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Cultural Influence on Perceptions of Advertising Creativity: A Cross-Cultural Comparison of U.S. and Korean Advertising Students

Daechun An[1]

[1] College of Business Administration, Inha University, Incheon, Korea

Correspondence: Daechun An, College of Business Administration, Inha Univeristy, Incheon, Korea. Tel: 82-32-860-7754. E-mail: dan@inha.ac.kr

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Abstract

A successful international advertising campaign should be based on a reliable and valid assessment of cultural differences, such as attitudes, beliefs, motivations, and values, while avoiding aspects of culture that might lessen the impact of advertising investment. This study examined the perceptional differences of advertising creativity between advertising students in two culturally dissimilar countries, South Korea and the U.S. In this attempt, two pervasively tested scales, the Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan scale and the CAT scale, were used to have a more composite understanding of perceptional differences. Significant differences were detected in numerous measures of the two scales, indicating that perceptional differences in identifying advertising creativity do exist between two countries. Thus, practically, the results suggest a localization strategy that recommends the use of separate message to promote the same product in a foreign culture rather than a standardized strategy.

Keywords: advertising creativity, perception, cross-cultural, localization strategy

1. Introduction

Understanding the culture of a local market is particularly important for international marketers. In general, international marketers have two options in promoting their products depending upon the similarity and dissimilarity of a local culture: standardization and localization. The standardization method is used when the culture of a certain market is similar to the marketers' own culture whereas the localization approach is preferred when the culture of a foreign market is considerably different from their own. For the former type of markets, marketers use a common, unified approach to promote the product as they would do in their own countries. On the contrary, for the latter type of markets, separate advertising messages are typically implemented for the same product (Papsvassiliou & Stathakopoulos, 1997).

With greater research interest in international marketing, especially in standardization and localization strategy, advertising creativity has also become an important topic in international marketing literature. A great number of cross-cultural studies have been conducted to determine cultural influence on differences in advertising creativity using anthropological reasoning, such as Hall's high-low context continuum (Hall, 1984) and Hofstede's cultural typologies (e.g., power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term orientation; see Hofstede, 1998; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005).

In spite of its significant implications on international marketing, few academics have attempted to determine the perceptional difference of advertising creativity between dissimilar cultures at the individual level. This exploratory study attempts to fill this gap. The purposes of this study are to obtain a theoretically more meaningful understanding of cultural differences on advertising creativity and to produce more useful marketing implications, especially in the international marketing strategy.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Creativity in the Western and Asian Culture

Creativity has been defined in numerous ways. According to Stein (1953), creativity is defined as "the process that results in a novel work that is accepted as tenable or useful or satisfying by a group [at] some point in time (p. 311)." This novelty-oriented definition was also used in the judgment of creativity in artistic and ritual activities such as dance, poem, and drawing (Amabile, 1996; Silver, 1981). Amabile (1996) added the concept of

appropriateness to the traditional definition of creativity and constructed the modern definition of the novelty-appropriateness framework for creativity in a larger social context.

Lubart (1990) argued that creativity is influenced by many factors such as culture and religion of a society as well as the societal status and gender of individuals. The importance of creativity has been determined in diverse areas, including art (Brower, 2000), music (Hickey, 2001), management (Anderson, 1992; Sethi, Smith, & Park, 2001), and advertising (Hirschman, 1989; Kendrick, Slayden, & Broyles, 1996; Kover, Goldberg, & James, 1995; Moriarty, 1991).

Previous studies have observed that universal judgments exist for aesthetic value (Anwar & Child, 1972; Haritos-Fatouros & Child, 1977). In general, creativity has been considered a positive construct regardless of cultural difference (Lubart, 1990). Thus, in both Western and Asian cultures, creative individuals are typically praised, and creative thoughts and behaviors are encouraged (Lubart, 1990; Walberg, 1988).

Nonetheless, the Asian and Western perspectives on creativity seem to be fundamentally different in orientation (Lubart, 1990). For instance, the Asian concept of creativity emphasizes the realization of the universe within a similar theme while the Western concept of creativity accentuates the spontaneity of creativity and the locus of creativity in an individually constructed group (Lubart, 1990). The difference between the Asian and Western cultures is also observed in the process of artistic activities such as painting and poetry. In the dominant Western culture, creative work goes through four stages: preparation (the accumulation of knowledge, materials, and experience for the eventual completion of a task), incubation (associations of prepared materials), illumination (identification of a promising approach), and verification (application and test for appropriateness) (Ghiselin, 1985). This four-step model of Western process can be viewed as a reflection of Westerners' strong orientation toward cognitive problem-solving, which fits well with product-oriented definition of creativity (Lubart, 1990). On the other hand, the Asian model of creative work processes includes four stages, but with different steps: preparatory (self-will and ceaseless self effort), achievement (of an internal identification), insight (more personal), and social communication of personal realizations (similar to the verification stage of the Western model). This process differs from the Western process in that itinvolves the emotional, personal, and interpsychic elements that represent the Oriental definition of creativity (Lubart, 1990)

2.2 Advertising Creativity

Creativity in advertising differs from creativity in other artistic works in that advertising creativity is designed to achieve marketing objectives. However, this is not usually a purpose in the arts. Rather, success in the arts is determined when the creative products please audiences in some way. On the contrary, pleasing audiences is not sufficient condition in advertising (El-Murad & West, 2004). Thus, Reid, King, and DeLorme (1998) argued that advertising creativity (originality and imagination) should "operate within a goal-directed and problem-solving context" (p. 3).

Similar to the originality-appropriateness framework in creativity, Sternberg and Lubart (1999) defined advertising creativity as newness (or novelty and originality) and appropriateness (or usefulness). Fletcher (1990) also suggested that advertising creativity must include both originality and innovation. Thus, creative ideas should be new, unique, and relevant to the target audience in order to provide useful solutions to marketing communications problems.

With greater research interest in advertising creativity, the number of scholarly publications on creativity has soared from 18 in 1985 to 85 in 1995 (El-Murad & West, 2004). In recent academic endeavors, the importance of creativity is intensified due to the fact that a creative idea can have considerable impact on consumer memory, sales, and monetary rewards, as well as affecting employment and unemployment in advertising agencies (Blair, 1988; Rossiter & Percy, 1997).

2.3 Measuring Advertising Creativity

Numerous measurements have been constructed to determine the creativity of advertising work. Hocevar (1981) classified advertising creativity into ten categories: tests of divergent thinking, attitude and interest inventories, personality inventories, biographical inventories, teacher nominations, peer nominations, supervisor ratings, judgments of products, eminence, and self-reported creative activities and achievements. These items can be further grouped into two broad categories: psychometric tests (the first four) and expert opinion (the remaining six). For the first type of advertising creativity, psychometric aspects of advertising creativity, several tests have been developed such as the Unusual Uses Test (Guilford, Merrifield, & Wilson, 1958), Structure of the Intellect Test (SOI test) (Guilford, 1967), Remote Associates Test (Mednick, 1962), and Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT test) (Torrance, 1974). Among these tests, the TTCT test, which measures fluency, flexibility, originality,

and elaboration of creativity in advertising, is the most commonly used test in practice (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999).

The second aspect, expert opinion, is also determined in numerous ways. For instance, Reid and Rotfeld (1976) used an Expert Opinion Creative Ability Profile Scale to assess creativity of advertising agency personnel. O'Quin and Besemer (1989) constructed the Creative Product Semantic Differential Scale (CPSS) to judge creative products. The CPSS method is particularly useful to measure the dimension of how well crafted the creative product is, or how well executed, as well as originality and appropriateness (White & Smith, 2001). Amabile (1996) created the Consensual Assessment Technique (CAT) in which experts assess the creativity of advertising using their own individual criteria and their own definitions of creativity. Similarly, Koslow, Sasser and Riordan (2003) created an assessment by considering three criteria: originality, strategy, and artistry. One unique aspect of this measurement is that it includes the artistic measure of advertising in addition to the traditional advertising creativity (originality and appropriateness) framework. The same measurement was used in determining the impact of top-management on advertising creativeness decision (Koslow, Sasser, & Riordan, 2006) and the relationship between creativity and IMC media use (Sasser, Koslow, & Riordan, 2007). In addition, with the advent of technological advances, the biometric approach that involves the measurement of brain activity while viewing creative work was developed (El-Murad & West, 2004; Plucker & Renzulli, 1999).

2.4 Cultural Difference in Advertising

In order to determine the cultural similarities and dissimilarities, a great number of cross-cultural research has been conducted in the advertising area. A basic premise in most cross-cultural studies is that advertising itself is reflective of culture. Thus, because advertisements contain inherent cultural values, such culture-laden contents would reflect similarities and dissimilarity in comparison with other cultures (Samiee&Jeong, 1994).

Okazaki and Mueller (2007) meta-analyzed 106 cross-cultural articles published in 12 academic journals and found that 39 articles focused on cultural values of advertising while 23 articles examined the standardization and localization debate. In determining the cultural values, Hofstede's (1998) cultural typology, such as power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term orientation, was used. When comparing various countries, not surprisingly, the United States was most studied, with 26.69% (or 71 cases). In terms of continents, Asian countries dominated in studies with 34% (21 articles each for Japan and China followed by South Korea with 16). Content analysis was the most widely used research method (37 articles), followed by survey (35 articles).

Hall and Hall (1990) determined the functional difference of advertising between Germany, France, and the U.S. They detected that the primary function of advertising is to provide information about products and to elicit the appropriate response from the consumer in Germany and France, respectively, while its key function is to sell products in the U.S. Taylor, Hoy and Haley (1996) determined how ads in France are different from those in the U.S. by conducting in-depth interviews with advertising creative directors and analyzing agency documents and photographic documentation of French and U.S. advertising. The study found that French advertising is different from American advertising in terms of four areas: seduction, spectacle, sex, and humor.

The similarity and dissimilarity between Asian and Western cultures in determining advertising value has been popularly discussed in academia (Biswas, Hussain, & O'Donnell, 2009; Helming, 1982; Javalgi, Cutler, & Malhotra, 1995; Khairullah & Khairullah, 2002; Kobayashi, 1980; La Ferle, Edwards, & Lee, 2008; Miracle, Chang, & Taylor, 1989; Mueller, 1987; So, 2004). Mueller (1987) observed that the direct communication strategy is more pervasively used in U.S. advertising while the indirect approach is more typical in Asian advertising. Miracle et al. (1989) and Helming (1982) also found that products and related information (e.g., brand name, price) are more frequently and conspicuously displayed in U.S. ads compared to their Japanese counterparts. Rather, Japanese customers are found to be more responsive to emotional components of the ad (e.g., mood and style) than content, compared to Western customers (Javalgi et al., 995; Kobayashi, 1980). La Ferle et al. (2008) also detected that consumers in China and Taiwan were similar in evaluating ads and showed more favorable attitudes toward advertising than American consumers. Using Hofstede's individualism and collectivism cultural typology and Hall's low-high context continuum, So (2004) analyzed the contents of ads in women's magazines in Hong Kong and Australia. By defining Hong Kong as collective and high-context cultures while Australia as individualistic and low-context cultures, So (2004) found that Hong Kong advertisements contained more information cues, and displayed sexier and less emotional content than the Australian ads.

Culturally similar countries were also compared. Frazer, Sheehan, and Patti (2002) found that the determination of the effectiveness of ad messages is similar between the U.S. and Australia in terms of selling propositions,

tone, and positive versus negative appeals. Specifically, the messages of two countries were similar in terms of their emphasis on product attributes and performance and a heavy reliance on humor. However, differences were detected in creative strategy, message appeals (rational versus emotional), and the presence of a brand-differentiating message.

2.5 Standardization and Localization

The cultural difference argument leads to the discussion of standardization and localization (or adaptation) in international marketing (Khairullah, & Khairullah, 2002; La Ferle et al., 2008). Proponents of the standardization advertising strategy argue that a common advertising message can be sufficient across national boundaries to reach consumers because of the shared universalities around the world (Lepkowska-white, 2004; Levitt, 1983; Onkvisit & Shaw, 1987; Szymanski, Bharadwaj, & Varadarajan, 1993). The basic premise of this idea is that customers around the world tend to share the same needs and wants (Levitt, 1983). Thus, the standardization approach allows international firms to build a consistent identity throughout the world, minimizes the likelihood of being confused by different messages, and reduces media costs and advertising production expenditures considerably (Cervellon & Dubé, 2000; Papsvassiliou & Stathakopoulos, 1997).

In contrast, supporters of the localization approach imply that separate messages and different advertising creativity would work more effectively because people around the world differ across countries and cultures (Kotler, 1986; Synodinos, Keown, & Jacobs, 1989). They argued that insurmountable differences exist between countries, such as cultural, economic, legal, and media availability as well as product-life cycle and industry infra-structure. Therefore, these structural differences demand the adaptation or development of different advertising strategies for different cultures. Since the 1990s, the concept of localization has become the dominant strategy among global corporations in some markets (Okazaki & Alonso, 2003).

3. Research Questions

Past attempts for understanding the cultural differences in advertising creativity have been primarily assessed at the societal level (Lubart, 1990). No studies published to date have examined the perceptual difference on advertising creativity between cultures at the individual level. Thus, although it is assumed that advertising creativity would be different from culture to culture, it is still unclear whether people in dissimilar cultures perceive advertising creativity similarly or differently and to what extent their perceptions of advertising creativity are different.

The purpose of this study is to establish a baseline understanding of cross-cultural similarities and differences in the perception of advertising creativity from two culturally fundamentally different cultures: the United States and South Korea. This study assumes that different cultural values would lead to different advertising creativity. However, due to the lack of sufficient literature and the exploratory nature of this study, this study poses the following research questions.

RQ1*: How do college students in culturally different countries (South Korea and the U.S.) perceive creativity in advertising?*

RQ2*: Do the perceptions of advertising creativity significantly differ between college students in culturally dissimilar countries (South Korea and the U.S.)?*

4. Method

4.1 Participants

College students majoring in advertising at large universities in the U.S. and South Korea participated in this study in return for course credit. An Internet-based survey was conducted in February 2012 in the U.S. and in May 2012 in South Korea. Students were mostly juniors and seniors in their institutions. A total of 255 students participated in the surveys (83 U.S. and 172 South Korean students). The researchers recruited students from two Southeastern universities to increase the extent of generalizability of findings. For U.S. students, emails with the survey link were sent to 300 advertising students. Among the 300 initial contacts, 29.3 percent (88 students) completed the survey. However, five surveys could not be included in the dataset due to missing values in key measures. Therefore, the total number of the U.S. students was reduced to 83. The same steps were conducted to recruit advertising students in Korean universities, resulting in 172 students, with the response rate of 60%.

4.2 Independent Variables: Cultural Difference

Cultural difference, measured by Hofstede's five typologies (1998; 2005) and Hall's context relation (1984), was used as the independent variable of this study. Generally, comparing countries' cultures has been defined with one or few attributes (e.g., individualism, masculinity) in the previous cross-cultural studies, particularly on

advertising research. However, this simplicity is perhaps inaccurate because culture cannot be properly represented with a single indicator or limited indicators of societal uniqueness. Rather, culture is a composite mixture of every aspect of society. Thus, considering Hofstede's five typologies (1998; 2005) and Hall's context relation (1984), this study selected South Korea and the United States as nations with distinctively different cultures.

The United States and South Korea indeed show a considerable difference in every measure of Hofstede's five typologies (Hofstede, 1998; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005) and Hall's classification (1984). For instance, the U.S. is the most individualistic country among 74 nations compared, with a score of 91 (rank 1st) on a 1-100 scale while South Korea is a typical collective nation, with a score of 18 (63rd). Difference also exists in other standards. The U.S. is 40 (rank 57-59th) in power distance, 62 (19th) in masculinity, 46 (62nd) in uncertainty avoidance, and 29 (31st) in long-term orientation measures while South Korea is 60 (power distance, 41-42nd), 39 (masculinity, 59th), 85 (uncertainty avoidance, 23-25th), and 74 (long-term orientation, 6th), respectively, for the same measure (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). In terms of contextual difference, the U.S. is classified as a low-context country while South Korea is classified as a high-context country (Hall, 1984). Therefore, this study defined the United States as individualistic, average power distance and uncertainty avoidance, somewhat feminine, long-term orientation, and low-context culture. On the contrary, South Korea was defined as highly collectivistic, somewhat power distance, more masculine, high uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation, and high–context culture. Cultural structures of individual nations are multidimensional. Although countries are categorized as noticeably different, it is still possible that they can be close in other cultural dimensions. Therefore, by selecting two countries whose cultural values are distinctively dissimilar in several cultural determinants, the findings of this study are assumed to be more externally valid than those from the studies that included a single or only few cultural indicators.

4.3 Dependent Variables: Perception of Advertising Creativity

The dependent variable of this study is the perception of advertising creativity. This study adopted two scales developed by Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan (2003) and Amabile (1996) in order to assess participants' perception of advertising creativity. This study included the Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan scale (2003) for its unique measure of the artistic aspect of advertising creativity. The Amabile's the CAT scale (Consensual Assessment Technique, 1996) was included due to its popular use in academic and marketing research and its ability to assess the broad concepts in advertising.

The Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan scale consists of 11 items with three broad categories: originality, strategy, and artistry (Koslow, Sasser, & Riordan, 2003). The assessment of this scale includes the aspects of on-strategy, a good fit with the client's strategy, an appropriate strategy for the client, built on good strategy, able to stand on its own as art, could be appreciated as a work of art, emotionally expressive, artistically sophisticated, original, unexpected, and novel. Participants' answers were measured with five-point Likert scales, anchored from strongly disagree to strongly agree. In addition to individual item measure, an average score was constructed by calculating the average of the overall scale scores. The overall reliability of the scale is acceptable (Overall scale Cronbach's α = .64: South Korea scale = .56, U.S. scale = .55).

The CAT scale consists of 31 items measuring novel use of materials, liking, overall aesthetic appeal, pleasing placement of shapes, pleasing use of color, display, technical goodness, overall organization, neatness, effort evident, variation of shapes, balance, degree of representation, degree of symmetry, expression, silliness, spontaneity, movement, complexity, consistency of theme, novelty of word choice, appropriateness of word choice, richness of imagery, originality of idea, pleasing flow of words, sophistication of expression, use of the poetic form, emotionality, grammar, rhythm, and clarity. For the CAT scale, the statement, "*When I evaluate advertising creativity, _____ is a critical point I consider*" was used. Participants' answers were measured with five-point Likert scales, anchored from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Similar to the Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan scale, an average score was obtained by calculating the average of the overall scale scores. The overall reliability of the scale was reasonable (overall CAT scale Cronbach's α = .83: South Korea scale = .80, U.S. scale = .85). These two scales were first constructed in English for American students, and then, translated into Korean for South Korean students. Then, the clarity of translation was cross-verified by co-researchers.

5. Findings

5.1 Findings of Univariate Analysis

For the Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan scale, the mean of "*originality"* was highest among 11 variables, with 4.13 (*SD*=.64), followed by "*built on advertising strategy"* (*M* =3.85, *SD*=.88) and "*novelty"* (*M* =3.78, *SD*=.80). On the other hand, the means of "*work of art"* (*M* =2.88, *SD*=1.13), "*artistically sophisticated"* (*M* =2.93, *SD*=.98),

and "*able to stand on its own as art"* (*M* =3.09, *SD*=1.08) were relatively low. This indicates that students in both cultures evaluated less favorably for the artistic components of advertising. The univariate analysis for the Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan scales is displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Univariateanalysis of the Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan's scales (n=253)

Item	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Originality	2.00	5.00	4.13	.64	-.86	2.38
Unexpectedness	1.00	5.00	3.71	.86	-.63	.03
Novelty	2.00	5.00	3.78	.80	-.35	-.24
On-strategy	1.00	5.00	3.40	1.04	-.19	-.85
A good fit with the client's strategy	1.00	5.00	3.07	1.14	.19	-.97
An appropriate strategy for the client	1.00	5.00	3.55	1.04	-.43	-.60
Built on good strategy	1.00	5.00	3.85	.88	-.70	.14
Able to stand on its own as art	1.00	5.00	3.09	1.08	.07	-.97
Work of art	1.00	5.00	2.88	1.13	.13	-.94
Emotionally expressive	1.00	5.00	3.70	.89	-.60	-.01
Artistically sophisticated	1.00	5.00	2.93	.98	.05	-.73
Mean of the scale	2.27	4.90	3.46	.46	.23	.20

For the CAT scales, the mean of "*originality of idea"* (*M*=4.44, *SD*=.65) was highest among 31 variables, followed by "*appropriateness of word choice"* (*M*=4.14, *SD*=.71) and "*spontaneity"* (*M* =4.08, *SD*=.94). On the other hand, "*silliness"* was least considered within the creativity of advertising (*M* =2.24, *SD*=1.02), followed by "*complexity"* (*M*=2.41, *SD*=.65) and the "*degree of symmetry"* (*M* =2.43, *SD*=.98). In short, participants evaluated the items relevant to ad content as more important while evaluating conversely for those less relevant to ad content. The univariate analysis for the CAT scales is displayed in Table 2.

Table 2. Univariateanalysis of the CAT scale (n=253)

Item	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Novel use of materials	1.00	5.00	3.47	.88	-.63	.01
Liking	1.00	5.00	3.63	1.00	-.65	-.09
Overall aesthetic appeal	1.00	5.00	3.51	1.02	-.52	-.47
Pleasing placement of shapes	1.00	5.00	3.46	.90	-.71	.13
Pleasing use of color	1.00	5.00	3.39	1.01	-.33	-.73
Display	1.00	5.00	3.80	.83	-.65	.31
Technical goodness	1.00	5.00	3.34	.95	-.47	-.24
Overall organization	1.00	5.00	3.49	1.02	-.46	-.60
Neatness	1.00	5.00	3.38	.99	-.30	-.54
Effort evident	1.00	5.00	2.97	1.08	.41	-.74
Variation of shapes	1.00	5.00	2.86	.90	.12	-.58
Balance	1.00	5.00	3.82	.93	-.91	.80
Degree of representationalism	1.00	5.00	3.08	1.03	-.07	-.72
Degree of symmetry	1.00	5.00	2.43	.98	.40	-.37
Expression	1.00	5.00	3.75	.79	-.90	1.22
Silliness	1.00	5.00	2.24	1.02	.71	-.08
Spontaneity	1.00	5.00	4.08	.94	-1.03	.80
Movement	1.00	5.00	3.19	.92	.05	-.59
Complexity	1.00	5.00	2.41	1.02	.51	-.40
Consistency of theme	1.00	5.00	3.84	.95	-.79	.15

Novelty of word choice	1.00	5.00	3.54	1.05	-.47	-.59
Appropriateness of word choice	1.00	5.00	4.14	.71	-1.13	3.11
Richness of imagery	1.00	5.00	3.29	1.02	-.19	-.80
Originality of idea	2.00	5.00	4.44	.65	-1.19	2.10
Pleasing flow of words	2.00	5.00	3.82	.76	-.58	.30
Sophistication of expression	1.00	5.00	3.48	.92	-.28	-.45
Use of the poetic form	1.00	5.00	2.77	1.00	.23	-.48
Emotionality	1.00	5.00	3.84	.86	-.59	.07
Grammar	1.00	5.00	2.84	1.23	.37	-.91
Rhythm	1.00	5.00	3.60	.84	-.71	.34
Clarity	1.00	5.00	3.49	1.03	-.25	-.74
Mean of the CAT scale	2.29	4.77	3.40	.39	.13	.55

5.2 Perceptional Difference of Advertising Creativity: The Koslow, Sasser and Riordan Scale

A series of ANOVAs were run to assess the statistical difference between two groups of students. The results were reported in the following session. First, to have a composite understanding of the difference between two cultures on the Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan scale, this study constructed an index with the 11 items. In overall scale, two cultures showed statistically significant difference, F (1,253) = 107.96, $p < .001$. U.S. Students (M=3.82) evaluated the items in the Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan scale significantly higher than South Korean students (M=3.29). When assessment was made with an individual item, the significant differences were found in eight items, *novelty*, *on-strategy*, *a good fit with the client's strategy*, *an appropriate strategy for the client*, *built on good strategy*, *able to stand on its own as art*, *work of art*, and *artistically sophisticated*. As presented in Table 3, South Korean students (M=4.03) evaluated the *novelty* aspect more importantly in determining the advertising creativity than American students did (M=3.24). However, other items were evaluated more importantly by U.S. students than South Korean students, including *on-strategy* (U.S. M=3.90 vs. South Korea M=3.15), *a good fit with the client's strategy* (4.11 vs. 2.58), *an appropriate strategy for the client* (4.28 vs. 3.20), *built on good strategy* (4.24 vs. 3.67), *able to stand on its own as art* (3.73 vs. 2.77), *a work of art* (3.72 vs. 2.48), and *artistically sophisticated* (3.32 vs. 2.74).

Table 3. Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan scale—ANOVA results (U.S. 83, South Korea 172)

Item	U.S. (n=83)	South Korea (n=172)	*f*-value	*p*-value
Originality	M=4.16 (SD=.61)	M=4.12 (SD=.65)	.163	.686
Unexpectedness	3.72 (.97)	3.71 (.80)	.014	.906
Novelty	3.24 (.69) $_A$	4.03 (.72) $_B$	69.222	.000
On-strategy	3.90 (.82) $_B$	3.15 (1.04) $_A$	33.234	.000
A good fit with the client's strategy	4.11 (.79) $_B$	2.58 (.92) $_A$	168.011	.000
An appropriate strategy for the client	4.28 (.63) $_B$	3.20 (1.02) $_A$	78.624	.000
Built on good strategy	4.24 (.64) $_B$	3.67 (.92) $_A$	26.172	.000
Able to stand on its own as art	3.73 (.99) $_B$	2.77 (.98) $_A$	53.615	.000
Work of art	3.72 (.91) $_B$	2.48 (.99) $_A$	91.787	.000
Emotionally expressive	3.60 (.91)	3.74 (.87)	1.433	.232
Artistically sophisticated	3.32 (.91) $_B$	2.74 (.96) $_A$	20.829	.000
Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan index	3.82 (.37) $_B$	3.29 (.39) $_A$	107.956	.000

Note: Subscripts placing next to the mean (standard deviation) indicate significant difference between the U.S. and South Korea found in ANOVA at a .05 significance level (i.e., A<B).

5.3 Perceptional Difference of Advertising Creativity: The CAT Scale

Similarly, the CAT index was calculated by averaging the scores of 31 items of CAT scale, and a considerable difference was detected from the overall scale, F (1, 253) = 37.80, $p < .001$). The result indicated that, again, U.S. students (M=3.60) evaluated the items in the CAT scale more importantly than South Korean counterparts (M=3.30). For the individual items, the significant differences were found in 19 items, *novel use of materials, overall aesthetic appeal, pleasing use of color, overall organization, neatness, effort evident, degree of symmetry,*

silliness, spontaneity, complexity, consistency of theme, novelty of word choice, richness of imagery, originality of idea, pleasing flow of words, use of the poetic form, emotionality, grammar, and *clarity*. Similar to the Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan scale, most variables were more favorably evaluated by U.S. students than by South Korean students. Out of 19 variables in which statistically significant differences were found, only four variables were valued more importantly by South Korean students: *novel use of materials* (U.S. *M*=3.18; South Korea *M*=3.61), *spontaneity* (3.41 vs. 4.40), *use of the poetic form* (2.61 vs. 2.88), and *emotionality* (3.49 vs. 4.01). Other variables were more highly evaluated by U.S. students than by South Korean counterparts. They are *overall aesthetic appeal* (U.S. *M*=4.12; South Korea *M*=3.22), *pleasing use of color* (4.05 vs. 3.07), *overall organization* (4.01 vs. 3.24), *neatness* (3.57 vs. 3.28), *effort evident* (3.33 vs. 2.80), *degree of symmetry* (3.15 vs. 2.09), *silliness* (2.63 vs. 2.06), *complexity* (2.88 vs. 2.19), *consistency of theme* (4.18 vs. 3.67), *novelty of word choice* (4.04 vs. 3.30), *richness of imagery* (3.96 vs. 2.97), *originality of idea* (4.58 vs. 4.38), *pleasing flow of words* (4.07 vs. 3.69), *grammar* (3.72 vs. 2.42), and *clarity* (4.10 vs. 3.20). The findings of the differences in the CAT Scale are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4. The CAT Scale—ANOVA results (U.S. 83, South Korea 172)

Item	U.S. (n=83)	South Korea (n=172)	*f*-value	*p*-value
Novel use of materials	*M*=3.18 (*SD*=.82) $_A$	*M*=3.61 (*SD*=.88) $_B$	13.666	.000
Liking	3.58 (.98)	3.65 (1.01)	.297	.586
Overall aesthetic appeal	4.12 (.71) $_B$	3.21 (1.02) $_A$	52.828	.000
Pleasing placement of shapes	3.57 (.95)	3.41 (.88)	1.760	.186
Pleasing use of color	4.05 (.88) $_B$	3.07 (.91) $_A$	65.514	.000
Display	3.94 (.91)	3.74 (.78)	3.189	.075
Technical goodness	3.48 (.97)	3.27 (.93)	2.551	.111
Overall organization	4.01 (.84) $_B$	3.24 (1.01) $_A$	36.397	.000
Neatness	3.57 (1.06) $_B$	3.28 (.95) $_A$	4.569	.034
Effort evident	3.33 (1.09) $_B$	2.80 (1.03) $_A$	14.287	.000
Variation of shapes	2.76 (.85)	2.91 (.93)	1.507	.221
Balance	3.72 (1.03)	3.87 (.88)	1.332	.276
Degree of representationalism	3.18 (.81)	3.03 (1.12)	1.210	.221
Degree of symmetry	3.15 (.87) $_B$	2.09 (.84) $_A$	85.140	.000
Expression	3.84 (.82)	3.70 (.78)	1.677	.196
Silliness	2.63 (1.06) $_B$	2.06 (.95) $_A$	18.993	.000
Spontaneity	3.41 (1.02) $_A$	4.40 (.71) $_B$	81.246	.000
Movement	3.31 (.94)	3.13 (.91)	2.284	.132
Complexity	2.88 (.98) $_B$	2.19 (.96) $_A$	28.065	.000
Consistency of theme	4.18 (.61) $_B$	3.67 (1.04) $_A$	16.906	.000
Novelty of word choice	4.04 (.82) $_B$	3.30 (1.07) $_A$	30.562	.000
Appropriateness of word choice	4.27 (.66)	4.08 (.73)	3.761	.054
Richness of imagery	3.96 (.76) $_B$	2.97 (.98) $_A$	66.577	.000
Originality of idea	4.58 (.61) $_B$	4.38 (.66) $_A$	5.291	.022
Pleasing flow of words	4.07 (.66) $_B$	3.69 (.78) $_A$	14.618	.000
Sophistication of expression	3.35 (.88)	3.54 (.94)	2.293	.131
Use of the poetic form	2.61 (.95) $_A$	2.88 (1.01) $_B$	4.119	.043
Emotionality	3.49 (.94) $_A$	4.01 (.76) $_B$	21.606	.000
Grammar	3.72 (1.15) $_B$	2.42 (1.03) $_A$	81.333	.000
Rhythm	3.54 (.89)	3.63 (.82)	.665	.416
Clarity	4.10 (.84) $_B$	3.20 (.99) $_A$	50.506	.000
CAT index	3.60 (.39) $_B$	3.30 (.35) $_A$	37.803	.000

Note: Subscripts placing next to the mean (standard deviation) indicate significant difference between the U.S. and South Korea found in ANOVA at a .05 significance level (i.e., A< B).

6. Discussion and Conclusion

This study determined the perceptional differences of advertising creativity between advertising majoring college students in two culturally different countries. Statistical assessments were made with ANOVAs by comparing the means of students' evaluations on two advertising creativity scales. The findings of this study show that the perceptions on advertising creativity between two dissimilar cultures are considerably different from each other.

Statistically significant differences were found in eight out of 11 items in the Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan scale and 19 out of the 31 CAT scale items.

Interestingly, the means of two scales were higher for American students than for South Korean students. Among 11 measures of the Koslow, Sasser, and Riordan scale, only *novelty* was significantly more highly evaluated by South Korean students, and similarly, of the 31 CAT scale items, only four items (*novel use of materials*, *spontaneity*, *use of the poetic form*, and *emotionality*) were evaluated more importantly. For other items including overall index scales, the evaluations were significantly higher for the U.S. students.

This perceptional difference on advertising creativity indicates that students in the U.S., compared to South Korean students, consider more elements in determining advertising creativity. Considering the size of U.S. advertising industry and the number of advertising media, the findings of this study seem to be somewhat expected. In addition, the history of advertising and other related creative industries (such as music video and movie) are also incompatible with other countries. Thus, people, including college students, are naturally influenced by this creatively high society and its culture. Accordingly, those who are raised and educated in this culture are more likely to have a high standard of creativity and consider more elements in considering advertising creativity. This finding is similar to that of Aviram and Milgram (1977), who observed significant difference in creativity tests among children in three countries. Aviram and Milgram (1977) found that U.S. children group scored highest on the creativity tests, followed by the Israeli and then the Soviet groups. The same rank-order was also found for the items, open-mindedness and internal locus of control.

Nonetheless, an alternative explanation can be made with the educational and institutional difference in each country in addition to cultural influence. For instance, Taylor, Hoy and Haley (1996) argued that the poor creativity of French advertising, compared to that of the U.S., is due to different advertising education and the perceptional difference on advertising education. The authors argued that professional skills were not taught in France, and lack of literature on practical guide of *how-to* also caused the poor creativity of French advertising. If this is the case, the considerable difference in advertising creativity perception can be due to institutional differences (e.g., college education for advertising major students, curriculums, faculty diversification, re-education at advertising agencies, and available resources) between South Korea and the U.S. Related to this notion, another explanation can be drawn with the measurement of advertising creativity. That is, the two scales used in this study were created by U.S. scholars, inspired by U.S. culture. Thus, it might have been plausible that items in scales were constructed with the concepts that are likely to be more familiar to U.S. students.

A successful international advertising campaign should be based on a reliable and valid assessment of cultural differences, such as attitudes, beliefs, motivations, and values, while avoiding aspects of culture that might lessen the impact of advertising investment. Hence, the finding of this study would be meaningful not only to researchers but also to international marketers who wish to promote their products in a foreign culture. The findings of this study show that the perceptional difference on advertising creativity does exist. Thus, practically, the results suggest a localization strategy, rather than a standardized strategy. Creativity is one of the most critical factors for effective advertisements (Kover, Goldberg, & James, 1995; Plessis, 1994; Stone, Besser, & Lewis, 2000; White & Smith, 2001). The differences found in each item would be useful to create the ad that is considered creative through the lens of a local culture.

This study included students who were majoring in advertising in two different cultures. However, due to this inclusion, this study bears a few limitations. First, advertising students' perceptions of advertising creativity may be different from those of students in general and advertising professionals. Related to that, the student sample may be a problem due to the fact that students are typically more liberal and may be different from the general population in considering advertising creativity. Nonetheless, the student sample can be considered as a barometer to predict the advertising creativity in the future for both countries. In fact, the role of college education in forming professional quality has been popularly discussed in mass communication research, particularly in journalism with regards to the agenda-building perspective. According to Shoemaker and Reese (1996), college education is one of the important elements in the individual stage, one of the five key factors (individual, media routines, organization, extramedia, and ideological) that considerably influences individual's professional values (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). Another limitation comes from possible external factors that may impact the perception of advertising creativity besides distinct culture, such as personal preference, brand loyalty, technological supports for making ads, traditional values, governmental regulation, and cultural idiosyncrasy as well as institutional differences in curriculums. This study could not determine those factors. Moreover, this study only selected two countries for two cultures. Thus, the findings of this study may not be applied to all other countries. Third, as Samiee and Jeong (1994) pointed out as the limitation of cross-cultural research, the unit of this study is a nation-state rather than a culture. Hence an a priori assumption that each

country included in the study has only one culture, or is at least is dominated by the culture being studied. This study may not be completely free from this drawback. These limitations and weaknesses should be addressed in future research on this topic. Finally, some of the assessments in the two scales were initially designed for professionals. Thus, it is plausible that students in both countries might have experienced difficulties in answering some detailed questions.

This study paved the way to understand the perceptional differences of advertising creativity between cultures. Thus, enlarging the scope of this area is suggested. Future research should also consider additional factors that are assumed to influence advertising creativity. Additional factors might include personal preference, brand loyalty, technological supports for producing ads, traditional values, governmental regulation, and idiosyncrasy of culture. Second, this study included advertising students simply because they are more likely to work at the advertising industry in the future and their perception on advertising creativity will influence their work in practice. However, it is unclear how their advertising creativity perception is influenced by other causes, such as the cultures of institution, corporate, agency, and subcultures within a society. Related to this, a study determining an interaction effect between the status difference (advertising students vs. advertising specialists) and cultural difference (Western vs. Asian) with regard to advertising creativity perceptions would produce more meaningful findings.

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