints were in the year 2009 and in this year there were also the most attestments which were positive. On the other hand the least complaints were in 2008, only 14 thereout 4 attest were positive and 10 negative.

4.2 The Slovak Culture

The Slovak language or Slovakian belongs to the Slavic languages as well as Czech, Polish, Kashubian, and Sorbian. The Slovak language is very similar to Czech. The Slovak literary language was set by Anton Bernolák – a Roman Catholic priest, at the end of 18th century. The creation was based on the Western Slovakian dialect and in Slovakia Anton Bernolák is famous for his statement: “Write as you hear”. The book “Grammatica

Slavica” by Anton Bernolák was published in 1790. The codification of the Slovak language led by Ludovít Štúr was made in 1843.

The Slovak people were considered as “peasant class” – people connected with earth and land. The communism brought to Slovakia industrialization and nowadays Slovakia includes elements of folk tradition as well as modern society. In 1993 Slovakia became independent state, but many customs, language, laws and conventions have remained similar to past rulers: Czechs, Hungarians, and the Austrian Habsburgs. Privacy is very important for Slovak people and it takes some time before they open up to and trust new people. That is the reason why they can be considered as formal and reserved.

The main qualities of Slovak people are politeness, punctuality, formality in business meetings and finesse in communication. Concerning business meetings these are usually organized by senior management of an organization. In the business meetings time is not as important as completing a meeting satisfactorily, so schedules are not very strict in Slovakia.

Hofstede’s cultural dimensions for the Slovak Republic¹:

- Power distance – 104
- Individualism – 52
- Masculinity – 110
- Uncertainty Avoidance – 51
- Long Term Orientation – 38

Slovakia (104) belongs among countries with high power distance and it means that for example subordinates in organization expect orders from the bosses. Most of people with titles expect that other people would use their titles when they talk with them or speak about them. Slovakia (52) is considered as a country which has index of individualism around average (50) and it means that some people are dependent on others, and some of people do not.

¹ Estimated Values

Slovakia has high index of masculinity (110) and it proves that there is more strict division of gender roles and values like achievement and assertiveness are important.

Slovak index of uncertainty avoidance (51) is again very close to average (65), so we can consider that it depends on situation whether people feel comfortable or uncomfortable in ambiguous situations.

Estimated number of Slovak index of long term orientation (38) is close to average (48), but this number may not be really precise. There should be another research for more precise results. (Medema, 2010)

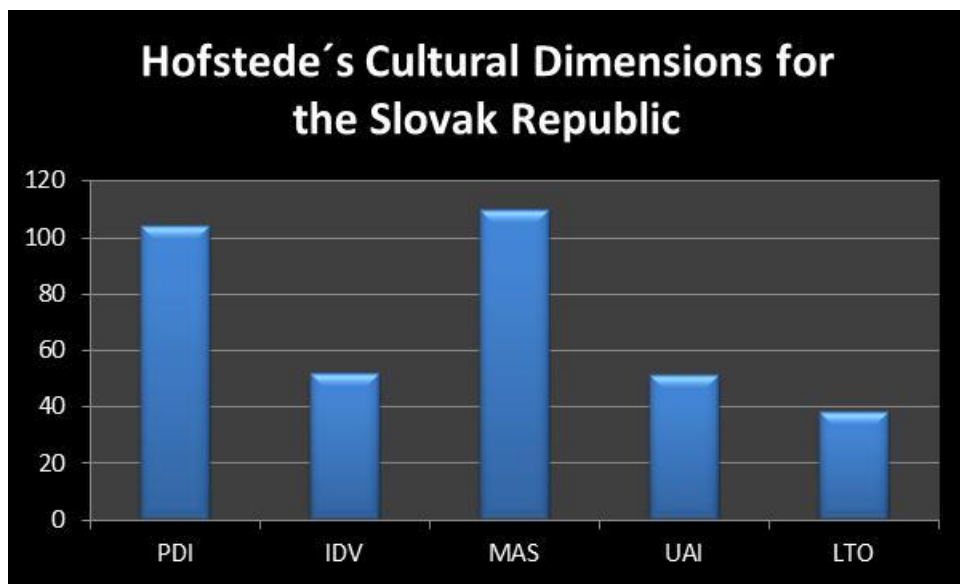


Fig 5

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions for the Slovak Republic

Source: Own creation adapted from MEDEMA, Taco. 2010. Doing Business in Another Culture. What is Different? In *Economics, Social Policies and Citizenship in the Europe of Regions*. Nitra: SUA, p. 227

Slovakia belongs among low context cultures. In the low context culture population is not homogenous. People do not have the common experiences and it causes that when they meet each other they need to obtain some detail information about background of each other. Communication in low context culture is direct and explicit. People are dependent on words

more than on behavioural messages. (Samovar, Porter, McDaniel, 2009) Because of low context Slovak culture we can consider that in Slovakia there are not some special rules in morality. Rather we can say that there are unofficially accepted general moral rules, which are valid in Europe.

The Slovak Constitution guarantees the freedom of religion. The most of the population of Slovakia are Roman Catholic (68,9%), the second biggest group is people without religion (13%), the third is Protestant Augsburg (6,9%), the fourth is Greek Catholic (4,1%), the fifth is Reformed Christian (2%) and the sixth is Orthodox (0,9%).

| | | |
|--|---------|--------|
| Roman Catholic Church | 3708120 | 68,93% |
| Greek Catholic Church | 219831 | 4,09% |
| Orthodox Church | 50363 | 0,94% |
| Protestant Augsburg Church | 372858 | 6,93% |
| Reformed Christian Church | 109735 | 2,04% |
| Protestant Methodist Church | 7347 | 0,14% |
| Apostolic Church | 3605 | 0,07% |
| Old Catholic Church | 1733 | 0,03% |
| Brotherlike Union of Baptists | 3562 | 0,07% |
| Czechoslovak Hussite Church | 1696 | 0,03% |
| Church of Seventh-Day Adventist | 3429 | 0,06% |
| Brotherlike Church | 3217 | 0,06% |
| Christian Choirs | 6519 | 0,12% |
| Jewish Religious Villages | 2310 | 0,04% |
| Religious Society of Jehovah's Witnesses | 20630 | 0,38% |
| Other | 6294 | 0,12% |
| Without Religion | 697308 | 12,96% |
| Unknown | 160598 | 2,99% |
| Sum | 5379455 | |

Tab 2

Religion in the Slovak Republic according to Census in 2001

Source: Own creation adapted from *Bývajúce obyvateľstvo podľa pohlavia a náboženského vyznania – 2001*. 2001 [online] Bratislava: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, updated 2001. [cit. 2011-05-05].

4.3 Unethical Advertisement 1 – “Pozor na kofotiny!”

Kofola belongs among the most famous and the most favourite domestic beverages. The company Kofola has been performing in 4 countries of Europe – the Czech Republic (since 2000), the Slovak Republic (since 2002), in Poland (since 2005), and in Russia (since 2007).

The advertisement “Pozor na kofotiny!” – “Beware of Kofotina!” has been presented in three ways:

- Internet,
- billboard, and
- glass mat.

On the Internet the campaign is divided into two parts. The first part with the name “What is kofotina?” states: “Kofotina is brown-colour or dark liquid that is often made from unknown source and that is wrongly marked as Kofola. However it has nothing in common with original, extraordinary, and immutable flavour of Kofola Original. The most often it is served in the form of mortising. Therefore when you order mortised Kofola in a place, do not let to seduce yourself by Kofotina!” In the Appendix 1 there is the view of this website.

On the billboard there is displayed the title: “Beware of Kofotina!”, with the link on the website.

The glass mat people can find in bars or restaurants. On this glass mat there is on the one side written: “We do not mortise Kofotina here” “We mortise only original with immutable flavour”. On the other side there is written “In this place you can be sure, that we mortise for you exactly that what you ordered, hence original Kofola. Not every place is honest as this one. It can happen that elsewhere you would get Kofotina what is brown-colour liquid wrongly marked as Kofola. The list of honest place and other info you find on www.pozornakofotiny.sk.” In the Appendix 1 there is view of these glass mats.

The company Kofola claims that the aim of this campaign is to warn consumers and businesses that in many Slovak restaurant facilities are offered products which has nothing in common with trademark and beverage Kofola. Therefore it is unlawful to name other beverages by the name of Kofola and it can cause confusion. The term “Kofotina” have been chosen in order to suit campaign to current style, way of verbalization and feeling of target consumers.

These advertisements were evaluated by the SASC as unethical mainly because of similarity relation of term “Kofotina” with one of the Slovak vulgarism. Advertisements can have impact on children and youth. It can evoke using of this vulgarism by children and youth and therefore it overlaps general norms of decency.

As it was mentioned above Slovak people are considered as reserved and formal we can claim that this is reason why this kind of advertising has been considered as unethical. There is also high share of people that are Christians and it also has impact of decency among the Slovak society.

4.4 Unethical Advertisement 2 – “Clavin Strong, Sexuálny diabol”

Clavin Strong is a food supplement for men who have problems with erection. Effective substances of Clavin Strong create in a body so called delta effect which helps to sexual organ to become congested with blood by several mechanisms of influences.

The advertisements of Clavin Strong, “Sexuálny diabol” – “Sexual devil” have been presented in two ways. These have been:

- poster,
- radio.

On the poster there is a middle-aged man, his rendering looks like devil and he holds the product. On the left side of the poster there is title: “Immediately sexual devil. Natural

preparation with unique composition for enhancement of erection with fast formation of influence.” Slogan: “I can now, man now”

In the radio there is a dialogue and in the end there sounds bombastic laugh reminiscent of devil. Narrator says the name of the product and the main advertising slogan: “Clavin Strong – Immediately sexual devil” and then there is description of the product: “Clavin Strong – nutritious supplement for enhancement of erection with fast formation of influence. We recommend it in problems with erection. Require in chemist’s.”

According to the SASC from the character of this product it is obvious that target consumers are adults. That is the reason why we should not reproach that company used words like “sex” or “erection”. On the other side every company should take into consideration the impact on all types of consumers. In this case the character of this advertisement is not suitable for broadcasting in the time in which children and youth can hear it. The advertisement in radio was not presented in the time when it would be heard only by target consumers – adults.

In the Appendix 2 there is a picture of the advertisement of product Clavin Strong. This example was not evaluated as unethical by the SASC, but we can see there some unethical signs, especially because of location of this advertisement. It is a billboard located by the supermarket, so it can be easily seen by children and youth.

Again in this advertising the main role is played by reservedness of the Slovak people and share of Christians in the area of the Slovak Republic. However, the main mission of removing of these kind of advertisements is the protection of children and youth who are not target consumers of these product, so they should be protected against seeing or hearing this advertising.

4.5 Unethical Advertisement 3 – “Právo na život”

The campaign “Právo na život” – “Right to life” is organized by CBR Europe and association Pastor bonus. CBR Europe is citizens’ association that aspire to fairness towards unborn children. In its projects it is focused on education of public and it uses know-how of American Centre for Bio-ethical Reform and it cooperates with several similar organizations in Europe. The main aim of the citizens’ association Pastor bonus is an extension of idea of solidarity, mutual tolerance among people and bringing moral values. Pastor bonus is secular organization devoted to Christian principles. These organizations try to reform law in the Slovak Republic and save lives of unborn children.

The campaign “Right to life” was presented in two ways:

- billboards,
- posters in buses in Bratislava.

On these billboards and posters there is damaged bloody aborted foetus in the age of 11 weeks from conception. Above this view there is headline: “Right to life was not denied to you”. In the bottom part of the billboard there is written: “Since 1957 in Slovakia there were killed 1 370 000 children. www.pravonazivot.sk”. The billboard of this campaign is viewed in the Appendix 3.

This advertisement was not prepared with responsibility towards all groups of consumers, especially towards the group of children. By using of billboard as a kind of advertising it intervene all groups of recipients and some groups have been shocked by it (parents, women afflicted by spontaneous abortion) or it could be also incomprehensible (for example for small children). The campaign also interferes in the rights of other people.

In this example of unethical advertisement we can consider that in this case the estimated long-term orientation caused that people do not want to see these kinds of advertisements, because the index of long-term orientation is below average and it means that our culture does

not adopt long-term outlook on life. We can also deal with another Hofstede's dimension of masculinity. According to his research we have high index of masculinity and we can also get together this fact with this unethical advertisement, because if we had low index of masculinity, values like relationship, caring, modesty, family and quality of life would be dominant. However, high index of masculinity is connected with achievement, competitiveness and assertiveness. That is why people do not care about abortion so much and this shocking advertisements regard as unethical. Reservedness of the Slovak people can be also seen in this case.

Conclusions

Slovakia is the country that uses advertising as a kind of marketing communication more often than other kinds as well as many countries all around the world. However, Slovakia as well as other countries also uses different practices in advertising which often breach some general moral principles or ethical principles of a certain country. Because of increase of the trend that companies use unethical practices in order to obtain consumers on their side, the organization as the Slovak Advertising Standards Council or International Chamber of Commerce had to be established. These organizations issued Code of Ethics for Advertising where principles of ethical advertising are written. People from Slovakia can report suspicions of unethical advertisement to the SASC which consequently evaluates these reports. The most reports from people were in 2009 (80 reports) and in this year there were also the most positive attest. Among the strongest years in terms of amount of reports from people there were years 2005 (79), 2006 (74), 2004 (69) and 2010 (69). Of course the principles are changing through the countries, because of many aspects of certain countries.

One aspect that influences perception of advertisements is culture. The culture can be also viewed from many perspectives. In this thesis the Slovak culture has been analysed from more perspectives. In general Slovakia is very reserved and formal country with high share of Christians. People are very polite and punctual. Slovakia has low-context culture and it means that the population is heterogeneous and thus there are unofficially accepted moral principles which are valid in whole Europe. According to Hofstede's dimensions Slovak people accept unequal distribution of power what means that there is sensible difference between bosses and subordinates. For the Slovak people values like achievement, assertiveness and competitiveness are dominant and important. Concerning long-term orientation people rather determine short-term objective and do not think so intensively about future or other generations.

The aim of this thesis has been analyses of three unethical advertisements in the area of the Slovak Republic. There were chosen such advertisements that were not only unethical, but

were also connected with the Slovak culture. The first and second advertisement was from the year 2009 and the last was from the year 2007. From the analyses of these advertisements it is obvious that Slovak people try to protect their children and youth – in the first example in the case of vulgarisms, in the second example in the case of sexuality and in the last example in the case of unintelligibility and shock. Positive attitudes in these advertisements also bear evidence of reservedness of the Slovak Republic. In the first two examples advertisements are connected with the high share of Christians in the area of Slovakia. Otherwise the last example is connected with Christians, but from the different point of view. This kind of advertisement is probably supported by Christians, because of sensitive issue of abortion that is condemned in this advertisement. On the other side condemnation of this advertisement deals with high index of masculinity in our culture – people do not devote their attention to the issues like quality of life, family or modesty, and lower index of long term orientation – people are concentrated on short-term objectives rather than on long-term ones and other generations.

The Slovak people should monitor advertising in Slovakia and report their outrages regarding ethics in advertisements to the SASC in order to protect their culture, children and morality.

Businesses should use ethical advertising as much as possible. It is important to make advertising in such a way which does not harm or violate consumer. However, in some cases unethical advertisement is the last alternative for companies in order to arouse consumers' attention. In these cases marketers use provocative advertising and it depends on people's perception how they accept it. Marketers should do this only in the last resort.

Resumé

Reklama je slovo, s ktorým sa každý človek stretáva a patrí medzi neodmysliteľné časti našich životov. V súčasnosti konkurencia medzi spoločnosťami narastá a to je dôvod prečo sa každá z nich snaží zlepšiť svoju marketingovú komunikáciu, aby upútala pozornosť spotrebiteľa. Najpoužívanejšou formou marketingovej komunikácie je reklama. Formou reklamy sa podniky snažia ovplyvniť správanie spotrebiteľa a jeho nákupné preferencie. Spotrebiteľia sú obklopovaní reklamou na každom kroku a to spôsobuje, že sú ňou často znechutení.

Narastajúca konkurencia tiež spôsobuje, že podnikatelia sú schopní používať rôzne praktiky, ktoré často hraničia s etikou a morálkou. Je veľa spôsobov, ktoré sú využívané týmito podnikateľmi a to sa stalo tiež objektom kritiky marketingu. Kritizované sú vysoké ceny, veľký nátlak pri predaji, nebezpečné produkty, plánovaná zastaranosť, slabá úroveň služieb zákazníkom, zavádzanie. Kritika marketingu často odsudzuje fakt, že spoločnosti sú sústredené len na predanie produktu a nestarajú sa, či spotrebiteľia tento produkt skutočne chcú. Často sa snažia manipulovať so zákazníkmi tak, aby urobili „nechcený nákup“. Kritici marketingu tiež tvrdia, že marketing spôsobuje kultúrne znečistenie, pretože ľudia môžu v súčasnosti vidieť tento druh prezentácie takmer všade – reklamy v televízii, v časopisoch, billboardy na cestách... Kritika tiež viní marketing z pretvárania ľudí na materialistov, pretože úspech ľudí je posudzovaný podľa toho, čo vlastnia. Autor Oliviero Toscani, známy pred svoje kontroverzné reklamy, chce priniesť nový druh reklám, ktoré majú šokovať a upriamovať pozornosť na vážne témy spoločnosti. Preto tiež patrí medzi kritikou súčasnej reklamy a predstavuje niekoľko zločinov páchaných reklamou.

Vyjadrenie nespokojnosti spotrebiteľov prebieha cez rôzne hnutia. V dnešnej dobe sú známe dve hlavné hnutia: konzumerizmus a environmentalizmus. Prvé hnutie sa snaží o ochranu spotrebiteľov a druhé o ochranu prostredia. Prezident John Kennedy vydal základné práva spotrebiteľa – právo voľného výberu, právo byť informovaný, právo byť vypočutý, právo na bezpečnosť. Tému ochrany spotrebiteľa sa tiež venuje stále väčšia pozornosť v rámci Európskej Únie, ako napríklad garancia základných zdravotných a bezpečnostných noriem, ochrana spotrebiteľa pred nezákonnými praktikami, informovanie spotrebiteľov, atď.

Kvôli nespokojnosti spotrebiteľov a kritike marketingu je dôležité, aby boli dodržiavané nejaké etické zásady v marketingu, pretože podniky nesú veľkú sociálnu zodpovednosť pri predaji tovaru a služieb. Spoločnosti by sa mali chovať eticky, aby nebola poškodená ich reputácia a aby sa vyhli sprísňovaniu noriem vládou. Preto si jednotlivé krajiny vytvárajú etické kódexy a tiež organizácie, ktoré monitorujú dodržiavanie týchto kódexov. Na Slovensku je to Rada pre reklamu, ktorej hlavným cieľom je zaistiť čestnú, slušnú, decentnú, legálnu a pravdivú reklamu na území Slovenskej republiky. Táto organizácia tiež vydala Etický kódex reklamnej praxe, ktorého cieľom je stanoviť etické princípy reklamnej praxe na Slovensku a prispieť do reklamy v Slovenskej republike takým spôsobom, že bude slúžiť spoločnostiam a tiež spotrebiteľom. Medzinárodne platný Etický kódex reklamy a marketingovej komunikácie je vydávaný Medzinárodnou obchodnou komorou. Cieľom medzinárodného i slovenského kódexu je samoregulácia marketingovej komunikácie. Všeobecné princípy reklamnej praxe v slovenskom Etickom kódexe sú slušnosť reklamy, čestnosť reklamy, spoločenská zodpovednosť reklamy a pravdivosť reklamy. Reklama nesmie tiež obsahovať žiadny druh zavádzajúceho vyhlásenia, zavádzajúce označovanie produktu o mieste pôvodu, či výrobcovi, zavádzajúce vyhlásenie o druhu, kvalite, rozmeroch, objeme a váhe produktu. Medzi ďalšie dôležité princípy etickej reklamnej praxe patrí cena produktu, očierňovanie konkurentov, porovnávacia reklama, napodobňovanie reklám alebo hodnota produktu, kde predajca nemôže používať výrazy ako grátis, zadarmo, bez poplatku a tiež nemôže používať superlatívy ako najlepší, najlacnejší, najrýchlejší a iné, ak to nemôže nejakým spôsobom dokázať.

Reklama ovplyvňuje všetky skupiny obyvateľstva pozitívne alebo negatívne. Snaží sa apelovať na ich city, psychiku a snaží sa im predat' výrobok. Sú tu však mnohé rozdiely vo vplyve reklamy na spotrebiteľa, ktoré závisia napríklad na veku, pohlaví, vzdelaní alebo bydlisku. Mnohé spoločnosti, hlavne americké, sa pokúšajú aplikovať rovnaký marketing všade na svete. Avšak európsky trh a európsky spotrebiteľ sú rozliční a je tiež náročné dať dokopy viac krajín v Európe, pretože kultúry sú rozmanité. Preto je dôležité, aby spoločnosti analyzovali jednotlivé lokality a správanie spotrebiteľov v týchto lokalitách, kde chcú predávať svoje výrobky a služby. Po vzhliadnutí reklamy spotrebiteľom nastáva proces rozhodovania, ktorý je ovplyvňovaný mnohými vplyvmi. Prvá fáza rozhodovania je

personálny proces, kde osoba prijíma informáciu a premieňa ju na pocity, myšlienky a akcie. Medzi osobné procesy patrí vnímanie, učenie a motivácia. Najväčším problémom pre spoločnosti je vnímanie spotrebiteľov. Niektoré podniky investujú milióny do reklamy, aby neskôr zistili, že ich reklamu si spotrebiteľia nepamätajú. Vnímanie spotrebiteľov je rôznorodé a mení sa čas od času, preto je to taký veľký problém pre spoločnosti. Učenie je považované za permanentnú zmenu v procese myslenia a správania, ktorá vzniká ako výsledok spevnenej skúsenosti. Motivácia nastáva, keď je vzbudená potreba a spotrebiteľ chce túto potrebu uspokojiť. Druhá fáza rozhodovania spotrebiteľa sú medziľudské vplyvy, medzi ktoré patrí kultúra, spoločnosť a rodina. Kultúra je skupina presvedčení, hodnôt, preferencií a chutí, ktorú zdieľa skupina ľudí a je odovzdávaná z generáciu na generáciu. Každá spoločnosť, ktorá chce začať podnikáť na medzinárodnej úrovni by mala poznať kultúru prostredia, kde chce začať podnikáť. Podľa Geerta Hofstedeho poznáme 5 dimenzie kultúry: rozpätie moci, individualizmus, maskulinita, vyhýbanie sa neistote, dlhodobá orientácia. Spoločnosť, v ktorej žijeme má tiež veľký vplyv na nás. Každý je členom nejakej skupiny: skupina v škole, skupina v práci, v komunite a iné. Každá skupina má svoje normy a ak sme jej členom, musíme ich samozrejme dodržiavať. Podobne ako v kultúre to čo je vhodné v jednej rodine môže byť nevhodné v druhej. Ako deti sa učíme z rodiny napríklad čo pomáha, keď nás bolí hlava. Avšak, vplyv rodiny v dnešnej dobe nie je až taký silný, aký bol v minulosti. Nasledujúcou fázou rozhodovania sú nepersonálne vplyvy. Sem patrí čas, miesto a prostredie.

Praktická časť práce je venovaná bližšiemu opisu práce organizácie Rada pre reklamu, opisu slovenskej kultúry a analýze troch neetických situácií v reklame, v ktorých sme hľadali spojitosti so slovenskou kultúrou.

Rada pre reklamu združuje subjekty, ktoré aktívne vstupujú do procesu marketingovej komunikácie, ako združenia klientov reklamy, reklamné agentúry, médiá, ako aj organizácie využívajúci propagáciu formou reklamy. Rada pre reklamu vytvorila nezávislý externý minimálne 7-členný orgán – Arbitrážna komisia, ktorá sa stará o súlad reklám s Etickým kódexom. Komisia posudzuje sťažnosti verejnosti, fyzických a právnických osôb, združení a štátnych orgánov o porušení Etického kódexu konkrétnou reklamou. Po posúdení sťažnosti prijíma arbitrážny nález. Na stránke Rady pre reklamu môžu ľudia nájsť formulár sťažnosti. Na základe prieskumu sme zistili, že najviac sťažností bolo v roku 2009 a v tomto roku bolo

tiež najviac pozitívnych nálezov. Na druhej strane v roku 2008 bolo len 14 sťažností, z ktorých boli 4 vyhodnotené ako pozitívne.

V práci bol tiež pre nasledujúcu analýzu použitý opis slovenskej kultúry z viacerých perspektív. Vo všeobecnosti Slovensko je veľmi rezervovaná a formálna krajina s vysokých podielom kresťanov. Ľudia sú veľmi zdvorilí a presní. Slovensko má nízko-kontextovú kultúru, čo znamená, že populácia je rôznorodá a tak sú neoficiálne prijaté iba morálne princípy, ktoré sú platné v celej Európe. Na základe Hofstedeho kultúrnych dimenzií Slováci prijímajú nerovnomerné rozdelenie sily, čo znamená, že je citelný rozdiel medzi bossmi a podriadenými. Hodnoty ako výkon, sebavedomie a súťaživosť sú dominantné pre slovenských ľudí. Čo sa týka dlhodobej orientácie ľudia si radšej určujú krátkodobé ciele a nemyslia tak intenzívne o budúcnosti alebo o ďalších generáciách.

Hlavným cieľom práce bola analýza troch neetických reklám na území Slovenskej republiky. Boli vybrané také reklamy, ktoré boli nielenže neetické, ale boli tiež spojené so slovenskou kultúrou. Prvá a druhá reklama boli z roku 2009 a posledná bola z roku 2007. Na základe analýzy týchto neetických reklám je zrejmé, že slovenskí ľudia sa snažia chrániť svoje deti a mládež – v prvom prípade sa to týka vulgarizmov, v druhom prípade sexuality a v treťom nezrozumiteľnosti a šoku. Pozitívne nálezy tiež svedčia o rezervovanosti slovenského národa. V prvých dvoch príkladoch reklamy sú spojené s vplyvom vysokého podielu kresťanov na Slovensku. Posledný prípad súvisí tiež s kresťanmi, avšak z iného pohľadu. Je pravdepodobne podporovaný kresťanmi, pretože ide o citlivú tému interrupcií, ktoré sú odsudzované v tejto reklame. Na druhej strane odsudzovanie tejto reklamy súvisí s vysokým indexom maskulinity v našej kultúre – ľudia nevenujú veľkú pozornosť témam kvality života, rodine, jemnosti; a s nižším indexom dlhodobej orientácie – ľudia sa sústreďia na krátkodobé ciele radšej než na dlhodobé.

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SLOVAK UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE IN NITRA
FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT

MARKETING COMMUNICATION ETHICAL ISSUES
RELATED TO CULTURE

Bachelor Thesis

Appendices:

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| Appendix 1: | Advertisement “Pozor na kofotiny!” |
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Appendix 1: Advertisement “Pozor na kofotiny!”

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MAPA

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- má bohatú penu
- čapuje sa do originálnych pohárov
- čapuje sa z originálnej pipy pri teplote 7 - 10 °C
- vďaka pôvodnej receptúre chuti nezameniteľne už takmer 50 rokov

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Appendix 2: Advertisement “Clavin Strong”



Appendix 3: Advertisement “Právo na život”



TEBE PRÁVO NA ŽIVOT ODOPRETÉ NEBOLO

**INTERUPCIA
11. TÝŽDEŇ**

OD ROKU 1957 BOLO NA SLOVENSKU USMRTENÝCH 1 370 000 DETÍ. WWW.PRAVONAZIVOT.SK

The advertisement features a central image of a bloody, aborted fetus held in a person's hand. The fetus is shown in a realistic, somewhat grotesque manner, with visible blood and anatomical details. The background is dark, making the hand and the fetus stand out. The text is in a bold, sans-serif font, with the main headline in white and red, and the supporting text in red and white.