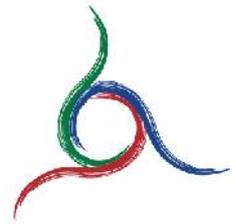




IAMCR 2018



Religion, Communication and Culture Working Group

Abstracts of papers presented at the annual conference of the
International Association for Media and Communication Research¹

IAMCR

**Eugene, Oregon, USA
20-24 June 2018**

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Version: 19/06/18

¹ We have endeavoured to ensure that these are the abstracts of the papers actually presented at the conference. Nevertheless, due to cancellations, additions and other factors, abstracts may be included here that were not presented and abstracts that were presented may not be included.

Id: 17231

Title: Roman Catholics and Evangelicals: Using Symbolic Convergence Theory to Explain Their Loyalty

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: According to the Christian faith, groups within Christendom came into being during the life, death, and believed resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth; whom they believe is the Christ. The early church, starting with the 12 Apostles then followed by “The People of the Way”, developed signs, terminology, and traditions that are still in use today. While the names of the denominations have changed, two very powerful and loyalty-demanding groups are still in existence today; Roman Catholics and Charismatic Evangelicals. The former are over 1700 years old and the latter are slightly over 100 years old. The outside accouchements are vastly different while the theological beliefs are eerily similar. In any case, both demand loyalty to their cause at the expense of out casting the other. This author will attempt to use symbolic convergence theory to explain this phenomena.

Using fantasy theme analysis, by determining fantasy themes, fantasy types and rhetorical visions, this author will show how the shared realities of both denominations maintain a loyalty of converts. This is done by showing how using the same words and beliefs a shared reality is created. The sanctioning agent of fantasy theme analysis is Christ. This paper analyzes the four forms of Christ each of these two groups use to create their shared realities; Christ the Savior, Christ the Baptizer, Christ the Healer and Christ the Returning King. More than thirty peer reviewed scholarly articles are used.

Key words: fantasy themes, fantasy types, rhetorical vision, Roman Catholic, Charismatic Evangelical

Id: 17308

Title: British Blunder in the Understanding Sanatan Dharma (Hindu religion) in Global Media and Communication : An Analysis

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: The paper attempts to present a historical analysis of the concept of Sanatan Dharma in rapidly changing media and communication scenario that evolved in Britain and accepted by English speaking students of religion in India and in the rest of the world. In contemporary English speaking countries also in Indo-European languages, particularly German, the religion of the composite Civilization of India is known as Hindu religion or Hinduism - a conception of Dharma that continues since East India Company landed in India over two centuries ago in 1772 (see Edwards 1967). According to Edwards (1967:127-132), British colonial rule impacts on the Indian religions were minimal and “remained untouched except the around fringes of its social expression” However “... British government-supplied a means to reinforcing Hinduism” (Edwards 1967:127). In the context of Dharma Radhakrishnan (1988:168-69) observed: “While other civilizations have perished ... in the march of over five thousand years, the Indian civilization--- still functioning...is an inheritance of thought and aspiration living and moving with the movement of time itself”. Dharma constitutes the observance in daily life and social relations. “It is truth’s embodiment in life and power to refashion our nature.(1988:172).

Within the historical framework of the concept of Sanatan Dharma, the paper attempts to analyze over twenty religious channels of Sanatan Dharma after the digital revolution in multi-religious India. These channels cover apart from Sanatan Dharma, Buddhism, Christianity, Jainism, Sikhism, and Islam to mention a few. The content analysis and qualitative viewers analysis highlights the varying meaning and scope of religion among the followers through the underlying belief in transmigration of soul and concept of rebirth continued to be reinforced by the telecast. Content analysis of religious channels showed reinforcement of underlying philosophy sparking debates, deliberations, and discussions among media viewers. Further, the paper will discuss the implications of the translation of Dharma as the religion in the Judeo-Christian perspective.

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Id: 17454

Title: Communication Philosophy in Taoism

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: Human beings communicate via media. Perhaps, the most successful media are currency and language. Currency was created for the exchange of goods, and language for the exchange of meanings. It is, however, interesting to note that their mechanisms are quite different. For example, currency must match the face value and the actual value. You can consider the face value as 'signifier' and the actual value as 'signified'. Thus, currency has 'sr=sd' relationship.

Such equation applies to language as well. At the composition-level, If "signified" reflects the meaning, "signifier" is the symbol that, together, constitutes the language. At the mechanism-level, the language can communicate more concise and objectively express when meanings are further distinguished, as the currency allow more precise exchange when lower denominators are used.

But it is difficult to maintain the 'sr=sd' relationship in human communication. It is difficult because language, or 'signifier', cannot be perfectly objectified or vivid enough to be match a thought, or 'signified'. East Asian culture, perhaps, have already realized the limitations and prefer to communication in 'sr≠sd' relationship.

As a matter of fact, it is the foundation of Eastern philosophy. With above hypothesis grounding foundation Eastern philosophy has portraying completed communication which consists of appropriate rationality and sensibility.

Lao Tsu once said, "Everything exists in a relative measure to the opposite and leads the way to the opposite." For example, a high hill and a deep valley do not exist separately but it can exist only if the other exists. Although a high hill and a deep valley are not unified under any category, they cannot be separated. According to Lao tsu, the universe is not a collection of metaphysical reality, but rather a collection of the relationship among inter-dependent meanings. 'Tao', the essential term of Lao tsu's philosophy is the rule of a relationship between the relative pairs which only exist through their reliance and interaction.

This is reflected by many classical philosophers, such as Gong Tsu(孔子), Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu, as they used metaphor, not logic, in their books. Chuang Tzu perhaps stands out the most as his book is considered a literature due to his extensive use of metaphors. In addition, Chuang Tzu and Lao Tzu established the 'sr≠sd' communication in the Taoism. First, Lao Tzu starts his book, Tao Te Ching, with a statement that the 'sr=sd' relationship cannot be established:

Tao that can be spoken of, is not the everlasting Tao.

This is certainly the direction that our civilization is currently heading toward, as we are accustomed to highlighting the minute differences. Unfortunately, our languages and words do contribute to this trend. This tendency is prevalent in all issues across politics, economy, society, and culture. Perhaps media is now preventing our communications. If that is the case, then it is due to the legacy of the 'sr=sd' relationship, and as a communication scholar, it is something we should reflect upon.

Id: 17473

Title: Rabbis, Computers & the Internet

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: How have Israeli rabbis have encountered the technological changes in the new media while at the same time maintaining their religious identity?

The paper draws upon a survey of rabbis carried out by the author in Autumn 2017 to generate an accurate picture of the attitudes of rabbis from different religious streams to new media. 250 filled questionnaires were received.

All orthodox rabbis polled - particularly Haredi and Haredi leumi - agreed that secular Internet websites damage religious values.

Whereas almost all Haredi rabbis and Haredi leumi rabbis - agreed that Internet damages the religious stricture of sexual modesty, this was much more qualified in the case of modern orthodox rabbis.

Facebook results in the free passage of information and gossip in a society in which gossip is frowned upon by Jewish religious law (halakhah). Social networking also breaches Haredi rules of conduct by building relationships between men and women. Most Haredi rabbis and Haredi leumi rabbis agreed to a large extent that social networks cause problems regarding social gossip. By contrast, only half of modern orthodox rabbis were 'greatly concerned' (but a further quarter were inclined to be concerned).

Almost all modern orthodox rabbis and Haredi leumi rabbis, and three quarters of Haredi rabbis, possess a computer.

Between three quarters and two-thirds of modern orthodox rabbis and Haredi leumi rabbis respectively were linked to the Internet in contrast to a third of Haredi rabbis were. Of those Haredi rabbis not linked to the Internet, almost all cited 'religious reasons'.

The level of computer literacy varies greatly, from almost all modern orthodox rabbis who are computer competent to a quarter of Haredi rabbis.

Mobile phones are much more prevalent among all rabbis - if nearly all Haredi rabbis possessing the 'kosher' mobile phone which is Internet free.

The extent to which rabbis have incorporated information technology in their professional work is limited. In contrast to most modern orthodox rabbis and Haredi leumi rabbis, few Haredi rabbis use on-line Torah sources sites for religious study, preparation of Torah lessons, and researching religious law rulings respectively, and for data like times for prayer and for the Sabbath and holydays, or listings like burial societies, religious law courts, kosher food information, and Jewish schools etc.

Even blogging - which is a valuable means for a rabbi to preach on-line such as a commentary on the weekly Bible reading, or on a holyday or on a topical issue on the public agenda - has been little adopted, even among the modern orthodox rabbis.

The data about the orthodox streams will be compared to data about rabbis from non-orthodox stream, Conservative and Reform

Id: 17494

Title: Newspapers, Extradition and an absent Jamaican Church

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: This paper deconstructs the coverage of Jamaica's two daily newspapers and the role of the island's Church in the 2009/2010 extradition of Christopher Coke to the United States. The Church traditionally has been the backbone of Jamaican civic commitment. For many Jamaicans the Church and Christianity are central to how they perceive the events that shape their everyday lives (Austin-Broos, 1997). However, the newspaper coverage of the extradition of Coke indicated there had been a shift in The Church's influence.

The newspaper reporting highlighted growing concerns about The Church's silence during a time of crisis and its place in national reconciliation. An in-depth content analysis of the online newspaper coverage leading up to the extradition forms the empirical basis for study. Interviews with journalists and clergy whose voices shaped the narrative of the Coke debate in the newspapers were also used to supplement the findings. This crisis provided a unique opportunity to assess the reach of The Church on the island as they engaged to influence a peaceful resolution.

The newspaper coverage of The Church during the Coke extradition provided a panoramic view into how it functions in contemporary Jamaica. Using the extradition newspaper coverage as a barometer for The Church on the island indicates varying degrees of activism and social responsibility. The results revealed that The Church lacked the cohesion and the capacity to incite meaningful leadership in the prelude to the execution of the extradition warrant. The analysis The Church's role in civic life through the newspaper platform highlighted some recurrent themes that have been part of the local dialogue in the past two decades including the lack of activism on the part of The Church, especially in a country that prides itself on its religious heritage.

Austin-Broos, D. J. 1997. Jamaica Genesis: Religion and the Politics of Moral Orders. University of Chicago Press.

Id: 17532

Title: The Radicalization of Islam: Case Study of Media Reportage of Boko Haram Insurgency in Northern Nigeria

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: ABSTRACT

One of the challenges of the world today is the plethora of wars, hostilities, violence, and pogrom engineered by the militarization of religions. From the north, to the south, east and west of the globe, there is religious war cloaked in political gimmicks. And the human devastation continues endlessly in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Turkey, Iraq, Greater Sahel and Lake Chad Basin, North Eastern Nigeria, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Israel and Palestine, Ukraine, Mexico, and among others including pockets of terrorist acts in United Kingdom and United States. This study examines the radicalization of Islam and its multiplying effects on the peace in the world. It looks at the media reportage of the Boko Haram terrorist religious group in Nigeria. It analyzes the coverage of the insurgencies in the Radio Nigeria news bulletins at the height of the mutinies. It concludes that the coverage of Radio Nigeria of the Boko Haram radicalization in the killing, kidnapping, and destruction of property in the north eastern Nigeria hasn't reduced the hostilities of the terror group. The research offer recommendations for the ways out of the crises.

Key Words: Islam, Radicalization, Boko Haram, Radio Nigeria

Id: 18110

Title: Religious media in Russian media system: structural and functional analysis

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: Sustainability of any contemporary society presumes the sustainability of its media system. Finnish scholar Kaarle Nordenstreng called media systems "a popular, useful and messy concept" (2016). Acknowledging, that "the media system is an important intellectual vehicle to understand media landscapes and focus on big stories", Nordenstreng suggested that "it is typically used as a label not properly defined, taken for granted". Supporting a call for re-thinking and re-approaching the notion of 'media systems', we still consider it to be useful for understanding the place, fixing the locum of religion media in national media landscape.

The relations between religions and media - their tensions, conflicts, mutual understanding and "modus vivendi" - make a significant factor for social stability and modernization of post-soviet Russia in the perspective of civil society. That is why they are becoming more attractive for research - from phenomenological description to structural and functional analysis (Luchenko 2015).

The proposed paper is based on the theoretical and empirical analysis of religious media subsystem in Russia. Focused on main religious media, the research evaluates their place in Russian media system, digital and social networks impact, specific features of the mediatization of religion in the country. These results of the research provide confirmatory evidence of the weakness of religious initiatives on media policy (regulation and co-regulation), the primarily ethnical approach to religious identity ("if you are Russian you should be the Orthodox"), religious media difficulties in handling of new digital communication technologies.

Despite the fact that it has been over 20 years since the revival, religious media have not implemented even a part of what potentially they could. Therefore the audience switched its attention in the search for religious information to other sources of information, mostly secular, which broadcast religious information with the inevitable distortions.

Many of the employees of religious media in Russia find themselves serving the religious institutions in terms of public relations and advertising much more that following journalistic standards. Both the employers and the employees do not find such a situation strange. Moreover, religious media seem that they have forgotten to ask themselves questions about the mission and target audience. They fall into the trap of thinking that their structure would be "media for all", but in reality, they find themselves out of the audience.

Addressing the problematic areas and challenging issues of Russian religious media (understanding journalism as PR, missing mission and target audience, lack of professionalism) the paper proposes the normative model of religious institutions interactions with media professionals at three stages (pluralism - dialogue - consensus) that could serve as check-list for the evaluation of the present situation.

Key words: mediatization of religion, Russia, religious identity, Orthodox media, social networks.

Id: 18193

Title: Instigator as Deflator of Hate Speech: A Nigerian Survey

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: Nigeria is in the throes of burgeoning social conflicts instigated largely by religion, political affiliation or ethnicity - or by a combination of all three factors. But religion is contributing more to the security crisis plaguing the country than do the two other factors.

Boko Haram, an insurgency primarily in the northeastern region of Nigeria, is spewing a hateful, extreme version of Islam and defying not only Nigeria's national security systems, but those of adjoining countries: Niger Republic, Chad, and the Republic of Cameroon.

This paper subscribes to the emerging view of religion as a potentially constructive force for social engagement, for conflict resolution, and for peacebuilding, not only as an instigator of violence, a view held by Appleby (2015), Lynch (2015) and Omer (2015). Further, the intersectionality of religion and development is indicated in religious institutional networks and leadership that support local programs for developing infrastructure and for cultivating platforms for promoting community well-being (Appleby, 2015).

It is against the preceding background, then, that this study reports findings of a survey conducted in 2017 for Facebook Peer-To-Peer Global Digital Challenge and another in 2018. It is grounded in social presence theory, which asserts that person-to-person telecommunications are a medium of social presence-that is, the "degree of salience of the other person in the (mediated) interaction and the consequent salience of the interpersonal relationships" (Short, Williams, & Christie, 1976, p. 65).

That survey sought ways to avert hate speech and incendiary media-disseminated comments. Its results indicated the following: (a) that religion, politics and ethnicity were the main drivers of hate and radical

comments in Nigeria; (b) that 65 percent of the respondents agreed Facebook had the highest prevalence of hate and extremist comments, followed by Twitter at 18 percent and WhatsApp at 17 percent; and (c) that people see themselves and want to be seen by others as members of a tribe, religion, political groups and professional bodies, and so they share stories that relate and reinforce those predispositions.

We, therefore, present social presence theory as a strategic response to containing religion-fueled hate speech in Nigeria, based on two premises: that a triggering factor in hate speech is the use of social media platforms, and that religion in its own right can serve as a centripetal force in Nigeria's ongoing battle against hate speech

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Id: 18239

Title: Audience Reception of Religious Serials on Indian Television

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: Religion has been one of the favorite themes of Indian cinema and television. Religious serials telecast in Indian television are mostly based on Hindu Religion. The themes are around the god Shiva, Krishna, Ganesh and Hanuman etc. There is sudden increase of religion based serials in Indian television in general, Hindi language television specifically. These serials also have started dubbed in other region languages and telecast on daily or weekly basis. This became a new phenomenon not only across Indian but also in the countries like China.

The study aimed to understand the reception of religious serials among audience. It tried to explore how audiences decode religious messages and codes to make meaning in their personal and public lives? What kind of impact these serials have comparatively with other entertainment serials with different themes. The study employs both reception methods and phenomenological inquiry of the audience. The study limits itself to the religious serials. Though there are number of mythological serials are also present over the years. The study period includes the currently ongoing religion based television serials in Hindi language.

They study examines whether the increased religion based serials has an impact by the existing socio-political system. The study will focus specifically women, youth and elderly audience. There are evidences the whenever the religious films are released especially in regional languages cinema theaters have become places to worshipping the posters of the actors who played. The televisions serials like Ramayan (1987) and Mahabarat (1988) could able to draw large amounts of audience and collective public viewing in India.

Theoretically there are many Marxian and well as neo-Marxist scholars have analyzed the religion and culture from various perspectives. But the religion in India should be analyzed with the perspective of Caste. Caste is one of the foundations of Hindu religion and social stratification. The study will provide an Indian specific theoretical premise on the basis of Dr.Ambedkar about Religion, media and society. The study will also engage with the reception of various audience belongs to different social strata or caste groups.

Id: 18323

Title: Countering Conflicts Based on Religious Beliefs in The Digital Media

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: Indonesia is a multicultural society with diverse ethnic backgrounds and religious beliefs. As devoted adherents, Indonesians take their religion very seriously. Their daily activities are based on their faith which they carry as their identity. The government also values religious diversity in this country and acknowledge religious ceremonies as national holidays. Hence, there are various holidays for Muslims, Catholics, Christians, Buddhist, Hindus and Confucians. Each religion entered and developed its influence through peaceful social interaction and cordial approach. At that time, the society adopted religious rituals of these new religions along with their traditional beliefs, known as *sunda-wiwitan* belief (Sundanese) or *kejawen* belief (Javanese) in the realm of animism and dynamism. Albeit living in the same environment, Indonesia still managed a peaceful religious tolerance in the country. It holds a very small number of inter-religious conflict. Nevertheless, recently the social media often become a conflict zone for religious issues (Lim, 2017, Priyadharma; 2017; Maryani & Grasiona, 2016). This research seeks to explore the rise of conflicts based on religious beliefs that occur in present time. Taking virtual ethnography with online data collection, the researcher tries to address how religious-based conflicts are being triggered and how they are overcome. In order to map the issue, interviews were conducted with prominent religious figures, social media users and digital media watchers. This study found that in line with the development of communication and technology some developments allow more access and freedom for communication but beside that they also contribute in triggering conflict. First, the trigger includes the acceptance of various religious beliefs which threaten inter-faith harmony that thrive in the social media. Second, the development of debates derive from within as well as from different religious perspectives between the beliefs. Third, the spread of interfaith hatred also develops through virtual communities online. However, small conflicts between several people easily soar in the social media and affect the society. Efforts to address the conflict are made through cultural and humanitarian approach. They seek to encourage a moderate attitude in practicing religion. Interestingly, there are two websites that promote peaceful diversity; melayuonline.com and islambergerak.co. They disseminate the new perspective of pluralism in culture and moderation in religion, especially for Muslims as the majority. Additionally, the society still needs to enhance digital literacy to cope with the fake news and hoax that triggered conflicts in Indonesia. It is also necessary to support the roles of religious leaders as representatives of religious institutes to remind the society of humanitarian values. This research also found that individuals can avert religious disputes by avoiding debates related to religious matters. Lastly, the research suggests to emphasize a more pragmatic relationship to develop a shared value as a collective society and cultivate a harmonic culture within the society.

Key words ; countering, religious, digital media, conflict

Id: 18372

Title: Reporting Religion: A comparative analysis of Coverage of Christianity and Islam in Kenya's Media

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: The media in Kenya has developed systematically but progressively. With a history spanning a century, it started out as a partisan media that served the dominant community: colonial administration. Over the years however, it evolved to straddle libertarianism and social responsibility models.

The Kenyan media is perceived as comparatively competitive regionally. Kenya has four daily newspapers with nationwide circulation including The People Daily, distributed free. Two of the newspapers, Daily Nation and The Standard both publish weekend editions on both Saturdays and Sundays. With a combined circulation of over 300,000 print runs during the weekends, the Kenyan papers are some of the largest circulating newspapers in East Africa.

From a design point of view these papers are bright and well laid out with lively content. Kenya newspapers devote substantial coverage to business news but comparatively limited space to international news. While ranked by New York based Freedom House as partially free, the range of views covered in these media are, in relation to media from the region, free flowing.

Over the years these media have also sought to professionalize. They are staffed by some of the most professional journalists in the region. An undergraduate qualification is considered a mandatory entry point into the media practice in the country. A code of conduct for the practice of journalism has been enacted into law as a framework for the ethical operations of the Kenyan media. Further, the efforts to professionalize the media have led to the founding of several professional organizations providing oversight with regard to fair media coverage. Further, the evolution of progressive legislation has provided the media with an environment for favorable operations.

While Kenya is a secular state religion plays a significant role in the life of the nation. There are two major religions in the country of nearly 50 million people. Majority of Kenyans, nearly 80 percent of the population, belong to the Christian faith. Islam is the second largest faith but with a critical and vocal presence in the socio-political arena. Islam has particularly become visible in the light of recent high profile terror attacks in the country which some have associated with followers of the faith. But in spite of the high profile presence of religion in the national conversation, there has hardly been any analysis over how religion is covered in the Kenyan press. In this competing environment this paper investigates how Kenyan media have covered religion. Using a framing analysis the paper will explore how the two leading Kenyan newspapers: Daily Nation and The Standard, have covered religion.

Using terms associated with either of the two faiths, we will conduct a lexis nexus search to cover a one year period and analyze the content of all the stories picked to determine if there are any differences in the manner in which Kenyan leading newspapers covered events associated with these two faiths.

Id: 18498

Title: Sacred space on television in a multi-religious audience domain: Media management patterns of religious broadcasting in India

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: Religion and media have become significant areas of study across the globe due to socio-cultural and political reasons. Interactions being dominant, media influence religion to the point where institutional strategies in religion are based on the forms of modern media. Television has incorporated religious content to its functional agenda while religion has adapted itself to the demand generated by the wide popularity and significant influence of the medium. A land of many religions, India has a long history of religious communication from the oral traditions of ‘wandering mendicants or parivrajakas’, folk tales, myths and epic stories. Religions later became more established and organized with different religious organizations employing all possible communication tools, to the extent of religion mediated as a cultural commodity. Reminding the success stories of the electronic church of the West, all the religious groups in India are utilizing the media prowess for propaganda and deepening the faith (Schultze, 1990). The social background of India presupposes that the depth of the pluralism appears even in the intra-religious variations of faith expressions and practices of the land. Varied streams of religious thoughts have intermingled at different stages of history affecting socio-cultural setting. The ‘Ramayan’ on the state owned Doordarshan from 1987 January to 1989 August was a catalyst. With heavy flow of images and messages it infused with religious identity and cultural affinity leading to the formation of a new kind of nationalism which was “more intimate with a section of the population and intimidating to the rest” (Rajgopal, 2001).

Later developments proved the ideological and political continuum of the religious representation on television. The ideology and agenda of the media management decide the content and nuances of religious broadcasting. The management model and functional dynamics of religious broadcasting differ substantially from commercial television (Menon, 2009) and that is not yet studied in detail from Indian perspective. This research paper is attempting to identify the management dynamics of religious television in India including the revenue model and power matrix. In-depth interviews from prominent spiritual channels across religions will be employed to assess the patterns and models of media management.

Id: 18657

Title: The use of religion and culture in developing marketing messages: Assessing the impact of cultural coding on consumer behavior

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: Introduction

The current study examines the processes of consumer decision-making and response, when exposed to a variety of favorable and conflicting symbols in advertising messages containing religious and cultural connotations in diverse and multicultural markets. Symbols provide subtle image to brands, therefore with the help of a true experiment, the variations in consumer decision-making process toward favorable and conflicting advertising symbols are assessed to note the main and interactive effects of the employed variables in the shape of symbols.

Significance

It is widely understood that while forming an attitude toward a brand, an ordinary consumer may have to decode several layers of meaning that are created in conjunction with one another through symbols. Majority of the previously conducted inter-cultural and marketing studies have approached this topic, but through a narrow or limited approach. For example, religious symbols (Taylor, Halstead, & Haynes, 2010); cultural Symbols (Holland & Gantry, 1997); semiotics and ideological symbols; (Rajan, 2010; Seaton, 1995), and others. This study adopts a broader range to include a variety of variables from various marketplaces to explain this phenomenon.

Theoretical Implication

Social identity theory of inter-group behavior proposed by Tajfel and Turner (1986) provides the basic theoretical framework for this study. However, the interdisciplinary nature and the use of multiple variables allow room to explain and predict the study within the premises of medium and distinctiveness theories. The applied and operational definitions of cultural and religious symbols from the existing literature, exploration and examination of cultural coding and social processes while decoding advertising symbols at individual and group levels leads to fill in the “gap in the literature” by the expected study results.

Methods

Through a mixed methods approach, a true experiment with 2 locations: (U.S. vs. United Arab Emirates(U.A.E.)) x 2 symbol type: (religious vs. cultural specific) x 2 Symbol: (Present vs. Absent) x 2 Ethnic Affiliation of the respondent (Indian vs. Middle Eastern) factorial is conducted. Total sample size (N = 360). The independent variables are location, symbol type, symbol presence and ethnic affiliation of the respondent. The main dependent variables are purchase intention, favorable attitude, perceived quality ,skepticism of the marketers, and product recall. Finally, the moderating variables are religiosity, strength of ethnic identification, collectivist or Individualist aptitude of the respondents.

Study Benefits

The study provide practical recommendations for the marketers to make prudent use of product symbols in order to elicit the desired response from their target groups by minimizing the prospects of offending other groups or individuals in a given marketplace. In this elaborate and detailed study, data will come from two different regions of the world (U.S.A. & U.A.E) through panels run by professional data collection companies. Therefore, a high level of reliability is expected which will help increase the generalizability of the results to a great extent.

Key Words: Religion, Cultural, Diaspora, Advertising, Symbols, Cues

Id: 18734

Title: Humour and Belief: A study of 'Halal Humour' on new media platforms

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: The series of protests and bouts of violence across the world which followed the publication of the cartoons on Prophet Mohammad in the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten in 2005 and in the French newspaper Charlie Hebdo in 2011, have created a perception that Muslims are lacking in modernity and have no sense of humour (Khan 2007, Kuipers 2011, Khanduri 2015). In this context, the proposed paper will explore the nature, function and purpose of humour on the internet. Whether humour has the potential to communicate, subvert, and resist mainstream narratives on Islam and Muslims, if so, how? Is humour a device used by Muslims to challenge the discourse dominated by the cleric within Islam? Everyday humour may be understood as an act of everyday resistance in relation to James C Scott's (1989) argument in his work *Everyday Forms of Resistance*, where he describes everyday resistance in the context of subordinate groups and lower classes as the one which is "not openly declared, unorganised, unsystematic, opportunistic, individual, self-indulgent, having no revolutionary consequences and is small scale". It is in this context that the question on Muslims using the humour as a tool for resistance and subversion will be explored. Mikhail Bakhtin, in his work *Rabelais and His World* (1965), has enunciated the potential of humour in creating an intersection between the 'real' and 'ideal' by breaking prevailing boundaries, hierarchies, norms and prohibitions, which is otherwise impossible in everyday life. Both Bakhtin and Scott point towards the potential of humour as an important apparatus of the subordinate classes and marginal groups for deviance. The paper will select the humour under the rubric of "Halal Humour"- a style of humour produced by Muslims to reflect on a variety of issues pertaining to them. This humorous material exist on the internet in many forms including memes. The study will use Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to qualitatively analyse the content and form of humour produced by Muslims on the Internet. CDA was chosen for this study because media texts are multi-dimensional and a complex mixture of different discourse types. CDA, as a multidisciplinary research tool, would help in analysis of the complex language, which constitutes political, social, cultural, historical and linguistic aspects, and the context of a media narrative. (Fairclough 1995, Wodak 2004)

Id: 18802

Title: Globalization and Islamic Home films: Religion and Cultural Circuits between Kerala and the Middle East

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: This paper is part of an ongoing investigation of the new and vibrant styles of religious communication that emerged in the post-colonial /post globalized period in India as they are articulated through new media technologies. We situate our study on what is popularly known as the Malabar Home film movement, an independent film movement among the Muslim community of Malabar region in the Kerala state of South Western India. The period under discussion moves from the 1990's to the beginning of the first decade of the new millennium. This period witnessed the crisis of India's post-colonial developmentalist state, the processes of globalization, the rise of right wing Hindu political parties, characterized by increased communalization and counter discursive politicization of Muslim communities. The Malabar Home Film movement was initiated almost in accident by a few imaginative films loving and enterprising artists in 1998, motivated by Jamaat e Islami's politics. Since then the home film genre has grown into a body of 200 odd films and over the vast landscape of northern Kerala and Malayalee migrant communities in UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain etc. With an average 5 million viewership for each film across this landscape of Malayalee migration, this genre of films has acquired the defining features of transnational media in their production, distribution and circulation. The term 'home' is prefixed to this video film movement to wrench in a set of historical experiences of film going among the Muslim community of Malabar. In Malabar, especially with the increasing violence and sexual content of films, Muslim women have been away from cinema halls. Historically the Malabar region also has witnessed a strong discourse on Cinema as Haraam. The coinage 'home film' comes from this very concept of bringing cinema into the Malabar Muslim Household, seen in itself as a reform act, an act which reforms the cinematic form and the Muslim household as well. The movement is premised on an ordinary principle of media to influence and educate and holds a strong belief in the utopian possibilities of media power. While mimicking the mainstream film style, the Home film genre reimagines the Muslim social in new ways that is in correspondence with a politicized Islam in Malabar.

The paper attempts to address the following questions. How does the experience of migration and travel central to the Malabar Muslim community become definitive in constituting the representational economy of Home Videos? How does the novel subjectivities formed in the context of transnational migration and Islamic reforms correspond with each other in the filmic

narratives? In the context of the reimagining of the Muslim households in the wake of the nebular forces of modernization and globalization as the central theme of most Home films, how do these films offer a re-imagination that is mediated through the categories of gender, class and religion?

Id: 18817

Title: Medium, message and comprehension of the Bible

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: This paper seeks to consider the relations of the reader of biblical texts (understood here as a pious, religious reading, not a casual or analytical reading) with the Scriptures, taking into account the principle formulated by Marshall McLuhan – "the medium is the message". The central idea is the development of a way of reading that is mediated by faith. The belief that God is somehow present in the biblical text leads to a distinct comprehension of the words, influenced by traditions that date back to the Middle Ages or even earlier (as the *Lectio Divina*, a millenarian practice, still encouraged by the Catholic Church, that intends to help finding communion with God by reading the Scriptures, meditating, praying and contemplating). Such understandings shape the way the message is received, therefore McLuhan stated that Christian message is not expressed in words, but in the effect these words induce in the reader – he synthesizes all of it in the word "conversion". Even though it is evaluated in the light of literary production (as prescribed by some branches of theological thinking), the Bible is on a different level: it is at the same time a reference in historical, ethnographic and behavioral matters. Christian denominations call it the only rule about faith and actions of mankind. It demands, therefore, a particular way of being interpreted. For this religious reader, the author cannot be a silent or distant referent, as argues Jacques Derrida, among others. On the contrary, pious reading is based on the conviction (by faith) that the text in hand is special, and that its author is just a prayer away. Thus, the target of biblical interpretation is to merge the literal meanings of the texts with the personal meanings that come to the reader, in a way to guide him in life, according to Grant Osborn.

Id: 18894

Title: Identities at War: The construction of of Hindus and Muslims in anti-liberation discourse during the Bangladesh war of 1971

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: This paper will address how media was used and functioned as a discursive tool in the legitimisation of violence in the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971. Specifically, it will explore the issue of identity formation – of the genuine Pakistani, the true Muslim, the Indian Hindu, the Bangali, the enemy – and how the Pakistani media of 1971 examined here contributed to this process, particularly with its focus on the religious.

As Stuart Hall articulates, identities use the ‘resources of history, language and culture’ and arise within ‘specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciated strategies’ (1996: 3). While identities are most often referred to as being common between people who share it, Hall points out that they also ‘emerge within the specific modalities of power, and thus are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion’ (1996: 4). In 1971 Pakistan, too, identities were, as the research will show, constructed through a discourse which used religion to differentiate between “us”, the Muslim Pakistani and “them”, the enemy, the Hindu Indian. As Husain Haqqani argues: ‘The fears of dilution of Muslim identity that had defined the demand for carving Pakistan out of India became the new nation-state’s identity, reinforced over time through the education system and constant propaganda’ (2005: 14) and this phenomenon was very much in play well into the war of 1971. Analysis of the media shows that those constructed as ‘true’ Pakistanis were also constructed as Islam-loving Muslims, and those constructed as ‘true Muslims’ were constructed as those prepared to fight for Pakistan and Islam.

Using discourse analysis of two East Pakistani newspapers, the Dainik Sangram and Dainik Pakistan during the nine months of the war between March and December 1971 as well as a number of interviews with eye witnesses to the war, the paper examines the media frames which served to construct divisive discourses of identity. It will show how the media, acting as an ideological and discursive tool of the state, interpellates or addresses the audience and summons them to action. By defining identities, in this case, of the good Muslim Pakistani Self posited against the evil Hindu enemy Other, the media discourse justifies the use of violence against the Bangali enemy in a war of faith, between the “khati Pakistani” and the Hindu-inclined Bangali, between the “sachcha Musolman” and the imperialist, infidel Hindu.

The paper begins with a brief theoretical introduction, followed by an analysis of the data gathered from the above newspapers divided into categories of how the Pakistani Muslim and Bangali Hindu were represented and a discussion on subjectivity, discourse and the remaking of identities. Rooted in archival research, the key themes and methodology of this work are highly relevant in an era characterised by increasing religiously-motivated violence in Bangladesh and around the world, and can be applied to the study of both traditional and digital media and their role in serving the purpose of both state and non-state actors in ideological conflicts.

Id: 18901

Title: Building the Spiritual Identity of the Children/Adolescents by Cinema Education

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: Is Wall-E a spiritual, theological film? Films, in general, can give children / adolescents principles for building their identity? Questions that we ask ourselves at the beginning of a post-doctoral research which could try to answer not only the needs of the theoreticians of the communication and theology but also those of the practitioners (teachers, instructors, etc.) and which will interest all those who expect the new generations to cooperate and dialogue effectively ... for an anthropological purpose in the broadest sense of the term.

The problem that leads us to carry out this research stems from the fact that the growing presence of the media (in this case, the films) - in response mainly to the logic of the market and the weakness in the regulation on the part of the public authorities - has makes it urgent to strengthen the media content, the autonomy of the recipient. This implies that the latter is provided with specific skills that lead him to develop a critical awareness and a creative attitude towards the media.

We start from the main results of our doctoral research (Catholic University of Louvain, 2011) on "The communicative dimension of media education: dialogue and decentration" to make a first reflection and research proposal in order to deepen the dimension anthropological-philosophical study of our study by linking education to media and theology to focus on the subject - children and adolescents - that is to say on a person with dignity, responsibility, competence, an autonomy, a spirituality and an identity.

In this perspective, our initial question can be formulated as follows: What are the fundamental principles of the anthropological-philosophical dimension of a film education that considers the identity of children / adolescents from a theological reflection around dialogue? In other words: How can films, in general, be a source of reflection for the construction of a spiritual, dialogical, critical and creative identity in children / adolescents?

To tackle these questions, the research was developed in the framework of a quasi-experimentation with a population of approximately 80 children / adolescents (between 10 and 12 years old) and of different cultural and socioeconomic levels. We work with 4 analysis groups (2 dialogical and 2 non-dialogical). All classes were filmed to perform the analyzes.

The results of the research are based on the analysis of the exchanges made between children / adolescents after having seen the film. An "analysis grid" has been structured based on the theoretical contributions of: Marie-France Daniel, Jean-Pierre Meunier, Paul Ricoeur, Mario Kaplún, Paulo Freire, among others.

As a general conclusion, it has been observed that the introduction of the independent variable dialogue or non-dialogue is determinant for the cognitive operations and critical thinking of children / adolescents with important repercussions in its deepest values, in the intangible, in what cannot be measured, in the spiritual.

Id: 18924

Title: In search of religious inclusivity and equality: An ethnographic study of Kumbh festival- the largest congregation of pilgrims on earth

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: Recently, UNESCO recognizes Kumbh (the festival of the sacred Pitcher) as “the largest peaceful congregation of pilgrims on earth”. Devotees of Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Sikh and other religions/ faiths participate in the festival with a belief that bathing in the designated river during Kumbh will free them from sins and thereby liberate them from ‘samsara’ (the cycle of sorrow as well as cycle of birth and death). As per report, approximately 70 million pilgrims participated during Ujjain Kumbh in April-May 2016. Religious leaders and scholars identified that participation and equality lies at the heart of the religious congregation. United Nations in its Sustainable Development Goals emphasized reducing inequality (Goal #10) and inclusively building effective, accountable institutions at all levels (Goal #16).

This research sought to explore the practice of equality and freedom of religious-rights from the perspectives of gender and caste; more specifically, it studied whether women and the people of third gender as well as the lower caste populations (i.e., dalits and adivasis) are treated equally and inclusively in the festival of Kumbh. A month-long ethnographic research was conducted in summer 2016 at Kumbh, Ujjain, where several commoners, sahdus and sadhvis (male and female monks) and representatives of akharas (religious institutions) were interviewed as a part of the study.

The study revealed that rights of women and their attempts for independence were actively opposed and threatened by the dominant male-monks and hegemonic religious institutions; those women who raised voices against male supremacy was arrested and denied permission to bathe during the festival. On the other hand, a small-section of third gender populations, the Hindu hijra communities, were given permission for the first time (by breaking the age-old tradition of Kumbh) to organize and function as independent institution- Kinnar Akhara. They, on the one hand was opposing broader LGBT rights; and on the other hand committed to help dominant power structure in converting Muslim hijra populations into Hindu hijras, so that right-wing vote-bank can be benefitted.

Dalits and Adivasis, however, faced different challenge- untouchability. Consequently, they were not permitted to set up their camps/ tents near the main bathing areas. Many of the dalit communities forced to bathe in their designated ghats (bathing areas); some of them were 8-10 km away from the center of the festival. Adivasis, many of whom were coercively converted to Hindus, neither enthusiastically/ independently participated in the festival, nor were welcomed by the mainstream religious populations. Owing to election-obligations and religious tokenism, right-wing political organizations threatened as well as lured the advasis to attend the festival; however, they were restricted to bathe during non-prime times- i.e., not during the time-slots designated for the mainstream/ upper-caste attendees.

Under the facade of festivity and religious equality, marginalized section of the population experienced serious discriminations and prejudices, which further delegitimized and jeopardized their identities, voices and human rights. Religious fanaticism, sexism and patriarchy coupled with right-wing populist politics reinforced inequality, injustice and 'other'-ing at the margins, which defeated the mission and goals of Kumbh- unity and inclusivity.

Id: 19066

Title: Conceal to Reveal: Television, Faith, and Fashion in 1950s America.

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: Using the life and career of Rose Marie Reid—a leading swimsuit designer—this paper analyzes the compelling intersection of faith, fashion, and television in 1950s America. Reid’s rise to success, her design philosophy, her swimsuits, and her Mormonism complicate the cultural history of early American television and its relationship with religion, technology, and female beauty standards. Reid’s success coincides with a brief anomaly in American public perception of Mormonism—for the first, and perhaps last time, 1950’s Mormons were seen as paragons of American values and virtues. Seizing this unique moment, Reid utilized her popularity and success to speak frequently, openly, and passionately about her religious beliefs, heavily influencing young women’s perceptions of modesty. Reid’s major intervention, I argue, was her insistence that female beauty requires discipline, diligence, and technological assistance—an articulation of both her deep-seated Mormon beliefs about the body and sexuality as well as television logics. An exposure-concealment dialectic runs through Mormonism, television, and swimwear in parallel, influencing 1950s American culture in subtle but powerful ways. Reid’s swimwear ultimately suggests that what is exposed must first be enhanced while the mechanisms of enhancement remain concealed.

Id: 19124

Title: How Egyptian Religious Discourse(s) through Satellite Channels Counter Modernity'

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: Religions in the Arab conservative societies mostly represent the cultural identity of its people. Consequently religious rhetoric might be the most influential factor for both political and social choices either with the individuals or groups levels. This impact has been noticed widely in the Egyptian society after 2011 uprising.(Brown, N. J., 2012; Ardıc, N., 2012; Monier, E. I., & Ranko, A., 2013; Rowe, P. S., 2013) The number and popularity of the Egyptian Satellite TV channels have grown (Lindsey, U., 2011; Khamis, S, 2011; El Issawi, F., 2014; Harper, C. J., 2016) and played significant role in shaping public sphere.

This qualitative study depends on Van Dijk's CDA approach to analyze discourses from the most popular Egyptian Satellite TV channels between August -December 2017. These discourses come from channels represent the Egyptian media landscape through different criteria: public and private ownerships; general and religious contents, Islamist and Christian, pro and anti regime.

Focusing on the main themes which supposedly reflect the concept of modernity in the sociocultural context such as: political freedom, human rights, women empowerment, defining and dealing with the "others", appreciating science, and the debate of the Egyptian identity.

The study found that the discourse producers are varied from clerics from the two major faiths, till public figures well-known as secular people. The study showed the dual role of religious people who worked as broadcasters, and news people who seem to be preachers, which could be referred to the need of using the greatest power of the two essential institutions in political socialization: Media and Religious organizations. The general conclusion is that most of these religious discourses are against modernizing the Egyptian society, by recalling religious text in different context or misusing it for political purposes.

Id: 19141

Title: Religious Populism and Software Uses in Religious Communication Research

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: The religious populism by the figure of the presidente invades the field of studies on communication and religion. Political leaders in Latin America carry their populist message on social networks by measuring their personal tastes and religious beliefs. This research makes a analysis of the religious messages of the president of Venezuela Nicolás Maduro investigating his personal account of the social network Twitter. Methodologically, at first this study proposes to examine the observation process and data collection methods (audio recording, diaries, screenshots, social media interactions etc.) used during this research in order to question the researcher' subjectivity. Quantitatively, this study analyses the social networks messages and data of the official Maduro's online account. Qualitatively, this study will aim at building a semantic network through text analysis and the identification of codes and subcodes contained in official documents, interviews, political talks and speeches in social networks through Atlas.TI software. Theoretically, this study presents usability of software that works with a coding and quantification system for a later qualitative analysis. Theories of populism in Latin American countries are also presented. It is concluded that the quantification of codes in research in political communication rescues a semantic universe close to conducting with the religious symbols within the religious calendars institutionalized in a country.

Id: 19150

Title: Filtered Morality: Religious Motivation in Consumer Gratifications of Sanitised Hollywood Films

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: Jar Jar Binks is one of the most hated movie characters, not only in the Star Wars Saga (1977-2017), but within film and television as a whole. Many feel that the removal of despised characters in movies, like Jar Jar Binks, or the editing of vulgar film content can enhance the audience viewing experience. VidAngel, a religious-oriented company from Provo, Utah, began offering home viewers a way to stream Hollywood movies, customized to their own artistic taste (excising of Jar Jar) and moral standards (elimination of sex, nudity, violence, and language). Some individuals, however, especially artists in Hollywood, believe that such alterations are a troubling form of modern-day censorship, but viewing alternatives for morally conscious religious consumers are extremely limited.

Filmmakers in Hollywood have long battled censorship of their work, most notably by the film industry's self-regulation policies, which were enforced to prevent government interference. Moral censors, frequently because of religious convictions, have frequently been the driving force behind the censoring of films. The Hollywood Production Code, for example, was eventually enforced because of mounting pressure from the Catholic Legion of Decency in 1934.

After the disintegration of the Production Code in 1968, religious audiences were left with few options to view Hollywood films free from immoral content. Today, alternate television versions of films are often produced by studios under the supervision of the film's director; FAA airline versions are also created that present a "cleaner" version of the original content. These more family-friendly versions, however, are rarely sold or distributed to the mass public.

Because of the lack of options available to morally sensitive consumers, companies such as CleanFlicks, ClearPlay, and VidAngel (each based out of Utah with substantial ties to Mormon operated Brigham Young University) have separately offered paid services of edited Hollywood films and television shows based on religious or moral grounds. Each company modifies the films using third-party editors, without the permission or input of either the films' artists or the studios. Through customizable filters, the consumer is able to create a unique version of a film, based on their own personal religious or moral values. Filtering content from copyrighted materials has

drawn much criticism from artists and created problematic legal entanglements. There is such a high demand, especially from religious consumers however, that companies are willing to challenge copyright laws to provide consumers an opportunity to view popular Hollywood films and television that better reflect their moral standards.

My paper employs uses and gratifications theory to examine what motivates consumers to seek out censored/filtered media content. Religion has historically been the guiding force behind the censoring of questionable moral content, but interest in edited content could be the result of more general societal or conservative values or to protect children. The non-fiscal motivation of ClearPlay and VidAngel will also briefly be explored to determine how significant the role of religion is as an impetus for modern-day censorship. With enough consumer interest in censored film content, however, studios could eventually support releasing their own edited versions.

Id: 19214

Title: A Critical Analysis of Pakistani National Press Portrayal of Zakat Advertisements during Ramadan

Session Type: Individual submission

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Abstract: Abstract

This study is a critical analysis of religious advertisements campaign on 'Zakat' (welfare contribution)→. Zakat is →a 4th among all Five Basic Pillars of Islam and is performed during Ramadan (the Holy Month) before Eid ul Fitr (a joyous occasion at the end of Ramadan). In Pakistan, which is the second largest Muslim nation in the world, Zakat is usually collected through advertisements campaign which runs thru mainstream national press in Pakistan. These ad campaigns incorporate 'religious' imagery and themes. Hence the study based upon the hypothesis that the specific religious images, icons, or representatives used and whether those images are indeed religious (derived from an established religion), either merely spiritual in nature, or just the commercial messages. And which one as the attention-getting tactic has been used, as the advertising researchers note that advertisers are desperately seeking catchy tactics as an essential first step in the persuasion process. And if the data are individual responses, Zakat donors are taken for the purpose, as they themselves have to decide this particular religious-practice, then why they would feel towards those advertisements either positive/favorable, negative/unfavorable or neutral. This research would add to the literature on the effects of mass media on individuals' social attitudes and the formation of beliefs in the Pakistani religio-scape.

Keywords: Zakat/Basic 4th Pillars of Islam, daily Dawn, Religious Advertisements, daily Jang, Media Exposure, CDA

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