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**Advertising Ethics and Regulation: Consumer Attitudes,
Behaviour and Ethical Ideologies**

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Advertising Ethics and Regulation: Consumer Attitudes, Behaviour and Ethical Ideologies
Reklam Ahlakı ve Reklam Düzenlemesi: Tüketici Tavrı ve Davranışları ile Ahlaki İdeolojileri

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Abstract

This study focuses on Turkish consumers' perceptions, attitudes and behaviour about Advertising Regulation and Advertising Ethics, as well as their personal moral ideologies. While the study aims to have a clearer picture on the demographical profiles of differing attitudes and behaviours towards Advertising Regulation, it also has the objective of revealing Turkish consumers' predisposition towards ethics in its general sense, unveiling their ideological constructs and seeing through the demographical variances. Furthermore, the study has the particular objective of discovering the relationship between the former and the latter, that is to say to analyze the predictability of the attitude and behaviour towards advertising regulation and ethics via the personal moral ideologies. A questionnaire has specially been formulated to accomplish these objectives. The questionnaire included questions on Attitude towards Advertising Regulational and Ethical Aspects (Larkin 1977; Pollay and Mittal 1993), Predisposition and Behaviour regarding Ad Regulation, and Personal Moral Philosophy with Ethics Position Questionnaire (EPQ) (Forsyth 1980). A quantitative survey with 600 consumers aged 15 and over in a nationally urban representative sample has been implemented in Turkey. The survey results corroborate some hypotheses of the study while some others have been not been supported. In summary, the survey has proven that Turkish consumers are significantly more idealistic than relativistic in their ethical judgments but only found a significant relationship between Gender and Idealism, with men being more Idealistic than women. It is also worth

noting that no significant differences were observed for any of the demographics when Advertising Regulation is the concern. Although one would expect its espousal to be more common amongst men (who are more idealistic) and among older age groups, no evidence is found to support this. Finally, the survey pointed out to the differences in attitude between Advertising Regulation and Advertising Ethics in view of the personal moral ideologies. It is concluded that Advertising Ethics is more independent of the ideological constructs consumers possess and that the ethical ideologies, or rather the Idealism dimension only, is determined to be a good predictor only for attitudes and behaviour towards Advertising Regulation.

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Advertising Ethics

Advertising ethics is a continually evolving field, given the great pace of change, even revolutions, happening in the advertising industry in recent years (Drumwright and Murphy 2009). But despite the fact that Ethics is considered a mainstream topic in the advertising literature, it is considered to be an insufficiently exhausted one (Hyman, Tansley and Clark 1994). A review by Schlegelmich et al (2009) reveals interesting statistics about the current state of the advertising ethics research when compared within the total realm of “marketing ethics”. Although 475 of the 500 published Works regarding the ethics of the 4P’s (price, place, product and promotion) of marketing belong to the promotion segment, the topic is still not as much scrutinized as ‘corporate decision making’, ‘norms and codes’ and ‘social marketing’.

Much of the research conducted about advertising ethics has been descriptive rather than causal. The general tendency of researchers has rather been to work on either of the three controversial aspects: the *executional themes*, the *advertised categories* or the *target group*. When Hyman et al (1994) tried to investigate the relative importance of thirty-three different topics to the study of Advertising Ethics amongst reviewers of Journal of Advertising and a random sample of academicians with a mail survey, they found out that ‘the use of deception’, ‘advertising to children’, ‘cigarette and tobacco ads’, ‘alcoholic and beverage ads’, negative political ads’, ‘racial stereotyping in ads’ and ‘sexual stereotyping in ads’ to be the

seven most important topics for further research (p.10). There is quite a vast literature on those aspects now. To cite a few examples; Darke and Ritchie (2007) worked on 'Advertising deception' and Bakır and Vitell (2010) worked on 'advertising to children' while other researchers like Ergin and Özdemir (2007) worked on all the seven important topics to evaluate their influence on the average Turkish consumer.

Consumer Ethics

Researching the perceptions of the Advertising Practitioners (Hunt and Chonko 1987; Drumwright and Murphy 2004; Tuncay et al 2008) and the -Advertising- Students (Beard 2003; Keith et al 2008) have been relatively recent streams of research on Advertising Ethics, together with the Consumer Ethics research which has grown considerably since the 1990's. But, "there still appears to be too little conceptual and empirical work focusing on the influence of socio-demographic variables (e.g. migration background or religion) and psychographic variables (e.g. materialism or individualism) on consumers' ethical judgements" (Schlegelmich et al 2009: 13).

Rawwan et al (2005) think that this limitation of interest in consumer ethics "is due to the sole attention devoted to examining ethical issues in the marketplace from the perspective of businesses." Nonetheless, there are also interesting studies involving the consumers' perspectives like the one of Hye-Jin and Nelson (2009). The two worked mainly on Socially Responsible Consumer Behaviour (SRCB) and concluded that "consumers

who support advertising ethics or the regulation of unethical advertising may do so to prevent what is bad and unfair for a healthy society”.

Attitude to Advertising Ethics and Regulation

Attitude toward Advertising Ethics has generally been reviewed as a small part in most of the ‘Attitude towards the Ad’ studies, which have a vast literature. As such, attitude to advertising ‘ethics’ first started to be investigated in Harvard’s Bauer and Greyser’s work in 1968; they concluded that there are two dimensions in deciphering the attitudes toward advertising: economic and social, leaving ‘ethics’ as a sub-segment. Then, it was Larkin (1977) who gave a special interest into the subject by elaborating Bauer and Greyser’s concept and adding two more dimensions, namely ‘ethical’ and ‘regulatory’ aspects. From then onwards, many studies have been conducted on this topic by different academicians while adding more layers to the investigation, Pollay and Mittal’s (1993) being one of them. Pollay and Mittal offered a comprehensive model of attitudes toward advertising that included three personal utility factors (product information, social image information, and hedonic amusement) and four socioeconomic factors (good for economy, fostering materialism, corrupting values and falsity / non-sense). Nonetheless, it is important to note that all suggested models of attitudes toward advertising, while on one hand emphasized the utilitarian value of advertising, that the crux of advertising is its ability to inform consumers, on the other hand tackled with regulatory practices related to advertising to limit the scope of what advertisers can do based on its negative social and cultural influences,

especially in the context of vulnerable populations (Dutta-Bergman 2006: 105).

Until now, “advertising has been charged with a number of ethical breaches, most of which focus on its apparent lack of societal responsibility” (Treise et al 1994). This has damaged -and continues to do so- the sector’s general credibility. Although not implying advertising only, the ‘Ethical Barometer Research’¹ conducted with business executives in 2007 for Türkiye Etik Değerler Merkezi Vakfı (TEDMER) shows that ‘media’ is the second most stated sector for needing improvement in terms of ethics with 75 percent, placing itself right after ‘local governing bodies’. It is not just the advertising sector and advertisers who are thought to be less credible. The damage also extends to the products and brands for which advertisements are used. Darke and Ritchie who worked on ‘Advertising deception’, proposed that “advertising deception leads consumers to become defensive and broadly distrustful of further advertising claims” (2007: 114).

The nature of the creative process in advertising process is another aspect leading to controversy in ethical and moral issues in the sector (Bush & Bush 1994). In line with the fact that figures of speech like repetition, reversal, substitution, destabilization, puns, rhymes and tropes that distort the reality in a way that would require an individual interpretation, have started to be frequently used in the advertising world, advertisers and agencies started to often “encourage controversy as part of a campaign as a

¹ <http://www.tedmer.org.tr/pps/etikbarometre.pps>

way to attract public attention and obtain extra publicity” (Waller 2005: 289). Even “shocking” content that “attempts to surprise an audience by deliberately violating social norms for societal values and personal ideas” have started to be more common (Dahl, Frankenberger and Manchanda, 2003: 269).

Predisposition Toward Advertising Regulation – Behaviour

If there is one thing we should have learnt from the vast literature of Attitude-Behaviour-Intention triad, it is that words do not go hand in hand with actions. Therefore, as it is the case for all, it is again of utmost importance to differentiate between the ‘intended’ and ‘actual’ behaviour of the consumers when it comes to Advertising Regulation.

To try to review the literature would help clarifying the situation. ‘Attitude’ is one of the concepts that is frequently studied within the realm of social sciences. The heavy coverage of the topic resulted in numerous definitions, thus a lack of a common ground. Chaiklin (2011) recently tried to designate a commonality with a broader differentiation of the term based on its usage in the two major scientific minors. He says that “a psychological definition of attitude identifies a verbal expression as behaviour” while “the sociological definition of attitude looks at verbal expression as an intention to act” (32). Chaiklin continues by saying that those who support the psychological view would expect attitude change first to see a change in behaviour, whereas for the supporters of the sociological view, attitude was mainly considered as a predictor for behaviour and was not to be changed because it would not always result in

a behavior change. Moreover, the sociological view holds up that it is sometimes behavior which result in a change in attitude. Chaiklin concluded that “it is not necessary to change attitudes to change behaviour”. He goes on to say:

“Those who insist on the reverse reflect the current infatuation with postmodernism that many social scientists and social workers have. One of its outstanding characteristics is to question whether truth can be established. This leaves a world filled with relative truths (...) While attitudes are important, there can be no real movement toward social justice unless major attention is given to behaviour” (48-49).

Further models that were developed to understand the relationship between attitude and behavior included a new mediating component: ‘intention’. The theoretical frameworks of ‘reasoned action’ (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975) and ‘planned behavior’ (Ajzen 1991) form the foundations for this new way of thinking. Basically, the new models suggested that attitudes, that are formed by beliefs, lead to intentions which in the end determine behavior.

Given the above, investigating the actual behaviors as well as intentions of the consumers in relation to their attitudes for advertising regulation is worth understanding.

Ethical Decision Making and Personal Moral Philosophies

Although there are many unethical practices like insider trading or false information advertising that are unique to business world, it is true that same psychological and interpersonal processes that determine judgments of any morally evaluable action are in play when it comes to individuals' reactions (Forsyth 1992: 461). Therefore, one can assume that whatever is applicable to ethical decision making in general is also applicable to decision making in marketing and in advertising, thus worth measuring.

Is there a universal moral truth? Various surveys conducted up until now show that there is not. It has been proven that moral judgments differ from culture to culture (Hunt and Vitell, 1986; Hofstede 1980) and even from person to person. Therefore the determination of the ideological standings of the consumers is crucial when it comes to ethics in order to be able to better understand and evaluate their attitudes and beliefs.

There are different theories for explaining the ethical ideology differences among consumers in the literature of Social Sciences. Social psychology research talks in-depth about these divergences with Cognitive developmentalism, Social learning theory and Psychoanalytic theory. Today, the current approach assumes that individuals have an integrated conceptual system or personal moral philosophy as the sum of their beliefs, attitudes and values (Forsyth 1992: 461). The majorly accepted theory for explaining the divergences of moral philosophies of people and understanding the dynamics of ethical decision making is that of Hunt and

Vitell's (1986; 2006). Hunt and Vitell proposed deontological and teleological ethical traditions in moral philosophy for drawing their theory upon. According to them, when an individual is faced with an ethical problem in one situation, he or she first determines a set of perceived alternatives to solve the problem. Following that, they theorized that two major ethical evaluations might take place: a deontological evaluation and/or a teleological evaluation. "In the process of deontological evaluation, the individual evaluates the inherent rightness or wrongness of the behaviours implied by each alternative (...) In contrast, the teleological evaluation process focuses on four constructs: (1) the perceived consequences of each alternative for various stakeholder groups, (2) the probability that each consequence will occur to each stakeholder group, (3) the desirability or undesirability of each consequence, and (4) the importance of each stakeholder group" (2006: 145).

The H-V model also posits that behaviour may be affected by ethical judgements through the intervening variable of 'intention', but not always so due to the teleological evaluations' acting independently. Even though it might well be the case that behaviour is inconsistent with the intention because the outcome is a less preferred one, in such a case, there will be feelings of guilt (2006: 146).

Ethics Position Theory (Forsyth, 1980)

Although philosophers have traditionally contrasted moral theories based on Hunt and Vitell's theoretical foundations, meaning on principles (deontological models) and consequences of action (teleological models),

there are still occasions where the model lacks an appropriate explanation. Since the world is not as black and white as defined by H-V model, meaning that there may be variations of the levels of support for each point of view (being norm oriented vs being result oriented for each of the parties involved), there should be 'gray areas' defined based on the individuals' emphasis on each approach.

Ethics Position Theory (EPT) suggested by Forsyth (1980) seems to be a rather appropriate tool for offering a remedy to the situation. The theory basically maintains that individuals' personal moral philosophies influence their judgments, actions, and emotions in ethically intense situations (Forsyth et al 2008).

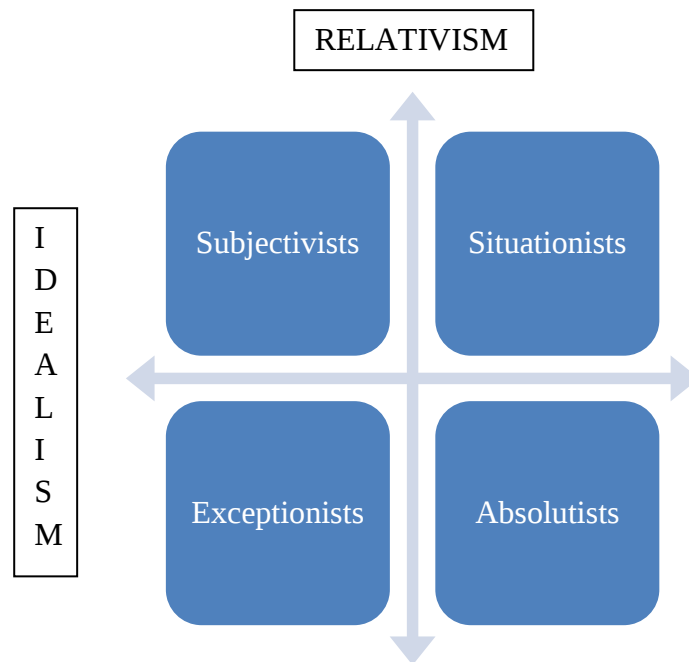
Forsyth (1980) explains the individual variations in approaches to moral judgment by taking into account two basic factors. *"The first is the extent to which the individual rejects universal moral rules in favor of relativism. The second major dimension underlying individual variations in moral judgments focuses on idealism in one's moral attitudes"* (175-76). Thus he defines two major dimensions, namely relativism and idealism. By relativism, he refers to those who espouse a personal moral philosophy based on skepticism, who decide based on the circumstances and parties involved for the specific issue in concern. Whereas by idealism, Forsyth depicts those people who are binded almost by 'rules', who act by their moral principles and norms that are unchangeable by the circumstances nor by the related stakeholders. What counts is the welfare of other people for

them, thus always avoid harming them and moreover think that it is possible and worth every effort to do so.

By taking into account the fact that “individuals can range from high to low in their emphasis on principles and in their emphasis on consequences”, Forsyth (1992: 462) dichotomize and cross these two variables, and ends up with four distinct personal moral philosophies as shown in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1

A taxonomy of personal moral philosophies by Forsyth



People who are high on both the relativism and idealism are called *Situationists*. These people, who chase not necessarily to do the ‘right’ thing but rather the ‘fitting’, usually view ethical standards as context-bound and depend on the situation for a thorough moral evaluation. “Situationism corresponds to such skeptical philosophies as situation ethics

and value pluralism” (Forsyth 2008: 815), that are mostly concerned with the consequences of an action as the determinants of its moral value.

Subjectivists on the other hand, are those people with high relativistic but low idealistic views. They are also rejecting one set of moral values, like situationists do, but they recognize that negative consequences are sometimes unavoidable. Therefore they do not strive for achieving positive outcomes for everyone concerned (Forsyth 1992: 463). Forsyth and his colleagues (2008) believe that there are similarities between subjectivists and an egoistic moral philosophy since their own judgments are at the core of their thinking.

The third group, the *Absolutists*, are people with a high level of idealism (meaning that all possible negative consequences of an event should be omitted) and a low level of relativism (meaning that they are strictly bound by the general / global / universal moral principles they think that exist). They believe in exceptionless universal moral principles that can be derived through reason and, harming people or violating fundamental moral absolutes are major reasons for Absolutists to condemn an action (Forsyth 1992: 463). Forsyth et al (2008) think they are “similar to to a system of ethics that is grounded in rules, such as Kantian deontology and the Judeo–Christian conception of moral commandments”.

And finally there are *Exceptionists*, who are at the lower end for both relativism and idealism. They believe that both bad and good consequences are inherent in any action while they call on moral absolutes in making judgments (Treise et al 1994). They are in a way pragmatists

since they are always on the lookout for positives to balance the negatives in any action. Forsyth and his colleagues (1980) place them based on their outlook near to a moral philosophy based on rule-utilitarianism: “moral principles are useful because they provide a framework for making choices and acting in ways that will tend to produce the best consequences for all”.

Measuring Personal Moral Philosophy - Ethics Position

Questionnaire (EPQ)

Forsyth developed the Ethics Position Questionnaire (EPQ) to assess the personal moral philosophy of individuals by asking them to indicate their agreement level for twenty different items that describe idealistic and relativistic tendencies.

This study in concern has utilised the Ethics Position Questionnaire (EPQ) to determine differences in personal moral philosophies of Turkish consumers. The questionnaire and its resulting data allowed to investigate deeper, contrast and compare the Turkish people’s attitude on advertising regulation and ethics as well as their behavior and intention on advertising regulation, with the four different moral philosophy segments identified.

Advertising Sector and Advertising Regulation in Turkey

Turkish advertising sector started to take a boost around 1950's with the establishment of Faal Acentesi by Eli Acıman after World War 2. Since then, with many interruptions in between due to military coups and economic crisis, the sector grew tremendously. Today, the advertising sector has a total value of 3,613 million TL; out of that 56 percent comes from TV advertising². While these figures are very impressive despite the sharp decline of 15 percent from 2008, advertisers at times push the boundaries of decency and deception due to various reasons described at the beginning of this paper. When advertising does offend, mislead or is untruthful, a structure needs to be in place in order to provide some protection (Harker and Harker 2002; 25).

In most of the developed countries, the industry regulates itself before the legal regulatory body intervenes. But in Turkey, the regulation of advertising has a complex structure. Although it is possible to talk about a tri-pillared control mechanism that includes a self-regulatory body, in fact, advertisements are intensively controlled by laws and regulations. Below is a summary of the three pillars, which are thoroughly covered in the Koan Law Firm's report³ for a survey commissioned by EU to Carat on Audiovisual and Media Policies about Turkey (2004) called "*Comparative study concerning the impact of the control measures on televisual advertising markets in the EU Member States and certain other countries*".

² www.rd.org.tr – The figures are for 2010.

³ http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/docs/library/studies/2003/44_03_rj_tr.pdf

Pillar 1 - Radio and Television Supreme Council (Radyo ve Televizyon Üst Kurulu - RTÜK)

The first pillar of such triple control mechanism is the **Radio and Television Supreme Council (Radyo ve Televizyon Üst Kurulu - RTÜK)**, an autonomous and impartial legal public institution which has been established in 1994 following the increase in the number of the players in the mass communication sector. With the destruction of the state monopoly of TRT (Turkish Radio and Television Corporation) in the broadcasting sector, the need to regulate the new environment has risen. Thus a new Law (no. 3984) has been issued to deal with the situation on the Establishment of Radio and Television Enterprises and their Broadcasts (3984 Sayılı Radyo ve Televizyonların Kuruluş ve Yayınları Hakkında Kanun). RTÜK consists of nine members with civil service and academic background who are elected for six years by the National Grand Assembly. The Supreme Council acts as the regulatory body on decisions related with the establishment and ownership of radio and television channels, their frequency planning, while also auditing the compliance of the broadcasts of radios and televisions to a list of pre-defined standards varying from ‘broadcasts that violate the existence and independence of the Turkish Republic’ to ‘the ads that are deceptive, misleading or that would lead to unfair competition’.

RTÜK examines advertisements in light of the provisions of RTÜK Law, the European Convention on Transfrontier Television, and the Regulation on the Principles and Procedures of Radio and Television

Broadcasts (Radyo ve Televizyon Yayınlarının Esas ve Usulleri Hakkında Yönetmelik) (Koan 2004). The Supreme Council has the right to impose punitive sanctions to the broadcaster radio and television enterprises which fail to fulfil their obligations and which violate the broadcasting rules available in the Turkish legislation. The punitive sanctions applied range depending on the severity of the violation, from warning and apology to suspension of the transmission of broadcast, or the application of administrative fines in case of repetition of the violation. RTÜK, unlike Reklam Kurulu, can only penalize the broadcasting institutions, while the latter (covered in detail in the following section) can also apply sanctions to advertisers and advertising agencies.

Table 1 and Table 2 summarizes the nature of the complaints submitted to RTÜK and the number of criterias under scrutiny for each. While ‘Drama Serials’ were making up only 23 percent of the total complaints submitted in 2009, its ratio went up to 52 percent in 2010 (possibly due to the commencement of ‘Muhteşem Yüzyıl’ which is about the life of Soleiman the Magnificent). ‘Advertising’ make up 9 percent of the total complaints in 2009 and 7 percent of total complaints in 2010.

TABLE 1: The distribution of the complaints submitted to RTÜK in 2009

PROGRAM TYPE	# OF COMPLAINTS	%	# OF POSSIBLE BREACH CRITERIAS	%
Serials – Drama	15.336	23	29.187	24
Physical Contests (Direnç Yarışmaları)	7.384	11	13.469	11
Advertising	6.262	9	13.629	11
Daytime shows (Kuşak Programları)	5.347	8	11.121	9
News	4.032	6	6.212	5
Actualities	3.252	5	5.685	5
Shows with Dramatic content	3.197	5	6.445	5
Commentaries (Yorum Programları)	2.349	4	5.694	5
Talk Show	2.290	3	5.418	4
General	4.040	6	5.821	5
Other	13.422	20	19.885	16
TOTAL	66.911	100	122.526	100

TABLE 2: The distribution of the complaints submitted to RTÜK in 2010

PROGRAM TYPE	# OF COMPLAINTS	%	# OF POSSIBLE BREACH CRITERIAS	%
Serials – Drama	45.254	52	107.356	61
Advertising	6.246	7	13.075	7
Physical Contests (Direnç Yarışmaları)	5.700	7	10.731	6
News	4.155	5	5.773	3
Daytime Shows (Kuşak Programları)	3.746	4	6.192	4
General	3.146	4	5.093	3
Other	18.053	21	28.123	16
TOTAL	86.300	100	176.343	100

Pillar 2 - Advertising Committee (Reklam Kurulu)

On the second pillar of the control mechanism is another statutory authority, the **Advertising Committee (Reklam Kurulu)**, which has been established on 8 September 1995 in accordance with Article 17 of Law no. 4077 on the Protection of Consumers (4077 Sayılı Tüketicinin Korunması Hakkında Kanun)⁴. The Advertising Committee operates on the general rules and principles mentioned in Article 16 of the Consumer Law, Regulation related to the Standards and Application Principles of Commercial Advertisements and Announcements (Ticari Reklam ve İlanlara İlişkin İlkeler ve Uygulama Esaslarına Dair Yönetmelik).

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/avpolicy/docs/library/studies/2003/44_03_rj_tr.pdf

The Advertising Committee currently has 29 members from different backgrounds, with a large span that will include all stakeholders active in the preservation of consumer rights. While government organizations are represented with institutions like the Ministry of Industry and Commerce and Ministry of Justice, there are also representatives of professional chambers like Türk Tabipler Birliği (Doctors) and Türkiye Barolar Birliği (Lawyers), as well as media organizations like Reklamcılar Derneği (Advertising Agencies) and Gazeteciler Derneği (Journalists).

The Advertising Committee, which operates with respect to international laws and regulations of advertising sector together with local peculiarities of the Turkish market, monitors the compliance of the commercial advertising and announcements made by the advertiser, the advertising agencies or by various media (including TV Broadcasters) and deals with the violations of general rules, general prohibitions of surreptitious and subliminal advertising and the like.

The Advertising Committee has the right to impose certain sanctions, varying from discontinuation, as a preliminary injunction, up to a maximum period of three months of the violating advertisement and/or announcement, to total prohibition of such advertisement of announcement and/or rectification of the same, and/or administrative fines, both on natural persons and/or legal entities⁵.

⁵ <http://www.tuketici.gov.tr/source.cms4/index.snet?wapp=36FD0FE4-82BB-4720-AFDF-B5D2A1FF0CF4>

Pillar 3 - Turkish Advertising Self-Regulatory Board – RÖK (Reklam Özdenetim Kurulu)

The last pillar of the control mechanism is the self-regulation represented by **Turkish Advertising Self-Regulatory Board – RÖK (Reklam Özdenetim Kurulu)**. It has been established in April 1994 to implement the Advertising Self-Regulation model in Turkey via adopting the world-wide accepted principles of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC). Under the name of RÖK (Reklam Özdenetim Kurulu / The Advertising Self-Regulatory Board), the board houses the Advertisers' Association (Reklamverenler Derneği), Advertising Agencies' Association (Reklamcılar Derneği) and International Advertising Association (IAA). The board currently comprises of 16 persons of which 5 represent the advertisers, 4 represent the advertising agencies, 2 represent private TV institutions, one represent TRT (the state television) and 4 represent the press institutions / the visual media.

RÖK's decisions impose no legal obligations over the advertisers in case of ethical breaches, but rather the board tries to act as the commonsense of the people, the reason and judgment of the sector by trying to preserve the honesty and morality in advertising. It also aims to lead all actors of the sector towards a more common usage and adoption of the International Advertising Application Rules via creating a stronger awareness, so that government intervention would be less on the matter. In case an advertising is condemned by RÖK, the advertiser is instructed to amend or withdraw the advertisement. In case of further resistance to the

instructions, then the media institutions are asked to refuse the advertisement in concern.

Turkish Advertising Self-Regulatory Board - RÖK functions on complaints from consumers and agencies as well as on its own regular auditory methods. Table 3 summarizes the list of the stakeholders involved in the complaint process by the number of complaints submitted in the last seventeen years. As the table shows, the highest number of complaints has been submitted by the ‘Competitors’ and then by the ‘Consumers’. The number of complaints has no relevance for RÖK as the board can review any material on even one single complaint.

TABLE 3: Complaints held by the Board between April 1994 and 29.04.2011

Complaints by	#
Competitors	1018
Consumers	932
Other (Gov. Depts., MPs, etc.)	56
Consumer Organization	4
Own Initiative	173
TOTAL	2183

RÖK has twenty-six different clauses to interpret the possible ethical problems in an ad. Over the years, different ads have been screened for different reasons and different sanctions have applied accordingly, varying from small modifications to the withdrawal of the ads. Table 4 summarizes the distribution of the ethical problems encountered in each of the ads that an official application is filed for. The results show that ‘truthfulness’ (see Appendix B for more detail) has been by far the major ethical breach threatening the Turkish Advertising sector.

TABLE 4: Complaints Resolved by RÖK by Their Nature* between April 1994 and 29.04.2011

	Total	Violated Code	Not Violated Code	Negotiating Both Parties	Still Under Evaluation
Basic Principles	123	46	74	1	2
Decency	87	19	67	1	
Honesty	62	32	30		
Social Responsibility	59	10	49		
Truthfulness	1382	746	615	20	1
Comparisons	101	65	32	4	
Testimonials	8	4	4		
Denigration	178	101	74	3	
Exploitation of Goodwill	22	13	9		
Imitation	85	27	54	4	
Identification	23	9	12	1	1
Safety and Health	13	7	6		
Children and Young People	115	45	69		1
Use of "free" and "guarantee"	1		1		
Environmental Behavior	4	1	3		
Substantiation	567	323	238	3	3
TOTAL	2830	1448	1337	37	8

*A complaint might be related with more than one article of the code

Research Hypotheses

The survey aimed to analyze different aspects of Turkish consumers' attitude and behaviour towards Advertising Ethics and Regulation as well as their moral ideologies and the connection between the two. With that in mind, four different hypotheses, in some cases with sub-hypotheses, were developed and tested within the scope of the survey. Each one of them is detailed below with plausible theoretical foundations that they were built upon.

The first hypothesis is founded on models like the one of Shavitt, Lowrey and Haefner (1998) that suggested there are significant differences between demographic segments when it comes to attitudes toward advertising. Although based on the above study, in the case of United States, men are determined to be less inclined for advertising regulation and older age groups are more likely to believe that the government currently places too much regulation on advertising, by relying on the results of the large Hofstede (1980) study that points out a huge gap between Turkey and United States on all terms, this survey assumes the opposite to be true for Turkey. To be more specific; Hofstede (1980) evaluated results of employees from 40 different countries and identified four dimensions of culture: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism-collectivism and masculinity-femininity. When Turkey is compared and contrasted with United States, the study determined that they were on totally opposite directions in terms of work values. First, Hofstede concluded Turkish

culture to be more feminine with a high concern for others rather than self, with a score of 45 versus a United States that is more masculine, meaning assertive, materialistic and competitive (62). Then, in line with the previous finding, US has been found to be a more individualistic country (91 over 100) while Turkey was more collectivist, valuing bondage and ties between people with a low score as 37. As for the power distance dimension that reflects on respect and relationship with authority figures, again a large discrepancy is observed between the two countries with Turkey scoring 66 and US scoring 40 only. Finally, when uncertainty avoidance measure was taken, which was mainly to measure a society's tolerance for new, ambiguous, uncertain situations, Turkey, coming from a strong tradition of military and respect for the authority figures, again scored on the far end with a score of 85.

Given all the above recap about the Hofstede (1980) study, it would be quite normal to expect totally opposite relationships than the ones discovered in Shavitt, Lowrey and Haefner (1998) study amongst the people of the United States. Therefore this survey assumed the following hypotheses:

H1: There are significant demographic differences between the different beliefs and attitudes towards Advertising Regulation

H1a: Younger age groups are significantly more prone to be against Advertising Regulation

*H1b: Men are significantly more prone to be for Advertising
Regulation*

The second objective, thus, hypothesis of the survey is built on understanding Turkish people's moral ideologies. "The primary rationale for studying ethical ideology is its proposed ability to explain differences in individuals' ethical judgments" (Barnett et al. 1994: 472). It has been hard to select a single model of ethical ideology to utilise for this survey since philosophical debates about questions like what is right or wrong have long been on the academia scene. Due to the lack of appropriate explanations for some cases when Hunt and Vitell's traditional theoretical foundations, namely principles (deontological models) and consequences of action (teleological models), are taken into account, this study used Ethics Position Theory (EPT) suggested by Forsyth (1980). The theory basically maintains that individuals' personal moral philosophies influence their judgments, actions, and emotions in ethically intense situations (Forsyth et al 2008).

Forsyth (1980) explains the individual variations in approaches to moral judgment on two dimensions: relativism and idealism. The relativism dimension aims to describe individuals "who weigh the circumstances more than the ethical principle that was violated" (Forsyth 1992: 462). They believe everything is circumstantial and that some possible damages can be tolerated on the way to something 'good'. Whereas the idealism dimension is to describe individuals who are bound by the rules, norms and

laws that they believe to be universal and valid for everyone; here the individual is rather concerned for the welfare of other people, thus would always choose the path that would produce the least damages to those around.

Hofstede (1980) classified Turkish individuals as high on power distance and strong on uncertainty avoidance, meaning they are less tolerant for unknown/ unpredictable situations and are apt to look for ways to minimize any blurriness by imposing clear and strict rules and regulations. Turkish people prioritize cooperation over individual success and ambitions and have a high obedience for authority figures.

“Consequently, when Turkish consumers are faced with an ethical dilemma, they tend to obey accepted rules rather than make their own decision” (Rawwas et al 2005: 190). Given the above empirical evidences, and the fact that Rawwas et al also concluded the same back in 2005, it would be normal to assume that Turks will be significantly more idealistic than relativistic.

H2: Turkish consumers are significantly more Idealistic than Relativistic in their ethical judgments.

The third hypotheses of the survey relies on the fact that demographics, especially age and gender, have long been used as a dependent variable in the empirical studies about ethical decision making (O'Fallon and Butterfield 2005). Thus, it is normal to expect finding demographic differences in the sample in terms of ethical ideologies.

Abramson and Inglehart in their famous book called "Value Change in Global Perspective" (1995) claimed that in countries that have experienced a high rate of growth, the differences between the values, attitudes and behavior across generation cohorts tend to be larger than in others. Given the strong transition Turkey has been going through in the last decade and the fact that it has managed to become the 17th largest economy in the world, we are allowed to classify it as one country with a high rate of growth. Thus, the differences between different age groups in Turkey are expected to produce significant deviations. Our sample included people as young as 15 (born in 1996) up to 60 (born in 1951). By assuming the traditionally accepted generational cohorts, our age group 15-29 can be called as the Millennials or Generation Y, while those aged 30 to 50 can be called the Generation X and those older than that, Baby Boomers.

Although there are no other studies to back it up, Forsyth's (1980) results showed that older individuals were less idealistic than younger ones. On the contrary, there is more than one study that proved the reverse: that older people are more conservative, thus rely more on moral absolutes and universal truth when making ethical decisions (Serwinek 1992, Bass et al 1998; Hartikainen and Torstila 2004).

In the light of all above, it is expected to find in this sample older people to be more idealistic than younger people.

H3a: Older people are significantly more Idealistic than younger people

Research on the relationship between gender and ethical ideology is even more inconsistent than the one concerning age in the literature, due to the fact that gender has been the mostly researched dependent variable in the ethical ideology literature (O'Fallon and Butterfield 2005). The only point that has been common in the majority of the studies has been that gender differences are more evident in the case of idealism. Apart from that, some studies ended up finding no significant differences between the two sex in terms of idealism and relativism (Forsyth et al. 1988, Singhapakdi et al. 1999), while some others like that of Bass et al. (1998) and Hartikainen and Tortilla (2004) found women to be significantly more idealistic than men.

In the light of all above, it is expected to find in this sample women to be more idealistic than men.

H3b: Women are significantly more Idealistic than Men

The fourth and the final objective of the survey relies on the interaction of the first two hypotheses. By founding on previous research like the one by Treise et al (1994) that showed that “the degree to which consumers judge advertising as ethical or unethical varies as a function of their relativism and idealism” (59), the survey hypothesised that the ethical

ideologies of Turkish consumers will be good predictors for attitude and behaviour towards advertising ethics and regulation. Although many surveys point out to an established relationship between ethical judgments and ethical ideology, the dominant empirical evidence has been toward idealism having a stronger predictive power than relativism (Barnett et al. 1994, Bass et al. 1998). In order to be able to see the differences in the intensity level of being idealistic and relativistic amongst respondents to better be able to differentiate (and thus target), this survey relied on the four-folded Ethical Ideology Taxonomy, which is obtained when the two dimensions are dichotomized and crossed 2 X 2 typology.

Forsyth (1992) concluded that, “relative to the other three types, absolutists tend to be more conservative in their position of contemporary moral issues and practices” (465). Along with this negativity in the moral attitude, a negativity in the moral judgment is observed too. While no previous surveys were conducted in the advertising sector, almost all other surveys conducted on moral judgment and moral ideology, be it in business or social environment, found that Absolutists were the strictest whereas Subjectivists were the more lenient ones (Barnett et al. 1994, Bass et al. 1998, Hartikainen and Torstila 2004). But considering the above finding that idealism has a stronger prediction power than relativism, both segments with high idealism, namely Absolutists and Subjectivists, will be taken as reference points in the following hypotheses.

H4: The Ethical Ideology Taxonomy is a good predictor of the attitude and behaviour towards Advertising Ethics and Regulation.

H4a: Quadrants with High Idealism (Absolutists and Subjectivists) are more prone for Advertising Regulation than the other quadrants

H4b: Quadrants with High Idealism (Absolutists and Subjectivists) are more sensitive towards Advertising Ethics than the other quadrants

Whether acting morally, thus behaviour, has anything to do with personal moral philosophies still represents an important question in the ethics literature. Forsyth and Berger (1982) were the first ones to work upon that, and they concluded that personal moral philosophies do not influence moral behaviour. One other important study conducted by Forsyth and Nye (1990) proved other interesting findings: people from high idealism quadrants (Absolutists and Situationists) were more apt to lie in exchange for money (which was to measure the salience of moral norms) or to help some other (which was to measure the consequences of an action). Given all the above, the research hopes to answer some questions on the relationship between personal ethical ideologies and behavioural intentions when it comes to advertising regulation, and thus contribute to the literature. The hypothesis developed will use *intention* as the base for moral behavior, as intention can be a good predictor for future behaviour; to put it differently; attitudes, that are formed by beliefs, lead to intentions which in the end determine behavior as theorized in ‘reasoned action’ (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975) and ‘planned behavior’ (Ajzen 1991).

*H4c: Those with High Idealism and Low Relativism
(Absolutists) are more apt to have thought of submitting an
official complaint for an ad than those with Low Idealism
and High Relativism (Situationists)*

Survey Design

The survey design was quantitative realized via computer aided telephone interviews (CATI). In total 600 interviews are realized with the questionnaire prepared and detailed below.

Fieldwork – CATIBUS of IPSOS

The fieldwork of the survey has been undertaken by Ipsos KMG, one of the leading professional market research companies of the world as well as of Turkey. Ipsos KMG has a weekly Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing Omnibus called CATIBUS where they interview 300 people aged over fifteen years old each week. The questions prepared were thus made part of CATIBUS for two consecutive weeks during March 28 and April 8, 2011, making a total rolling base sample of 600 for the survey in focus.

Questionnaire

A special questionnaire of about ten minutes has been developed for this survey and was tested for its understandability before the actual fieldwork. The flow of the questionnaire is as detailed below:

1. Awareness on Advertising Regulation (Yes/No)
 - a. Awareness on the Advertising Regulatory Bodies
 - b. Awareness of RÖK (Reklam Özdenetim Kurulu – Advertising Self Regulation Body)

2. Ever complaint officially for an ad
 - a. Ever thought about it
3. Beliefs and Attitude Towards Ad Regulation and Advertising Ethics
(five-point Likert scale)
4. Most sensitive ethical issue in Advertising on a list of four topics
5. Ethical Ideologies with EPQ of Forsyth (1980; 1992) – Agreement level to 20 statements of which 10 are for Idealism and 10 are for Relativism dimension on a five-point Likert scale
 - a. 10 Statements for Idealism
 - b. 10 Statements for Relativism
6. Demographics
 - a. Gender
 - b. Age
 - c. City/Geographical region
 - d. Socio-economical status (SES)

Development of the Beliefs and Attitudes Towards Advertising Ethics and Regulation

Seven different attitudinal questions were developed for this part of the survey to measure the respondents' attitude towards Advertising Ethics and Regulation. The questions were founded on the results of different surveys about Turkey and Turkish consumers' general attitude towards Ethics (Ergin and Özdemir 2007; Rawwas et al 2005) as well as on surveys that could be considered as important milestones in Ethics and Advertising Ethics (Beard 2003; Hyman et al 1994).

Development of the Ethical Ideologies Scale

The Ethical Ideology Scale that is used within the survey is the Ethics Position Questionnaire (EPQ) developed by Forsyth (1980). It has been translated from English to Turkish by the author and has been subject to a small pilot of ten people before the actual fieldwork to determine its understandability. The questionnaire is comprised of 20 statements in total, of which 10 are asked to measure Idealism and the other 10 are asked to measure the Relativism dimension. For each statement, the respondents are asked to indicated their level of agreement on a five-point Likert scale.

Sample Size and Selection Method

The sample size is 600 and is urban Turkey representative.

The sample selection method is quasi-random sampling. This means that the sampling units (households) were totally selected on a random base but quotas were applied as to who to interview within that specific

household. To start with, the sampling units are being randomly selected from a telephone numbers database that has been stratified by districts (ilçe) and then by neighbourhoods (mahalle). In each neighbourhood (mahalle) a maximum of 10 interviews is allowed.

The total number of interviews completed is 600, with an even split between men and women. The tables showing the distribution of the sample based on major demographics which were controlled by a quota to represent the urban Turkey better, are as depicted below at Table 5:

TABLE 5 – Sample Characteristics

		n	%
Gender		600	100
	Male	298	49.7
	Female	302	50.3
Age			
	15-19	104	17.3
	20-25	125	20.8
	26-35	151	25.1
	36-45	120	20
	46-60	35	16.7
SES			
	AB	63	10.5
	C1 / C2	142	23.7
	DE	95	15.8
City			
	İstanbul	197	32.8
	Ankara	74	12.3
	İzmir	62	10.4
	Other	267	44.4

Data Analysis and Results

This section will first review the simple statistics regarding all questions except the EPQ module and then will discuss the findings related with the research hypotheses.

Awareness on Advertising Ethics and Self Regulation

The respondents were first asked whether they were aware that a certain regulation of advertising based on some pre-defined rules is being regularly exercised in Turkey. Two third of Turkish people stated not to be aware of this fact.

The percentage of participants who were aware on advertising regulation in Turkey did not differ by gender, $\chi^2(1, N = 600) = 1.35, p = .25$, nor by age, $\chi^2(4, N = 600) = 5.74, p = .22$. But it differed by SES, $\chi^2(2, N = 600) = 18.88, p = .000$ with a higher incidence of awareness among higher social class people (AB).

TABLE 6 – Awareness on Advertising Regulation in Turkey

	Total	AB	C1/C2	DE
	N	n	n	n
Aware	205	61	97	47
Unaware	396	65	187	143
Base	600	126	142	190

Awareness of Institutions in Advertising Regulation

Those who were aware of a certain regulation action (204 people), were further asked the institutions that they know to take part in the process. Only 44 percent of them (91 people) mentioned to know a regulatory institution in the advertising sector.

The percentage of participants who were aware on the institutions taking part in advertising regulation in Turkey did not differ by SES, $\chi^2(2, N = 204) = 1.57, p = .46$, nor by age, $\chi^2(4, N = 204) = 7.74, p = .101$. But it differed by Gender, $\chi^2(1, N = 204) = 7.68, p = .006$ with males being more aware about the system.

TABLE 7 – Awareness on the Regulatory Body(ies) in Charge

	Total	Female	Male
	N	n	n
Aware of the regulatory bodies	91	33	58
Unaware of the regulatory bodies	113	63	50
Base	204	96	108

Of those who stated to be aware of the regulating bodies in Turkey, 86 percent mentioned RTÜK (Radyo Televizyon Üst Kurumu – Radio and Television Supreme Council) by its name. Only 5 percent was able to mention RÖK (Reklam Öz Denetim Kurulu – The Self Regulation Council of Advertising) on a spontaneous basis. When prompted to all, the awareness of RÖK (Reklam Öz Denetim Kurulu – The Self Regulation Council of Advertising) amongs the total sample rises up to 24 percent. The

awareness of RÖK is determined to be significantly lower among younger age groups and C1/C2 socio economic status consumers.

Submittance/ Inclination to Submit An Official Complaint About an Ad

When the respondents were asked whether they have ever officially submitted a complaint about an ad to a regulatory body, it is determined that only 1 percent has ever performed such an act.

The respondents who have never submitted an official complaint about an ad were further questioned on their inclination for such an act. In that case, nearly one fourth (24 percent) replied that the idea crossed their mind. No significant differences have been found between different demographic characteristics. It is interesting to see that only a small minority has ever acted despite the larger inclination.

TABLE 8 – Awareness on Advertising Regulation in Turkey

	%		%
Ever submitted official complaint	1	Ever considered submitting official complaint	24
Never submitted official complaint	99	Never considered submitting official complaint	76
Base	600	Base	593

Attitude Towards Advertising Ethics and Regulation

Seven different attitudinal questions were developed for this part of the survey to measure the respondents' attitude towards Advertising Ethics and Regulation. The questions were theoretically founded on the results of different surveys about Turkey and Turkish consumers' general attitude towards Ethics as well as on surveys that could be considered as important milestones in Ethics and Advertising Regulation as explained in 'Questionnaire' section.

The highest agreement has been observed for the statement 'There should be a ban on advertising of harmful or dangerous products' with 4.18 over 5 points. Following that, the respondents also showed a more than average agreement level for 'There should be more regulation of advertising, the current regulation is quite insufficient' with 3,62 over 5. The lowest agreement has been recorded for the statement 'The fact that some ads can be banned is quite contradictory to creativity'. Overall, the results indicate that there is a considerable tendency towards advertising regulation among Turkish consumers.

TABLE 9: Attitude Toward Advertising Ethics and Regulation

1= I totally disagree	Average
5= I totally agree	over 5
There should be a ban on advertising of harmful or dangerous products	4,18
There should be more regulation of advertising, the current regulation is quite insufficient	3,62
I get the feeling of being deceived while watching most of the ads	3,41
There are lots of commercials which are of harmful nature to the youngsters' values	3,30
Just because an ad has obscene content does not mean that it is unethical	2,98
I do not believe that an ad has the power to mislead people	2,87
The fact that some ads can be banned is quite contradictory to creativity	2,86

When the correlational relationships between the seven statements of attitudes towards Advertising Ethics and Regulation have been investigated, the following table (10) is obtained. Before reviewing the table, a short summary of the major highlights has been provided below:

‘I do not believe that an ad has the power to mislead people’ and ‘There should be a ban on advertising of harmful or dangerous products’ are both positively correlated with ‘There should be more regulation on

advertising; the current regulation is quite insufficient’, while ‘I get the feeling of being deceived while watching most of the ads’ and ‘There are lots of commercials which are of harmful nature to the youngsters’ are both negatively correlated with the same statement as well as ‘There should be a ban on advertising of harmful or dangerous products’. Interpreting further these findings means that people who support regulation do not think that ads are deceitful and misleading nor are a danger to societal values.

‘I get the feeling of being deceived while watching most ads’ is positively correlated with ‘There are lots of commercials which are of harmful nature to the youngsters’ and ‘The fact that an ad can be banned is quite contradictory to creativity’, while it is negatively correlated with ‘I do not believe that an ad has the power to mislead people’ and the two attitudinal statements on regulation as stated above (‘There should be a ban on advertising of harmful or dangerous products’ and ‘There should be more regulation on advertising; the current regulation is quite insufficient’). Commenting upon this, it is possible to say that when one is deceived by the quality and the content / message of the ads, then he or she is probable to think that the ads have dangerous content that can damage values. But despite that, he or she is also prone to think that banning is not in harmony with creativity. Totally parallel to that finding, they are less probable to think well of the regulation and banning of advertising for whatever the reasons are.

TABLE 10: Correlation Analysis between the different Attitudinal Statements on Advertising Ethics and Regulation

		I do not believe that an ad has the power to mislead people	There should be a ban on advertising of harmful or dangerous products	I get the feeling of being deceived while watching most of the ads	Just because an ad has obscene content does not mean that it is unethical	There should be more regulation of advertising; the current regulation is quite insufficient	There are lots of commercials which are of harmful nature to the youngsters' values	The fact that some ads can be banned is quite contradictory to creativity
I do not believe that an ad has the power to mislead people	Pearson Correlation	1	0.061	-.121(**)	0.075	.126(**)	-0.054	-0.072
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.139	0.003	0.068	0.002	0.184	0.076
There should be a ban on advertising of harmful or dangerous products	Pearson Correlation	0.061	1	-.239(**)	0.008	.175(**)	-.208(**)	0.055
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.139		0.000	0.841	0.000	0.000	0.176
I get the feeling of being deceived while watching most of the ads	Pearson Correlation	-.121(**)	-.239(**)	1	-0.032	-.240(**)	.186(**)	-.121(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.003	0.000		0.428	0.000	0.000	0.003
Just because an ad has obscene content does not mean that it is unethical	Pearson Correlation	0.075	0.008	-0.032	1	-0.042	0.019	0.075
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.068	0.841	0.428		0.300	0.642	0.068

There should be more regulation of advertising; the current regulation is quite insufficient	Pearson Correlation	.126(**)	.175(**)	-.240(**)	-0.042	1	-.364(**)	.126(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.300		0.000	0.002
There are lots of commercials which are of harmful nature to the youngsters' values	Pearson Correlation	-0.054	-.208(**)	.186(**)	0.019	-.364(**)	1	-0.054
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.184	0.000	0.000	0.642	0.000		0.184
The fact that some ads can be banned is quite contradictory to creativity	Pearson Correlation	-0.072	0.055	.165(**)	-.156(**)	-0.050	0.064	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.076	0.176	0.000	0.000	0.220	0.116	
N		600	600	600	600	600	600	600

The Most Sensible Ethical Debate

At this stage of the survey, the respondents were given the list of four major ethical debates in the (Turkish) advertising business and were asked to state the one requiring a more sensible approach when it comes to ethics.

The table below shows the results in detail. Apparently, for the majority of Turkish consumers (52 percent), advertising that is ‘deceptive / misleading / causing unfair competition’ is the type of advertising that requires a more sensible ethical approach than any other topic. 38 percent of the consumers interviewed believe that the issue should be tackled with more sensitivity to its ethical aspect. This finding is in line with most of the existing surveys’ results on the matter. For example Hyman, Tansey and Clark (1994) concluded in their paper called ‘Research on Advertising Ethics: Past, Present and Future’ that ‘use of deception in ads’ is the major topic that needs to be further exploited in the area of Advertising Ethics. It is a well known fact that everywhere in the world, businesses are prohibited to unfairly promote the value of their goods and services via advertising nor are they allowed to badmouth their competitors in any way. Turkish consumers are not any less sensitive to the matter as it has been pointed out in the section detailing RÖK (Reklam Özdenetim Kurulu). ‘Truthfulness’ which can be translated as ‘not being deceitful and misleading’ via implication, ambiguity, omission or exaggeration (see Appendix B for more detail), has been the code that has had by far the highest number of complaints for being violated.

The second mostly mentioned ethical debate for which a more sensitive approach is deemed appropriate by Turkish consumers has been the ‘negative messages towards youngsters and children’. This aspect, which has been stated by 38 percent of the sample, has also been the second most important topic on advertising ethics as indicated in the same paper by Hyman, Tansey and Clark (1994).

While it has been a long debated issue with no conclusive decision ever taken on where its limits are, ‘obscene content’ has been ranked to be the least sensible ethical debate for Turkish consumers amongst the three options, when it comes to advertising. Although there are previous research on the use of ‘sexuality’ in commercials in Turkey showing a high rate of belief in their impact on the society’s ethical values (Ergin and Özdemir 2007), the current research predicted that they are of less importance compared with ‘honesty’ and ‘children/youth advertising’. Another interesting thing to note is that males are significantly more sensitive to the issue than females (7 percent vs 13 percent).

TABLE 11: The most sensible ethical debate for Turkish consumers

	%
Deception/Misleading/Causing unfair competition	52
Negative messages towards youngsters/children	38
Obscene content	10
TOTAL	100

Preliminary Analyses – Reliability tests for EPQ Constructs

The data was analysed using SPSS. Prior to examining the hypothesised relationships, the reliability and validity of the constructs for Ethical Ideologies were assessed. Using the traditional Cronbach's alpha, the assessed reliability for both the 'Idealism' dimension ($\alpha=0,72$) as well as the 'Relativism' dimension ($\alpha=0,71$) were determined to be well within acceptable levels.

Preliminary Analyses – Creating the New Variable of Ethical

Ideology Taxonomy

Prior to conducting the analyses, scores on each scale were recoded into 'low' and 'high' by splitting each scale at its median (median for relativism=3.6 median for idealism=4.2). This procedure has resulted with the creation of a new categoric variable with four labels, namely:

- 1) High Idealism - High Relativism (HI-HR): *Situationists*
- 2) High Idealism - Low Relativism (HI-LR): *Absolutists*
- 3) Low Idealism - High Relativism (LI-HR): *Subjectivists*
- 4) Low Idealism - Low Relativism (LI-LR): *Exceptionists*

The incidence of each of the four segments of the new ethical ideology taxonomy has been computed to understand more in-depth the Turkish consumers' tendencies over moral issues. As was indicated above, the means obtained for both Idealism and Relativism were taken as the milestone for defining the new segments. For Idealism, those scored above 4.2, which is the average for that dimension, have been coded as "High

Idealism” on those scored below 4.2 have been coded as “Low Idealism”.

In the same way, those who scored below 3.6 for Relativism dimension were labeled as “Low Relativism” and those above as “High Relativism”.

Following that, a new variable has been created by using all the possible combinations and naming the new categories as Forsyth (1980) suggested.

The results indicate that the largest proportion of Turkish consumers (37 percent) are ‘Exceptionists’. To rephrase it, more than one third of Turkish consumers are utilitarians who endorse the value of moral principles but who also value pragmatically the consequences produced by those moral principles, thus weighing pro’s and con’s. It is interesting to note that in the “Meta-analytic Investigation of Cultural Variations in Idealism and Relativism” by Forsyth et al (2008) where they identified 139 samples from 29 countries, the authors concluded that “an exceptionist ethic is more common in Western countries” (813). But one should bear in mind that this was a relativistic study comparing the Idealism and Relativism mean scores of 29 countries to one another. Therefore, the positioning of Turkey being far from the Exceptionist quadrant is due to the level of gap between the two scores for each country, as well as their highest and lowest score for the two dimensions.

The second largest segment are ‘Situationists’ with 27 percent of occurrence. Situationists are those who reject common moral rules and grounds and who believe in a relativity requiring an individualistic approach depending on the situation and circumstances surrounding it.

TABLE 12: Occurences of the Four Segments of Ethical Ideology Taxonomy

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	LR-LI – Exceptionists	222	37.0
	LR-HI – Absolutists	110	18.4
	HR-LI –Subjectivists	103	17.2
	HR-HI - Situationists	164	27.4
	Total	600	100.0

Hypothesis1- Demographic Differences Between The Different Beliefs and Attitudes Towards Advertising Regulation

The statements that were developed to measure the Turkish consumers' attitude towards Advertising Regulation were put under One-Way Anova analyses with the categoric variables 'Age', 'Gender' and 'Socio Economic Status (SES)' to determine significant demographic variations, if any.

H1a - Age

Out of the seven statements developed to measure consumers' attitude towards Advertising Ethics and Regulation, only one is determined to be in a significant relationship with Age as following:

- *There are lots of commercials which are of harmful nature to the youngsters' values (Birçok reklam gençlerin değerlerine zarar verir nitelikte)* [$F(4,595) = 4.957, p=.001$]. When descriptives are analysed it is seen that 15 to 19 years old consumers are significantly more prone to agree with this statement ($M=3.17$) than 36-45 and 46-60 age groups.

TABLE 13: Post-Hoc Test for 'Birçok reklam gençlerin değerlerine zarar verir nitelikte' vs Age

Age (I)	Age (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Significance
15-19	20-25	0.335	0.197	0.436
	26-35	0.490	0.190	0.075
	36-45	.678(*)	0.199	0.006
	46-60	.834(*)	0.208	0.001

Since no significance is detected for the attitudinal statements for Advertising Regulation, our Hypothesis H1a is not supported.

H1a NOT SUPPORTED: Younger age groups are significantly more prone to be against Advertising Regulation

H1b - Gender

None of the statements developed to measure consumers' attitude towards Advertising Ethics and Regulation were determined to be in a significant relationship with Gender. Therefore Hypothesis H1b is not supported.

H1b NOT SUPPORTED: Men are significantly more prone to be for Advertising Regulation

Hypothesis2- Idealism vs Relativism for Turkish Consumers

The survey aimed to understand the predominant Ethical Ideology of Turkish consumers. As depicted at Table 15 below, the mean for the 10 statements of Idealism is 4.2 over 5 while the mean for the 10 statements of Relativism is 3.6. The results compare well with the previous survey results on EPQ in Turkey as covered in the article by Rawwas et al, with the former score being 4.1 and the latter 3.2 (2005: 189). A further comment can thus be made on the consistent level of idealism over the 6 years, while an increase in relativism is also evident to be noted down.

TABLE 14a: Summary Statistics for Idealism and Relativism

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance
Idealism	4.200	2.872	4.663	1.791	1.624	0.293
Relativism	3.579	3.059	4.187	1.128	1.369	0.123

As earlier surveys pointed out, Turkish consumers are significantly more prone to be Idealistic than Relativistic. The significance testing results indicate that the difference between the mean scores of Idealism and Relativism is significant.

TABLE 14b: Significance Testing for Idealism and Relativism

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1 Idealism & Relativism	600	.479	.000

The mean and the standard deviation of each of the 20 statements are also worth noting to have a deeper understanding of the situation. They are presented at the Table 16 and 17, first for Idealism and then for Relativism. A short review of the results show that the highest agreement is observed for two statements for Idealism, namely ‘The dignity and welfare of people should be the most important concern in any society’ and ‘If an action could harm an innocent other, then it should not be done’ with 4.66 over 5. Following those with 4.65 over 5, comes ‘One should never psychologically or physically harm another person’. The lowest agreement among the ten Idealism statements has been recorded for “Deciding whether or not to perform an act by balancing the positive consequences of the act against the negative consequences of the act is immoral” with only 2.87 points over 5.

TABLE 15: Agreement Level with Idealism Statements

	Mean	Std. Deviation
The dignity and welfare of people should be the most important concern in any society	4.66	0.711
If an action could harm an innocent other, then it should not be done	4.66	0.719
One should never psychologically or physically harm another person.	4.65	0.827
One should not perform an action which might in any way threaten the dignity and the welfare of another individual.	4.53	0.937
The existence of potential harm to others is always wrong, irrespective of the gains to be made.	4.37	1.113
A person should make certain that their actions never intentionally harm another even to a small degree	4.17	1.174
Risks to another should never be tolerated, irrespective of how small the risks might be	4.14	1.213
It is never necessary to sacrifice the welfare of others	4.05	1.302
Moral actions are those which closely match ideals of the most 'perfect' action	3.90	1.199
Deciding whether or not to perform an act by balancing the positive consequences of the act against the negative consequences of the act is immoral.	2.87	1.498

The highest agreement among the ten Relativism statements has been observed for 'What is ethical varies from one situation or society to another' with an average of 4.19 points over 5. Following that, came 'Moral standards are simply personal rules which indicate how a person should behave, and are not to be applied in making judgments of others' with an average of 3.89 and 'Moral standards should be seen as being individualistic; what one person considers moral may be judged immoral by another' with an average of 3.86 points over 5. The least agreed statement has been 'There are no ethical principles that are so important to be part of any code of ethics' with an average of only 3.06 points over 5.

TABLE 16: Agreement Level with Relativism Statements

	Mean	Std. Deviation
What is ethical varies from one situation or society to another	4.19	1.190
Moral standards are simply personal rules which indicate how a person should behave, and are not to be applied in making judgments of others.	3.89	1.312
Moral standards should be seen as being individualistic; what one person considers moral may be judged immoral by another	3.86	1.339
Different types of moralities cannot be compared as to 'rightness'	3.73	1.323
Questions of what is ethical for everyone can never be resolved since what is moral or immoral is up to the individual	3.62	1.299
Rigidity establishing an ethical position that prevents certain types of actions stands in the way of better human relations	3.57	1.353
Ethical considerations in interpersonal relations are so complex that individuals should be allowed to formulate their own individual codes.	3.35	1.581
Whether a lie is judged to be moral or immoral depends upon the circumstances surrounding the action.	3.33	1.412
No rule concerning lying can be formulated; whether a lie is permissible totally depends upon the situation	3.19	1.620
There are no ethical principles that are so important to be part of any code of ethics	3.06	1.359

Based on all the above, it can be said that our second hypothesis has been supported.

H2 SUPPORTED: Turkish consumers are more idealistic than relativistic in their ethical judgments.

Hypothesis3- Demography and Idealism

H3a – Age and Idealism

To be able to confirm whether a significant relation exists between Age and Ethical Ideologies, first, the twenty statements developed to measure Ethical Positioning with the EPQ model of Forsyth were put under scrutiny. Only three of them were determined to be in a significant relationship with Age as following:

- *A person should make certain that their actions never intentionally harm another even to a small degree (Bir insan bir davranışta bulunmadan önce, sonucunda çok ufak oranda bile olsa, başkalarına bilinçli bir zarar vermeyeceğinden emin olmalıdır)* [F (4,595) = 8.141, p=.000]. When descriptives are analysed it is seen that 15-19 year olds have agreed with this statement (M=3.69) significantly less than all other age groups.

TABLE 17a: Post-Hoc Test for ‘Bir insan bir davranışta bulunmadan önce, sonucunda çok ufak oranda bile olsa, başkalarına bilinçli bir zarar vermeyeceğinden emin olmalıdır’ vs Age

Age (I)	Age (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Std. Error
15-19	20-25	-.505(*)	0.153	0.009
	26-35	-.668(*)	0.147	0.000
	36-45	-.643(*)	0.155	0.000
	46-60	-.499(*)	0.162	0.018

- *Moral actions are those which closely match ideals of the most ‘perfect’ action (Ahlaklı davranışlar ‘mükemmel’ olarak tanımlanabilecek davranışa en yakın olanlardır)* [F (4,599) =

8.862 , $p=.000$]. When descriptives are analysed it is seen that 36-45 years old have agreed with the statement ($M=4.29$) significantly more than all the younger age groups.

TABLE 17b: Post-Hoc Test for ‘Ahlaklı davranışlar ‘mükemmel’ olarak tanımlanabilecek davranışa en yakın olanlardır’ vs Age

Age (I)	Age (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Std. Error
36-45	15-19	.645(*)	0.158	0.000
	20-25	.632(*)	0.151	0.000
	26-35	.425(*)	0.144	0.027
	46-60	0.219	0.159	0.644

- *Whether a lie is judged to be moral or immoral depends upon the circumstances surrounding the action (Söylenmiş bir yalanın ahlak dışı olup olmadığını hangi şartlar altında söylendiği*

belirler) [$F(4,599) = 8.727, p=.001$]. When descriptives are analysed it is seen that the agreement is higher especially among the very young ones, 15-19 years old ($M=3.82$) with a significance over all age groups except 46-60.

TABLE 17c: Post-Hoc Test for ‘Söylenmiş bir yalanın ahlak dışı olup olmadığını hangi şartlar altında söylendiği belirler’ vs Age

Age (I)	Age (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Std. Error
15-19	20-25	.633(*)	0.185	0.006
	26-35	.683(*)	0.178	0.001
	36-45	.605(*)	0.187	0.011
	46-60	0.441	0.195	0.160

As for the two major dimensions of the Ethical Ideologies, namely Idealism and Relativism, no significant relationship has been found with the age variable as shown below, thus refuting H3a:

Idealism [$F(4,595) = 1.069, p=.371$].

Relativism [$F(4,595) = 0.689, p=.600$].

H3a NOT SUPPORTED: Older people are significantly more Idealistic than younger people

H3b – Gender and Idealism

Again, out of the twenty statements developed to measure Ethical Positioning with EPQ model of Forsyth, only three were determined to be in a significant relationship with Gender as following:

- *Risks to another should never be tolerated, irrespective of how small the risks might be (Söz konusu riskler ne kadar küçük olursa olsun, başkalarını riske sokacak hiçbir davranış hoş görülmemelidir)* [$F(1,598) = 5.504, p=.053$]. When descriptives are analysed it is seen that men agree significantly more ($M=4.24$) than women.
- *The existence of potential harm to others is always wrong, irrespective of the gains to be made (Sonucunda ne kadar kazanç sağlanacak olursa olunsun, eğer bir durum başkalarına zarar verebilecek olma ihtimali barındırıyorsa her halükarda yanlıştır)*

[$F(1,598) = 14.216, p=.001$]. When descriptives are analysed it is seen that men agree significantly more ($M=4.52$) than women.

- ***Moral standards are simply personal rules which indicate how a person should behave, and are not to be applied in making judgments of others (Ahlaki ölçütler sadece bir insanın kendisinin nasıl davranması gerektiğine dair oluşturduğu kişisel kurallardır; diğer kişileri yargılamakta kullanılmamalıdır).*** [$F(1,598) = 8.453, p=.027$]. When descriptives are analysed, it is seen this time that women agree significantly more ($M=4.00$) with this statement than men.

As for the two major dimensions of the Ethical Ideologies, namely Idealism and Relativism, though no significant relation exists between Relativism and the Gender variable, a slightly significant relationship, which is right at the limit, has been found between Idealism and Gender. When descriptives are analysed, it is seen that, contrary to the expectations and the literature, men agree more with the Idealism statements than women, which leads us to not support H3b.

Idealism [$F(1,598) = 3.802, p=.052$].

Relativism [$F(1,598) = 0.902, p=.343$].

H3b NOT SUPPORTED: Women are significantly more Idealistic than Men.

The Ethical Ideology Taxonomy / Quadrant by All Demographic Variables

Since almost none of the sub-hypotheses above have been supported by the two-folded Ethical Ideology scale developed by Forsyth (1980), a further analysis has been conducted to see if there would be further proofs to the questions posed with the use of the four-folded Ethical Ideology Taxonomy of Forsyth. By dichotomizing and crossing the Idealism and Relativism scales, a four quadrant taxonomy is obtained, which allows to segment respondents by their level of espousing idealistic or non-idealistic values and by their beliefs in moral rules as absolute or debatable.

The below Table 20 shows the distribution of the demographics for the newly formulated taxonomy and the result of the proportion tests in brackets. As can be seen, the four segments do not differentiate significantly based on SES variable, but do pose significant disparities for Age and Gender. The Subjectivists, who are high on relativism and low on idealism have significantly more consumers from 15-19 age group when compared with the Absolutists (Low Relativism and High Idealism) and the Situationists (High Relativism and High Idealism). Moreover, Subjectivists are comprised significantly more of females than males in comparison to Absolutists.

TABLE 18: The Demographical distribution of the Ethical Ideology Taxonomy

		A	B	C	D
		LR-LI Exceptionists	LR-HI Absolutists	HR-LI Subjectivists	HR-HI Situationists
SES	AB	21.4%	20.8%	29.0%	15.6%
	C1-C2	46.2%	49.6%	41.8%	50.8%
	DE	32.4%	29.6%	29.2%	33.6%
	Total	222	110	103	164
Age	15-19	17.6%	11.8%	27.4% (B,D)	14.3%
	20-25	21.5%	22.0%	22.6%	18.0%
	26-35	24.1%	30.2%	22.9%	24.5%
	36-45	19.9%	21.1%	12.0%	24.5%
	46-60	16.9%	15.0%	15.1%	18.8%
	Total	222	110	103	164
Gender	Female	50.5%	40.8%	59.2% (B)	50.8%
	Male	49.5%	59.2% (C)	40.8%	49.2%
	Total	222	110	103	164
<i>Results are based on two-sided tests with significance level 0.05.</i>					

Hypothesis4- Predicting the Attitude Towards Advertising Ethics and Regulation by the Ethical Ideology Taxonomy

To explain H4, a two-staged analyses is conducted. First, all analyses are done with the two-folded Ethical Ideologies, namely Idealism and Relativism. Following that, the same analyses are conducted with the four-folded Ethical Ideology Taxonomy, which is the actual base for our Hypotheses.

Prediction with Idealism and Relativism

For this part of the analysis, Correlation and Regression Analyses are conducted. Correlation Analysis showed that '***I do not believe that an ad has the power to mislead people***', '***Just because an ad has obscene content does not mean that it is unethical***' and '***There should be more regulation of advertising; the current regulation is quite insufficient***' are *positively* correlated with both the Idealism and the Relativism dimensions, while '***There should be a ban on advertising of harmful or dangerous products***' is also *positively* correlated with the Idealism dimension. Interestingly, both Idealistic and Relativistic dimensions are in high correlation with Advertising Regulation and Ethics Attributes, although 'banning' is slightly less supported among Relativists.

When *negative* correlations are investigated, '***I get the feeling of being deceived while watching most of the ads***', '***There are lots of commercials which are of harmful nature to the youngsters' values***' and '***The fact that some ads can be banned is quite contradictory to creativity***'

are determined to be *negatively* correlated with both the Idealism and the Relativism dimensions. This means that feeling deceived by ads, thinking that the values of the youth are being distorted by them and believing that banning ads contradicts with creativity, do not have much to do with neither being Idealistic nor Relativistic.

TABLE 19: Correlations between Idealism/Relativism and Attitudinal Statements for Advertising Ethics and Regulation (n=600)

		Idealism	Relativism
I do not believe that an ad has the power to mislead people	Pearson Correlation	.161(**)	.101(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.014
I get the feeling of being deceived while watching most of the ads	Pearson Correlation	-.204(**)	-.103(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.012
There are lots of commercials which are of harmful nature to the youngsters' values	Pearson Correlation	-.204(**)	-.112(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.006
Just because an ad has obscene content does not mean that it is unethical	Pearson Correlation	.101(*)	.145(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.014	0.000
There should be a ban on advertising of harmful or dangerous products	Pearson Correlation	.234(**)	-0.015
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.718
There should be more regulation of advertising; the current regulation is quite insufficient	Pearson Correlation	.218(**)	.188(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000
The fact that some ads can be banned is quite contradictory to creativity	Pearson Correlation	-.108(**)	-.207(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.008	0.000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The Regression Analysis supported that the Ethical Ideologies, especially the Idealism dimension, are a good predictor of the majority of the Attitude towards Advertising Ethics and Regulation aspects, while a cautionary approach is required due to low R² values. The Idealism dimension is good at predicting all of the attitudes towards Advertising Ethics and Regulation except ***‘The fact that some ads can be banned is quite contradictory to creativity’***; while the Relativism dimension is good at predicting only four attitudinal aspects out of seven as follows: ***‘Just because an ad has obscene content does not mean that it is unethical’***, ***‘There should be more regulation of advertising; the current regulation is quite insufficient’***, ***‘There are lots of commercials which are of harmful nature to the youngsters’ values’*** and ***‘The fact that some ads can be banned is quite contradictory to creativity’***. The Tables 20 to 26 summarize the major variables in question.

TABLE 20 Predicting *‘I do not believe that an ad has the power to mislead people’* by I/R

Predictors: 10 statements of Idealism or 10 statements of Relativism

	df	R ²	F	Sig.
Idealism	10,599	,044	2,719	,003
Relativism	10,599	,029	1,736	,069

TABLE 21 Predicting *‘I get the feeling of being deceived while watching most of the ads’* by I/R

Predictors: 10 statements of Idealism or 10 statements of Relativism

	Df	R ²	F	Sig.
Idealism	10,599	,072	4,577	,000
Relativism	10,599	,027	1,646	,090

TABLE 22 Predicting ‘*There are lots of commercials which are of harmful nature to the youngsters’ values*’ by I/R

Predictors: 10 statements of Idealism or 10 statements of Relativism

	df	R2	F	Sig.
Idealism	10,599	,052	3,256	,000
Relativism	10,599	,030	1,815	,055

TABLE 23 Predicting ‘*Just because an ad has obscene content does not mean that it is unethical*’ by I/R

Predictors: 10 statements of Idealism or 10 statements of Relativism

	df	R2	F	Sig.
Idealism	10,599	,035	2,158	,019
Relativism	10,599	,050	3,082	,001

TABLE 24 Predicting ‘*There should be more regulation of advertising; the current regulation is quite insufficient*’ by I/R

Predictors: 10 statements of Idealism or 10 statements of Relativism

	df	R2	F	Sig.
Idealism	10,599	,063	3,981	,000
Relativism	10,599	,058	3,621	,000

TABLE 25 Predicting ‘*There should be a ban on advertising of harmful or dangerous products*’ by I/R

Predictors: 10 statements of Idealism or 10 statements of Relativism

	df	R2	F	Sig.
Idealism	10,599	,094	6,142	,000
Relativism	10,599	,029	1,776	,062

TABLE 26 Predicting ‘*The fact that some ads can be banned is quite contradictory to creativity*’ by I/R

Predictors: 10 statements of Idealism or 10 statements of Relativism

	df	R2	F	Sig.
Idealism	10,599	,027	1,627	,095
Relativism	10,599	,064	4,057	,000

Prediction with the four-folded Ethical Ideology Taxonomy

As the previous section showed, the Idealism and the Relativism dimensions are not quite strong in making a good prediction when it comes to Attitudes Towards Advertising Ethics and Regulation. Therefore, a second phase of ANOVA analyses have been conducted between the newly created four-folded Ethical Ideology Taxonomy and the attitudinal statements about Advertising Ethics and Regulation separately, as to prove what has been suggested with our third hypothesis. As it is detailed below, there is a significant relationship between all attitudinal statements and the taxonomy of four segments except ‘Just because an ad has obscene content, it does not mean that it is unethical’. Each statement is detailed with variations in descriptives to give the reader a clearer understanding as to the level of the Idealism and Relativism the consumers display.

H4a

Statements about Advertising Regulation were put to test with the Ethical Ideology Taxonomy and the following results were obtained:

- ***There should be a ban on advertising of harmful or dangerous products (Bence tehlikeli veya zararlı ürünlerin reklamlarına karşı yasaklamalar olmalı)*** [$F(3,596) = 4.986, p=.002$]. A closer look at the descriptives show that Absolutists (High Idealism – Low Relativism) have agreed with the statement significantly more ($M=4.55$) than the Exceptionists.

- *There should be more regulation of advertising; the current regulation is quite insufficient (Günümüzde reklamlar üzerinde daha fazla denetim olmalı; şu anki denetim çok yetersiz)* [$F(3,596) = 8.976, p=.000$]. When descriptives are analysed, it is noted that especially Situationists (High Idealism - High Relativism) have agreed with the statement significantly more ($M=4.05$) than the other segments. The reader must keep in mind that this statement has been positively correlated with both the Idealism and the Relativism dimensions at the Correlation analysis for H2 testing, with slightly higher scores of significance for Idealism and this is in line with the above finding.

When the findings above are examined further to see if they support H4a, the following can be stated: The two statements to measure support for Advertising Regulation are most highly appreciated by the consumers from the Quadrants with High Idealism, either by Absolutists or by Subjectivists. Thus hypothesis H4a is supported.

H4a SUPPORTED: Quadrants with High Idealism (Absolutists and Subjectivists) are more prone for Advertising Regulation than the other quadrants

H4b

Statements about Advertising Ethics were put to test with the Ethical Ideology Taxonomy and the following results were obtained:

- ***I do not believe that an ad has the power to mislead people (Bir reklamın kitleleri yanlış yönlendirebilme gücü olduğuna inanmıyorum)*** [$F(3,596) = 6.852, p=.000$]. When descriptives are analysed it is seen that Situationists (High Idealism-High Relativism) have agreed with the statement significantly more ($M=3.21$) than the Exceptionists and Subjectivists. One must bear in mind that this statement was also one that was highly correlated with both the Idealism and Relativism dimensions in the Correlation Analysis, as is supported with its high incidence rate amongst Situationists.
- ***Just because an ad has obscene content does not mean that it is unethical (Bir reklamın müstehcen içerikli olması ahlak dışı olduğunu göstermez)*** [$F(3,596) = 2.081, p=.102$]. This is the only statement with no significant relation with the newly created Ethical Ideology Taxonomy. Interestingly, this attitudinal statement was demonstrated to be in positive correlation with both dimensions for H2 testing. This might mean that it has a more or less equal distribution over the Idealism and Relativism span of the Turkish consumers.
- ***I get the feeling of being deceived while watching most of the ads (Birçok reklamı izlerken kandırıldığım hissine kapılıyorum)*** [$F(3,596) = 9.544, p=.000$]. This time, the descriptives indicate that Exceptionists (Low Idealism - Low Relativism) have agreed with the statement significantly more ($M=2.98$) than the other three

segments. Again, this finding is parallel to the findings of the earlier section about H2, which confirmed that the statement was negatively correlated with both the Idealism and the Relativism dimensions.

- ***There are lots of commercials which are of harmful nature to the youngsters' values (Birçok reklam gençlerin değerlerine zarar verir nitelikte)*** [$F(3,596) = 3.473, p=.016$]. This time, the descriptives indicate that Exceptionists (Low Idealism - Low Relativism) have agreed with the statement significantly more ($M=2.91$) than the Situationists. Both Idealism and Relativism have negatively correlated with this statement as explained at the earlier section, confirming the existence of only the Exceptionists when it comes to significance testing.

It is interesting to note that, the sensitivity to Advertising Ethics is more common among Exceptionists, those who are low on both Idealism and Relativism, thus refuting H4b. This also is an evidence of Advertising Ethics and Advertising Regulation being two totally separate topics in the consumer minds. Attitudes about Advertising Ethics operate more independently of the Ethical Ideologies.

H4b NOT SUPPORTED: Quadrants with High Idealism (Absolutists and Subjectivists) are more sensitive towards Advertising Ethics than the other quadrants

Overall, it can be concluded that both the Idealism and the Relativism dimensions are fairly good predictors of the behaviour, predisposition and attitude towards Advertising Regulation and Ethics. But given the low R² levels observed, it would be more accurate to say that further precision is obtained when the four-folded Ethical Ideology Taxonomy is used for prediction. The study shows that the intensity with which the Turkish consumers are idealistic or relativistic, and their combination, is a much better tool when predicting the attitude and behaviour towards Advertising Ethics and Regulation.

***Relationship Between the Behaviour on Advertising Regulation
and Ethical Ideologies – H4c***

Finally, to support H4c, the moral behaviour (which in this case is measured with *intention*) of the respondents when it comes to ‘regulating’ ads, were investigated in the light of their Ethical Ideologies as defined by their level of Idealism and Relativism.

As depicted in Table 29, the results displayed significant variations for Absolutists, those who are high on Idealism but low on Relativism, on two sided t-tests at 95%. It is interesting to note that Absolutists were significantly more aware than the Exceptionists of the existence of a regular control system, kind of a regulation, over the ads in Turkey. While only 29 percent of the Exceptionists mentioned to be aware of this fact, the ratio was determined to be 43 amongst the Absolutists. The same has been true when the awareness about RÖK – Reklam Özdenetim Kurulu / Advertising SelfRegulation Board was investigated. While 35 percent of the Absolutists

are determined to ever heard about RÖK when prompted by its name, only 18 percent of the Exceptionists stated the same.

There were two questions included in the survey to measure the respondents' *behaviour* on the Advertising Regulation. Knowing that behaviour is not always a direct reflection of the attitude, the respondents were asked to state whether they have ever submitted an official complaint for an ad to a relevant institution. Again knowing that sometimes *intention* is a better predictor of the real action, thus behaviour, than the attitude, the respondents were further asked to state their tendency to ever submit an official complaint for an ad. The results showed that the Absolutists were still the outlier in that case, with 37 percent mentioning of having thought of submitting a complaint. The number is significantly higher when compared with 19 percent of the Exceptionists and 20 percent of the Subjectivists with the same intention.

TABLE 27: The Awareness and Behaviour Levels for Advertising Regulation

		A	B	C	D
		LR-LI Exceptionists	LR-HI Absolutists	HR-LI Subjectivists	HR-HI Situationists
Awareness on advertising regulation in Turkey	Yes	28.7%	43.2% (A)	34.4%	34.9%
	No	71.3%	56.7%	65.6%	65.1%
	Total	222	110	103	164
Awareness of RÖK	Yes	18.2%	35.3% (A)	25.0%	22.7%
	No	81.8%	64.7%	75.0%	77.3%
	Total	222	110	103	164
Ever submitted an official complaint about an ad	Yes	1.4%	1.6%	0.4%	1.2%
	No	98.6%	98.4%	99.6%	98.8%
	Total	222	110	103	164
Ever thought of submitting an official complaint about an ad	Yes	19.2%	37.4% (A, C)	20.1%	23.5%
	No	80.8%	62.6%	79.9%	76.5%
	Total	219	108	103	162

Results are based on two-sided tests with significance level 0.05.

Given the above H4c is supported.

H4c SUPPORTED: Those with High Idealism and Low Relativism (Absolutists) are more apt to have thought of submitting an official complaint for an ad than those with Low Idealism and High Relativism (Subjectivists)

Other Findings

Advertising Regulation and Advertising Ethics vs Socio Economic Status (SES)

Two of the seven statements developed to measure consumers' attitude towards advertising ethics and regulation is determined to be in a significant relationship with SES as following:

- *I do not believe that an ad has the power to mislead people (Bir reklamın kitleleri yanlış yönlendirebilme gücü olduğuna inanmıyorum)* [$F(2,597) = 4.957, p=.002$]. When descriptives are analysed it is seen that middle social class people (C1C2) do agree significantly more with the statement ($M=3.09$) than the lower social class people (DE).

TABLE 28a: Post-Hoc Test for 'Bir reklamın kitleleri yanlış yönlendirme gücü olduğuna inanmıyorum' vs SES

SES (I)	SES (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Significance
AB	C1-C2	-0.279	0.162	0.199
	DE	0.220	0.174	0.417
C1-C2	AB	0.279	0.162	0.199
	DE	.499(*)	0.142	0.006
DE	AB	-0.220	0.174	0.417
	C1-C2	-.499(*)	0.142	0.001

- *There are lots of commercials which are of harmful nature to the youngsters' values (Birçok reklam gençlerin değerlerine zarar verir nitelikte)* [$F(2,597) = 4.957, p=.001$]. When descriptives are analysed it is seen that lowest social class people (DE) do agree

significantly less with the statement (M=2.45) than higher social class people (AB).

TABLE 28b: Post-Hoc Test for ‘Birçok reklam gençlerin değerlerine zarar verir nitelikte’

SES (I)	SES (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Significance
AB	C1-C2	0.295	0.160	0.156
	DE	.569(*)	0.172	0.003
C1-C2	AB	-0.295	0.160	0.156
	DE	0.274	0.140	0.125
DE	AB	-.569(*)	0.172	0.003
	C1-C2	-0.274	0.140	0.125

Ethical Ideologies and SES

As for the measurement of the relationship between the Socio Economic Status (SES) variable and the Ethical Ideologies, it is concluded that out of the twenty statements developed to measure Ethical Positioning with EPQ model of Forsyth, four of them were determined to be in a significant relationship with SES. They are as detailed below:

- ***Risks to another should never be tolerated, irrespective of how small the risks might be (Söz konusu riskler ne kadar küçük olursa olsun, başkalarını riske sokacak hiçbir davranış hoş görülmemelidir)*** [$F(2,597) = 4.644, p=.042$]. When descriptives are analysed it is seen that middle class people (C1C2) do agree significantly more with the statement (M=4.25) than lower class people (DE).

TABLE 29a: Post-Hoc Test for ‘Söz konusu riskler ne kadar küçük olursa olsun, başkalarını riske sokacak hiçbir davranış hoş görülmemelidir’ vs SES

SES (I)	SES (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Significance
AB	C1-C2	-0.279	0.162	0.199
	DE	0.220	0.174	0.417
C1-C2	AB	0.279	0.162	0.199
	DE	.499(*)	0.142	0.006
DE	AB	-0.220	0.174	0.417
	C1-C2	-.499(*)	0.142	0.001

- Moral actions are those which closely match ideals of the most ‘perfect’ action (Ahlaklı davranışlar ‘mükemmel’ olarak tanımlanabilecek davranışa en yakın olanlardır) [F (2,597) = 5.472, p=.022]. Higher social class people (AB) do agree significantly less with this statement (M=3.66) compared to lower social class people (DE).***

TABLE 29b: Post-Hoc Test for ‘Ahlaklı davranışlar ‘mükemmel’ olarak tanımlanabilecek davranışa en yakın olanlardır’ vs SES

SES (I)	SES (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Significance
AB	C1-C2	-0.256	0.128	0.113
	DE	-.378(*)	0.137	0.017
C1-C2	AB	0.256	0.128	0.113
	DE	-0.122	0.112	0.518
DE	AB	.378(*)	0.137	0.017
	C1-C2	0.122	0.112	0.518

- Deciding whether or not to perform an act by balancing the positive consequences of the act against the negative consequences of the act is immoral (Herhangi bir şeyi yapmaya, olumlu sonuçları ile olumsuz sonuçlarını dengeleyerek karar***

vermek ahlak dışıdır) [F (2,597) = 7.916, p=.029]. Higher social class people (AB) do agree significantly less with this statement (M=2.56) compared to lower social class people (DE).

TABLE 29c: Post-Hoc Test for ‘Herhangi bir şeyi yapmaya, olumlu sonuçları ile olumsuz sonuçlarını dengeleyerek karar vermek ahlak dışıdır’ vs SES

SES (I)	SES (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Significance
AB	C1-C2	-0.363	0.160	0.060
	DE	-.434(*)	0.171	0.031
C1-C2	AB	0.363	0.160	0.060
	DE	-0.070	0.140	0.870
DE	AB	.434(*)	0.171	0.031
	C1-C2	0.070	0.140	0.870

- *Moral standards are simply personal rules which indicate how a person should behave, and are not to be applied in making judgments of others (Ahlaki ölçütler sadece bir insanın kendisinin nasıl davranması gerektiğine dair oluşturduğu kişisel kurallardır; diğer kişileri yargılamakta kullanılmamalıdır).* [F (2,597) = 6.676, p=.020]. When descriptives are analysed it is seen that higher social class people (AB) do agree significantly less with the statement (M=3.60) than middle social class people (C1C2).

TABLE 29d: Post-Hoc Test for ‘Ahlaki ölçütler sadece bir insanın kendisinin nasıl davranması gerektiğine dair oluşturduğu kişisel kurallardır; diğer kişileri yargılamakta kullanılmamalıdır vs SES

SES (I)	SES (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Significance
AB	C1-C2	-.383(*)	0.140	0.017
	DE	-0.330	0.150	0.073
C1-C2	AB	.383(*)	0.140	0.017
	DE	0.054	0.122	0.899
DE	AB	0.330	0.150	0.073
	C1-C2	-0.054	0.122	0.899

But for the two major dimensions of the Ethical Ideologies, namely ***Idealism and Relativism***, no significant relationship has been found between them and the SES variable as below:

Idealism [$F(2,597) = 1.685, p=.186$].

Relativism [$F(2,597) = 1.231, p=.293$].

Discussion and Conclusion

In general, the results are in line with the a priori expectations.

Overall, the analyses resulted in three important revelations: 1) that Turkish people are significantly more Idealistic than Relativistic, with women being more so than men, 2) that variations in the ethical ideologies of people is a much better predictor for the attitude and future behaviour (measured as intention) of Advertising Regulation while no such strong association is observed for any of the demographics, and 3) that Advertising Ethics is not correlated with the general moral ideologies of the people.

The first important revelation of the study has been to find that Turkish consumers were significantly more idealistic than relativistic in their ethical ideologies. This is totally in line with the relatively small literature available and supports Rawwas et al's conclusion (2000). Another important revelation of the study has been the differing weights of the two dimensions of the personal ethical ideologies, namely Idealism and Relativism, in explaining ethical judgments. While in general, it is concluded that ethical ideology is an important predictor of ethical decision making and behavior, there are important studies that show that idealism may have a stronger relationship with ethical judgments than relativism (Barnett et al., 1994; Singhapakdi et al., 1995; Bass et al., 1998). The study in concern has also proved this to be true, supporting the stronger substance of Idealism over Relativism and this is clearly observed when it comes to gender differences. Women were found to be significantly more idealistic

than men, in line with earlier empirical studies (Bass et al. 1998 ; Hartikainen and Tortilla 2004). Nonetheless, despite the fact that there is more than one study that proved that older people are more conservative, stricter in terms of moral absolutes and universal truth when making ethical decisions (Serwinek 1992, Bass et al 1998; Hartikainen and Torstila 2004), this study could not find a correlation between the two.

In general, no differences were observed for any of the demographics when Advertising Regulation is the concern. Although one would expect its espousal to be more common amongst men and among older age groups, no evidence is found to support this.

When means other than demographics to predict the attitude towards Advertising Regulation or Advertising Ethics were looked for, the Ethical Ideology Taxonomy presented a strong alternative. But given the fact that it would be hard to differentiate the differences via only two segments, namely Idealism and Relativism, the four-folded Ethical Ideology Taxonomy of Forsyth was preferred for the analysis. The outcome proved this choice to be right, with very low R² scores despite a significant testing result when only the two dimensions were taken into account.

In line with the finding that idealism has a stronger prediction power than relativism, the hypothesis that the quadrants with the High Idealism (Situationists and Absolutists) would be more prone to support Advertising Regulation proved accuracy. Moreover, the hypothesis that Absolutists would be significantly more inclined to have thought of

submitting a claim to the regulational institutions of advertising than Situationists also proved right. But interestingly, no support is found when the High Idealism segments were expected to be more sensitive towards Advertising Ethics.

Implications and future research directions

Building on the body of survey research, the results of the quantitative interviews contribute both to the literature of Advertising Regulation and Ethics, and that of Personal Ethical Ideology as well as to the Turkish Advertising industry and its stakeholders. In summary, the supported hypotheses, as well as the non-supported ones, will have further implications for better planning and segmented targetting of advertising, while also helping to establish a more targeted approach when it comes to media literacy in order to avoid possible misreadings of ‘unethical’ ads or ‘regulation’ of advertising.

The findings first support Forsyth’s (1992) conclusion that “individuals who differ in relativism and idealism divaricate when making moral judgments, in attitudes toward many contemporary moral issues (...)” (467). Since the ethical ideology of individuals seems to be a good explanatory variable for probable questions concerning Advertising Regulation, as such, it should be included in future research on advertising regulation.

With regard to the specific results, it should be noted that some of the findings have been consistent with the literature while others have not.

For example, Turks are determined to be significantly more idealistic than realistic based on Hofstede's (1980) findings. Hofstede claimed that Turkish culture, which is low on masculinity and high on uncertainty avoidance, is based on prioritizing 'others' rather than 'self'. This is reflected onto different facets of life, starting from childhood, though not directly translated in all occasions. When youngsters aged 15-24 were asked the top three values that they were taught by their parents, 'honesty', 'religiosity', 'self-confidence', 'being hard-working' and 'being respectful' were the top listed values as stated by them (Zeylan 2007). Therefore it should be quite normal to expect a higher value of idealism than relativism.

It has to be noted that this contradicts with another stream of surveys that is centered on the idea that Turkey has been going through a strong transitionary phase in the last decade that resulted in a great shift in important values. For example, Askun et al. (2010) found that 'achievement' is the third most important value for Turkish managers, re-establishing the fact that Turkey is in a change toward more individualism rather than collectivism. One possible explanation for that would be the inclusion of the whole Turkish urban population in this survey versus the inclusion of only business owners or managers in most of those surveys that concluded the above. Since the survey did not focus on the working status nor the occupation of the respondents, it lacks in providing any supporting evidence. Future research should consider working on different working groups.

The survey found no significant demographic variations concerning the attitude toward Advertising Regulation amongst Turkish people, while ethical ideologies, when used as further segmented into four, offered greater explanation for the evolution of such attitudes and even behaviours. This could be due to the fact that further precision is necessary than just Relativism and Idealism to understand the Turkish consumers attitude and behavior regarding Advertising Regulation. But the same was still not good enough when the Advertising Ethics were the concern and it is interesting to note that it is not possible to predict Advertising Ethics via personal Ethical Ideologies. Further research should dig deeper onto this aspect trying to differentiate much clearly why the ‘ethics’ of advertising do not function in line with the general ethical ideologies of an individual. Possible explanations can be hidden in the statements (not) included to measure advertising ethics and a broader understanding can be looked for in the views of Hunt and Vitell (1986) who claimed that moral evaluation can be activated when individuals believe an action or issue has ethical significance.

Appendix A

The Questionnaire

Soru Formu

CATI uygulaması için bilgisayarlı telefon anketine uygun formata getirilmiştir.

S1. Türkiye'de reklamların belirli şartlara uygunluk açısından düzenli olarak denetlendiğini biliyor musunuz?

Hayır Evet

1a. Evet diyenlere - Peki bu denetiminin hangi kurum/kurumlar tarafından yapıldığını biliyor musunuz? İsim verebilir misiniz?

Bilmiyorum

Biliyorum

RTÜK

RÖK

Diğer

1b. RÖk dememişse -- Reklam Özdenetim Kurulu'nu daha önce hiç duydunuz mu?

Evet

Hayır

S2. Peki siz bugüne kadar hiç herhangi bir reklamı resmi bir merciye şikayet ettiniz mi?

Evet

Hayır ----- Peki hiç düşündünüz mü?

Evet

Hayır

S3. 5'li katılım skalası ile 1= Hiç katılmıyorum 2= Pek katılmıyorum 3= Kararsızım 4= Katılıyorum 5= Tamamen katılıyorum

Şimdi size okuyacağım cümlelerin her birine ne kadar katıldığınızı 1'in hiç katılmıyorum 5'in ise tamamen katılıyorum anlamına geldiği bir skala üzerinden değerlendirir misiniz?

1. Bir reklamın kitleleri yanlış yönlendirebilme gücü olduğuna inanmıyorum
2. Bence tehlikeli veya zararlı ürünlerin reklamlarına karşı yasaklamalar olmalı
3. Birçok reklamı izlerken kandırıldığım hissine kapılıyorum

4. Bir reklamın müstehcen içerikli olması ahlak dışı olduğunu göstermez
5. Günümüzde reklamlar üzerinde daha fazla denetim olmalı, şu anki denetim çok yetersiz
6. Birçok reklam gençlerin değerlerine zarar verir nitelikte
7. Bazı reklamların yasaklanabiliyor olmasının yaratıcılık ile ters düştüğünü düşünüyorum

S4. Türkiye’de yapılan reklamları düşündüğünüzde size okuyacaklarımdan hangisini ahlak açısından daha hassas olunması gereken bir alan olarak değerlendiriyorsunuz?

Müstehcen içerik

Çocuklara/Gençlere yönelik reklamlarda verilebilecek olumsuz mesajlar
Yalan söylemek / Yanlış yönlendirme yapmak
Haksız rekabet yaratmak

S5. 5’li katılım skalası ile 1= Hiç katılmıyorum 2= Pek katılmıyorum 3= Kararsızım 4= Katılıyorum 5= Tamamen katılıyorum Şimdi size okuyacağım cümlelerin her birine ne kadar katıldığınızı 1’in hiç katılmıyorum 5’in ise tamamen katılıyorum anlamına geldiği bir skala üzerinden değerlendirir misiniz?

1. Bir insan bir davranışta bulunmadan önce, sonucunda çok ufak oranda bile olsa, başkalarına bilinçli bir zarar vermeyeceğinden emin olmalıdır.
2. Ahlaki olanın tanımı kişiden kişiye, toplumdan topluma değişir.
3. Söz konusu riskler ne kadar küçük olursa olsun, başkalarını riske sokacak hiçbir davranış tolere edilmemelidir.
4. Sonucunda ne kadar kazanç sağlanacak olursa olunsun, eğer bir durum başkalarına zarar verebilecek olma ihtimali barındırıyorsa her halükarda yanlıştır.
5. Kimse hiçbir şart altında bir başkasına psikolojik veya fiziksel olarak zarar vermemelidir
6. Ahlak tanımının kişiye bağlı olması, herkes için ahlaklı olan nedir sorusunun cevabını çözümsüz bırakır

7. İnsanlar arası ilişkilerde ahlaki değerlendirmeler çok karmaşık olduğu için, herkes kendi ahlak ölçütlerini oluşturmakta özgür olmalıdır.
8. İnsanlar bir başkasının onuru ve refahını herhangi bir şekilde tehdit edebilecek bir davranışta bulunmamalıdır.
9. Ahlak ölçütleri kişiden kişiye değişir; bir kişinin ahlaklı olarak değerlendirdiğini bir diğeri ahlak dışı olarak görebilir.
10. Bazı davranışları tamamen yasaklayan ve esnek olmayan bir ahlaki anlayış, daha iyi insan ilişkileri oluşmasını engeller.
11. Masum birine zarar verebilecek hiçbir davranışta bulunulmamalıdır.
12. İnsanların onuru ve refahını düşünmek her toplumun önceliği olmalıdır.
13. Yalan söylemek konusunda tek bir kural olamaz; bir yalanın söylenip söylenemeyeceği tamamen duruma bağlıdır.
14. Hiçbir durum başkalarının mutluluğunu feda etmeyi gerektirmez.
15. Farklı ahlak anlayışları hangisi daha ‘doğru’ diye karşılaştırılmaz.
16. Ahlaklı davranışlar ‘mükemmel’ olarak tanımlanabilecek davranışa en yakın olanlardır.
17. Herhangi bir şeyi yapmaya, olumlu sonuçları ile olumsuz sonuçlarını dengeleyerek karar vermek ahlak dışıdır.
18. Hiçbir ahlaki prensip her ahlak yönetmeliğine (ortak) bir madde olarak girecek önemde değildir.
19. Söylenmiş bir yalanın ahlak dışı olup olmadığını hangi şartlar altında söylendiği belirler.
20. Ahlaki ölçütler sadece bir insanın kendisinin nasıl davranması gerektiğine dair oluşturduğu kişisel kurallardır; diğer kişileri yargılamakta kullanılmamalıdır.

Appendix B

The Advertising Self-Regulatory Board's List of Codes of Advertising Applicable for Ethical Breaches

Basic principles

Article 1

All marketing communication should be legal, decent, honest and truthful. The marketing communication which is regarded to be legal is to be in line with the legislation as a whole (law, regulation, standing order, circular letter, edict).

All marketing communication should be prepared with a due sense of social and professional responsibility and should conform to the principles of fair competition, as generally accepted in business.

No communication should be such as to impair public confidence in marketing.

Decency

Article 2

Marketing communication should not contain statements or audio or visual treatments which offend standards of decency currently prevailing in the country and culture concerned.

The general rules of decency is accepted to reflect the society's modern and secular way of living.

Honesty

Article 3

Marketing communication should be so framed as not to abuse the trust of consumers or exploit their lack of experience or knowledge.

Relevant factors likely to affect consumers' decisions should be communicated in such a way and at such a time that consumers can take them into account.

The subtitles used in all advertising films should roll on the screen at a reasonable speed, making sure that consumers are able to read it fully. Similarly, footnotes in all printed material and in all printed advertising should be legible.

According to that;

- ☐ If the subtitled text contains 9 words or less; 0.2 seconds per word plus 2 seconds recognition period shall be calculated,
- ☐ If the subtitled text contains 10 words or more; again 0.2 seconds per word plus 3 seconds recognition period shall be calculated.

Other than the duration of subtitled text;

- ☐ The contrast between the text and the background shall be sufficient,
 - ☐ The text shall be placed on an opaque single-colored block,
 - ☐ Ornate, heavily serified, italic typefaces and like should be avoided,
- The text shall be positioned within the "safe text area" of the screen

Social responsibility

Article 4

Marketing communication should respect human dignity and should not incite or condone any form of discrimination, including that based upon race, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation. Marketing communication should not without justifiable reason play on fear or exploit misfortune or suffering.

Marketing communication should not appear to condone or incite violent, unlawful or anti-social behavior.

Marketing communication should not play on superstition.

Truthfulness (Not Being Deceitful)

Article 5

Marketing communication should be truthful and not misleading.

Marketing communication should not contain any statement, or audio or visual treatment which, directly or by implication, omission, ambiguity or exaggeration, is likely to mislead the consumer, in particular, but not exclusively, with regard to:

- ☐ characteristics of the product which are material, i.e. likely to influence the consumer's choice, such as: nature, composition, method and date of manufacture, range of use, efficiency and performance, quantity, commercial or geographical origin or environmental impact;
- ☐ the value of the product and the total price to be paid by the consumer;
- ☐ terms for delivery, exchange, return, repair and maintenance;
- ☐ terms of guarantee;
- ☐ copyright and industrial property rights such as patents, trade marks, designs and models and trade names;
- ☐ compliance with standards;
- ☐ official recognition or approval, awards such as medals, prizes and diplomas;
- ☐ the extent of benefits for charitable causes.

Food products, cosmetics, personal care products should not be presented as a remedy or a medication, as they do not possess any healing power. These products can be presented as a general 'supplementary aid' to human health, instead of being a solution to a specific health problem.

Products which contain chemicals or products produced as a result of a chemical process, cannot claim to be "pure and natural". In order to be able to have such a claim, the product needs to be produced only from natural ingredients.

Leaving out exceptions to the main claim of the product, by way of omission, will be considered as deceitful communication. If these exceptions are too many to be cited in the communication itself, then the most critical ones have to be included. Also, consumers need to be informed in this particular communication, where the full list of exceptions could be accessed (such as press advertising, website, point of sales, etc).

Use of technical/scientific data and terminology

Article 6

Marketing communication should not

- ☐ misuse technical data, e.g. research results or quotations from technical and scientific publications;
- ☐ present statistics in such a way as to exaggerate the validity of a product claim;
- ☐ use scientific terminology or vocabulary in such a way as falsely to suggest that a product claim has scientific validity.

Use of "free" and "guarantee"

Article 7

The term "free", e.g. "free gift" or "free offer", should be used only

- ☐ where the offer involves no obligation whatsoever; or
- ☐ where the only obligation is to pay shipping and handling charges which should not exceed the cost estimated to be incurred by the marketer, or
- ☐ in conjunction with the purchase of another product, provided the price of that product has not been increased to cover all or part of the cost of the offer. A marketing communication should not state or imply that a "guarantee", "warranty" or other expression having substantially the same meaning, offers the consumer rights additional to those provided by law when it does not. The terms of any guarantee or warranty, including the name and address of the guarantor, should be easily available to the consumer and limitations on consumer rights or remedies, where permitted by law, should be clear and conspicuous.

Substantiation

Article 8

Descriptions, claims or illustrations relating to verifiable facts in a marketing communication should be capable of substantiation. Such substantiation should be available so that evidence can be produced without delay and upon request to the self-regulatory organizations responsible for the implementation of the Code.

The tangible claims in the advertising/marketing communication message could be verifiable with the help of academic articles, academic reports or performance test reports. These reports should not be outdated. The report is considered valid irrespective of its date, if the claims are not nullified through new prevailing conditions (unless tested products are produced with a new formula, have a new technology applied, or have a new competitive product marketed and the like).

If the product needs to be tested, samples should be collected by the testing body from the market place or should be gathered from the market place and sealed by the Notary Public. If none of these methods are not applicable, the sample products will be purchased by the Advertising Self-Regulatory Board (RÖK), from the market and delivered to the testing body.

The following list itemizes acceptable substantiations, from the lowest to the highest proof value;

- ☐ The reports produced as a result of tests conducted at the advertiser's own laboratory or production plant,
- ☐ The reports written by national/international technical and scientific organizations, expert in the specific area of the advertised product and the reports produced as a result of tests conducted at the academic bodies' laboratories,
- ☐ The reports given by the national/international bodies and laboratories, retaining an accreditation certificate .

The imported goods, acquire the necessary permission to produce or import from the related Ministry and have the required explanation on their packaging in line with this permission. If they use the same explanation in their communication, as on their packaging, then there is no further substantiation is needed.

Claim of Excellence

- ☐ All claims of excellence ("the first", "the only", "number one", "having ... % market share" and the like) need to be measurable and have tangible numerical data which can be validated through various tests, reports or documents, should be accompanied by relevant substantiating documents.
- ☐ Another claim of excellence asserting pre-eminence among equals, such as "there isn't a better a one", could only be used if the advertised product has proven distinction among all others.

If the claim of excellence stated in the advertising/communication message is unmeasurable in nature, then it can also be used without further supporting documentation.

Identification

Article 9

Marketing communication should be clearly distinguishable as such, whatever their form and whatever the medium used. When an advertisement appears in a medium containing news or editorial matter, it should be so presented that it is readily recognizable as an advertisement and the identity of the advertiser should be apparent (see also Article 10).

Marketing communication should not misrepresent their true purpose. They should not be presented as, for example, market research or consumer surveys if their purpose is commercial, i.e. the sale of a product.

Identity

Article 10

The identity of the marketer should be apparent. This does not apply to communications with the sole purpose of attracting attention to communication activities to follow (e.g. so-called "teaser advertisements").

Marketing communication should, where appropriate, include contact information to enable the consumer to get in touch with the marketer without difficulty.

Comparisons

Article 11

Marketing communication containing comparisons should be so designed that the comparison is not likely to mislead, and should comply with the principles of fair competition. Points of comparison should be based on facts which can be substantiated and should not be unfairly selected.

In comparative advertising/communication:

- ☐ The compared products, services or brand names should not be mentioned,
- ☐ The compared products and services should be have similar characteristics and features or they should be able to satisfy similar types of consumer demand.

While making the comparison, certain elements (such as the packaging form, the corporate color and the like) which identify with the competitive brand cannot be used. If two products are shown in the advertising/communication, then the comparison should be made with a distorted image of the competitive product. This distortion should be to the extent that its form and the brand name will not be recognizable and that the brand should not be distinguishable in any other way.

While making the comparison, the competitive products could be generalized as "ordinary products". Furthermore, similar cases/situations should be base of the comparison.

If in the comparative advertising/communication, the competing products are named as "others" or the "remaining", then substantiation documents should be presented for all competing products and services in the marketplace. The term "competing products and services in the market place" denotes brands which are covered in the periodically conducted market share researches undertaken by research companies or brands which have sustainable advertising/communication support. While naming competitive products/services, if adjectives used to label them such as "other quality..." or "produced from ... raw material" or "consisting of..."; it will suffice to produce the necessary substantiation documents only for products/services that the adjective refers to.

Denigration

Article 12

Marketing communication should not denigrate any person or group of persons, firm, organization, industrial or commercial activity, profession or product, or seek to bring it or them into public contempt or ridicule.

A product can present its competitive edge or its point of difference to consumers as an option. However this should not be done with a disparaging tone. Nor should this message imply to hinder the use of competitive products/services.

Testimonials

Article 13

Marketing communication should not contain or refer to any testimonial, endorsement or supportive documentation unless it is genuine, verifiable and relevant. Testimonials or endorsements which have become obsolete or misleading through passage of time should not be used.

Portrayal or imitation of persons and references to personal property

Article 14

Marketing communication should not portray or refer to any persons, whether in a private or a public capacity, unless prior permission has been obtained; nor should marketing communication without prior permission depict or refer to any person's property in a way likely to convey the impression of a personal endorsement of the product or organization involved.

Exploitation of goodwill

Article 15

Marketing communication should not make unjustifiable use of the name, initials, logo and/or trademarks of another firm, company or institution. Marketing communication should not in any way take undue advantage of another firm's, individual's or institution's goodwill in its name, brands or other intellectual property, or take advantage of the goodwill earned by other marketing campaigns without prior consent.

Imitation

Article 16

Marketing communication should not imitate those of another marketer in any way likely to mislead or confuse the consumer, for example through the general layout, text, slogan, visual treatment, music or sound effects.

Where a marketer has established a distinctive marketing communication campaign in one or more countries, other marketers should not imitate that campaign in other countries where the marketer who originated the campaign may operate, thereby preventing the extension of the campaign to those countries within a reasonable period of time.

If there is no confusion or doubt created in the consumer perception due to the fact that the advertised products belong to two different categories or that their media schedules do not overlap; then, this could not be categorized as an imitation.

If the same marketing technique is used in two different products'/services' advertising/communication, then, this could not be considered as an imitation.

If idioms/words used in the colloquial language, have not been used as a specific brand's slogan; then they cannot be considered within that brand's creative domain.

Certain generic shots that can be found in any brand's advertising for a given category (such as pouring out a liquid detergent or cleaning a surface) cannot be regarded in any brand's possession.

Safety and health

Article 17

Marketing communication should not, without justification on educational or social grounds, contain any visual portrayal or any description of potentially dangerous practices, or situations which show a disregard for safety or health, as defined by local national standards. Instructions for use

should include appropriate safety warnings and, where necessary, disclaimers. Children should be shown to be under adult supervision whenever a product or an activity involves a safety risk.

Information provided with the product should include proper directions for use and full instructions covering health and safety aspects whenever necessary. Such health and safety warnings should be made clear by the use of pictures, text or a combination of both.

Children and young people

Article 18

The following provisions apply to marketing communication addressed to children and young people, as defined in national laws and regulations relevant to such communications.

Special care should be taken in marketing communication directed to or featuring children or young people. Such communications should not undermine positive social behavior, lifestyles and attitudes.

Products unsuitable for children or young people should not be advertised in media targeted to them, and advertisements directed to children or young people should not be inserted in media where the editorial matter is unsuitable for them. Material unsuitable for children should be clearly identified as such.

For rules on data protection relating specifically to children's personal information see Article 19.

Inexperience and credulity

Marketing communication should not exploit inexperience or credulity, with particular regard to the following areas:

1. When demonstrating a product's performance and use, marketing communication should not
 - a. minimize the degree of skill or understate the age level generally required to assemble or operate products;
 - b. exaggerate the true size, value, nature, durability and performance of the product;
 - c. fail to disclose information about the need for additional purchases, such as accessories, or individual items in a collection or series, required to produce the result shown or described.
2. While the use of fantasy is appropriate for younger as well as older children, it should not make it difficult for them to distinguish between reality and fantasy.

3. Marketing communication directed to children should be clearly distinguishable to them as such.

Avoidance of harm

Marketing communication should not contain any statement or visual treatment that could have the effect of harming children or young people mentally, morally or physically. Children and young people should not be portrayed in unsafe situations or engaging in actions harmful to themselves or others, or be encouraged to engage in potentially hazardous activities or behavior.

Social values

Marketing communication should not suggest that possession or use of the promoted product will give a child or young person physical, psychological or social advantages over other children or young people, or that not possessing the product will have the opposite effect.

Marketing communication should not undermine the authority, responsibility, judgment or tastes of parents, having regard to relevant social and cultural values.

Marketing communication should not include any direct appeal to children and young people to persuade their parents or other adults to buy products for them.

Prices should not be presented in such a way as to lead children and young people to an unrealistic perception of the cost or value of the product, for example by minimizing them. Marketing communication should not imply that the product being promoted is immediately within the reach of every family budget.

Marketing communication which invite children and young people to contact the marketer should encourage them to obtain the permission of a parent or other appropriate adult if any cost, including that of a communication, is involved.

For specific rules on marketing communication to children in the electronic media see Chapter D, Article D7.

Data protection and privacy

Article 19

When collecting personal data from individuals, care should be taken to respect and protect their privacy by complying with relevant rules and regulations.

Collection of data

When personal information is collected from consumers, it is essential to

ensure that the individuals concerned are aware of the purpose of the collection and of any intention to transfer the data to a third party for that third party's marketing purposes. When it is not possible to inform the individual at the time of collection, this should be done as soon as possible thereafter.

Use of data

Personal data collected in accordance with this Code should be

o collected for specified and legitimate purposes and not used in any manner incompatible with those purposes; o adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose for which they are collected and/or further processed; o accurate and kept up to date; o preserved for no longer than is required for the purpose for which the data were collected or further processed.

Security of processing

Adequate security measures should be in place, having regard to the sensitivity of the information, in order to prevent unauthorized access to, or disclosure of, the personal data.

If the information is transferred to third parties, it should be established that they employ at least an equivalent level of security measures.

Children's personal information

When personal information is collected from children, guidance should be provided to parents about protecting children's privacy.

Children should be encouraged to obtain a parent's or other appropriate adult's permission before providing information via electronic media, and reasonable steps should be taken to check that such permission has been given.

Only as much personal information should be collected as is necessary to enable the child to engage in the featured activity.

Data collected from children should not be used to address marketing communication to the children's parents or other family members without the consent of the parent.

Additional rules specific to marketing communication to children using the electronic media and the telephone can be found in Chapter D, Article D7.

Privacy policy

Those who collect data in connection with marketing communication activity should have a privacy policy, the terms of which should be readily available to consumers, and should provide a clear statement if any

collection or processing of data is taking place, whether it is self-evident or not.

In jurisdictions where no privacy legislation currently exists, it is recommended that privacy principles such as those of the ICC Privacy Toolkit 5 are adopted and implemented.

Rights of the consumer

Appropriate measures should be taken to ensure that consumers understand and exercise their rights

o to opt out of marketing lists (including the right to sign on to general preference services); o to require that their data are not made available to third parties for their marketing purposes; and o to rectify incorrect data which are held about them. Where a consumer has expressed a wish not to receive marketing communication using a specific medium, whether via a preference service or by other means, this wish should be respected. Additional rules specific to the use of the electronic media and consumer rights are to be found in Chapter D.

Cross-border transactions

Particular care should be taken to maintain the data protection rights of the consumer when personal data are transferred from the country in which they are collected to another country.

When data processing is conducted in another country, all reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that adequate security measures are in place and that the data protection principles set out in this Code are respected. The use of the ICC model clauses covering agreements between the originator of the marketing list and the processor or user in another country is recommended.⁶

Transparency on cost of communication

Article 20

Where the cost to consumers of accessing a message or communicating with the marketer is higher than the standard cost of postage or telecommunications, e.g. "premium rate" for an online message or telephone number, this cost should be made clear to consumers, expressed either as "cost per minute" or as "cost per message". When this information is provided on-line, consumers should be clearly informed at the time when they are about to access the message or online service, and be allowed a reasonable period of time to disconnect without incurring the charge.

Where a communication involves such a cost, the consumer should not be kept waiting for an unreasonably long time in order to achieve the purpose of the communication and calls should not be charged until the consumer can begin to fulfill that purpose.

Unsolicited products and undisclosed costs

Article 21

Marketing communication associated with the practice of sending unsolicited products to consumers who are then asked for payment (inertia selling), including statements or suggestions that recipients are required to accept and pay for such products, should be avoided.

Marketing communication which solicits a response constituting an order for which payment will be required (e.g. an entry in a publication) should make this unambiguously clear.

Marketing communication soliciting orders should not be presented in a form which might be mistaken for an invoice, or otherwise falsely suggest that payment is due.

For specific rules on unsolicited commercial e-mails, see Chapter D, Article D5.

Environmental behavior

Article 22

Marketing communication should not appear to condone or encourage actions which contravene the law, self-regulatory codes or generally accepted standards of environmentally responsible behavior. They should respect the principles set out in Chapter E, Environmental Claims in Marketing communication.

Responsibility

Article 23

These general rules on responsibility apply to all forms of marketing communication. Rules on responsibility with special relevance to certain activities or media can be found in the chapters devoted to those activities and media.

Responsibility for the observance of the rules of conduct laid down in the Code rests with the marketer whose products are the subject of the marketing communication, with the communications practitioner or agency, and with the publisher, media owner or contractor.

Marketers have overall responsibility for the marketing communication for their products.

Agencies or other practitioners should exercise due care and diligence in the preparation of marketing communication and should operate in such a way as to enable marketers to fulfill their responsibilities.

Publishers, media owners or contractors, who publish, transmit or distribute marketing communication, should exercise due care in the acceptance of them and their presentation to the public.

Individuals employed by a firm, company or institution falling into any of the above categories and who take part in the planning, creation, publication or transmission of a marketing communication are responsible, to an extent commensurate with their respective positions, for ensuring that the rules of the Code are observed and should act accordingly.

The Code applies to the marketing communication in its entire content and form, including testimonials and statements, and audio or visual material originating from other sources. The fact that the content or form of a marketing communication may originate wholly or in part from other sources does not justify non-observance of the Code rules.

Effect of subsequent redress for contravention

Article 24

Subsequent correction and/or appropriate redress for a contravention of the Code, by the party responsible, is desirable but does not excuse the contravention.

Implementation

Article 25

The Code and the principles enshrined in it, should be adopted and implemented, nationally and internationally, by the relevant local, national or regional self-regulatory bodies. The Code should also be applied, where appropriate, by all organizations, companies and individuals involved and at all stages in the marketing communication process.

Marketers, communications practitioners or advertising agencies, publishers, media-owners and contractors should be familiar with the Code and with other relevant local self-regulatory guidelines on advertising and other marketing communication, and should familiarize themselves with decisions taken by the appropriate self-regulatory body.

Requests for interpretation of the principles contained in this Code may be submitted to the ICC Code Interpretation Panel.⁷

Respect for self-regulatory decisions

Article 26

No marketer, communications practitioner or advertising agency, publisher, media owner or contractor should be party to the publication or distribution of an advertisement or other marketing communication which has been found unacceptable by the relevant self-regulatory body.

Only the Advertising Self-Regulatory Board (RÖK), could decide whether or not the amendments made to the controversial advertisement/marketing communication, has met the requirements set previously by the Board.

All parties are encouraged to include in their contracts and other agreements pertaining to advertising and other marketing communication, a statement committing the signatories to adhere to the applicable self-regulatory rules and to respect decisions and rulings made by the appropriate self-regulatory body.

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