



Department of Media Studies

The Thesis Release Form

EQUIPPING CHILDREN
TO OUTSMART ADVERTISING
THROUGH PHILOSOPHY

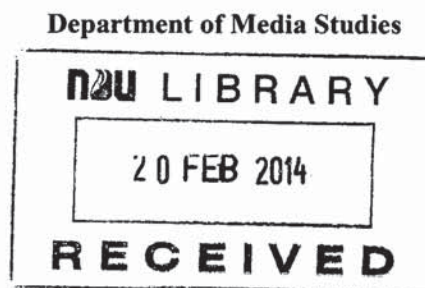
A Thesis
Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Media Studies/ Advertising

by

Nada H. Abdulbaki

Department of Media Studies
Notre Dame University – Louaize
Lebanon

Fall, 2014



The Signature Page Form

EQUIPPING CHILDREN
TO OUTSMART ADVERTISING
THROUGH PHILOSOPHY

by

Nada H. Abdulbaki

Department of Media Studies
Notre Dame University – Louaize
Lebanon

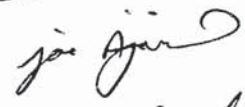
Fall, 2014

Thesis Committee:

Thesis Adviser: Dr. Bou Zeid, Maria
Assistant Professor - Media Studies



First Reader: Dr. Ajami, Joseph
Associate Professor - Media Studies



Second Reader: Dr. Yaacoub, Youssef
Associate Professor - Education

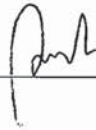


Chairperson of the Department: Mr. Lahoud, Sam
Lecturer – Media Studies

Department of Media Studies

The Thesis Release Form

I, Nada H. Abdalbaki, authorize Notre Dame University – Louaize to supply copies of my thesis to libraries or individuals on request.



Signature

18th of Feb. 2014

Date

Abstract

The focus of this study is basically exploring the concepts of advertising brainwash and the imagined reality, and how it has developed a gruesome threat that devours the children's imagination. It also highlights how the Lebanese curriculum of Grades one to five ignores critical thinking that can be acquired by customized philosophy in the form of children stories, which in turn creates media literacy and equips kids to specify their own identities and shape their own world. Thus, the theoretical framework relies on mass communication theories: Propaganda (seven persuasive devices that convince the audience that elite's interests are theirs) and Inoculation Theory (vaccinating the audience against advertising effects). The conceptual framework includes advertising appeals and effects, philosophy of the real, and Lebanese children education. Hypotheses were validated through three different methodologies: a content analysis of seven Lebanese ads that aired between September and November 2013, during the only two Lebanese kids' shows: Mini Studio on MTV and Kazado on OTV; three focus groups of seven pupils each, between six and ten years old, of both sexes, randomly selected from distinct private and government schools in Shouf and Metn areas; four in-depth interviews with academic, psycho-pedagogy and advertising experts, in addition to a testimonial with a 17-year-old child whose experience is a living example of what this thesis is about. The study tackled only one aspect affecting critical thinking development; therefore a long-term quantitative (for

generalization) and qualitative research is needed to explore this development in different angles through age.

Keywords: advertising effects and appeals, brain manipulation, simulacra, simulation, philosophy of the real, world of appearances, Lebanese curriculum, critical thinking, customized philosophy, children stories, Inoculation Theory, Propaganda devices

Acknowledgements

This study has stemmed from a great support and effort exerted by every member of my thesis committee. Through their comments and Socratic questioning, they brought me nearer to the concept I had originally perceived, eventually making its rich complexity easier to grasp.

I am indebted to Dr. Joseph Yacoub whose course “Seminar in Educational Psychology” (PSL 682) was a substantial inspiration for me to examine my thesis topic. The themes he used to discuss in class gave me a valuable insight into the workings of many influential writers and philosophers such as Michel de Montaigne, Jean Baudrillard...

I am also thankful to Dr. Joseph Ajami for his meticulous remarks that were able to take my discussions to a higher level. His humbleness and his compassion make him take the role of a father rather than a professor.

My deepest appreciation is to my advisor Dr. Maria Bou Zeid who has given the image of an understanding professor with an unwavering commitment especially with her quick feedback and full-time availability. Her notes on the thesis drafts can themselves form a platform of a course in critical thinking, knowing that she has always showed respect to my perceptions without imposing any of hers, which makes the whole process smooth and comfortable.

Last but not least, this study is a humble tribute to the exceptional five people who have marked my way and continue to be my guiding light.

Father, mother and my three patient and prudent gurus, I am forever grateful for your perpetual guardianship and persistent prayers that sustained me this far.

In a world where all hope seems to be lost, you made me open up to the wonders of life through the marveled eyes of the child that once saw the beauty in every new encounter.

After all, isn't it overly blissful to have five mentors, two Josephs and a Mary in one's "life" contact list?

Table of Contents

Introduction	9
Literature Review	13
Theoretical Framework	32
- Propaganda	33
- Inoculation Theory	37
- Hypotheses	41
Methodology	42
- Content Analysis	42
- Focus Group	44
- In-depth Interviews	47
Findings and Results	48
- Content Analysis	48
- Focus Group	64
- In-depth Interviews	69
Conclusion	74
Limitations and Recommendations	80
Bibliography	81
Appendices	92
- Appendix I: Interview to All Experts	92
- Appendix II: Focus Group Questions	93
- Appendix III: Photoshop Manipulated Images Used in the Focus Group	94

Introduction

Inspired by “*V for Vendetta*” movie with its quest to fulfill the desire of righting the wrongs in a corrupted society, and captivated by the concept of the “*Matrix*” dream world that was built to keep human race under control, this thesis is merely, as the subtitle divulge, a humble invitation to the *Spectacle of Reality*.

It is basically a show that brings forth infinite sets of questions that hopefully might guide humans in their search for absolute reality (Wachowsk, 1999).

Given that “imaginary” is the antonym of “real”, what unreal images are people filling and forming during their quest? Do these images really take the depth of a great living icon of the spirit? What role can the education take here? What is the role of schools and universities? Is there any understanding of what human being is? Is the curriculum enough? Does it tackle the essentials of the students? Are these same students anymore able to go beyond what is seen? Or the media and other powers have set the system’s agenda and programmed it to limit the creativity of the Lebanese generations? What are the impediments that stand against real education? Is it constructing a spiritual person who can liberate his/her soul and get a transcended humanity or is it constructing only slaves of change and the desires imposed by this alteration? How far is it from spirituality, from virtues, and from the honest inner self? How much does propaganda make education nowadays familiar with conscious creation and the absolute reality? How to abolish markets without regressing into servitude and dominators?

Akin to the “*Matrix*” trilogy, which relies on four different philosophical works (*Simulacra and Simulation* by Jean Baudrillard, allegory of the cave in *The Republic* by Plato, *Oracle of Delphi* by Socrates and the work of René Descartes), this thesis attempts to answer on these questions and discusses the philosophy of the real (the critical analysis of the nature of the world of reality versus the world of illusions and appearances). In other words, the study examines the illusionary consumer culture that contributes in distracting the human race from the reality of being exploited by powers like the media, and of being ignorant of their own interests, much like the machines capitalize the humans in the “*Matrix*” to acquire bioelectricity.

The ruling scheme of this paper is to suggest a platform for Lebanese education to nurture generations with wide imaginations and endowed with the ability to upgrade their sensory experience (perceive reality merely via their senses) to a higher level where the foundation of genuine knowledge lays (perceive reality merely via their mind), a level of high skeptical perspective, however, without doubting their own human existence, similar to what the French philosopher René Descartes indicated in his famous quotation “*I think, therefore I am*”, and to what Morpheus tried to imply in his conversation with Neo in “*The Matrix*” movie:

“What is real? How do you define real? If you’re talking about what you can feel, what you can smell, what you can taste and see, then real is simply electrical signals interpreted by your brain.” (Wachowsk, 1999).

The platform mentioned above aims also to give the students the passport to be aware of their current ignorance, apply Socrates’ popular phrase “Know thyself” and experience the intellectual journey in search of truth, just like the escapee in Plato’s

allegory of the cave, creating the free open society that Karl Popper talked about in his 1944 book *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, which was reflected in “*V for Vendetta*” movie. (Popper, Havel, & Gombrich, 2011)

How can education achieve the above? Implementing sessions featuring thought-fostering narratives (static or animated) can be potent enough, especially when teachers help students identify the concepts that are raised by the story and push them to think deeply and ask philosophical questions. The expression “philosophical questions” does not necessarily mean “existential questions”, on the contrary, such questions can merely introduce dialectic and creative thinking, as well as engender the orchestration of links between the discussions and human’s daily life on one hand, and/or the rest of the school subjects, on the other hand.

Despite these objectives appear to be utopian, theoretical, grandiose, and difficult to be applied, however, when considered in depth, one can realize that the world today is due to ideas that were rated impossible and mere fantasies. Thomas Edison, for instance, had an idea about using the electric power and implementing it in many areas, similar to Alexandra Graham Bell who had an idea of facilitating the process of communication through the telephone, Marconi who thought of sending signals wirelessly and who bequeathed the world the radio, the Wright brothers who believed that flying is possible, not to mention Walt Disney, knowing that “Most castles in the air are never built. But Walt Disney's was” as Eve Zibart indicated in the book *The Unofficial Disney Companion*. (Zibart, 1997)

Although a considerable amount of research on fake reality and media simulacra (plural of simulacrum that means a static image, representation and imitation, sometimes without original) has been done to explore their different dimensions, no parallel research has been conducted to discuss how to let the Lebanese curriculum prepare the children to outsmart these simulations, the concept that is the heart of the discussion pursued in this paper.

Therefore, the focus of this study is basically exploring the concepts of advertising brainwash and the imagined reality, and how it has developed a gruesome threat that devours the children's intelligence and imagination. As a result, the theoretical framework relies basically on mass communication theories whereas the conceptual framework is advertising appeals and effects, philosophy of the real, and Lebanese children education.

Literature Review

Mankind is living in a system where a brutal regime of simulation is governing, bringing forth a melancholy that turns to be the supreme tone of social life.

A savage dissatisfaction is emerging from this vicious governor (simulating media; specifically advertising) that has abolished all lines between real and fake. All differences have been eliminated between things that in their turn started to vanish, leaving the people with a converged world with poorly defined entities.

This system seems to outsmart human's ability to even check it. On the contrary, most generations of the human race become fascinated at what is happening to the uprising signs, the ubiquitous manipulations, and the deterioration of realities.'

Societies are being overwhelmed by all types of masking, which, as Moore suggested, happens when a signal interrupts another primary signal successively and retroactively to hide it, leading the viewer to a reduced visibility and a vague perception of the primary stimulus. As a result, this masking serves to engender a positive grasp of a negative or neutrally grasped primary stimulus and vice versa. (Moore, 1988, p. 302); (Breitmeyer, 1980); (Breitmeyer & Ogmen, 2000); (Kahneman, 1968)

In the realm of advertising, the central element of any communicated message is the appeal whose objective is concealing the way of perception, which may be subliminal

and runs at a subconscious level. Moreover, obviously, if the appeal were removed, the primary stimulus shall be perceived clearer.

Advertising is crowded with masks, or rather it is a mask by itself. Masking is a covert technique for manipulation and subliminal persuasion. In his book, Phillips (1997), defined manipulative ads as those that aim to alter consumers' interests unreasonably, or satisfy them by associating the promoted service, idea, or product with the fulfillment of their conscious and unconscious desires.

As a result, after looking on both criteria, one can conclude that masking is one form of manipulation because it alters the rational assessment of a given product or service by false deceptive associations. Such changes in product or service evaluation work at the subconscious level during ad exposure.

Researches, dealing with manipulation in marketing, studied the advertising claims extensively. They involved many definitions of deceptive ads. For instance, Olson and Dover said that it is the ad that generates a fallacious opinion about the product or service or idea. Whereas Miller asserted that for the ad to be manipulative, it should be communicating a distorted message resulting from intentional faking or deletion of information for the sake of arousing a belief that the communicators themselves do not believe. (Braun & Loftus, 1998); (Gardner, 1975) and (Leonard, 1990); (Olson & Dover, 1978); (Miller, 1983)

As for Gardner (1975), deception happens when a product or service ad makes the viewer believe in something different than that of a viewer with reasonable knowledge of this advertised idea, product or service. For example, when seeing the ad for *Nautica Oceans Cologne* for Men, which features a man with washboard abs (sex appeal) and a yacht that worth more than thousands of dollars, only the rational viewer will not fall in the trap of masculinity and social status representations, rather he/she will realize that the purchase includes neither the six packs nor the luxury of the yacht, but only a perfume.

Relying on the preceding definitions, Aditya, Ram wrote in the article "*The Psychology of Deception in Marketing: A Conceptual Framework for Research and Practice*", that the deceptive ad is an assertion, message or action that leads some consumers to reasonably take decisions that would not be taken otherwise. Additionally, according to her, an ad is considered deceptive if it makes some consumers have some unverified beliefs about the product or service. The author claimed that a deceptive ad can encourage distrust of certain ethical values that are basically considered desirable in society (Aditya, 2001).

Marketing and advertising industries all around the world are in continuous wars for people's hearts and minds against fierce opponents and competitors. They appreciate all what it takes to guarantee their winning, even if the only means was deception, masking, or manipulation.

Harry Mills, in his book *Artful Persuasion - How to Command Attention, Change Minds, and Influence People*, said that:

"A large group of people... believe that persuasion is sorcery, a mysterious black art practiced by wizards who masquerade as politicians, advertisers, and spin doctors."
(Mills, *Artful Persuasion*, 2000)

Vance Packard, tackled the same concept in his 1957 best-selling book *The Hidden Persuaders*, quoted the Theologian Reinhold Neibuhr:

"we are in danger ... of developing a culture that is enslaved to its productive process, thus reversing the normal relation of production and consumption". (Packard, 1957)

A Canadian university professor, William Bryan Key, roared the press with his 1973 *Subliminal Seduction: Ad Media's Manipulation of a Not So Innocent America*. In all of his books, like *Clam Plate Orgy*, *Media Sexploitation*, and *Age of Manipulation*, Key tried to create a social awareness about the hidden subliminal messages embedded in advertisements that urge the unconsciously manipulated viewer to buy the different products, services, or ideas being promoted. Through his writings, Key pushed government officials and religious leaders to fight against this media conspiracy and hence ban any subliminal selling.

This study agrees that this policy against subliminal messages is one of the most stupid acts ever taken. It is just another manipulation of the subconscious. Its application is impossible, as the advertisers will use another manipulative tool to defend themselves in case of any policy violation. Key and Packard ignited such gigantic media frenzy but its aftermath was not the needed solution. If they banned subliminal messages, what will they do with the other forms of manipulation? For example in his book *Subliminal Persuasion: Influence & Marketing Secrets They Don't Want You To Know*. Dave Lakhani said:

"TELL THEM WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO TELL THEM, TELL THEM, AND THEN TELL THEM WHAT YOU TOLD THEM" (Lakhani, 2008)

Populations are bombarded with ideas and ads that are consistently repeated. How can anybody outlaw this? They cannot. Otherwise they need to exterminate the entire advertising industry; the thing that is thoroughly idiotic.

Humans are being trained not to take heed of the destructive reality of the messages that come across them. But being unheeded does not mean they are unseen. These messages are seen and felt by their subconscious and engraved deeply in there, affecting their behavior and perception of the different facts that are encountered.

"Peeling off the deceiving layers of reality" has become crucial as Slavoj Zizek wrote in his 2002 book *"Welcome to the Desert of the Real"*. He discussed the signals that ride the fast lane to the mind and exploit it. He said that the reason that people feel free is that they are deprived from the language that helps articulate their "non-freedom". Zizek wrote that the freedom publics feel is basically a mask that sustains their deeper "non-freedom". (Zizek, 2002)

There is a constant interrogation by cultures and advertisers for the audience to be convinced that they are free, however this freedom is also veiled by an "unfreedom", a demand to obey and conform. Likewise when it comes for the choice of democracy. People always opt for whatever choice as long as it conforms to these same societies, cultures, and power. Consumers do not anymore create their demand for anything based upon their own normally existing needs. Rather, advertisers choose the needs for these consumers and define their relation to the world via media. Hence, the automatic response is a complete

acceptance. The issue of needs creation by advertising is highly debatable, as some consider that needs are neither created nor destroyed.

Actually the title of Zizek book originates from the *Matrix* movie when Neo first came face to face with the real reality.

Jean Baudrillard also tackled this issue of the real and the signals. He asserted that images and signs have come to be more real to the viewers than reality itself. In his book "*Screened Out*" Baudrillard was wondering what the case would be if the signal has no link neither to the object nor to the meaning, but rather it is related to the promotion of the signal as signal. Similarly, what if data also was relevant neither to the facts nor to the event, but rather to the promotion of data itself as event. Likewise concerning television that might not be linked to anything except itself as a message (Baudrillard, 2002, p. 188). This argument resembles Marshall McLuhan's theory: the medium is the message. For instance, in a given commercial for a BB cream, the brand Garnier said:

"Skin concerns, such as discoloration, dullness, blotchiness and dryness can come from a number of different sources. It's hard to find just one product that addresses all these concerns at once. Garnier introduces its first BB Cream, Miracle Skin Perfector. Multi-benefit skincare that combines intense hydration with tinted minerals and vitamin C." (Garnier Website)

On the other hand, a competitor brand Maybelline, when promoting the same product BB cream, claimed:

"The 1-step wonder for a good skin day, everyday. Packed with 8 great skin benefits for instant skin perfection Ideal for Normal Skin." (Maybelline Website)

Both products showed a beautiful young model with almost perfectly pure skin. In this case, both commercials are promoting signals as signals. They are promoting the image of this beautiful pure skin (that can hardly be reached or at least only reached by some who already have pure skin) and they are advertising the words “*Miracle Skin Perfector*”, “*Instant skin perfection Ideal for ...*”, and so on so like. The products might not reflect these facts.

In his writings, Baudrillard generally condemned capitalist consumerism and the western ideology, and accused them in superseding the “real” with “simulacra”. He asserted that capitalism has engulfed hungrily humans’ natural needs and developed what is called as cultural trends which define their wants and perception of the world through these simulacra or signs - advertising and media.

In this faculty, Baudrillard tried to project what Walter Benjamin had written about “*the age of mechanical reproduction*” to all dimensions of life and not only to art as Walter did. (Benjamin, 2008)

In his 1964 novel *The Simulacra*, Philip K. Dick first introduced the term simulacra. The concept of simulation and the concept that the image is more real than the real was mentioned again in Dick's most famous novel “*Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*” in which he also shed the light on the contrast between reality and its representation. “*Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*” was then adapted in the movie “*Blade Runner*”.

The same argument was held by Steven Best who indicated in his essay "*The Commodification of Reality and the Reality of Commodification*" that:

"In this new postmodern world, images and signs proliferate to the point where previous distinctions between illusion and reality, signifier and signified, subject and object, collapse, and there is no longer any social or real world of which to speak, only a semiotically self-referring 'hyperreality'. (Best, 1994, pp. 41-42)

However, Slavoj Zizek, in his book "*Welcome to the Desert of Real*", hinted at the way of overcoming this mixing between reality and fake and hence pursuing the real reality. For regaining the real reality, he gave the example of the "cutters" who have this irresistible desire to cut themselves. By projecting this self-annihilation phenomenon to the environment, it can be considered as an attempt to resume normality and as a strategy to regain the real reality of the body, and hence preventing a psychotic breakdown (Zizak, 2002). Much like what Wilson Bryan Key wrote in his book "*Media Sexploitation*". He quoted Henry Bergson who believed that the way to get back to reality is through the obliteration of how it is perceived. Humans should kill their conventional manner of thinking and reverse the habitual workings of their intellect, by the help of their imagination and heart. (Key, 1976)

On the other hand, Jonathan Bond and Richard Kirshenbaum, the advertising mentors and authors of "*Under the Radar*", considered that every consumer owns an internal advertising radar screen.

"Marketing radar is a defensive mechanism that helps them screen out advertisements that they are exposed to every day." (Bond & Kirshenbaum, 1997, p. 50)

And according to them, the clue for an ad to be under that radar shield is credibility. However, as this paper's obvious foremost concern is the human element and not the ad, what is the clue for the consumer to develop this built-in shield and know what is the real real?

Issac Asimov in "A Cult of Ignorance" published in the *Newsweek* in 1980 said that:

"I contend that the slogan "America's right to know" is a meaningless one when we have an ignorant population, and that the function of a free press is virtually zero when hardly anyone can read." (Isaac Asimov, 1980)

In this regard as well, in his interview with London Scott, which was issued in July 2012 in "*The Sun*" magazine, James Hillman agreed that:

"We can't change anything until we get some fresh ideas, until we begin to see things differently. My goal is to create a therapy of ideas, to try to bring in new ideas so that we can see the same old problems differently." (London, 2012)

Therefore, people are witnessing a problem of ignorance that is deteriorating the quality of their integral radar and suppressing their ability to conceive what is being delivered to them as audience. There are no more fresh ideas but rather ideas with propaganda residues.

Harry Mills, in his book said:

"Moreover, I passionately believe that the best defense against manipulation, propaganda, and ultimately tyranny is a fundamental knowledge of how persuasion works. You only have to visit the Auschwitz and Dachau concentration camps to know the human price we pay for naïveté, gullibility, and ignorance." (Mills, 2000)

And this paper says that the best way to acquire this "fundamental knowledge of how persuasion works" is through widening the generations' imagination and enhancing

their critical thinking through philosophy (the reasonable inquiry after the truth and fundamentals of being and knowledge). More than ever people need philosophy today.

It is time to think more carefully and extensively about education through which the priority should be given to the emergence of judgment and character. Philosophy should be held in the highest regard to free the thoughts and paralyze the effect of all mind manipulators. By embracing the opinions of the great thinkers, nourished by the classical authors, this study navigates through heaps of knowledge, suggesting some philosophical innovations along the way. It tries as well to offer some penetrating analysis and enduring guidelines that might be applied in the Lebanese curriculum and improve it.

Hargreaves (1994) believed that the context of a postmodern world should be applied to education and schools. Being mindful of the harsh reality of the world around and cognizant of the demands on young people who are striving to identify their own identity and position in society is very essential when discussing curriculum. Philosophy for children programs must be perceived in this light.

In Australia, USA, and UK, for instance, studies figured out that a lot of young people are lacking interest in the curriculum to an extent that they are leaving school at early stages before even developing the fundamental skills for purposeful living (Beane, 1993) (Newmann, G., & Lambon, 1992).

What if Lebanese schools have an educational intervention centered on philosophical debates that can rectify the imbalance imposed by what is happening around them?

According to Murriss K.:

“Philosophy is often thought of as a body of knowledge; but this idea makes little sense, because for virtually every significant statement that one philosopher makes, it is possible to find another who will disagree with it. It is better to consider philosophy as a method of enquiring into very fundamental questions that do not yield to the methods of science. In the Western tradition, since the time of Plato, this method can be characterised by a form of relentless questioning, in which the answer to one question only leads to a further question, and so on, and on and on. Readers of Plato will know what I mean. And so will parents of small children.” (Murriss K. , 2000)

Since early ages, since Plato, the philosophers have been disputing the notion of considering children as great thinkers who can pick up the spirit of philosophical concepts.

Cultural thinkers, in different countries, have been promoting intellectual skills and fostering the urge of implementing philosophy in educational plans. Hence, what are the different approaches to introduce philosophy in the elementary school program and why? And how can it be related with the Lebanese curriculum?

Going back to Michel de Montaigne whose concern is highly relevant to the current times, he talked about education that is often displayed in a similar manner in modern times with career goals and future earnings that are used as standards of success. In his essay “Of the Education of Children”, Montaigne perceived education as the way students turn to be most fully human, *“to enrich ... inward mind...”* (Montaigne M. de, 1899).

To encourage intellectual growth, Montaigne intended to foster wisdom, character and physical development as a way of education. Why not if the bible said:

“Know also that wisdom is sweet to your soul; if you find it, there is a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off.” (Proverbs 24:14)

"For wisdom is a defense as money is a defense, But the excellence of knowledge is that wisdom gives life to those who have it." (Ecclesiastes 7:12)

However, it is not possible to create a new generation by stuffing heads with facts that the student does nothing with but parrots without any understanding, like what is being done in different schools including the Lebanese schools.

Schools should not anymore create a generation that has a misunderstanding between itself and understanding. Rather, as Montaigne believed that sculpting minds proficient enough for critical judgments will come at its very best merely with a solid block of philosophy. He asked schools to develop the sense of judgment. He criticized that too often *"We labor only to fill our memory, and leave the understanding and the conscience empty."* He also believed that what will help children is learning how to judge history rather than memorizing historical names and dates. He considered history as the skeleton of philosophy – Montaigne's highest regard. According to him, philosophy is lively, spirited and playful and should never be presented lightly to students. Montaigne moved from the notion of philosophy as theoretical science to philosophy as the application of free judgment. Hence, it is a major part of the whole mix, the part that is missing in the Lebanese curriculum today. (Montaigne M. De, 1958)

Learning is meant to be an enjoyable experience. The methodology section will study if things have changed. Do they still talk unceasingly into the ears of their students as if, *"they were pouring water into a funnel"*? In the same essay, Montaigne asserted that the chief objective of education should be to produce an individual who is both wise and happy, as *"the surest sign of wisdom is constant cheerfulness"*.

Relying on observations that shall be backed up at later stages in the methodology, unlike what is being witnessed nowadays, learning is meant to be an enjoyable experience. Schools in Lebanon are being programmed to give the “what’s” of an answer rather than the “how’s” and “whys” to the world. They are programmed to talk unceasingly into the ears of their students as if, “*they were pouring water into a funnel.*”

On the other hand, Jean Jacques Rousseau focused in *Emile* on the issue of the proper setting for the education of a child. Rousseau insisted that living in cities is bad for children and will propagandize them to be adapted to the corrupting immortality and wickedness that characterize the world.

According to Rousseau, the proper approach for a child to begin to develop vigorously is by living in a “*state of nature*” away from the destructive impact of the society and culture. As Rousseau asserted in one of the phrases in *Emile* that children should be children before becoming men because they have their own perceptions, thoughts, and feelings that fit them. This is nature’s desire. (Rousseau, 1979, p. 90)

This extract from *Emile* is of paramount importance on more than one level, as it perceived children as living beings who are thoroughly natural, healthy, and moral. He described them as “*fruits*”, some real fruits that are unable to survive in a cluttered city deprived of the fresh air where there is no room for the roots to extend. Rather, he preferred to nurture them in a fresh healthy sunny place to avoid the ruining of their original quality.

Rousseau also compared young aged children to animals and asked the readers to pave the way for them to explore, without restricting them with the hindrances of formal education and rigid hefty ethical instructions. Hence, instead of imprisoning youngsters in cities and classrooms, let schools free them and provide them with the breathing space to develop in a state of nature. How far is this being applied in the Lebanese schools?

In one part of *Emile*, Rousseau started to ridicule and criticize the notion of nurturing a child relying on reason. He claimed that creating a reasonable man should be the masterpiece of good education. As a result, depending on reason while educating children is like starting with the end and turning the outcome into a mere means. (Rousseau, 1979)

This thesis considers that media (specifically advertising) is the cluttered city that is depriving Lebanese children of the fresh air where there is no room for the roots to extend. It is the city that propagandizes them to be adapted to the corrupting immortality and wickedness that characterize modern societies. However, this study suggests that the solution is not by taking them away from it. Instead, the solution is by providing them with the immunity needed to withstand and embrace the harsh conditions of this environment. Furthermore, it is ultimately true that schools should help children grasp and make sense of the world and then come the logic and rationalization. Why hindering their imagination with the consumerism logic spread by advertising and media, which is more likely not be that idealistic?

Let them excel and philosophize on their own, knowing that, and according to the writings of Gareth Matthews, a professor of philosophy at the University of Massachusetts, young children are naturally born philosophers. For instance, *Philosophy and the Young Child* demonstrated to what extent the child's unlimited intellectual curiosity overlaps with the purposeless ruminations of experts in the field of philosophy. (Matthews, 1982).

Matthews (1994) criticized the developmental theories that focus on a single goal, which is maturity and illustrated it as "evolutionary bias". In his opinion (1994), growing up does not mean maturity, and maturity is not necessarily of a positive connotation, sometimes it means "staleness" and "uninventiveness". On the other hand, immature children can be "fresh and inventive thinkers" as he added. Nonetheless, Matthews (1994) refused to describe philosophy as 'immature', but rather he called it as a wise naivety.

According to Van der Leeuw (1993), children's knowledge shortage leads them to a favorable position and urges them to start from scratch without any corrupting residue.

In this regard, the American philosopher, William James, quoted Murrin K. in the article *Can Children Do Philosophy?*, who said that humans might think that they are thinking, however, the reality is that they are solely rearranging their preconception. (Murrin K. , 2000)

On the other hand, philosophy has traditionally been considered a subject that is studied only at university. Multitude of professional philosophers has been extremely skeptical about the suitability of philosophy for children. For instance, Gordon Graham, a regius professor of Moral Philosophy at Aberdeen University, asserted that young children are impotent to engage in abstract thinking. He stated that philosophical questions have

drained the brightest human minds over centuries, children are more likely to comprehend nuclear physics than philosophy (Johnston, 2005). Mark McLean, an organizer in the Philosophy for Schools Unit at Aberdeen University, confirmed that children should be thirteen or fourteen before they are able to think very carefully. (Johnston, 2005)

Additionally, Plato's philosophy, especially in the *Simile of the Cave* related knowledge that he named it as episteme with adulthood, and the belief or as he called it the doxa with childhood. Children are in a cave and can only perceive the world of appearances (doxa). Hence, they are not able to be truth lovers and philosophers. However, this study suggests the exact contrary; i.e. adults are the ones in the cave seeing only the world of appearance and not children. (Murriss K. , 1997) (Egan, 1988)

Piaget thought that a child's imagination is nothing but romancing, while Aristotle and Plato also focused in their research on only one faculty of the human mind that is logic and mathematical reasoning. One of the main critics of this issue is the Canadian educationalist, Kieran Egan, who contented that many researchers have ignored and undermined the imaginative side of the child. Nevertheless, the argument of children's lack of readiness to absorb philosophy is born dead. In this regard, Matthew Lipman, the founder of the P4C (Philosophy for Children) movement confirmed that philosophy should be reassembled in a way different than the traditional scholar philosophy delivered in the graduate schools and universities, so that it can be acceptable and alluring to the children's appetite. (Matthews, 1980) (Egan, 1988) (Egan, 1992) (Lipman M. , 1991)

Additionally, Lipman described philosophy as a '*way of life*' to shed the light on the difference between two concepts: philosophy the '*body of knowledge*' and

n2u LIBRARY

philosophizing '*doing philosophy*'. He claimed that the concept of doing philosophy has been existent since Socrates, who used to believe that philosophy is a practice, deeds and a form of life, rather than knowledge or application. (Lipman M. , 1988)

Fisher (1995) agreed that philosophy for children is an eminent technique to teach thinking. Research in more than fifty countries has suggested that philosophy for children enhances thinking skills, involving critical thinking (1998). According to Mathew Lipman (1988), philosophy for children has originated from Dewey and Vigo Tesky's theories. These theories focused on teaching thinking and refused the idea of mindless automatic learning. In his opinion, children should be taught how to analyze and experiment the subject matter instead of training them how to memorize and remember the content. By providing children with variety of teachings, such programs broaden the children's horizons and drill them the way to judge relying on proof and reason. Similarly, and going back to the Dutch philosopher Karel van der, he argued that philosophy schools are only using philosophy as knowledge and not teaching students how to think. Van der Leeuw added that philosophical concepts should not be treated as mathematical concepts that are abstract and general. For instance, they should not be defined or separated from concrete experiences.

Necessity drives people to have philosophical enquiries that are answered explicitly or implicitly through their actions and experience; and it does matter whether this translation into actions is good or bad. For philosophy to be appropriate to children, it should be reassembled in a way that fits their gratitude, talents, and interests. (Emmet, 1991) (Cam, 1995)

Philosophy can be delivered in the form of stories in order to allure the children's appetite for grasping it. Some storybooks have been established to implement philosophy for children. The best example of such books is the bible storybooks for children that give a simplified brief synopsis of the greatest philosophy ever written in the history of the mankind. Splitter and Sharp (1995) thought that since children are fond of stories, it could be used to inspire them to have inquiries and think.

While selecting a stimulus, it is essential to take into consideration whether it would interest the children on one hand, and whether it has the potential in its philosophical content to create an enquiry, on the other hand. Since children enjoy listening to stories, narration would be a suitable method that fulfills the objectives.

This reconstruction should focus on doing philosophy rather than learning it. Much like what Montaigne said when he moved from the notion of philosophy as theoretical science to philosophy as the application of judgment, as it was mentioned before.

Relying on what precedes, it is evident that a wise person should not simply neglect the subject of advertising brainwash, its potential impact on generations, and its role in replacing real with fictional illusions. These illusions are portrayed in the pictures that train viewers to perceive themselves as inadequate and think that "others" are more desirable because of the purchases of certain brands, making merchandizers gain more profit and hence more power. These fabricated images have created the urge for the public to constantly re-verify their values and virtues thus have made them exposed to subliminal administration and control techniques.

All what is needed is unveiling the mask of these techniques, which in turn reveals the veil of the original virtues that play a pivotal role in the human's soul formation. Once the human is introduced to the concealer, his/her reason starts to think well and regains its prudence, the appetite begins to desire well and get back its temperance, the high spirit commence showing emotions well and hence retrieve fortitude, and the preceding three parts start to interplay properly, reestablishing justice. It is only then the fullest sense of humanity is earned, reality is secured, and therefore happiness is attained. And here comes the job of education.

In order to build a righteous future generation, free from the filth of the system, schools should work on the building blocks, that is children. Akin to what most of the earlier review of literature has suggested, a community of inquiry should be enshrined in human culture, because it is believed that it can be the transformative power. Feeding young minds with philosophical questions using stories and tales can afford a delightful escape from the imaginary reality, through sharpening their wits and spreading out the wisdom of previous generations.

Theoretical Framework

The objective of this section is to study the theories that advertising uses in communicating different messages. Then, the thesis attempts to relate these theories to the Lebanese educational system and the way they can be utilized in enhancing critical thinking and widening imagination of children between 6 and 10 years old, so that they can outsmart advertising and marketing industries.

The theoretical framework is based on the Arabic popular proverb “وداوي الداء بالداء”. It implies that the best way to cure a disease is by the disease itself. It has the same concept of a “vaccine”, which is according to the Merriam-Webster medical definition:

“matter or a preparation containing the virus of cowpox used to vaccinate a person against smallpox” (Merriam-Webster)

In this framework, this study relies on theories that are considered the secret recipe of the advertising industries’ success and argues how important is to implant them in the Lebanese educational system to vaccinate the children and upsurge their antibodies to induce a prolonged immunity against the advertising disease. Hence, the best theories discussed are Propaganda and Inoculation theory.

Propaganda

Starting with propaganda, in their book *Israel Affairs*, Frenkel-Faran Atara, and Sam Lehman-Wilzig stated that:

"every day we are bombarded with one persuasive communication after another. These appeals persuade not through the give-and-take of argument and debate, but through the manipulation of symbols and of our most basic human emotions. For better or worse, ours is an age of propaganda." (Atara & Lehman-Wilzig, 2000, p. 246)

The concept of propaganda has a religious origin and has been there since the primates were able to articulate and use it. Kotler asserted (Kotler, 1967) that, in its earliest stages, propaganda was one of the primary jobs of princes and religious leaders who used to win converts through manipulating people's feelings and thoughts.

During the Industrial Revolution, in the 19th century, the remarkable new era of propaganda started to be formed. A lot of inventions had emerged, be it the airplane, telegraph, railroads, phonograph, assembly line, Diesel engines, or many others. The invasion of this giant number of consumer goods in the mass market developed the concept of a consumer, improving people's lifestyle phenomenally. However, the lion's share, if not the exclusive share, of this lifestyle improvement was for those who can afford to get it. As an outcome, tastes, preferences, and aspirations were all redefined. (Pratkanis & Aronson, 2001)

In his writings, Noam Chomsky (2000) suggested that propaganda limits the borderlines of acceptable debate, it generates a framework of thought that none is able to

speak out of. In his opinion, Propaganda's objective is making elite's interests look like the population's interest.

In the book "*Animal Farm*", George Orwell (2000) talked about the emergence of a supreme totalitarian reality. Humorously, he described the centralized power that rules the population. His humor becomes ultimately disturbing when projected into reality where oppressive governments sustain power by the ceaseless threat of violence, much like that in the book, forbidding democratic institutions and setting limits to press and speech. Repression in authoritarian systems is effortlessly specified and condemned by those who belong to democratic societies. Most probably, this was the reason behind the popularity of *Animal Farm* during the Cold War in the USA and other democratic systems.

However, the author had a further objective in his story. He attempted to show how this same dictatorship is being experienced in both totalitarian and capitalist regimes where the ideological media is playing the whole role. He demonstrated how propaganda exists even in free societies, forming another hidden form of dictatorship and keeping the people obedient to the controlling elite policies.

In his Ph.D dissertation, Dr. Stanley Naribo Ngoa (2006) noted that a necessity in orienting the consumer's choices has emerged after the advent of mass production and hence mass markets, leading to what is called as propaganda devices and techniques.

Talking about the devices, according to Mike Conway, Maria Elizabeth Grabe and Kevin Grieves, in their study "Villains, Victims And The Virtuous In Bill O'reilly's "No-Spin Zone" Revisiting world war propaganda techniques", they confirmed that in 1930s,

the Institute for Propaganda brought into existence seven devices that help identify propaganda in speeches. Since then, these IPA's seven devices have been used to analyze communications. These devices constitute of: name calling, glittering generalities, transfer, testimonial, plain folks, card stacking, and bandwagon. (Conway, Grabe, & Grieves, 2007)

The propaganda devices and their analysis were integrated in a vast variety of academic areas such as philosophy, social psychology, sociology, political science, logic, public speaking, education, and many other disciplines (SPROULE, 2001); (LEE & LEE, 1979).

Name Calling, according to Mike Conway, Maria Elizabeth Grabe, Kevin Grieve (Conway, Grabe, & Grieves, 2007), and all propaganda-related research that this study has examined, manipulates minds by representing a person or idea associated with a bad label to make the recipients spurn it without even looking for any evidence.

Glittering Generality, as opposed to Name labeling, is basically the utilization and exploitation of words that carry positive labeling, such as liberty, honesty... in order to urge the recipients to accept the discussed idea without questioning or searching for any evidence.

Transfer is attaching a symbol, which is associated with authority, respect, prestige, or sanction, to an idea to make it more acceptable by the audience.

Plain Folks is another propaganda device that convinces the recipient that the discussed idea is basically the idea of the people and part of the ordinary folks.

Bandwagon urges people to act or think in a certain manner because the majority does likewise. The example that suits best here is Pepsi's 1985 commercial with the slogan "The choice of a New Generation". (Pepsi: The choice of a new generation (1985))

Testimonial is the endorsement of a person who can be respected or disrespected to promote for or against a given idea or product.

Card Stacking is used to acquire the audience's advocacy or rejection of a given idea or product by presenting selective or half-truth, or even complete lies.

Although propaganda is mostly associated with negative connotations, at its very core, it is an approach in communication whose objective is to influence and shift the attitude of a community toward an idea or a cause that is not necessarily bad. Although the aim of propaganda is to brainwash and manipulate emotions by depicting facts and ideas selectively, it can also convey constructive and positively effective messages.

According to Bernays, Edward L. (1928), in his book *Propaganda*, it can be both destructive and constructive depending on the merit of the intentions behind it and the truthfulness of the data and ideas promoted. (Bernays, 1928)

Consequently, as stated by this study's hypothesis, in the field of education, propaganda can act as the humble servant of the coming generations instead of being a remorseless supporter of illegitimate rulers.

Inoculation Theory

One of the theories that talks about the persuasion psychology and simultaneously deals with the receiver's automatic response is William J. McGuire's Inoculation Theory. In his article "Resistance to persuasion conferred by active and passive prior refutation of the same and alternative counterarguments" published in the "*The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*", he argued that the effect of propaganda is reduced if the recipient in the communication process is previously alerted about the peril (McGuire W. , 1961).

Relying on the medical analogy of vaccination, Inoculation Theory provides insights into the persuasion psychology approach. Strengthening preexisting attitudes, beliefs, or opinions can help in resisting persuasion. Once the recipients are warned of the imminent attack, they will initiate defensive strategies to future attacks.

Consequently, once the receivers are subjected to mild argument in the inoculation messages, the process of refutation will make them ready for future stronger arguments. These mild arguments should be strong enough to create the defense mechanism in the recipient, however weak enough not to alter the already established beliefs and opinions (McGuire W. , 1961).

Much like the work of the vaccination, the body is exposed to mild viruses that are strong enough to strengthen the immune system and induce antibodies, but weak enough not to damage the body.

Ernest Van Den Haag asserted in "*The Jewish mystique*" that the media turned to be biased and controlled by a group of people who have reciprocated origin and mutual

experience (Haag, 1969). As a result, these men of power apply propaganda through media and impose their own standpoint and world perception. They vaccinate the recipients' minds and create illusions of debates as Chomsky said in his book *"Necessary Illusions"*, serving the media owners and global conglomerate corporations. These dominators provide their audience with codes as antigens to reshape their reality (Chomsky N. , 1989).

To break this conspiracy, schools should vaccinate the generations alternatively through education, in order to redefine the existing version of reality infiltrated and imposed via advertising, and do a remarkable traveling to acquire the antigens of free thinking infection.

Early studies on Inoculation compared the efficiency of supportive and refutational methods to acquire resistance (immunity). The supportive method attempts to bolster already existing beliefs and attitudes. In other words, if any person believes that "X" is desirable, a supportive approach would come up with arguments to fortify this position. However, contrarily, the refutational (inoculative) approach seeks to intimidate people's beliefs and attitudes by alerting them of potential confrontations to these beliefs, and then raises and preventively refutes these confrontations. People who support "X" would be told that they would run into strong arguments opposing their position. Consequently, complaints would be raised and instantly refuted and proved false.

Generally, after this comparison, researches have indicted that adhering to the refutational approach is better and more effective. On the other hand, multitude studies confirmed that the use of both approaches together was superior to the use of one alone. These researches established the viability of inoculation and removed all shadows of doubt

concerning whether inoculating arguments that oppose the people's beliefs might unwittingly lead to an attitude change. (Anderson & McGuire, 1965) (Crane, 1962) (McGuire W. J., 1961) (McGuire W. J., 1962) (Tannenbaum & Norris, 1965)

Early research studied as well the persistence of inoculation treatments over time. They concluded that although treatments decayed over time, refutational 'different' messages deteriorated less than refutational "same" messages. Inoculation proved to be amazingly robust in converting resistance to influence.

The tenet of the mentioned theories is reconcilable with this study's objective in terms of finding ways to persuade and manipulate the kids' subconscious minds, through the educational system, to set critical thinking as a priority on their agendas and orient them to have wide imagination rather than passivity and accepting without questioning.

In this way, through inoculation theory, these youngsters will have enough potential to defeat Propaganda spread by advertising. As a result, the world will be witnessing what these children do with media rather than witnessing what the media will do to them.

This is completely doable. Why?

Going back to the literature review, Slavoj Zizek, in his book *Welcome to the Desert of Real*, suggested that the best way of overcoming this mixing between reality and fake, and hence pursue the real reality, is by "self-annihilation" or "cutting" like Zizek

called it, where the result will be a person liberated from filth and soul's uncleanness.
(Zizak, 2002)

But, Jean Jacques Rousseau in *Emile* perceived a child as living being who is thoroughly natural, healthy, and moral. Therefore, a ready-made "*New Man*" who is "*freed from the filth of the past corruption*" is already there. All what is needed is to know what ways of persuasion should be used to maintain this natural purity and protect it from any harm, especially that "*A nation has invaded my land, powerful and without number; it has the teeth of a lion, the fangs of a lioness.*" (Joel 1:6)

Hypotheses

Based on the review of literature, the research hypotheses are:

H1: Lebanese Curriculum and the way it is delivered in schools, especially from Grade 1 to Grade 5, is not enough to enable students to go beyond what is seen and to liberate themselves from the propaganda imposed by advertising.

H2: Sculpting minds proficient enough for critical judgments that outsmart the best minds in advertising might be achieved at its very best with the inoculation of a solid block of philosophical stories.

Methodology

The aim behind this section is two-fold. The first part aims to study the way propaganda is used and what role it plays in the effectiveness and success of the advertisements. This highlights both the threat it has on the public and the necessity for using it for good purposes in order to attain in education the same success as that in advertising. Consequently, this part tests the validity of H1.

As for the second part, it is to study whether critical thinking skills are part of the Lebanese curriculum. It also aims to identify the gaps in this curriculum and detect if philosophy is the proper means that can bridge them. As a result, the part tests the validity of H1 and H2.

The study uses three different types of methodologies: Content Analysis, Focus Groups and In-depth Interviews (including a testimonial).

Content Analysis

Content analysis is used to explore and study how propaganda is embedded in both implicit and explicit communication messages; Neuendorf (2002) explained that content analysis is “the primary message-centered methodology” (Neuendorf, 2002, p. 9). In his

study, he quoted the studies conducted by Riffe and Freitag (1997) and that of Yale and Gilly (1988) who stated that:

“in the field of mass communication research, content analysis has been the fastest-growing technique over the past 20 years or so” (Neuendorf, 2002, p. 1).

In his book *Propaganda techniques in the World War*, Harold Lasswell (Lasswell, 1927) introduced media content analysis as a technique used in propaganda-related researches. This is considered as an additional reason behind the study's choice of this type of methodology.

As a quick overview on content analysis, research said that during the 1920s and 1930s, media content analysis gained its popularity for studying the communication content of movies. However, in the 1950s, as television arrived, media content analysis diffused to mass communication and social sciences areas. It has been a significant research methodology for studying depictions of a broad range of social issues in television programs and films, such as violence, discrimination against women, racism or similar problems. On the other hand, different analyses and studies have proved that marketing strategies have been focusing on complex persuasive techniques, manipulating and changing consumer perceptions by targeting humans' psychology (Schor, 2004, pp. 13-16). With time, these strategies' focus has turned to children.

In the Findings and Results section, there are some representations of these advertising and marketing strategies that were aired between September and November 2013, during the two Lebanese kids' shows: Mini Studio on MTV and Kazado on OTV, knowing that these two programs are the only kids' shows televised on local Lebanese

channels. This was done to make the current sample of TV advertisements more likely to be watched by Lebanese people, as they are the research's primary concern.

Focus Group

Following the content analysis of the seven local ads that were aired during Kazado and Mini Studio, three focus groups of seven pupils each were conducted to achieve two objectives. The first objective is to discuss the kids' perception and opinion toward their schools, to study the extent they are satisfied with what they are studying, and whether or not the material is meeting their expectations. The second objective is to know their perception of certain concepts presented by ads after showing them a selective sample whose content was previously analyzed by the researcher.

Subjects included in the samples should be Lebanese pupils between six and ten years old, of both sexes, randomly selected from distinct private and government schools in Shouf and Metn areas.

By definition, focus group qualitative method is:

"a way of collecting qualitative data, which—essentially— involves engaging a small number of people in an informal group discussion (or discussions), 'focused' around a particular topic or set of issues" (Wilkinson, 2004, p. 177)

Researchers in social sciences can extract a myriad of advantages from conducting focus groups. One of these benefits is that focus groups are considered inexpensive, quick, and effective method for deriving data from a group of participants (Krueger & Casey, 2000), leading to an exponential increase in the total number of individuals in a

qualitative study. Another benefit of focus groups is the socially directed environment (Krueger, 2000).

Being the main stakeholders in this research, and because they are fundamental partners in the curriculum (1998), children were asked about their perspectives, especially that encouraging pupils' beliefs and views is the heart of philosophy for children program's nature. In this way, this study will be collecting feedback that can be put in use for future practices and research.

For the data to be as much credible as possible, the recruitment process was based on choosing participants from different Lebanese communities. There were students coming from Beirut area (Sid El Bouchrieh Official School and College La Sagesse St. Joseph) and others from Shouf area (English Academy School and Shouf National College).

Because most of the kids were concerned about the difficulty of questions that they will be asked, the researcher introduced herself as a student who needs their help to complete an assignment requested by her teacher. She promised that there will be a lot of fun activities like singing, acting, watching videos and on top of that a lot of delicious desserts. This motivated the participants and helped them open up and introduce themselves more freely. Moreover, choosing the researcher's home as the focus group environment created a sense of social belonging and made the process smooth and comfortable.

At the beginning, the focus group concentrated on the kids-school relationship; that is whether they love or hate their schools, which teacher they love most and if they

were once the school principal which rules they would abide by and which ones they would eliminate. Then the children explained their relation with stories and expressed their opinions in having school lessons in the form of stories. Afterwards the focus was on the health facts of vegetables/fruits versus chocolate/candies/various snacks. After telling them about some nutritional facts related to fruits and vegetables, the kids were exposed to OSMO, Junior Mini Croissant and Yan Yan ads. To know their honest and natural feedback and observe their reaction to such commercials, a collection of the mentioned products together with different fruits like bananas, grapes and apples were served. Subsequently, the discussion related to image perception was raised, when the kids had to choose one of the two manipulated photos of a fat young girl gone thin and vice versa. Then a quick demonstration of how the original pictures were edited via Photoshop was presented. Later, every kid stated the list of TV programs, series and shows he or she watches and specified what elements or even parts they prefer most. The discourse ended after tackling the BLF commercial, “Let’s Play” game and Youth cards.

All the above discussions aim to know the status of the Lebanese schools from the students’ point of view, see how much the children see stories as entertaining and check the way they perceive the Lebanese ads. Hence, these discourses intend to explore the validity of H1.

In-depth Interviews

After the content analysis and the focus groups, a series of in-depth interviews was conducted.

Kvale (1983) indicated that the qualitative research interview aims to relate the collected descriptions of the interviewee's life and interpret it as per the meaning of the given phenomenon. In-depth, qualitative interview is appropriate means to use in planning and evaluating programs. Being an open-ended and discovery-oriented tool, it is convenient for describing the processes and the outcomes of a given program from the key stakeholder's perspective. The aim of this method is to deeply explore the respondent's opinion, perspective, and feelings regarding advertising effects, education, and philosophy for children.

The interviewees are:

- Dr. Antoine Saif : An academic specialist, a philosophy expert, a member in the Lebanese philosophy program committee and a philosophy professor in the Lebanese University)
- Miss Siham Ramadan and Miss Samira Said: Two experts in psychopedagogy and counselors in more than one official and private school.
- Dr. George Farah: An advertising expert and a chairperson of the Faculty of Mass Communication at AUST.

Additionally, a testimonial was conducted with the 17-year-old child, who has a distinguished story with his school and the Lebanese curriculum. His experience is a living example of what this thesis is discussing.

The interview with Dr. Saif tackled the issue of psychopedagogy and the importance of the corporation between philosophy, psychology, and education. Moreover, he talked about the current Lebanese academic program, how it is being applied in schools, to what extent it is creating the immunity against advertising effects and the importance of adding philosophy for children to the curriculum.

Akin to what Dr. Seif discussed, Miss Ramadan and Miss Said spoke about their experience in education, about their perception of the media effects on the generations and how the Lebanese educational system is helping in limiting this influence. Additionally, the interviews included their points of view on reconstructing the elementary program with philosophy (in the form of stories) as one of its components.

The previous interviews covered the philosophy, education and psychology areas in the research. As an attempt to cover the mass communication area and advertising effects, the interview with Dr. George Farah focused on the advertising impact on Lebanese audience and the significance of media literacy and philosophy to widen the people's imaginations so that they deal properly with potential negative influences of advertising or perhaps other media messages.

Regarding the testimonial, Kaasamani's experience with schools and the Lebanese curriculum and his understanding of it were discussed in details.

Findings and Results

The chosen ads fall under four categories based on the nature of the product. The groups include snacks and sugary products, banking products in addition to TV programs and series.

Content Analysis

Snacks and Sugary Products:

HARIBO / OSMO / Junior Mini Croissant / Yan Yan

Ad Content

HARIBO

The whole ad is basically focused on cartoon characters dancing and singing a jingle that says, “The Kids and grown-ups love it so, the happy world of HARIBO”, showing the “happy world” of HARIBO. The end shot displays the pack shot with the tagline: “Enjoy HARIBO. The world’s best eating fruit jelly.” The commercial airs on MTV during Mini Studio show.

OSMO

The scene opens to grandchildren asking their grandfather about a necklace they found. He replied that it is a secret that he has been trying to unravel the mystery behind it for many years. As though being anxious to know the answer, the kids did some magic to

move to the fantasy world of OSMO, where kids and colorful cartoon characters start to dance on the vibrant song of OSMO which means: OSMO's world is just too great, so come to dance and don't be late... OSMO cone... a definite adventure and fun... OSMO cone... a unique taste". Then a voiceover says: "OSMO cone with chocolate and milk". Afterwards, the kids get back to the real world where a happy family is shown eating chocolate corn all together. The last shot demonstrates the tagline "Delicious milk chocolate in a cone" along with the pack shot. The commercial airs on MTV before, during, and after the Birthday section in Mini Studio, as it sponsors this section, and on OTV.

Junior Mini Croissant

The scene opens to a mother waking her child up to get him prepared to school. However, the little boy did not get up until the cartoon character Junior came to encourage him and say what means in English: "Hey... Come on Junior is waiting for you... Come on wake up". Cut to the mother putting Junior Mini Croissant packs instead of sandwiches in the kid's lunch box. Afterwards, the ad starts to demonstrate the process of croissant preparation by showing eggs and flour with a voiceover saying that this product consists of the best natural ingredients to give energy all day long. Cut to the little boy who lost his energy and concentration while attending a Math session at school. However, soon he retained his vigor and enthusiasm when Junior helped him eat a snack of croissant. Not only the Math session went fast, but also the child was able to win the football game in the Sports session. The last shot includes the pack shot, the cartoon character Junior, and

the slogan “Mini Croissant...Maxi Hayawiyyi”, which means “Mini Croissant... Maxi Energy”. The TVC precedes the Junior Mini Croissant games and competitions section in both shows: Mini Studio and Kazado.

Yan Yan

The ad opens to a jingle “*I have loved you for a long time*” with a mother enjoying the Yan Yan tasty experience with her kid who starts to explain the steps of eating these biscuits by saying “*I take Yan Yan, I dip Yan Yan, and I crunch Yan Yan*”. The ad ends with a pack shot, the holding company’s logo “Abiaco” and the tagline “The A-Class Products”.

Ad Analysis

Being a major market force, advertisers are aggressively competing to achieve brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand preference, and boost the brand’s sales among youth. This explains the usage of cartoon characters in the three commercials HARIBO, OSMO, and Junior Mini Croissant, as they can arouse the temptation and build a positive attitude, a long-term recognition and a brand loyalty starting from early childhood years (Neeley & Schumann, 2004).

Advertisers tend to use music in their commercials as it enriches the central message and might act as the single most stimulating element in an ad (Hecker, 1984). Viewers perceive it as a well-built peripheral cue that creates a positive emotional state, hence a positive attitude which is transferred to the promoted brand (Gorn, 1982).

Zimny and Weidenfeller (1963) discovered a link between music and the person's emotional reaction. For instance, exciting music maximizes emotional arousal in people by affecting skin response and heart rate, as they are considered to be the physiological evidence of emotional response. This rationalizes the usage of jingles in HARIBO and OSMO TVCs.

In all its promotions, HARIBO communicates in its audio and visual messages the idea of being natural and extracted from fruits. However, is this idea real or merely a fake signal and a *Glittering Generality* that masks the real real?

In a study, published in the *Los Angeles Times* (2013) about caffeine effects on children and teens, the author stated that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) investigated caffeine presence in gum, jellybeans, waffles and other food.

The American Academy of Pediatrics deterred young people from caffeine consumption, since it stimulates an increase in heart rate and blood pressure and could negatively lead to certain disorders in the kid's developing neurological and cardiovascular systems (Venteicher, 2013).

Being a food rich in sugar, jellybeans might be a direct cause of obesity or overweight, because according to Gleason P. and Sutor C., high sugar foods act as the source of around 20% of the calorie intake of a person (Gleason & Sutor, 2001). Being a jellybean, HARIBO stays in the mouth and stick to the teeth just like lollipops, caramels and hard candies, as they make it hard for the saliva to remove the sugar away, hence causing cavities. Moreover, Ramiel Nagel added in his book "*Cure Tooth Decay*" that processed sugar, which is considered as a major ingredient of kids' modern diet,

fluctuates the level of blood sugar, pulling minerals like calcium and phosphorous from teeth and bones to save the body (Nagel, 2011).

However, the way the ad is presented conceals these nutritional and scientific facts, driving the parents to buy and the children to consume more nutrient-poor snack foods and less healthy fruits and vegetables (Medicine, 2006). This leads the viewers to fall in the trap of *Card Stacking*.

Moreover, through the jingle "*The Kids and grown-ups love it so, the happy world of Haribo*", which is based on the *Bandwagon* technique, the commercial urges people to love the happy world of HARIBO because the majority of kids and grown-ups do likewise. The song together with the tagline "*Enjoy Haribo. The world's best eating fruit jelly.*" use emotionally appealing words or *Glittering Generalities* to associate the experience of consuming HARIBO with the concept of living in a happy world and eating pleasing natural and fruity sweets.

Regarding OSMO ad, it is very similar to HARIBO in terms of the basic ad elements; that is the usage of animated cartoons together with a jingle. OSMO resembles HARIBO as well in the product's nature. Same propaganda techniques are employed to stir up positive attitude towards the brand. For instance, the words used in the jingle like "great", "tasty", "fun", "unique"... point up the way *Glittering Generalities* are embedded in the ad. Additionally, the fact that the kids celebrate their birthday parties with OSMO character at Mini Studio and get OSMO family pack with many other incentive promotional items as their birthday gifts, make the product a must on their birthday

parties' menu and associate the brand's name with fun and happy moments. This makes it just another example of how propaganda works to manipulate kids' minds and build a base for future adult consumers.

As for Junior Mini Croissant, what characterizes this ad is the usage of the cartoon character "Junior" that acts as a hero who boosts the child's energy. This is portrayed in two scenes: first when he wakes the kid up to go to school while the mother failed to do that; second when he motivates him in class and helps him to get rid of his laziness and win the football game. This same character is endorsed in both kids shows "Mini Studio" and "Kazado" where the kids are engaged in games (via social media) that give them the chance to win Junior Mini Croissant family packs with many promotional items like Junior mugs, puzzles... As an additional incentive, every child who participates in the games will automatically enter a draw in which only four names are picked to win a mini iPad.

Sarah Klein, in her article "*Study: Cartoon characters attract kids to junk food*" shown on CNN, said that, according to the Children's Advertising Review Unit (CARU) and Dr. Thomas Robinson, M.D., a professor of child health at the Stanford University School of Medicine, linking food with cartoon characters can provoke certain feelings and memories that will contribute in associating the product with something considered fun, making the brand seem more desirable, hence altering the audience's perception (Klein, 2010).

Junior Mini Croissant campaign expands its communication platforms to include social media like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. It pursues many new chances to get its desired customers to “engage” with the brand through games as mentioned above, tagging one’s self in photos of events held by Junior, and competitions in which children are asked to snap one of the Junior ads displayed on billboards all over Lebanon and upload the picture on Junior Mini Croissant Facebook page to win a tablet.

Therefore, the brand relies on many techniques of persuasion. First, celebrity (Junior) endorsement acts as a core persuasive tool in its communication with the audience. Second, incentive programs that were developed play a significant role in driving the audience to increase the product’s consumption. The third persuasive technique is mainly the brand-kids interaction through games and different social media platforms. In addition to all of what precedes, Junior Mini Croissant focuses in its communication message on the fact that it is nutritious, healthy, natural and a good source of energy for every kid, as it improves the child’s performance at school and in activities. This is clearly manifested in the words used during the ad like “best natural ingredients”, “boosts energy”..., and in the tagline that appears in the end “Mini Croissant...Maxi Energy”. These expressions that fall under the category of “*Glittering Generalities*” aim to convince the viewers and especially the parents that Junior Mini Croissant is the best choice for their kids’ snack. They aim to present an ideal world where kids are not only excited to wake up in the morning to go to school, but also are able to maintain their energy all day so that they excel in both classes and the activities they are engaged in.

However, the Public Health Institute, California Center for Research on Women and Families, published in 2011 an article titled “*Understanding Nutrition: Primer Module on Overweight & Obesity*” asserted that California Department of Public Health defined the list of high-calorie, low-nutrient foods, which include pastries like doughnuts, muffins, croissants, in addition to deep-fried foods like French fries, fried chicken, fried fish and onion rings. The list continues to involve snack foods especially chips and cracker biscuits, as well as desserts, namely cake, pie, cookies, ice cream and candy bars. On the other hand, the Irish Heart Foundation published an article in July 2013 declaring that the over-consumption of high fat and sugary bakery foods such as croissant lead to deficiency in fibers and in some vitamins like calcium and iron, not to mention the excess of calories and the imbalanced diet. As a result, and after scanning all the above scientific facts, one can conclude that this butter-based snack is nothing but a pack of calories that should be avoided, unlike what the commercial is trying to imply. (Reed, 2011) (McCormack, Macey, & Mulvilhill, 2013)

Similarly with respect to Yan Yan, these cracker biscuit sticks that come with flavored frosting are just another example of high-calorie, low-nutrient foods that are promoted to attract kids by using several propaganda and persuasive techniques. *Glittering generalities* are put into practice in the ad’s opening French song “*have loved you for a long time*” and in the tagline revealed in the end shot “*The A-Class Products*”. In addition to that, much like OSMO and Junior Mini Croissant ads, the presence of the mother eating Yan Yan with her kid gives a sense of security to the parents watching and reduce their concerns about the healthiness, knowing that these messages sometimes (if

not most of the times) are delivered on the subconscious level. The jingle used in the ad that shows the bond connecting the little boy with Yan Yan can contribute in alluring positive sentiments towards the product among the audience, just like the case of HARIBO and OSMO commercials.

Banking Products:

Banque Libano-Francais (BLF) Youth card

Ad Content

The ad opens to a young child talking about her dream future job, saying which means in English: “When I grow up I want to be a teacher, and in the afternoon I want to sing in Mini Studio”. Then the ad features a voiceover saying: “We are ready for all their ambitions”. Finally the end-shot reveals the logo of BLF with a slogan “A contributor to your ambitions”. The ad is presented on MTV prior to “Let’s Play” section.

Ad Analysis

The ad is basically promoting Youth Card, which is a form of direct debit card. Using cartoon animation, the ad focuses on actualizing the kids’ dreams and fulfilling their desires through BLF card. These images are portrayed through the alluring expressions or in other words *Glittering Generalities* like “ready for all their ambitions”.

As stated above, the ad precedes a section of the program called “Let’s play”, sponsored by BLF. In this section, a BLF game is played where two young participants

compete in counting money. The one who counts better scores more and eventually wins. It is a clear portrayal of how children are nurtured and trained to be obedient to the illusions created by great powers like bankers. By teaching them, creatively, that this obedience is the sole way the world is meant to be, the children become indoctrinated with a chain of beliefs that bound a human tightly.

In the case of debit cards, studies have proved that the frequent use of these cards might lead to a negative effect on the customer's cash flow management and weakening its control. A study done in Vienna by Stix (2003) suggested that both debit cards and credit cards had augmented cash withdrawals and consumption level, leading to a decrease in saving and investment, accelerating cash outflows without being able to surge cash inflows at the same rate.

The study concluded that because the two cards offer a remarkable flexibility when accessing the money, they are significantly used by young and employed people who risk having impulsive purchases, increasing the level of indebtedness and keeping the cardholders in cash deficit situations, dissimilar to what was indicated in the commercial that the card helps achieve ambitions.

Furthermore, the frequent pairing of Youth card, with happy consumers in television and ambition may cause an unsuspected belief that possessions fulfill ambitions and bring happiness, turning consumers who are heavily exposed to this type of advertising to value and appreciate material possessions more than people with less

exposure, much like what Belk and Pollay (1985) claimed when talking about the presentation of material themes in media and advertising.

Marsha L. Richins, in her paper "*Media, Materialism, and Human Happiness*", quoted Schudson (1987) who suggested that as a result of these ads, character has degraded and values have vanished. The obsessive strive after things is replaced by mindless indulgence in them. The problem here is no more the quest for the promoted product (Youth Card), but rather the speculation that all values are inherent in these objects.

As for the in-game placement, BLF took advantage of the opportunity that games are very interactive and require a sustained attention and reaction from the audience, unlike other media where noise might take place and prevent the perception of the ad's key message.

It is the arena of games and electronic applications, which employs most senses simultaneously to take the user in a journey to the promised world of virtual reality where the most frenzy dreams come true. The consumer's subconscious starts perceiving that this world is his/her own reality that they look up to. In other words, they start believing, without even noticing, that he who is with more money wins at the end.

TV shows and series

Ma Fi Metlo Show / Hilwi W Kizzabi Series

Ad Content

Ma fi Metlo Show Ad

“Ma fi Metlo” or “Like No Other” promotion is an ad for a comedy show that runs on MTV every Thursday at 20:45. It features Lebanese comedians and different characters such as the gays “Majdi w Wajdi”, the guy who pretends to know English “Mr. Loughat”, the old man “3ammo 3adel” and many others. The ad basically displays sketches of Ma fi Metlo show accompanied with its jingle.

Hilwi W Kizzabi Series

“Hilwi w Kizzabi” or “Beautiful and Liar” ad promotes an Arabic comedy series, aired on MTV every Sunday at 20:45, which talks about, as the title suggests, a beautiful lady who loves to lie. The promotion shows a number of the series’ scenes.

Ad Analysis

The selling power of comedy and humor is discussed in more than one research. François Dominic Laramée (2002) indicated, in his book *Game Design Perspectives*, that comedy and humor have a remarkable selling power. According to *The Times of India* newspaper, Gaurav Bhatia (2011) said in his article that a research project done at Tara Singh College for Women, studied a sample of 100 parents living in Ludhiana city and found that 35% of the children favor comedy shows while 29.1% of them love cartoons.

This is a clear explanation why a comedy show targeting adults is promoted during a kids show. However, what if it was the type of humor that children must not see? What if it was flooded with a list of swear words and sexual messages, as those communicated in *Ma fi Metlo* show, that a 6-years-old kid is still not ready to receive? Is it the right medium to learn about the world of sex? Is this world portrayed properly or it is just another fake simulation?

Data derived from a survey done by Bleakley and other researchers (2009) was used in a study they conducted in 2011 to investigate the way sexual media may affect behavior. They concluded that young people who are exposed more to sexualized media are prone more likely to have sexual intercourse or sexual dysfunction.

In their research, Eyal and his colleagues (2007) analyzed the content of the sexual messages communicated by the most famous twenty television programs among teenagers, which appeared on air between the years 2001 and 2002 as well as those shown between 2004 and 2005. They concluded that only a minor percentage of the programs that have sexual content included cautions related to risks and safety measures. Similarly, in *Ma fi Metlo show*, after watching five episodes, it was obvious that sex precautions are not present and sexual messages are delivered using humorous dialogue between actors, making them look cool, funny, and appealing to the kids.

On the other hand, Hilwi w Kizzabi series portrays the image of a young spoiled Lebanese girl who succeeded to seduce a famous artist using her beauty and by pretending that she is a millionaire's daughter. The series concept identifies the way the "popular

attractive girl” image is constructed in our society via the intersection of beauty, cunning and wealth. It is a typical paradigm of how media has set society’s standards of body image perception and demand of conformism. In the book *“Look at my Ugly Face: Myths and Musings on Beauty and other perilous obsessions with women’s appearance”*, Halprin (1995) believed that in the absence of self-acceptance, people especially females, are prone to internalize beauty standards that create low self-esteem and harbor distorted body and face images that can lead to self-hatred.

Again, Lebanese audience falls as victims of the misleading disguised signals that they are receiving on daily basis. The artful fabrication of the messages is not only punishing the viewers but also compelling them to seek actualizing media’s definitions of terms.

After scanning and analyzing all the above ads, it is noticed that three out of three Beauty/diet ads and two out of four kids snacks as are branded with the regular peculiar, ubiquitous term: natural. The natural label’s sovereignty is not just anecdotal, but also harmful and misleading, as it shows that the promoted product is the best choice (for snacks) and the only solution (for diet and beauty products).

In addition to that, three out of four kids’ snacks commercials rely on the presence of the parents, especially the mother, to endow the audience with a sense of security. Moreover, jingles and cartoon characters are used in all snacks and banking product promotions as an element that captures the kids’ attentions, engraving the brand’s name in their heart and mind. On the other hand, the banking products (BLF Youth card)

commercial engages the kids through the usage of cartoons and games and gives them promises that turn to be fake. As for the comedy shows and series ads, they tantalize young ages to watch these programs that are engulfed with indecent language and sexual messages that are meant to be targeting adults rather than kids. They also depict the beauty image that was initially represented by the diet/beauty products and define the standards for social conformity.

The content analysis highlighted the presence of the propaganda techniques in all ads presented on Lebanese local TV channels, akin to what H1 mentioned.

Focus Group

Regarding the school-kids relationship, the participants' opinions were divided into two, in which 33% thoroughly hate their schools, while the other 67% like it but think that it is a bit boring. All the students coming from private schools claimed that their art/sports teachers and all tutors with loose rules and regulation are preferred most among all. On the other hand, government school kids perceive the best teacher as the one who treats them in friendly and nice ways without beating them, as they complained that some instructors in their schools used to yell at them and hit them when they misbehave.

There was consensus among the 21 focus group members regarding the measurements they would take if they were once assigned as the school principal. All of them agreed to prolong the school breaks or at least not to cut the recess in favor of teaching time, to reduce the number of home assignments, to devote more time for activities/art/sports sessions and above of all, the kids, especially government's school students, stressed on compelling teachers to treat students nicely and prohibiting them from shouting at or beating students.

Only 25% of the participants indicated that they love to read books or stories, while the rest prefer videogames, playing and social networking on iPads, basketball, football, watching TV.

However, all describe the experience of having some school lessons in the form of stories as unfamiliar but a cool practice, but they would rather have animated narratives (motion picture rather than static) instead of storybooks.

As for the healthy versus unhealthy snacks discourse, despite the fact that the children showed an approving response when told about fruits and vegetables nutritional facts, however, soon as the OSMO, Junior Mini Croissant and Yan Yan ads were displayed and the products were served along with a variety of fruits, the effect of the preceding discussion was neutralized. Instead, the kids started singing the ads' songs while consuming all the chocolate, biscuit crackers, croissants and jelly belly supplied, leaving all the fruits untouched. Such outcomes can be obtained anywhere anytime, however, one will wonder what would be the results if grapes, for example, were repeatedly and frequently advertised with a jingle and a cartoon character that participates in events and kids activities. However, who would benefit from such promotion? Is it just consumers? Is it worthwhile for the media people? Is it profitable if compared to the thousands of dollars paid by OSMO or HARIBO or...?

This shows the power of the strategies and the appeals embedded in the snacks' TV commercials as compared to the usual boring lectures and lessons about the benefits of veggies and fruits. On top of that, what was remarkable is that 85% of the kids considered croissants as healthy as fruits and vegetables because the commercial says that it contains eggs, which strengthens the muscles and the bones.

Concerning the image perception subject, it was quite a shock for the children to know that the image of the thin model that they selected was merely a digitally manipulated photo of an overweight woman, whereas the one that they described as “big”, “ugly”, “horrible”, “monster” and even a “cow” is actually a slim young lady in reality.

The majority considered that this photographic fakery is pure cheating and many almost did not believe that this was possible. It was delightful how they all promised not to believe all what is shown in the media platforms they are exposed to, particularly after they were told that they might encounter similar fabricated imagery on daily basis in the various commercials they are subjected to. This shows how small discussions might contribute, even if minimally, in helping the children read better media messages and not be deceived.

Thereafter, the kids embarked on a new debate as they started listing the TV programs they usually watch. It was remarkable that 90% of the participants watch with their parents Lebanese shows and series that are broadcasted on the local channels, including “Ma Fi Metlo” and “Helwi w Kizzabi” whose ads were analyzed previously in the content analysis section. A thrill of excitement ran through them when every kid began performing a scene from his or her favorite show/series, conscious of every single detail and correcting to one another in case somebody missed any point. The kids asserted that if they were not able to watch these programs on TV, they make sure to watch them on YouTube.

This was a perfect example that demonstrates how children are shockingly immersed in and inspired from media signals, to an extent that they can recall even the smallest gestures as if they were part of them. In addition to that, this instance indicates the absence of the parents' censorship, which amplifies the negative impact of the media and lets them be a permeable environment, as both the useful and the harmful messages can pass into them without any hindrance.

Moving to the last issue, which discusses BLF ad and "Let's Play" game that is played during Mini Studio show on MTV, it was noticed that 20% of the participants (90% of them were boys) do not usually watch this kids show, hence they were not aware of the youth card ad and its related game. These 20% loved the idea of the card and were overwhelmed with excitement as they noted that the first thing they want to do when they return back home is ask their parents to bring them one and make a little research if they can download the "Let's Play" game on their iPads. They began to envy the kids in the ad because they possess such a card, which make its holder happy and have the ability to buy whatever he or she wants. This points out how advertising has the potential to highlight certain needs that the audience was not alert to originally, and set the ideals they want to embody.

However, a distinctive response of a 9-years-old boy "Peter" in one of the three focus groups was detected, when he asked whether this card is real or it is just like the fake Photoshop-manipulated images they saw before.

Although it was just one out of twenty one, that is 4.7%, who questioned the ad and showed suspicion, it is considered a satisfying result that conveys the message of this study: children can outsmart advertising.

Therefore the focus group proved the effectiveness of the Inoculation Theory and the powerful presence of Propaganda Theory. It also showed the primitive ways of teaching practiced, such as beating, in certain schools, which need to be fixed before even start thinking in media literacy and critical thinking. Thus, the focus group validates H1.

In-depth interviews

Dr. Saif, Miss Ramadan and Miss Said admitted that the Lebanese curriculum suffers from a number of serious deficiencies and should be reviewed. In their points of view, education experts should acquire a broader understanding of the curriculum's purpose for them to be able to check whether the planned courses and learning programs are well developed, organized, and will produce the desired results.

The interviewees agreed that the curriculum is so outdated and does not keep pace with modern times and modern approaches and definitely not with today's media. It was set in 1997 and was supposed to undergo a three-years-evaluation for it to be applied in schools starting from the year 2000. However, sixteen years has rolled by without a single assessment or modification.

Additionally, with the lack of explicitly delineated responsibilities and well-distributed roles, the educational system has failed to have any sort of supervision. Miss Ramadan acknowledged that in the absence of any follow up, inspectors just put some notes and comments on the teachers' preparation books, without bothering themselves tracking the educational process.

On the other hand, Dr. Farah asserted that the Lebanese people are taking the sword of technology by its edge and cutting themselves out of misuse and ignorance. Despite all the progress that the world is witnessing, most Lebanese are becoming more and more ignorant, imprisoned in the superficial utilization of the distinct media platforms. For instance, instead of using it to broaden their scopes, they merely use social media

networks for gossiping and watching others' lives. He added that the perception of communication messages that lacks critical and rational thinking due to media illiteracy is just another example of negative media interaction.

Therefore, all the interviewed experts consent to the idea that it is time for the Lebanese education programs to be an incubator of innovative approaches that help inaugurate media literacy skills and debate mastery. In their opinion, philosophy customized for children in the form of stories can definitely be one of the approaches.

However, Dr. Seif believed that people of the Arabian Peninsula fear everything related to philosophy, psychology or any complicated thoughts or ideas, as these concepts are considered perplexing and not common. Consequently, he thinks that camouflage is very essential, that is proposing something the Lebanese minds are acquainted with, which simultaneously can fulfill the same objectives. In other words, to raise the chances for this thesis proposition to be adapted in the Lebanese education program, philosophy should be inaugurated under a mainstream name like civic education for instance. Civics is a course being taught in the Lebanese schools, but similar to the whole curriculum, it is very basic and extremely behind the time.

Dr. Farah suggested to replace the term "philosophy for children" by "Children's Media Literacy", as he considered that the naming explain the objective of the course better and is straight to the point. He also affirmed that media literacy is a booming power that can intervene in the forces that are transforming the world, and integrating it in the Lebanese curriculum will definitely serve the thesis's objective.

On the other hand, Miss Ramadan, Miss Said and Dr. Saif argued counseling programs are being integrated to help develop the student's decision-making, life skills, in addition to character values. However, this implementation is still so immature that it is confined to prioritizing the need to finish the syllabus within the school year, without taking into consideration the fact that this course outline is merely a framework and not the "whole" work.

Moreover, they added that some books have started to use storytelling to present a given course's material, in a way that stimulates children's imagination and help them learn in a fun and fresh way. However, this approach in teaching is unripe as well.

As a result, all interviewees were in perfect concord with the idea that philosophy customized for children, no matter what the form or the name was, should be delivered to children in the society that is immersed from cradle to grave with propaganda messages. All agreed that the obsolete curriculum should be revamped in order to keep pace with all updates and bring up a generation emancipated from the negative impact of propaganda that overwhelm advertising and mass media.

The experts affirmed that it is not an easy job to do since many have tried to alter the curriculum before in a way or another and they failed, however, everyone will miss 100% of the shots if he or she did not tried any.

As for the testimonial, the 17-year-old young man Ashraf Kassamani claimed that there were a lot of triggers he used to encounter at school played a key role in engendering a lot of emotional meltdowns.

In his opinion, teachers, for example, do not acquire a full understanding of the students. In other words, he asserted that as long as the students abide by the instructors' rules and succeed in their exams, they will be considered a good student, however, if they do not pass the tests because simply they do not know how to deal with mechanical head stuffing and have potential in something thoroughly different, they will be automatically regarded as a complete failure, just like what happened to him.

He narrated his story with the three schools that expelled him for his disobedience and low grades, and how he decided later to improve his scores and attitude, not because he wanted to be obedient to the "stupid system" as he called it, but just for universities to accept him in the faculty of engineering, as he excels in math and physics, his two most favorite subjects.

On the other hand, Ashraf started to remember how he used to be deluged by both teachers and parents' pledges related to the consequences of having high scores; how good grades guarantee getting a great job, facilitate the future life and make it less stressful, and the most important how they make his parents and teachers proud of him. He added that nobody had the hassle to include the expression "to be happy" in all their recommendations.

Ashraf considered that since the beginning of time until this moment, the real concept of education has been missed, seeing the way Albert Einstein, Issac Newton, Charles Darwin and many others failed at school and turned to be geniuses.

He thought that it is weird how despite the progress the world is witnessing, the key of all success, that is education, is still falling in the trap of the same mistakes. This eventually limits horizons and visions, imprisoning generations in a box for the rest of their lives.

He advocated this study's suggestion and saw that altering the way education is delivered will definitely rescue and liberate the youth, enhancing them to have new perspectives they have not been aware of.

Hence, the in-depth interviews showed that the Lebanese Curriculum and the way it is delivered in schools, especially from Grade 1 to Grade 5, does not keep pace with the modern times and is not enough to enable students to go beyond what is seen and to liberate themselves from the propaganda imposed by advertising and necessity of implementing philosophical stories that inoculate students against media effect. This validates both H1 and H2.

Conclusion

With the attempt to prove the application of propaganda theory in the local Lebanese ads, first the study conducted a content analysis of the ten ads, which are promoted during the only two Lebanese kids shows airing on MTV and OTV, featured the ability of the omnipotent power “advertising” to firmly implant long-standing beliefs in the children’s minds, using all its energies to breed a world of dreams and delusions that are conceived to ensnare the young ages’ judgment about different topics they deal with on daily basis.

Starting by the unhealthy snacks commercials like HARIBO jellybeans, OSMO, Junior Mini croissants and Yan Yan, moving to the banking products such as BLF Youth card, then to the entertainment programs similar to the “humorous” Hilwi w Kizzabi and Me fi Metlo ads employ, creatively and in an ultimately appealing way, all possible propaganda devices, cartoons, jingles, in addition to celebrity endorsement in order to generate a simulated sustained stream of consciousness, controlling cunningly the audience’s brains, much like the “Brains in a vat” argument by the American philosopher Hilary Putnam (1981) in his book *Reason, Truth and History*, which was the core premise of “The Matrix” movie and suggested that there is a malicious evil who aims to deceive humans, similar to the brain which was separated from the body and put in a vat,

connecting its nerve endings to a computer that prompt the fantasy that everything is superbly normal.

Second, the study investigated the education and advertising correlation with children's perception, understanding and attitude towards subjects.

The idea of "lesson in the form of stories" sounded good to the kids, as they prefer animated stories rather than static storybooks. The vast majority hates school, the thing that acts an additional reason to think of new fun and engaging education. However, before introducing these ways of teaching, Lebanese government schools should find alternatives to the shameful medieval ways of punishments; that is beating, which is shockingly still applied in the "modern" times.

On the other hand, the results of the focus group revealed the participants' understanding of advertising's portrayal and society's notion of beauty and body image dissatisfaction, healthy versus unhealthy food, banking products, as well as entertainment shows and programs. The focus group addressed as well the beauty ideal problem faced everyday especially by women, as "overweight" turned to be a synonym of "ugly", and "ugly" does not conform to the society's standards.

Additionally, the focus group pointed out how advertising formulates certain misconceptions related to healthy and unhealthy food, when showing eggs and flour in the commercial makes croissant considered as healthy. It also shows the powerful impact of appealing media communication messages that promote unhealthy snacks, as compared to

the boring healthy food discussions delivered to children at school or at home. This urges the inauguration of a new technique in nurturing and educating these kids.

As for the banking products, the children were extremely magnetized in the concept of holding a debit card just like adults, and what amplified their engagement was the game created by BLF to promote its new card. Moreover, the reaction of the children who did not know this ad assured that advertising accentuates certain needs that the audience has not been aware of initially.

Furthermore, the results showed the way the comedy shows and series touch the kids deeply, where the sense of humor makes them adopt the shows and series' language, believes, and perception of the world, and stamp them in their memories, without any sort of monitoring neither from the government nor from the parents.

On top of that, the focus group confirmed the Inoculation theory that was obvious in the small "awakening" debate that was able to "vaccinate" the kids, change their reaction towards the fabricated media images and drive them to be suspicious and go beyond what they see.

The study extended into the exploration of the importance of storytelling that acts as a pedagogical device to develop dialogue in a media environment whose core tenet is reality simulation. Storytelling featuring customized philosophy can be implemented in the Lebanese curriculum by specifying sessions for narration that prompt children to utilize their imaginations and commence their own contemplation of the story told. They can discuss what they consider as right or wrong and visualize alternatives of the events,

NU LIBRARY

supporting their argument by a rationale. With the help of their teacher, students can relate the theme to their daily encounters, or even to the material delivered (Math, Science...) because it is also possible to tell stories during all sessions to present a math or any other type of lessons in a fresh and alluring way that drives the kids to be deep and thoughtful. Every single part of the mentioned process acts as an element of purposeful philosophizing.

Relying on the in-depth interviews conducted with more than one expert in the fields of mass communication, philosophy, psychology, pedagogy and education, it is concluded that the mentioned pedagogy, that is philosophy in the form of storytelling, serves as a vaccine that creates immunity for children against advertising cynicism and therefore gives them the opportunity not to be in the media thrall.

As it is asserted that the Lebanese curriculum has not been modified since 1997, education in Lebanon should start taking roles in redefining the powers that shape kid's opinions, hopes and dreams. The learning process should be more relevant to the life's demands in the 21st century. However, the government and educationalists' incompetency is hampering the revamp needed in education.

Nevertheless, the Lebanese program rehabilitation is no more an option because the presence of divergent thinking among Lebanese future generation is not an option either. These kids should start learning to perceive more than one possible answer and interpretation of a question, and not only possess a good mind, but rather apply it properly and think independently as René Descartes suggested (Fernandez, 2008).

Schools should train their generations to get used to critical thinking to be able to constantly contain everything: pain and sorrow, joy and happiness. This cannot be achieved except with philosophy.

Regardless of what shall be called, in the interviewees' opinion, the Lebanese curriculum entails the presence of customized philosophy to promulgate media literacy that helps recognize the invisible unconscious impact and the inherent features of media (Kellner & Share, 2005).

Moreover, the testimony of the 17-year-old young man, Ashraf Kassamani, also proved the necessity of having an innovative pedagogy that conveys education's real concept, which is human-based, unlike what parents and educators try to imply.

It is not too late to do something without being indicted as utopians in the bad sense of the word. It is not enough to repeat the same story about the horrible capitalistic media effect. Humankind should know what is really wanted and needed. Alternatives should be found. Without a shadow of doubt, it is a gigantic confusion. It is so fashionable and easy to be anti-system, and to have moralistic arguments like "money and power should serve the people and not vice versa, or absolute reality should be the only goal, etc...", but what is the next step? Thinking is the answer.

Critical thinking acquired by media literacy grants humans the takeover of their culture, thus equips them to generate their own meanings, gives them the power to specify their own identities and shape the material together with the social conditions of their world.

So long as the youngsters continue to abide by this agenda, the world will miss watching the parade of cattle that turned loose upon the plains of big corporations, but rather it will be solely captured by the *Spectacle of Reality*.

Limitations and Recommendations

The research suffers from the lack of detailed research in the thinking peculiar to very young children; that is how Lebanese children articulate the communication messages.

The study did not tackle other aspects affecting the development of critical thinking and imagination like educational psychology and others.

An extensive and long-term research is needed to discuss the Lebanese children's psychological and philosophical development through age and what best educational program suits this growth.

On the other hand, the study's methodology does not involve any survey that is usually characterized by its versatility and generalizability because the type of this thesis demands a qualitative method more than any other kind of methods. (Check & Schutt, 2012)

Bibliography

Books:

A., B., M., H., Fishbein, M., & Jordan, A. (2009). How sources of sexual information relate to adolescents' belief about sex. *American Journal of Health Behaviour* , 33 (1), 37-48.

Aditya, R. N. (2001). The Psychology of Deception in Marketing: A Conceptual Framework for Research and Practice. *Psychology and Marketing* , 735-762.

Anderson, L. R., & McGuire, W. J. (1965). Prior reassurance of group consensus as a factor in producing resistance to persuasion. *Sociometry* , 45-56.

Atara, F.-F., & Lehman-Wilzig, S. (2000). La Bell (e) epoque? A comparison of party platform and television propaganda ideology in the 1999 Israeli elections. In F.-F. Atara, & S. Lehman-Wilzig, *Israeli Affairs* (Vol. 7, pp. 245-268.). New York: W.H. Freeman and Company.

Baudrillard, J. (2002). *Screened Out*. (C. Turner, Trans.) Verso.

Beane, J. (1993). *A Middle School Curriculum: From Rhetoric to Reality*. Columbus, Ohio: National Middle School Association .

Belk, W., R., Bryce, W. J., & Pollay, R. W. (1985). Advertising Themes and Cultural Values: A Comparison of US and Japanese Advertising . In A. o. Chinese University of Hong Kong. Department of Marketing and International Business, K.-c. Mun, & T.-s. Chan (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Inaugural Meeting of the Southeast Asia Region* (pp. 11–20). Hong Kong: Hong Kong: Academy of International Business .

Benjamin, W. (2008). *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. Penguin Books Limited.

Bernays, E. L. (1928). *Propaganda*. New York: Horace Liveright.

Best, S. (1994). "The Commodification of Reality and the Reality of Commodification: Baudrillard, Debord, and Postmodern Theory." . In D. M. Kellner, *Baudrillard: A Critical Reader* (pp. 41-42). Wiley-Blackwell; 1 edition.

Bond, J., & Kirshenbaum, R. (1997). *Under the Radar: Talking to Today's Cynical Consumer*. Wiley; 1 edition.

Braun, K. A., & Loftus, E. F. (1998). Advertising's Misinformation Effect. *Applied Cognitive Psychology* , 569-591.

Cam, P. (1995). *Thinking Together; Philosophical Inquiry for the Classroom*. Australian English Teaching Association & Hale and Iremonger.

Check, J., & Schutt, R. K. (2012). *Research Methods in Education*. Massachusetts , Boston: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Chomsky, N. (1989). *Necessary Illusions*. USA: South and Press.

Chomsky, N. (2000). *Propaganda and Indoctrination*. Znet.

Cumming, J. (1998). *Extending Reform in the Middle Years of Schooling: Challenges and Responses*. Canberra: Australian Curriculum Studies Association.

Development, C. R. (2002). *Game Design Perspectives* . (F. D. Laramée, Ed.) Hingham , Massachusetts, USA: Cengage Learning.

Ecclesiastes 7:12. In *Bible*.

Egan, K. (1992). *Imagination in Teaching and Learning; ages 8-15*. . London, Routledge.

Egan, K. (1988). *Primary Understanding; Education in Early Childhood*. London, Routledge. .

Emmet, E. R. (1991). *Learning to Philosophize*. Penguin Books.

Fisher, R. (1995). *Teaching children to learn*. London: Bloch well / Simon and Schuster/ Stanley thornes.

Fisher, R. (1998). *Teaching thinking: Philosophical inquiry in the classroom*. London: Continuum.

Haag, E. V. (1969). *The Jewish mystique*. U.S: Stein & Day.

Halprin, S. (1995). *Look at My Ugly Face!: Myths and Musings on Beauty and Other Perilous Obsessions With Women's Appearance*. Viking.

Hargreaves, A. (1994). *Changing Teachers, Changing Times: Teachers' Work and Culture in the Post Mod- ern Age*. London: Cassel.

Hargreaves, A., & Fullan, M. (1998). *What's Worth Fighting for Out There?* NewYork: Teachers College Press.

Joel 1:6. In *Bible*.

Key, W. B. (1976). *Media Sexploitation*. Prentice Hall Trade.

Kotler, P. (1967). *Marketing Management: Analysis, Planning & Control*. Prentice – Hall Inc.

Krueger, R. A. (2000). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research* . (3rd, Ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2000). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied researchers* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lakhani, D. (2008). *Subliminal Persuasion: Influence & Marketing Secrets They Don't Want You To Know*. Wiley; HAR/CDR edition .

Lasswell, H. (1927). *Propaganda techniques in the world war*. New York.

Lipman, M. (1988). *Philosophy Goes to School*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Lipman, M. (1991). *Thinking in Education*. . Cambridge (Mass), Cambridge Univ. Press.

Matthews, G. (1980). *Philosophy and the Young Child*. Cambridge (Mass), Harvard Univ. Press.

Matthews, G. (1982). *Philosophy and the Young Child*. Harvard University Press.

Matthews, G. (1994). *The Philosophy of Childhood*. Cambridge (Mass), Harvard University Press.

Merriam-Webster.

Miller, G. R. (1983). Telling It Like It Isn't and Not Telling It Like It Is: Some Thoughts on Deceptive Communication. In J. Sisco, *The Jensen Lectures: Contemporary Communication Studies* (pp. 91-116). Tampa: USF Press.

Mills, H. (2000). *Artful Persuasion: How to Command Attention, Change Minds, and Influence People*. AMACOM.

Mills, H. (2000). *Artful Persuasion: How to Command Attention, Change Minds, and Influence People*. AMACOM.

Montaigne, M. D. (1958). *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*. (D. M. Frame, Trans.) Stanford University Press.

Montaigne, M. d. (1899). *The Education of Children*. (L. E. D, Trans.) D. Appleton and company.

Murris, K. (1997). *Metaphors of the Child's Mind; Teaching Philosophy to Young Children*. University of Hull.

Nagel, R. (2011). *Cure Tooth Deca*. California, USA: Golden Child Publishing.

National Research Council (2006). *Food marketing to children and youth: Threat or opportunity?*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press

Neuendorf, K. (2002). *The Content Analysis Guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Newmann, F. M., G., G., & Lambon, S. D. (1992). The Significance and Sources of Student Engagement. In F. Newmann, *Student Engagement and Achievement in American Schools*. New York : Teachers College Press.

Ngoa, N. S. (2006). *Agenda-Setting: The Neglected Role of some Agents of Power*. University of the Witwatersrand.

Orwell, G. (2000). *Animal Farm and Related Readings*. Columbus.

Phillips, M. J. (1997). *Ethics and Manipulation in Advertising: Answering a Flawed Indictment*. Westport, CT: Quorum Books.

Popper, K. R., Havel, V., & Gombich, E. H. (2011). *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. Routledge.

Pratkanis, A., & Aronson, E. (2001). *Age of Propaganda: The Everyday Use and Abuse of Persuasion*. W. H. Freeman and company.

Proverbs 24:14. In *Bible*.

Putnam, H. (1981). Brains in a vat. In H. Putnam, *Reason, Truth and History* (pp. 1-21). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Rousseau, J. J. (1979). *Emile: Or, On Education*. (A. Bloom, Trans.) Basic Books.

Splitter, L. J., & Sharp, A. M. (1995). *Teaching for Better Thinking: The Classroom Community of Inquiry*. Melbourne: ACER.

Wilkinson, S. (2004). Focus group research . In D. Silverman, *Qualitative research: Theory, method, and practice* (pp. 177–199). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Zibart, E. (1997). *The Unofficial Disney Companion*. USA: Macmillan General Reference.

Zizak, S. (2002). *Welcome to the Desert of the Real: Five Essays on September 11 and Related Dates*. Verso; First Edition edition .

Journals:

Bhatia, G. (2011, September 13). 35% kids love comedy shows, 29.1% cartoons. *The Times Of India*.

Breitmeyer, B. G. (1980). Unmasking Visual Masking: A Look at the 'Why' Behind the Veil of the 'How'. *Psychological Review*.

Breitmeyer, B. G., & Ogmen, H. (2000). Recent Models and Findings in Visual Backward Masking: A Comparison, Review and Update. *Perception and Psychophysics*.

Fernandez, B. (2008). Mental Life. A naturalized approach to the autonomy of cognitive agents. *Modelling autonomy. Special Issue BioSystems Journal* , 91 (2).

Gardner, D. M. (1975). Deception in Advertising: A Conceptual Approach. *Journal of Marketing* , 40-47.

Gleason, P., & Sutor, C. (2001). Food for thought: children's diets in the 1990s. *Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.*

Gorn, G. J. (1982). The effects of music in advertising on choice behavior: A classical conditioning approach. *Journal of Marketing* (46), 94-101.

Hecker, S. (1984). Music for Advertising Effect. *Psychology & Marketing*.

Isaac Asimov. (1980, January). A Cult of Ignorance. *Newsweek* , 19.

Johnston, J. (2005). School children should be thinking deeper, says philosopher. *Sunday Herald*.

K., E., D., K., EN., B., & KL., F. (2007). Sexual socialisation messages on television programs most popular among teens. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media* , 51 (2), 316-336.

Kahneman, D. (1968). Methods, Findings and Theory in Studies of Visual Masking. *Psychological Bulletin* , 404-425.

Kellner, D., & Share, J. (2005). Toward Critical Media Literacy: Core concepts, debates, organizations, and policy. *Discourse: studies in the cultural politics of education*, 26 (3), 369/386.

Kvale, S. (1983). The qualitative research interview: A phenomenological and a hermeneutical mode of understanding. . *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* , 171-196.

LEE, E. B., & LEE, A. M. (1979). The Fine Art of Propaganda Analysis-then and now. *Et cetera* , 117-127.

Leeuw, K. v. (1993). Experiences with Kio and Gus. *Thinking: The Journal of Philosophy for Children* , 11, 31-39.

Leonard, N. H. (1990). Research in Deceptive and Corrective Advertising: Progress to Date and Impact on Public Policy. *Current Issues and Research in Advertising* , 275-309.

Lipman, M. (1988). Critical thinking, what can it be? *Journal of Educational leadership* .

McCormack, C., Macey, C., & Mulvilhill, M. (2013, July). Pre-Budget Submission 2014. *Irish Heart Foundation* .

McGuire, W. J. (1962). Persistence of the resistance to persuasion induced by various types of prior belief defenses. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* , 241-248.

McGuire, W. J. (1961). The effectiveness of supportive and refutational defenses in immunizing and restoring against persuasion. *Sociometry* , 184-197.

McGuire, W. (1961). Resistance to persuasion conferred by active and passive prior refutation of the same and alternative counterarguments. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* , 63 (2), 326-332.

Moore, T. E. (1988). The Case Against Subliminal Manipulation. *Psychology and Marketing*. 297-316.

Murris, K. (2000). "Can children do philosophy? *Journal of Philosophy of Education* , 261-279.

Murris, K. (2000). Can children do philosophy? *Journal of Philosophy of Education* , 261-279.

Neeley, S., & Schumann, D. (2004). Using animated spokes - characters in advertising to children. *Journal of Advertising* .

Olson, J. C., & Dover, P. A. (1978). Cognitive Effects of Deceptive Advertising. *Journal of Marketing Research* , 29-38.

Reed, D. F. (2011). *Understanding Nutrition: A Primer on Programs and Policies in California*. California Center for Research on Women and Families, Public Health.

Richins, M. L. (1987). Media, Materialism, and Human Happiness. *Advances in Consumer Research*. Vo. 14, 352-356.

Riffe, D., & Freitag, A. (1997). Riffe, D., & Freitag, A. (1997). A content analysis of content analyses: Twenty-five years of *Journalism Quarterly*. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 74(3), 515-524. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*.

Sproule, J. M. (2001). Authorship and Origins of the Seven Propaganda Devices: a research note. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*. 135-143.

Stix, H. (2003). *How do debit cards affect cash demand? Survey data evidence*. Vienna: Oestterreichische National bank.

Tannenbaum, P. H., & Norris, E. L. (1965). Effects of combining congruity principle strategies for the reduction of persuasion. *Sociometry* , 145-157.

Venteicher, W. (2013, May 04). FDA studies caffeine's effects on children, teens. *Los Angeles Times* .

Yale, L., & Gilly, M. (1988). Trends in advertising research: a look at the content of marketing- orientated journals from 1976 to 1985. *Journal of Advertising* , 12-22.

Zimny, G. H., & Weidenfeller, E. W. (1963). Effects of Music upon GSR and Heart-Rate. *The American Journal of Psychology* , 76 (1), 311-314.

Thesis/Dissertation

Conway, M., Grabe, M. E., & Grieves, K. (2007). Villains, Victims And The Virtuous In Bill O'reilly's "No-Spin Zone": Revisiting World War Propaganda Techniques. *Journalism Studies* , 8 (2).

Crane, E. (1962). Immunization - with or without use of counterarguments. *Journalism of Social Psychology* , 255-265.

Websites:

Garnier. Retrieved from Garnier website: http://www.garnierusa.com/_en/_us/bb-cream/products.aspx

London, S. (2012, July). *On Soul, Character and Calling: A Conversation with James Hillman*. Retrieved from Scott London: <http://www.scottlondon.com/interviews/hillman.html>

Maybelline. Retrieved from Maybelline website:
<http://www.maybelline.com/Products/Face-Makeup/BB-Cream/Dream-Fresh-BB.aspx>

Pepsi: The choice of a new generation (1985). Retrieved from YouTube:
www.youtube.com

Miscellaneous:

Klein, S. (2010). *Study: Cartoon characters attract kids to junk food*. CNN.

Silver, J. (Producer), Wachowsk, L. &. (Writer), & Wachowsk, L. &. (Director).
(1999). *The Matrix* [Motion Picture].

Appendices

Appendix I: Interview to All Experts

1. How do you assess the process of learning followed currently in the Lebanese elementary classes? Can this process define where the learners are within this learning continuum and where they need to go and how best to get there?
2. What do you think the ultimate objective of a teacher should be? Does this objective meet with the Lebanese curriculum objective today?
3. Does the curriculum help the teacher define the learners' gratifications? Does it meet these needs?
4. How will you know if a given teaching strategy has been effective? What defines success?
5. How far does the program prepare the children to coexist with the media and its pressures and manipulations?
6. To what extent do you think that schools should take advantage of storytelling effectiveness in education?
7. How do you perceive using inoculation theory in education? In other words, to vaccinate pupils through adding classes of discussions, so that they become immune against media persuasion and decode the propaganda content wisely and critically?
8. What do you think of introducing customized philosophy to the elementary program in Lebanon to fight embedded propaganda?

Appendix II: Focus Group Questions

1. Please introduce yourself: What is your name, how old are you and in which grade and school are you?
2. Do you love your school? Why?
3. What is your best subject and who is your favorite teacher? Why?
4. If you were once assigned as the school principal, which rules will you abide to and which ones will you get rid of?
5. Do you love and read stories? Will you like a class session where you learn lessons in the form of stories?
6. Do you know why fruits and vegetables are healthier than chocolate and candies?
7. Are you familiar with OSMO, HARIBO, Yan Yan and Junior Mini Croissant's ads? Who can sing ads' jingles? (TVCs being displayed in parallel)
8. Choose one of the two images (Appendix III: Part 1) that you prefer to be your friend when you grow up and say why.
9. What if you discover that the real images are these (Appendix III: Part 2) and not the ones I showed you before? What if you know that this kind of image manipulation you see on daily basis through all the media you are exposed to? How do you feel about that?
10. What is your favorite Lebanese TV program/show/series? Who can play the role of his/her best character?
11. Who watched BLF commercial and know the game? How would it feel if you own your own debit card?

Appendix III: Photoshop Manipulated Images Used in the Focus Group

Part 1: Digitally manipulated photos shown to kids at the beginning:



Part 2: Real photos shown to kids later

