Public Service Campaigns through Mass Media: Impact of Public Health Communication in Covid-19 Era

Sajida Awais

Department of Mass Communication, Punjab University Lahore

Shanawer Rafique

School of media and communication studies university of management and technology Lahore

*Muhammad Hashim

Department of sociology and criminology university of Sargodha.

*__Email of the corresponding author__: hashimsocial@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This study aims to uncover the cultivation impact of public service campaigns on public by taking the case study of Multan City. Impact of these campaigns was analysed through Social, Electronic and Print media usage of general public by conducting the survey. The study mainly used the cultivation and Gratification's theory as a supporting theory for literary support and analysis. Moreover, sample of 300 individuals was taken including male and female without any age restrictions and educational background by using convenience sampling. The population of Multan City was mainly targeted for evaluating the desired results and SPSS was used for data analysis. Results of the study demonstrated that most of the respondents believe that they get information from social media while they are watching news channels, dramas and movies about COVID-19 and they are also communicated positively through public service campaigns. Different opinions of respondents are observed in terms of acceptance and refusal of these campaigns in a positive and negative manner simultaneously.Most of the respondents also believe that such campaigns affect the level of consciousness and cause higher level of anxiety while other respondents considered these campaigns fruitful and knowledgeable for health. It is recommended that future studies may be conducted to explore the impact of this scenario with larger sample size and with different methodology and different constructs.

*Keywords*__:__ Electronic Media, Print Media, Social Media, Uses and gratification theory, Public Service Campaigns, COVID-19.

INTRODUCTION

COVID-19, the corona virus that causes respiratory illness, is much more serious in nature. It is a viral infection with rapid global transmission that affects the respiratory system of humans (Clark, Martin et al., 1998). Due to COVID-19, people are confronted with a variety of issues, including a heightened fear of financial hardship, psychological stress factors, and a disruption of their everyday lives. The COVID-19 had an impact on the social bonding of peoples as human nature requires that people have a social network of friends and colleagues. In consequence, there is a significant disruption in social life as a result of the continual precautions, bans on outside activities (Brooks, Webster et al., 2020).

COVID-19 had the greatest impact on the world economy since the Great Depression of the 1930s. COVID-19 adversely affects the global economy (He and Harris, 2020). Due to widespread social isolation and lockdown tactics, COVID-19 has an immediate and devastating impact on the global population. Although the epidemic is over, the impacts of COVID-19 on the social, economic, cultural, and political spheres will persist. COVID-19 has a profound impact on human life, on how people think, how they see the world, and how they live (He and Harris, 2020).

People participate in indoor activities and display sedentary behavior, and most of them are interested in the internet and social media since they have little choice other than to remain at home and communicate with their families via social media. The practice of social isolation is widespread, which is also harmful to the health and safety of individuals (Chen, Chen et al. 2020).

Various social networks such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and Twitter may be used to disseminate COVID-19 over the Internet. In addition, they had extensive knowledge of overseas control of COVID-19, COVID-19 prevention advice, travel advice, the COVID-19 trans campaign route, the number of confirmed cases and locations, information about the various medications and vaccines, and information about the various populations and COVID-19 infection symptoms (Wang, Pan et al. 2020; Wang, Hu et al. 2020).

People are transitioning from print media to electronic media as a result of technological progress. Before the advent of electronic media, there was a massive exchange of information through print media. Information such as public service campaigns was regulated through these media channels and was deemed to be the most expensive and least effective compared to modern electronic communication channels. These days, electronic modes of communication are the most prevalent, and they may encompass a variety of channels.

These are the most efficient, cost-effective, and rapid methods of disseminating information, whether for campaigns promoting public services or other advantages. In every aspect, they aid nations, governments, and societies by enabling the public in more effective and efficient ways.

Social media is a fast method of communication now and in the future since Android mobile phones provide individuals with electronic communication and information tools

in their pockets, as well as access to global information. These Medias include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, etc., as well as websites and television.

With the spread of COVID-19, the initial intensity of COVID-19 was very high, causing people to experience fear. It was essential for governments to control the situation and prevent the spread of COVID-19. Various campaigns were launched by the government to educate the public about the consequences of the problem, and the number of deaths was kept under control with appropriate measures.

The Ad Council and the COVID Collaborative have launched a new public assistance advertising campaign aimed at gaining the confidence of Americans who are hesitant to get COVID-19 vaccinations. The "It's Up to You" campaign will highlight promotions in English and Spanish for TV, bulletins, transport covers, online entertainment, and distributions, and will include materials tailored for chapel pioneers, specialists, drug specialists, and others in the Black and Hispanic population, where COVID-19 has hit hard but antibody uptake has slowed.

Those who are particularly susceptible to COVID-19 exposure, such as medical care personnel, are more susceptible to experiencing anxiety, depression, insomnia, and unhappiness (Dubey, Altay et al. 2018; Kwak, Seo et al. 2018). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, prevalence rates of discomfort and unpleasant side effects during home control were much lower among Chinese adolescents (Lee 2004). however, the public campaigness regarding the awareness of covid 19 geerated the positive impact regarding the safety measures and adoption of precautions.

Research indicates that COVID-19 public service campaigns have a positive impact on people worldwide, and social media is used by public service campaigns to seek information on COVID-19.Additionally, the government of Pakistan handling the COVID-19 health crisis very well, what is the perceived threat of COVID-19, perceived benefits of COVID-19 vaccine, and what are the skepticism towards COVID-19 vaccines barriers,. In addition, the practices of the Pakistani government influenced the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of immunization campaigns and what role public service campaigns would play throughout COVID-19, from its early stages to its vaccination process and also in its aftermath. Hence this study intended to sought the impact of Covid 19 in terms of the research objectives in the Punjab jurisiction particulalry in Multan

- What is the impact of public service campaigns about COVID-19 Vaccine?
- How the government of Pakistan is handling the COVID-19 health crisis?
- How do COVID-19 and public service campaigns affect the perception of COVID-19?

Public Service Campaign

A Public Service Announcement (PSA) appears to be like a TV advertisement however is intended to instruct the crowd about a specific point as opposed to selling some sort of item. The motivation behind these advertisements is to produce mindfulness or make a change in popular assessment on something significant, for example, drug utilization, smashed driving, disease check-ups, or forestalling backwoods fires (Bonell et al., 2020).

Most open help publicizing incorporates joint undertakings of the private and public regions. Non-benefit get-togethers and government workplaces ordinarily team up with private wide interchanges, headway and publicizing firms to convey spots for radio, TV and print media. Most usually, the non-benefit office makes the message and a campaign firm fosters the campaign, shines it to satisfy industry guidelines and plans its appropriation, all for nothing. Television and radio stations for the most part communicated these promotions at no charge, and magazines and papers ordinarily circulate them for nothing as well. it was observed that those public service campaigns which presents on social media cultivates the mind of individuals according. Similarly, public service campaigns of social media can well influenced the public as compared to news media

Public service announcements started out after the United States entered World War II when radio commentators and pre-roll promotions in cinemas would attempt to constrain watchers and audience members to help the conflict exertion. The United States and its military being supportive by convey importance message like "Loose lips sink ships". Public help declarations are assembled and delivered by the Ad Council, charitable training-based association. In basic terms, Public Service Campaign can be perceived as fuse and channelization of a message in the public interest scattered with practically no charge, with the objective of exposing issues of ordinary citizens.

Types of Public Service Campaign

It is very difficult to communicate to public via different media campaigns that are related to health and medical issues. Different print media campaigns are used for different types of requirements, issues and matters. selection of appropriate medium for certain kind of public campaigns are necessary to impact the public. Different types of public service are hereby discussed.

Display Campaign

The display campaign includes banner ads, which are little advanced promotions or standards placed in promotion surrounding blog posts, keyword search pages, sites, and so on. Ads may be animated and moving .display campaigns used for commercial advertising or promotions that are paid by those individuals who have the ownership. Banner campaigns that are associated to medical issues usually funded by Government

Video Campaign

In today's digital marketing environment, Video ads are quite popular campaign types and it makes sense. A complex story can easily be understood with the help of video campaign that display in the form of entertainment, information and eye catching. Video campaigns usually presented via television or via social media ads and targets the individuals that primarily interested in them. Public service campaigns Advertiser utilize media stream video advertisements and in transfer video promotions. Government use media campaigns to spread clear awareness regarding the public health hazards (Neumann et al., 2022).

Mobile Campaign

More individuals are consuming internet based content through their cell phones than any time in recent memory because Mobile campaign is quickly becoming the new norm. Mobile campaign is essentially, advertisements that are improved for portable utilization. Mobile ads are quite broad cam include app, search, video, or social ads. For most brands, video-based web-based entertainment portable advertisements are an incredible spot to begin. From these kinds of advertisements on platform like Instagram health and wellness brands could definitely benefit (O'Barr,2012).

Native Campaign

This type of promoting is straightforward advertisement content that is coordinated into a piece of content. Sponsored content is included in the native advertisement they are considered 'non-disruptive" ad. These advertisements will match the style and stream of the substance it shows up in without being pushy is problematic. For instance, spring up advertisements and auto play recordings are viewed as troublesome and can frequently adversely affect one's potential client base. Sometime native add is more attractive not disruptive to consumer. They can come in the form of videos, blog posts, photos, etc. It's important to invest in a reliable platform while health campaign that can handle programmatic targeted campaign.

Door to Door COVID-19 vaccination campaign in Pakistan

On the door-to-door campaign about COVID-19, Dr. Sohail Raza Shaikh, representing the government, explained that the government of Pakistan has organized public service campaigns to spread awareness about the dangers of the pandemic, thereby targeting communities less familiar with the vaccine for the pandemic.

Whether other countries have sought to bring the vaccine to people's doorsteps is unknown, but Pakistani health officials claim that they are unaware of any similar effort elsewhere. It could serve as a model for other developing countries struggling to increase vaccination rates.

Sources of Social media campaigns:

Different platforms are used for social media campaigns such as instagam, twitter, snap chat, WhatsApp and facebook, youtube has also included in social media campaign where public service messages are communicated to public to spread awareness for the public.

Uses and Gratification

The Uses and Gratifications Theory, one of the approaches to the use of social media, argues that individuals use social media to meet their needs, such as information, knowing what friends are doing, and making self-presentations, communicating, and having fun.Similarly this theory deems fit about the use of social media and the association of this with perceived image, thought, awareness and practice (Nadkarni & Hofmann, 2012; Piwek & Joinson, 2016). According to researchers and analysts, media clients trace the sources that provide them the most effective means of fulfilling their needs. It is presumed by the Utilizations and Gratifications Theory (Griffin and Neal 2000) that users have alternative options that must meet their necessities.

Theory of Cultivation

The Cultivation Theory of George Gerbner was used in this study to examine outcomes and impacts. With the addition of this theory, another speculation will be possible as a result of this study.

Long-term exposure to media has been predicted to alter the way in which consumers perceive the world and the way in which they behave in the future. In the cultivation hypothesis, it is argued that the more people watch television, the more likely they are to hold a view of reality that is closer to that which is presented on television.

Methodology

The scope of this study is limited to the Multan region. Taking into consideration the general public while selecting the sample, the convenient sampling technique is used to select the sample for this study. Through the use of WhatsApp and Facebook applications, almost five hundred individuals were targeted. The link to the questionnaire was shared and responses are collected. A total of approximately 300 responses have been collected, which is a good response rate.

This study is descriptive in nature, therefore, a questionnaire is used to collect data. Following a study of relevant literature, a semi-structural questionnaire is developed. It includes closed-ended questions. The closed-ended items were presented on Likert and dichotomous scales, respectively, with multiple options. In the first part of the questionnaire, demographic information is requested, while in the second part, we ask questions that are directly related to the discussion topic. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to analyze the data and a variety of equations were applied. sult extracted through percentage and frequency of the responses to meet the research objectives.

Item no 1: Gender wise detail.

Table: 1

Sr.no	Items	Frequency	Percent
	Male	220	73.3
1	Female	80	26.6
	Total	300	100.0

## Please state your gender

Legend: ■ Male ■ Female
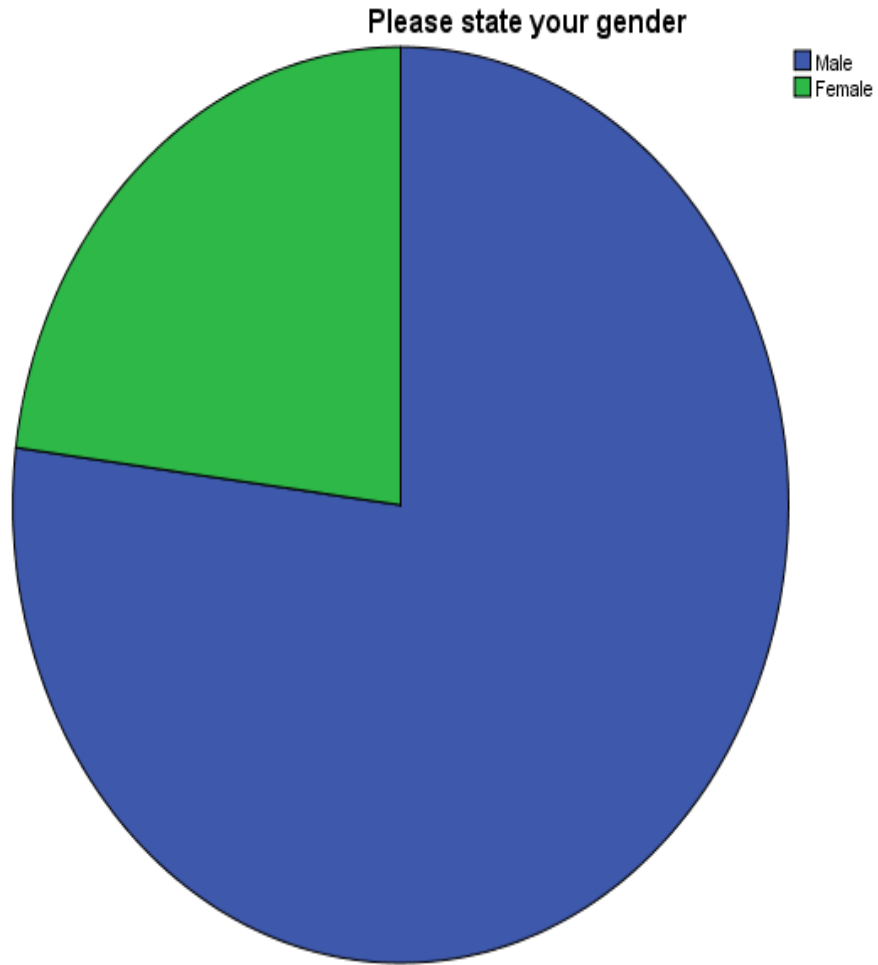
According to the table no 1, it has been observed that mal e participants are higher than female participants.

Table: 2

Sr. No	Items	Frequency	Percent
	18-27	187	62..3
2	28-27	87	29.0
	38-47	22	7.33
	48-57	04	1.3
	Total	300	100.0

Table number no 2 depicts that mostly participants falls in the age group of 18-27

Please chose your age group

- 18-27 years old
- 28-37 years old
- 38-47 years old
- 48-57 years old
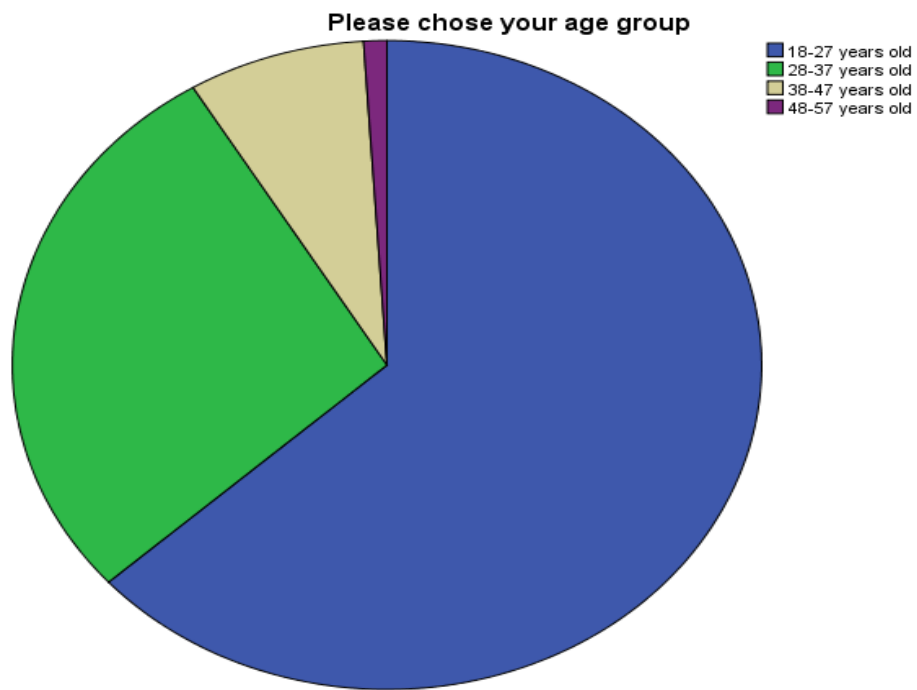
Item no 3: The government of Pakistan is handling the COVID-19 health crisis very well.

Table: 3

Sr. No	Items	Frequency	Percent
6	Agree	214	71.3
	Disagree	34	11.3

|			
I am not sure		52	17.33
Total		300	100.0

Table 3 shows the government of Pakistan is handling the COVID-19 health crisis very well. 71.3 % of respondents agreed and 11.3 % disagreed, and 17.3% not sure about the statement.

Item No 4: COVID-19 Vaccine" is

Table: 4:

Sr. No.	Item	Frequency	Percentage
	Not at all reliable	17	5.6
	Not reliable	44	14.66
9	Reliable	129	43
	Very reliable	70	23,33
	Extremely reliable	40	13.33
	Total	300	100

Table no 4 shows COVID-19 Vaccine" is that 5.6% of respondents says Not at all reliable, 14.66 % of respondents says not reliable, 43% of respondents says reliable, 23.33% respondents say very reliable, and 13.33% of respondents says Extremely.
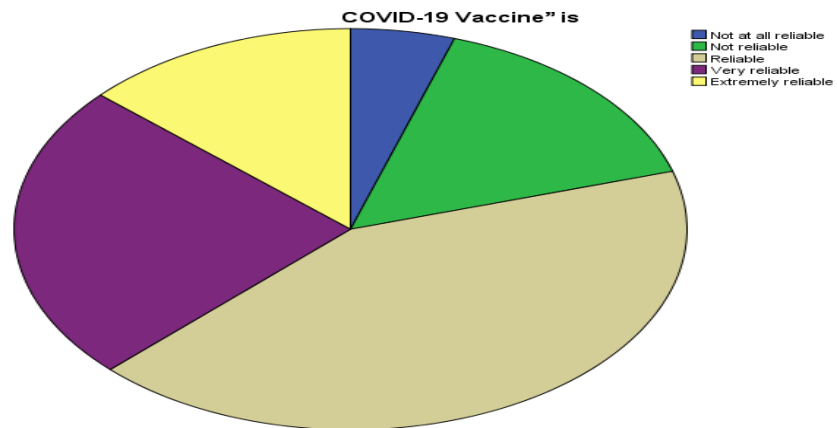

Item No 5: Is about believe on COVID-19 is severe.

Table: 5

Sr. No.	Item	Frequency	Percentage
	Strongly Disagree	12	4
	Disagree	60	20
	Neutral	62	20.66
	Agree	73	24.33
	Strongly Agree	93	31
	Total	300	100.0

Table no 5 shows agreed respondents are 24,33% and disagrees respondents with the statement are 20%. 20.66 % are neutral. While, strongly disagreed respondents are 4 percent. It supported that believe on COVID-19 is severe.

I believe that COVID-19 infection is severe
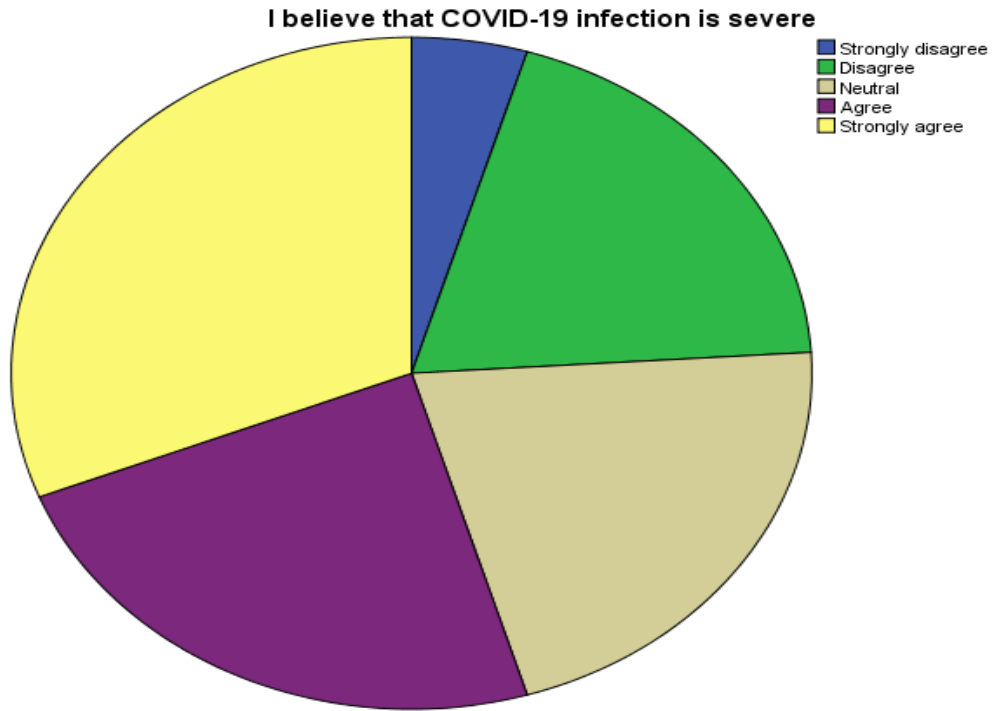
Item No 6: It is related to the daily routine, and safety behavior from COVID-19.

Table No:6

Sr. No.	Item	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
	Strongly Disagree	20	6.66	
	Disagree	31	10.33	
13	Neutral	68	22.6	3.67
	Agree	91	30.33	
	Strongly Agree	90	30	
	Total	300	100.0	

Table no 5.13 shows agreed respondents are 61.6% and disagreed respondents with the statement are 17.4% .3.67 is Mean score. It supports that the daily routine, and safety behavior from COVID-19.

Due to my routines, I will more likely be infected from COVID-19 if I do not perform safety behavior

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree
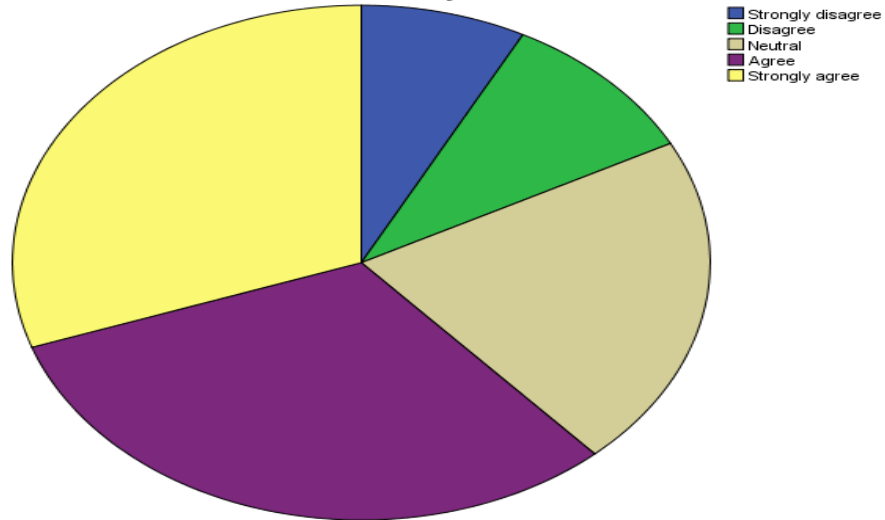
REFERENCES:

Bonell, C., Michie, S., Reicher, S., West, R., Bear, L., Yardley, L., ... & Rubin, G. J. (2020). Harnessing behavioural science in public health campaigns to maintain 'social distancing'in response to the COVID-19 pandemic: key principles. *J Epidemiol Community Health*, *74*(8), 617-619.

Neumann, M., Fowler, E. F., & Ridout, T. N. (2022). Body Language and Gender Stereotypes in Campaign Video. *Computational Communication Research*, *4*(1).

O'Barr, W. M. (2012). Public service advertising and propaganda. *Advertising & Society Review*, *13*(2).