

“The impact of shocking advertising on consumer buying behavior: empirical study of Lithuanian consumers”

AUTHORS

Regina Virvilaite
Migle Matulevičiene

ARTICLE INFO

Regina Virvilaite and Migle Matulevičiene (2013). The impact of shocking advertising on consumer buying behavior: empirical study of Lithuanian consumers. *Innovative Marketing* , 9(2)

RELEASED ON

Monday, 29 July 2013

JOURNAL

"Innovative Marketing "

FOUNDER

LLC “Consulting Publishing Company “Business Perspectives”



NUMBER OF REFERENCES

0



NUMBER OF FIGURES

0



NUMBER OF TABLES

0

© The author(s) 2026. This publication is an open access article.

Regina Virvilaite (Lithuania), Migle Matulevičiene (Lithuania)

The impact of shocking advertising on consumer buying behavior: empirical study of Lithuanian consumers

Abstract

The link between shocking advertising and consumer buying behavior in the case of Lithuanian consumers is considered to be unexplored and requires an empirical research. The aim of the article is to substantiate theoretically and empirically verify the impact of shocking advertising on the consumer buying behavior in the case of Lithuanian consumers.

This article investigates theoretical and empirical studies of the impact of shocking advertising on consumer buying behavior in the case of Lithuanian consumers. Consumer buying behavior is found to be impacted by the main elements of shocking advertising, influenced by additional moderators – socio-demographic factors, which comes out through consumers' positive or negative view on shocking advertising. The relationship has been developed in a theoretical model of the link among the socio-demographic factors, consumer view on shocking advertising and consumer buying behavior, which is used for a further empirical study.

The results of the empirical study explain the hypotheses and submit a conceptual model of the impact of shocking advertising on the consumer buying behavior. The empirical research confirmed the model of the impact of shocking advertising on consumer buying behavior and supported the relationship between all components of shocking advertising and consumer view on shocking advertising, socio-demographic factor “moral principles” and consumer view on shocking advertising and also between consumer view on shocking advertising and consumer buying behavior. The implications of the findings are discussed further.

Keywords: shocking advertising, consumer buying behavior, consumer view on shocking advertising, socio-demographic factors.

Introduction

Considering increasing of supply, the growing number of commercials in nowadays media and consumption growth, companies are forced to search for new advertising solutions to achieve cognition, distinctiveness and positive impact on the advertised brand sales. Consumers react differently to advertisements, therefore, advertisers attempt to distinguish by influencing consumer emotions and intention to buy, invoking non-traditional way – shocking advertising, as one of the most effective ways to increase brand sales. According to Javed and Zeb (2011), “unexpected factor is the main ingredient that turns a normal advertisement into shock advertisement” (p. 1).

Shocking advertising, as one of the ways to attract consumer attention became popular quite a long time ago. Chan et al. (2007) argues that shocking advertising has been around for 25 years. Sabri (2012) argues that shocking advertising started in about 1980, through the AIDS crisis. One of the initiators of shocking advertising was the company “United Colors of Benetton”, which shocked the world with its controversial advertisements. The main support element of the “United Colors of Benetton” has always been shocking advertising, which was one of the most

important marketing solutions in international markets, which determined the success for the company (Crestanello and Tattar, 2010).

As shown by the previous experience, it is important for companies to explore the impact of shocking advertising on consumer buying behavior to increase their profit. However, the link between shocking advertising and consumer buying behavior in the case of Lithuanian consumers is considered to be unexplored. Worldwide, plenty of researchers have made an attempt to investigate the impact of shocking advertising on consumer buying behavior, however have not reached the consensus. There is a lack of detailed and generalized information about the impact of shocking advertising on consumer buying behavior. A further empirical study require a better identification and generalization of basic factors which impact and how they impact consumer buying behavior. This paper investigates the impact of shocking advertising on consumer buying behavior in the case of Lithuanian consumers, based on the theoretical and empirical research.

The problem of this research. Does the shocking advertising impact the consumer buying behavior?

The aim of this research. Theoretically substantiate and empirically verify the impact of shocking advertising on the consumer buying behavior in the case of Lithuanian consumers.

1. Theoretical approach of the impact of shocking advertising on consumer buying behavior

The conception of shocking advertising vary from attracting audience to criminal activity promotion,

according to shocking advertising elements, which Dahl et al. (2003) summarized and singled out as disgusting images, sexual references, profanity/-obscenity, vulgarity, impropriety, moral offensiveness and religious taboos (see Table 1).

Table 1. Types of shock appeals

Offense Elicitor	Description
Disgusting images	References to blood, body parts or secretions, orifices, especially urinary/fecal, gases, odors, disease, parasites, bodily harm (e.g., dismemberment), death and decay
Sexual references	References to masturbation, implied sexual acts, sexually suggestive nudity or partial nudity
Profanity/obscenity	Swear words, obscene gestures, racial epithets
Vulgarity	References to crude or distasteful acts by humans or animals, such as nose picking, farting, licking, humping, or drinking from the toilet
Impropriety	Violations of social conventions for dress, manners, etc.
Moral offensiveness	Harming innocent people/animals, gratuitous violence or sex, alluding to people or objects that provoke violence (e.g., Hitler), violating standards for fair behavior (e.g., shooting a person in the back), putting children in provocative situations (e.g., sexual, violent), victim exploitation
Religious taboos	Inappropriate use of spiritual or religious symbols and/or rituals

Source: Dahl et al. (2003).

The shocking advertising elements are basement for various researches and the analysis of scientific literature has revealed that these seven main elements of shocking advertising cause a positive or negative consumer view on shocking advertising.

Theoretical research studies confirmed that positive or negative consumer view on shocking advertising is impacted by socio-demographic factors – religiosity, moral principles, age, gender. A significant contribution towards this research was investigated by Prendergast and Hwa (2002), Andersson and Pettersson (2004), Sengupta and Dahl (2008), Dahl et al. (2009), Liu et al. (2009), Sawang (2010), Brugiere and Barry (2011), Sabri (2012). In order to understand the impact of socio-demographic factors on consumer buying behavior, it is necessary to analyze how consumer view on shocking advertising impacts buying behavior.

Consumer buying behavior is divided into positive and negative, according to consumer view on shocking advertising. According to Waller (2005), positive consumer behavior includes purchasing the advertised brand or disseminating positive information “from mouth to mouth” while negative consumer behavior comes through ignoring, resistance and disseminating negative information about advertising or advertised brand. In order to clearly understand the reasons of consumer buying behavior, it is appropriate to evaluate socio-demographic factors – religiosity, moral principles, age, gender. These socio-demographic factors were chosen according to a large number of research findings, which were accomplished by many scientists all over the world.

1.1. Religiosity. Sabri (2012) investigated that consumer buying behavior depends on religiosity – more religious people tend not to recognize

shocking advertising and also advertised brand. This is particularly apparent in Muslim countries. The findings of Sabri (2012) revealed that consumers of Morocco have emotions such as shame, guilt, confusion when seeing shocking advertising. They say that this kind of advertisement violates religious principles and to speak out about advertising is inappropriate, contrary to French consumers, who are less religious and more liberal. Sabri (2012) concludes that in order for shocking advertising is perceived positively, consumers should be less religious. According to the results, it could be stated that more religious consumers will have a negative view on shocking advertising and it will negatively impact on consumer buying behavior and vice versa.

1.2. Moral principles. Sabri (2012) revealed an internal conflict between morality and personal values, stating that shocking advertising does not significantly impact consumer view to shocking advertising. The main reason why consumers tend not to buy advertised goods is the morality level in their culture and country. If morality level in the country is high, consumers will have a negative view to shocking advertisements, which will negatively impact their buying behavior. As noted above, Moroccan consumers would not buy advertised goods in contrast to French consumers. None the less than religiosity, moral principles also impact a positive or negative consumer view to shocking advertising that consistently impacts on positive or negative consumer buying behavior.

1.3. Age. Age is a very significant factor, impacting consumer view on shocking advertising. According to Liu et al. (2009), younger consumers have more positive view on shocking advertisement than older consumers. This is confirmed by Prendergast and Hwa

(2002) who found out that consumers over the age of forty were more likely to refuse advertised goods than younger consumers. The findings of Brugiere and Barry (2011) revealed that young consumers will have a positive view on shocking advertising and it will not have negative impact to their buying behavior – conversely, older consumers, who with one accord stated that they would not like to be identified with the advertised brand, so will better choose other brands.

1.4. Gender. Sengupta and Dahl (2007, 2008), Dahl et al. (2009) has found out that there are differences in a view on shocking advertising between men and women. Women’s negative reaction to sexual context shocking advertising depends on finesse and

compatibility of moral and social principles in shocking advertising. Conversely, finesse and compatibility of moral and social principles in shocking advertising do not impact men’s negative view on shocking advertising. Dahl et al. (2009) revealed that proper selection of shocking advertising context can positively impact consumer view on shocking advertising in a gender aspect.

In order to understand how shocking advertising impacts on consumer buying behavior a theoretical model of the link among the main elements of shocking advertising, socio-demographic factors, consumer view on shocking advertising and consumer buying behavior was developed (see Figure 1).

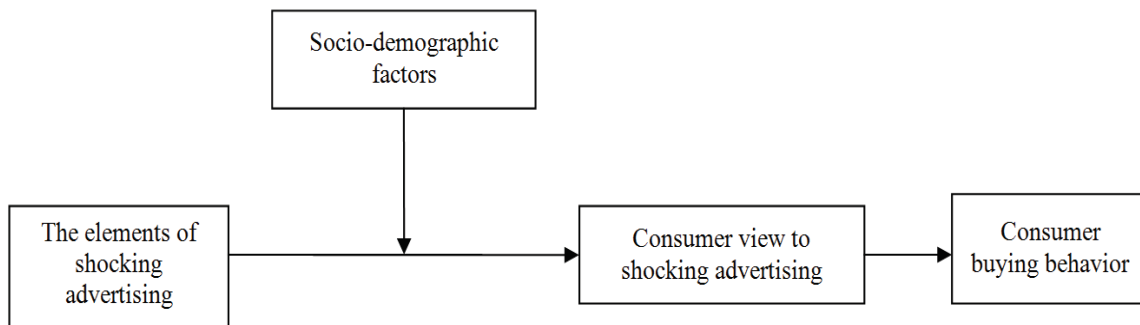


Fig. 1. A theoretical model of the impact of shocking advertising on consumer buying behavior

The theoretical model was developed with reference to the main elements of shocking advertising (Dahl et al., 2003), studies of the socio-demographic factors which impact on consumer view on shocking advertising (Liu et al., 2009; Sengupta and Dahl, 2008; Dahl et al., 2009; Sawang, 2010; Sabri, 2012) and studies of positive and negative impact on consumer buying behavior (Dens et al. (2008) and Sabri (2012), based on Kotler and Armstrong (1987), Aaker (2002), Stevens et al. (2003), Janssens et al. (2007); Dens et al. (2008), based on Edell and Burke (1987); Dahl et al. (2003); Andersson and Pettersson (2004), based on Shimp (2003); Waller et al. (2005); Sabri and Obermiller (2011), based on Manceau and Tissier-Desbordes (2006); Ortega-S (2011)). The theoretical model graphically represents the main elements of shocking advertising in relation to consumers’ positive or negative view on shocking advertising, which is impacted by additional moderators – socio-demographic factors. The model also represents a relationship between consumers’ view on shocking advertising and consumer buying behavior.

2. Methodology

The empirical research was conducted, according to a theoretical model of the impact of shocking advertising on consumer buying behavior. The empirical research includes qualitative and quantitative research methods.

The object of the research is shocking advertising and consumer buying behavior.

The aim of the research is to identify the impact of shocking advertising on consumer buying behavior in the case of Lithuanian consumers.

In order to identify the impact of shocking advertising on consumer buying behavior, the qualitative research was conducted in target groups, intentionally choosing subjects according to their age. Respondents were divided into four age groups. The first group is 18-25-year-old respondents, the second is 26-35-year-old respondents, the third is 36-45-year-old respondents, and the fourth 46-year-old and older respondents. The focus groups were based on discussions of 6-8 respondents. A questionnaire was made according to the theoretical studies of shocking advertising impact on consumer buying behavior. Seven shocking advertisements were selected, based on Dahl et al. (2003) shocking advertising elements. The advertisements were shown at the beginning of the qualitative research.

The quantitative research was conducted by selecting the most convenient, the closest and the most easily accessible respondents. Units of the research – Lithuanian consumers from 18 to 46 years old or more. 261 respondents were investigated during the quantitative research. A questionnaire was made

according to the theoretical studies of shocking advertising impact on consumer buying behavior. Seven shocking advertisements were selected, based on Dahl et al. (2003) shocking advertising elements. The advertisements were included in the questionnaire.

With reference to a theoretical model of the impact of shocking advertising on consumer buying behavior, 12 research hypotheses were proposed:

H1a: There is a positive relationship between shocking advertising element – disgusting images and consumer view on shocking advertising.

H1b: There is a positive relationship between shocking advertising element – sexual references and consumer view on shocking advertising.

H1c: There is a positive relationship between shocking advertising element – profanity/obscenity and consumer view on shocking advertising.

H1d: There is a positive relationship between shocking advertising element – vulgarity and consumer view on shocking advertising.

H1e: There is a positive relationship between shocking advertising element – impropriety and consumer view on shocking advertising.

H1f: There is a positive relationship between shocking advertising element – moral offensiveness and consumer view on shocking advertising.

H1g: There is a positive relationship between shocking advertising element – religious taboos and consumer view on shocking advertising.

H2a: There is a positive relationship between religiosity and consumer view on shocking advertising.

H2b: There is a positive relationship between moral principles and consumer view on shocking advertising.

H2c: There is a positive relationship between age and consumer view on shocking advertising.

H2d: There is a positive relationship between gender and consumer view on shocking advertising.

H3: There is a positive relationship between consumer view on shocking advertising and consumer buying behavior.

The analysis of quantitative research data were performed with SPSS statistical data processing program.

3. Results

3.1. The results of the qualitative research. The respondents' primary reaction to shocking advertisements showed that younger respondents accept the advertisements with humor – hysterical laughter

followed after subtle giggle. The reaction of older respondents was much more restrained – they expressed surprise, indignation or even disgust. The results of different age are summarized in the following tables (see Tables 2-7),

Table 2. The results of shocking advertising elements in different age groups

	The elements of shocking advertising
18-25 year	Disgusting images.
26-35 year	Disgusting images and impropriety.
36-45 year	Disgusting images and sexual references.
46 year and older	Disgusting images and moral offensiveness.

It can be stated that the most shocking advertisements for respondents of all age groups are those with disgusting images, also improper advertisements which violate social conventions for clothing or manners. During the research, it was found out that respondents single out sexual context shocking advertisements. Despite the fact that sexual context advertising was the only one, respondents perceive vulgar and obscene advertisements as sexual context advertisements.

Table 3. The results of religiosity in different age groups

	Religiosity
18-25 year	Religious respondents have more negative view on shocking advertisements than non-religious respondents.
26-35 year	The impact of religiosity to respondents view on shocking advertising is low.
36-45 year	High religiosity, influencing negative view on shocking advertisements.
46 year and older	Religiosity impacts only women's view to shocking advertising.

It was found out that consumer view on shocking advertising does not always depend on consumer religiosity. Older and middle-aged religious women have a more negative view on shocking advertisements than older and middle-aged religious men. Only the results of the youngest respondents revealed that all religious consumers have a negative view, while non-religious respondents have a positive view. Therefore, it can be stated that consumers' view on shocking advertising depends more on age and gender differences than on religiosity.

Table 4. The results of moral principles in different age groups

	Moral principles
18-25 year	Moral principles, family and public opinion about shocking advertisements do not impact respondents' view on shocking advertising – the emotional ambivalence of individuals did not come through.
26-35 year	Moral principles, family and public opinion about shocking advertisements do not impact respondents' view on shocking advertising – the emotional ambivalence of individuals did not come through.

Table 4 (cont.). The results of moral principles in different age groups

	Moral principles
36-45 year	Respondents have a negative view on shocking advertisements, coming through high moral principles, strong family values and high religiosity.
46 year and older	Moral principles impact respondents' negative view on shocking advertisements – they fear for children and older people's reactions to the advertisements.

The strongest moral principles were expressed by older respondents who have children. Older than 46-year-old respondents tolerated the advertisements but underlined the impact of shocking advertising on children. 36-45-year-old respondents have a more negative view on shocking advertisements than older respondents but this could be explained by the fact that 36-45-year-old respondents have younger children than older respondents, so they fear that children can see the advertisements. Older respondents have the most strongly expressed moral principles. Respondents of a younger age group stated that shocking advertisements violate moral principles but they underlined that shocking advertisement is not negative if it is social. Social advertisements have more positive impact on consumers' view on shocking advertising because it provides benefit in contrast to profit – making advertisements.

Table 5. The results of age in different age groups

	Age
18-25 year	Age does not impact respondents' view on shocking advertising.
26-35 year	26-35-year-old respondents have a more positive view on shocking advertising than older respondents.
36-45 year	According to 36-45-year-old respondents, younger consumers have a more positive view on shocking advertising than older consumers.
46 year and older	More negative view on shocking advertising comparing with younger respondents.

Table 6. The results of gender in different age groups

	Gender
18-25 year	Gender does not impact respondents' view on shocking advertising.
26-35 year	Women have a more negative view on shocking advertising than men.
36-45 year	Women have a more negative view on sexual context shocking advertising than men, but the advertisements do not cause high hostility or acceptance neither for men nor for women.
46 year and older	Women have a more negative view on sexual context and vulgar shocking advertising than men.

The results show significant gender differences between women and men. Women have a more negative view on shocking advertising than men. This is especially shown up in a view on sexual context shocking advertising. It was found out that women have a negative view of sexual context

advertising. These kind of advertisements often seem to be hateful and unacceptable for women. Sexual context advertising impact a positive men's view on shocking advertising but there is an exception – sexual context shocking advertising impact negative view on the advertisement not for all young women. This could be explained by differences in a viewpoint of younger age.

Table 6. The results of consumer buying behavior in different age groups

	Consumer buying behavior
18-25 year	The greatest impact on consumer buying behavior make external factors – occupation, liberality and spontaneous behavior. A positive view on shocking advertising does not impact positive consumer buying behavior and vice versa.
26-35 year	The greatest impact on consumer buying behavior make gender differences – women have more a negative view on shocking advertising than men. As a result, a men's negative view on shocking advertising does not impact negative buying behavior, while a women's negative view impacts their negative buying behavior.
36-45 year	A negative view to shocking advertising does not impact negative buying behavior – 36-45-year-old respondents have a negative view on shocking advertising but they do not refuse an advertised brand, with a statement that advertisement does not impact their choice.
46 year and older	A positive view on shocking advertising impacts on positive consumer buying behavior, while a negative view on shocking advertising impacts negative consumer buying behavior. However, the respondents choose the goods despite their positive or negative view on shocking advertising – consumers unconsciously choose the advertised goods.

The results revealed that buying behavior of younger consumers is the most unpredictable. The youngest consumers with a positive view on shocking advertising would not buy advertised goods but simply ignore advertising. Meanwhile, having a negative view on advertising will publicly renounce goods. Older than 25-year-old consumers expressed the opinion that shocking advertising does not affect their buying behavior but the research has shown that women are more likely to refuse advertised goods because of a negative view on shocking advertising and vice versa with men. Most of the respondents said that they would not refuse advertised goods if they liked them. The respondents indicated that they would choose advertised goods unconsciously – their buying behavior is often influenced by spontaneousness. In this case, there is no relationship between a consumers' positive view on shocking advertising and positive buying behavior and vice versa.

3.2. The results of the quantitative research.

Variable distribution similarity to normal was identified by applying Kolmogorov and Smirnov test, which showed that the data are not normally distributed (significance level of *p* less than 0.05), so further analysis of the data is appropriate for nonparametric statistical methods.

3.3. Correlation analysis. The correlation was carried out to verify the hypotheses. The relationship between the variables were assessed by Spearman’s correlation coefficient. *P*-value of correlation coefficient significance indicator was used to assess the statistical significance of

correlation coefficient, and note of ** indicates the statistical significance of the relationship between variables (if the *p*-value is less than the chosen significance level α , which is equal to 0.01). The results of correlation analysis are described below (see Table 7 and Table 8).

Table 7. The results of the correlation analysis among the main elements of shocking advertising, socio-demographic factors and consumer view to shocking advertising

		Consumer view on shocking advertising	
		P-value	Interpretation of correlation
The elements of shocking advertising	Disgusting images	-0,458**	Low
	Sexual references	-0,524**	Medium
	Profanity/obscenity	-0,468**	Low
	Vulgarity	-0,484**	Low
	Impropriety	-0,405**	Low
	Moral offensiveness	-0,455**	Low
	Religious taboos	-0,404**	Low
Socio-demographic factors	Religiosity	-0,189**	Very low
	Moral principles	0,493**	Low
	Age	0,266**	Low
	Gender	-0,275**	Low

Table 7 shows that all correlation variables are statistically significant, but the strength of correlation varies between very low, low and medium.

It can be stated that the correlation between the main elements of shocking advertising and consumer view on shocking advertising is low (correlation coefficient ranges from -0.484 to 0.404). Stronger - the medium correlation was found only between the shocking advertising element “sexual references” and consumer view to shocking advertisement (-0.524). The results of the correlation between the main shocking advertising elements and consumer view on shocking advertisement revealed that the variables are low correlated.

The correlation between socio-demographic factors and consumer view to shocking advertising is low (correlation coefficient ranges from -0.275 to 0.493). Weaker – a very low correlation was found out only between the socio-demographic factor “religiosity” and consumer view on shocking advertisement (-0.189). The results of the correlation between the socio-demographic factors and consumer view on shocking advertising revealed that the variables are also low correlated.

Table 8. The results of the correlation analysis between consumer view on shocking advertising and consumer buying behavior

		Consumer buying behavior			
		Positive	Interpretation of correlation	Negative	Interpretation of correlation
Consumer view to shocking advertising	Positive	0,546**	Medium	-0,552**	Medium
	Negative	0,129	Very low	-0,240**	Low

Table 8 shows that all correlation variables are statistically significant, but the strength of the correlation varies between very low, low and medium.

It can be stated that the correlation between consumer positive view on shocking advertising and consumer positive – negative buying behavior is the strongest – the medium (correlation coefficient is equal to 0.546 and -0.552) to compare with consumer negative view on shocking advertising. The correlation between negative consumer view on shocking advertising and negative buying behavior is low (correlation coefficient is equal to -0.240), while the correlation between negative consumer view to shocking advertising and positive buying behavior is very low (correlation coefficient is equal to 0.129) and not statistically significant. The results of the correlation between consumer view on shocking advertising and consumer buying behavior revealed that the variables are low or medium correlated.

The correlation analysis was considered statistically significant in case that the relationship between the variables was positive, nevertheless the relationship between the variables was found low or very low, suggesting that a theoretical model of the impact of shocking advertising on consumer buying behavior can be used for further analysis. Further, the model was used to perform analysis of hypothesis testing of each variable by regression analysis.

3.4. Regression analysis. The regression analysis was performed to determine the relationship between a dependent variable and one or more

independent variables: two-variable regression with one dependent and one independent variable and multiparametrical regression with one dependent and several independent variables. Aforementioned variable regression was measured by the coefficient of determination “R square” values and level of significance α . The coefficient of determination values from 0 to 1. The higher the value of the coefficient of determination, the stronger variable

linear functional dependence (Pukėnas, 2005). α level of significance indicates the statistical significance of the relationship between the variables. Statistical relationship is considered to be significant when the p -value of the correlation coefficient significance indicator is less than the chosen significance level α , which is equal to 0.01. The results of the regression analysis are described below (see Table 9 and Table 10).

Table 9. The results of the regression analysis between two variables

Dependent variable		Independent variable	Coefficient of determination (R square)		Level of significance (α)
Consumer view	Positive	Religiosity	0,035	0,037	0,002
	Negative		0,006		0,206
Consumer view	Positive	Moral principles	0,212	0,255	0,000
	Negative		0,105		0,000
Consumer view	Positive	Age	0,083	0,070	0,000
	Negative		0,000		0,803
Consumer view	Positive	Gender	0,057	0,070	0,000
	Negative		0,032		0,004
Consumer buying behavior	Positive	Positive consumer view to shocking advertising	0,272	0,012	0,000
		Negative consumer view to shocking advertising	0,031		0,005
	Negative	Positive consumer view to shocking advertising	0,235		0,000
		Negative consumer view to shocking advertising	0,052		0,000

According to the results of two-variable regression, it is noticeable that different independent variables in the regression models explain the unequal variance of the dependent variables.

Religiosity explains 3.5% of positive consumer view on shocking advertising dispersion (the significance level α is equal to 0.002) and 0.6% of negative consumer view on shocking advertising dispersion and the relations are considered to be not statistically significant (significance level α is equal to 0.206). Therefore, hypothesis H2a was refused.

Moral principles explain 25.5% of consumer view on shocking advertising. It was determined that moral principles explain 21.2% of positive consumer view on shocking advertising dispersion (the significance level α is equal to 0.000) and 10.5% negative consumer view on shocking advertising dispersion (the significance level α is equal to 0.000). Therefore, hypothesis H2b was confirmed.

Age explains 8.3% of positive consumer view on shocking advertising dispersion (the significance level α is equal to 0.000) and does not explain negative consumer view on shocking advertising dispersion. Therefore, hypothesis H2c was refused.

Gender explains 5.7% of positive consumer view to shocking advertising dispersion (the significance level α is equal to 0.000) and 3.2% negative consumer view on shocking advertising dispersion

(the significance level α is equal to 0.004). Therefore, hypothesis H2d was refused.

A positive consumer view on shocking advertising explains 27.2% of positive consumer buying behavior dispersion (when the significance level α is equal to 0.000) and 23.5% of negative consumer buying behavior dispersion (when the significance level α is equal to 0.000). A negative consumer view on shocking advertising explains 3.1% of positive consumer buying behavior dispersion (the significance level α is equal to 0.005) and 5.2% negative consumer buying behavior dispersion (the significance level α is equal to 0.000). Therefore, hypothesis H3 was confirmed.

According to the coefficient of determination as a two-variable linear functional dependence measure, it is concluded that moral principles and a positive consumer view on shocking advertising; a positive consumer view on shocking advertising and positive consumer buying behavior; and a positive consumer view on shocking advertising and negative consumer buying behavior linear relationships are strong because the values of the coefficient of determination exceed 0.20 (Pukėnas, 2005). It can be stated that the three independent-dependent variable models are suitable for use because the independent variable has a significant impact on the dependent variable. All remaining regression models are not suitable for use – the independent variable does not have a significant impact on the dependent variable.

Table 10. The results of multiparametrical regression analysis

Dependent variable	Independent variable	Beta coefficient	Coefficient of determination (R square)	Level of significance (α)	
Consumer view to shocking advertising	Positive	Moral offensiveness	0,010	0,384	0,894
		Profanity/obscenity	-0,036		0,628
		Impropriety	-0,044		0,516
		Religious taboos	-0,127		0,043
		Vulgarity	-0,162		0,025
		Disgusting images	-0,183		0,005
		Sexual references	-0,264		0,000
	Negative	Disgusting images	0,078	0,112	0,312
		Moral offensiveness	0,051		0,579
		Religious taboos	0,036		0,630
		Impropriety	0,009		0,916
		Profanity/obscenity	-0,123		0,161
		Vulgarity	-0,128		0,140
		Sexual references	-0,245		0,003

The main elements of shocking advertising have a significant impact on consumer view on shocking advertising, because the values of the coefficient of determination exceed 0.20 – the value is equal to 0,405. It is expected that the elements of shocking advertising have a significant positive impact on consumer view on shocking advertising. Values of standardized Beta coefficient indicate that there is a strong impact between “disgusting images” (Beta coefficient is -0.183, the significance level α is equal to 0.005), “sexual references” (Beta coefficient is -0.264, the significance level α is equal to 0.000) and a positive consumer view on shocking advertising. All remaining elements have a stronger impact, however, are not statistically significant (significance level α ranges from 0,894 to 0,025). The main elements of shocking advertising do not have a significant negative impact on consumer view on shocking advertising, because the values of the coefficient of determination do not exceed 0.20. Therefore, hypotheses H1a, H1b, H1c, H1d, H1e, H1f, H1g were confirmed.

According to the coefficient of determination as a multiparametrical linear functional dependence measure, it is concluded that the elements of shocking advertising and a positive consumer view

on shocking advertising linear relationships are strong, because the values of the coefficient of determination exceed 0.20 (Pukėnas, 2005). It can be stated that these independent-dependent variable models are suitable for use, because the independent variable has a significant impact on the dependent variable. The elements of shocking advertising explain 40.5% of total consumer view on shocking advertising dispersion and 38.4% of a positive consumer view on shocking advertising dispersion.

3.5. Hypothesis testing. In accordance with the qualitative and quantitative researches, a theoretical model of the impact of shocking advertising on consumer buying behavior in the case of Lithuanian consumers was certified (see Figure 2). Justifying that in the quantitative research 261 respondents were surveyed while in the qualitative research – only 26 respondents, it can be stated that the quantitative research accurately reflects the overall consumer trends in Lithuania. In that case the theoretical model was certified with reference to the results of the quantitative research. The qualitative research is considered to reveal deeper aspects of the problem, highlighting the problems of minor importance, which remain unnoticed by the quantitative research.

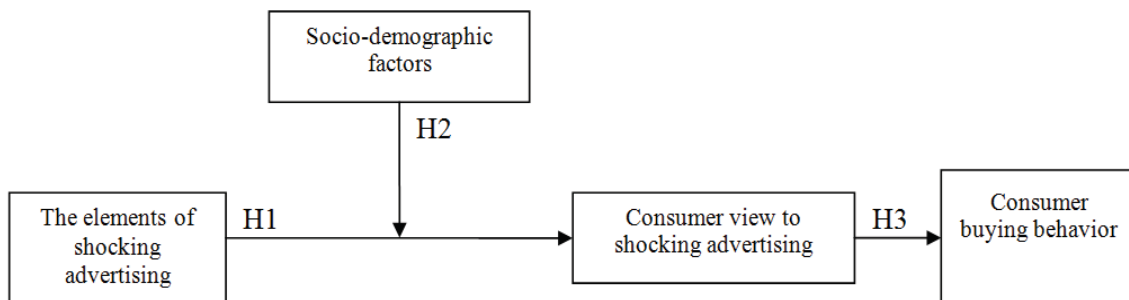


Fig. 2. A theoretical model of the impact of shocking advertising on consumer buying behavior: the case of Lithuanian consumers

Table 11. The results of the tested hypotheses

Hypotheses		Result
H1a	There is a positive relationship between shocking advertising element – disgusting images and consumer view on shocking advertising	Confirmed
H1b	There is a positive relationship between shocking advertising element – sexual references and consumer view on shocking advertising	Confirmed
H1c	There is a positive relationship between shocking advertising element – profanity/obscenity and consumer view on shocking advertising	Confirmed
H1d	There is a positive relationship between shocking advertising element – vulgarity and consumer view on shocking advertising	Confirmed
H1e	There is a positive relationship between shocking advertising element – impropriety and consumer view on shocking advertising	Confirmed
H1f	There is a positive relationship between shocking advertising element – moral offensiveness and consumer view on shocking advertising	Confirmed
H1g	There is a positive relationship between shocking advertising element – religious taboos and consumer view on shocking advertising	Confirmed
H2a	There is a positive relationship between religiosity and consumer view on shocking advertising	Refused
H2b	There is a positive relationship between moral principles and consumer view on shocking advertising	Confirmed
H2c	There is a positive relationship between age and consumer view on shocking advertising	Refused
H2d	There is a positive relationship between gender and consumer view on shocking advertising	Refused
H3	There is a positive relationship between consumer view on shocking advertising and consumer buying behavior	Confirmed

The results of the study suggest that the main elements of shocking advertising – disgusting images, sexual references, profanity/obscenity, vulgarity, impropriety, moral offensiveness and religious taboos impact consumer view on shocking advertising (hypotheses H1a, H1b, H1c, H1d, H1e, H1f, H1g). Moral principles impact consumer view on shocking advertising (hypothesis H2b). Consumers’ view on shocking advertising impacts consumer buying behavior (hypothesis H3). Hypotheses H2a, H2c, H2d were refused.

Conclusions and suggestions

Summarizing the theoretical and empirical research findings and in conclusion, there is sufficient empirical evidence to suggest the shocking advertising impact on consumer buying behavior. Dahl et al. (2003) better than other scientists specified the most shocking advertising elements, identified as disgusting images, sexual references, profanity/obscenity, vulgarity, impropriety, moral offensiveness and religious taboos, which are considered to be the basement for the key components of shocking advertising. These seven main elements of shocking advertising cause a positive or negative consumers’ view on shocking advertising.

Different scientists agree that the consumer positive or negative view on shocking advertising is affected by the main moderators: socio-demographic factors – religiosity, moral principles, age, gender. The theoretical research confirmed that a positive view on shocking advertising impacts on positive consumer buying behavior and vice versa. The link between shocking advertising, consumer view on shocking advertising and consumer buying behavior, influenced by socio-demographic factors was theoretically developed in the theoretical model,

which was created according to the analysis of the scientific literature.

The qualitative results of the research in the case of Lithuanian consumers revealed that socio-demographic factors influence consumer view on shocking advertising. More religious consumers and those with a higher morality level have a more negative view on shocking advertising than less religious and with a lower morality level consumers. Younger consumer have a more positive view on shocking advertising than older consumers, while women have a more negative view on shocking advertising than men. A positive view on shocking advertising cause positive buying behavior, while a negative view on shocking advertising does not always cause negative buying behavior.

The quantitative results of the research in the case of Lithuanian consumers confirmed that consumer view on shocking advertising is influenced by all main elements of shocking advertising – disgusting images, sexual references, profanity/obscenity, vulgarity, impropriety, moral offensiveness and religious taboos and also by socio-demographic factor – moral principles. It is also confirmed that consumers’ view on shocking advertising impacts consumer buying behavior.

Following suggestions. It is important for companies to assess the benefit of shocking advertising and properly choose shocking advertising solutions which can draw consumers’ attention to shocking advertising and develop a positive consumer view on shocking advertising. It is possible for companies to create a unique image and achieve greater consumer interest by using shocking advertising techniques.

In order to create a positive consumer view on shocking advertising, it is proposed to focus on less religious, with lower moral principles, younger consumers, since it was found out that shocking advertising to consumers who possess these characteristics, causes a less outrage and less negative view on shocking advertising. In some cases, it is appropriate to focus on a men's segment, which is

characterized by a positive view, especially to sexual context shocking advertisements.

In Lithuania it would be appropriate to use shocking advertising in the segment of luxury goods, specifically cosmetics, perfumes, underwear and clothing for youth companies through the shocking advertising elements – sexual references, profanity/obscenity and impropriety.

References

1. Andersson S. and Pettersson A. (2004). Provocative advertising. The Swedish youth's response: master thesis; marketing and e-commerce, Lulea University of Technology: Sweden.
2. Brugiére A.G. and Barry R. (2011). A new marketing strategy for a new luxury market: shock advertising and porno chic in social networks. The French market: bachelor thesis: business administration, marketing, Halmstad University: Sweden.
3. Chan K., Li L., Diehl S., Terlutter R. (2007). Consumer's response to offensive advertising: a cross cultural study, *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 24, No. 5, pp. 606-628.
4. Crestanello P. and Tattar G. (2010). A global network and its local ties. Restructuring of the Benetton group, Working paper, Department of Economics in Ca' Foscari University of Venice, No. 11, pp. 1-21.
5. Dahl D.W., Frankerberger K.D., Manchanda R.V. (2003). Does it pay to shock? Reactions to shocking and nonshocking advertising content among university students, *Journal of Advertising Research*, Vol. 43, No. 3, pp. 268-280.
6. Dahl D.W., Sengupta J., Vohs K.D. (2009). Sex in advertising: gender differences and the role of relationship commitment, *Journal of Consumer Research*, No. 36, pp. 215-231.
7. Dens N., De Pelsmacker P., Janssens W. (2008). Exploring consumer reactions to incongruent mild disgust appeals, *Journal of Marketing Communications*, Vol. 14, No. 4, pp. 249-269.
8. Javed M.B. and Zeb H. (2011). Good shock or bad shock: what impact shock advertisements are creating on the mind of viewers, Marketing & Programme Leader International Business: Annual Conference on Innovations in Business & Management [London, 2011, January 26-27]. London, University of East London, pp. 1-12.
9. Liu F., Cheng H., Li J. (2009). Consumer responses to sex appeal advertising: a cross-cultural study, *International Marketing Review*, Vol. 26, No. 4-5, pp. 501-520.
10. Ortega-S A.A. (2011). Effectively offending to sell: consumer response to shocking visual merchandising presentations: master thesis: department of design and merchandising. Colorado State University: United States.
11. Prendergast G. and Hwa H.C. (2002). Offensive advertising on the web: Asian insights, *BRC Working Papers Series*, pp. 1-21.
12. Pukėnas K. (2005). *Sportinių tyrimų duomenų analizė SPSS programa*, Mokomoji knyga: Kaunas.
13. Sabri O. (2012). Preliminary investigation of the communication effects of "taboo" themes in advertising, *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 46, No. 1/2, pp. 215-236.
14. Sabri O. and Obermiller C. (2011). Consumer perception of taboo in ads, *Journal of Business Research* Vol. 65, No. 6, pp. 869-873.
15. Sawang S. (2010). Sex appeal in advertising: what consumers think, *Journal of Promotion Management*, No. 16, pp. 167-187.
16. Sengupta J. and Dahl D.W. (2008). Gender-related reactions to gratuitous sex appeals in advertising, *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, No. 18, pp. 62-78.
17. Waller D.S. (2005). A proposed response model for controversial advertising, *Journal of Promotion Management*, Vol. 11, No. 2/3, pp. 3-15.