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A Class Matter: Exploring Signals of Socioeconomic Class within Egyptian and Lebanese

Advertising from 2000-2022

by

Najifa Hossain

Dr. Devin Stewart
Adviser

Arabic Studies

Dr. Devin Stewart
Adviser

Dr. Morgan Ward
Committee Member

Dr. Sam Cherribi
Committee Member

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Abstract

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Developed over the course of the 20th century in the Western world, targeted marketing is a consumer-based approach that firms commonly take to communicate their product or service to buyers who would be most likely to purchase or want to purchase it. Based fundamentally on observable local culture, evidence-based advertising techniques, and a study of a nation's unique consumption history, targeted marketing methods inherently require an understanding of a country's relationship with consumerism and consumer behavior. However, globalization at the turn of the 21st century led to the top-down application of this practice to much of the developing world, where there is a large gap within consumer behavior research. This thesis examines Egypt and Lebanon as case studies of middle-income countries of the Middle East and North Africa region to explore this underrepresented facet of marketing research and the ways in which it reflects and reinforces cultural sentiments around socioeconomic class as a demographic category targeted through television and social media advertising. Such cultural sentiments, this thesis argues, inform behaviors, attitudes, and opinions commonly held by certain targeted consumer segments and can be signaled through specific technical and thematic ad indicators curated from insights from existing literature. This investigation proposes a methodology to better understand how consumption history and consumer behavior elucidate targeted marketing strategies in underrepresented regions and suggests further research to continue refining this area of study through a case-by-case approach to country, ad type, and demographic category.

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Preface

In an increasingly globalized world, the value of a product carries different meanings. To economists, it may mean utility. To sociologists, it may mean fulfillment. To marketers, it may mean innovation. To consumers, however, it undoubtedly means a combination of factors. How much something costs, where and how often it will be used, who is paying for it, and how it makes one feel, among many other things, make up a product's value through a consumer lens. Even with the unprecedented amount of information at the average company's disposal, it is impossible to capture the exact components of a product's perceived value to every consumer exposed to that product. At the international level, this dilemma is amplified. How can communications about a product be sent to and received by different populations that have different languages, customs, and histories? Furthermore, how can distinct subcultures within those populations be adequately served?

To answer those vital questions, marketers developed *targeted marketing*, an approach widely known and adopted today worldwide. Popularized by the West in the late-20th century, targeted marketing aims to identify and communicate with consumers who would derive the most value from a certain product, using demographic and psychographic information to do so. This practice took decades of research and refinement to become an effective strategy, but with the help of rapidly advancing information technology, it led to more lucrative advertising.

By the turn of the 21st century, targeted marketing was in practice on a global scale. As countries across Asia, Africa, and South America began to witness significant market expansion, leaders of multinational and growing local firms alike adapted long-established practices of Western markets. However, the extensive research of communities and their histories that is required to implement targeted marketing adequately was less available in such developing

markets. In other words, to effectively capture the behaviors, attitudes, and ideals of a population, every aspect of its culture and marketing history must be studied. Naturally, a strategy that takes decades to evolve in one part of the world cannot yield the same results if it is applied top-down to a different part of the world. Thus, targeted marketing in developing regions did not grow gradually into a mature, integral system. There were—and still are, as this thesis later explores—missing pieces and misunderstandings that led to underrepresentation in marketing research, both due to limited resource availability *and* due to a less comprehensive approach. One of these missing pieces relates to the lens through which targeted marketing is conducted in these developing, or middle-income, economies. Targeted marketing is largely done through examining observable local cultures and applying evidence-based advertising techniques in a way that incorporates cultural norms and values. However, just as it was done in the West, it is necessary to consider a population's unique history of consumption, which varies from nation to nation on account of differences in politics, religion, social stratification, and many other factors. This consideration is a missing piece within targeted marketing in middle-income economies on which my thesis builds.

An example in which consumption history is absent in marketing research of developing countries is in the case of life insurance in Nigeria. In 2007, the *Journal of Retail Marketing Management Research* published a study detailing the lack of consumer research being the primary driver of underutilized Nigerian life insurance plans. While cultural sentiments were reflected in marketing efforts, such as including consideration for tribal and extended familial structures within marketing messages, consumption history that would better elucidate the behaviors and attitudes of insurable groups was not investigated. This study collected primary data to gather historical consumer behavior information that ultimately uncovered the real

barriers to the purchasing of life insurance—a lack of confidence in insurance companies and a lack of concern for premature death. (Omar 2007, 41-47)

Likewise, in 2012, the *International Journal of Mobile Marketing* published a study detailing more effective ways for companies to target Generation Y consumers in India. After segmenting ages groups using demographic and psychographic traits, researchers relied on Western events, namely from the United States, to provide a historic lens to the evolution of this generation in context of its general purchasing behaviors. Like the Nigerian study, there was no previous marketing research to synthesize or consolidate in order to improve the existing targeted marketing strategy—consumer behavior data had to be collected or deduced from foreign studies. (Jain & Pant 2012, 56-62) There are many other examples of studies in which marketing research can be insufficient in the developing world because of inadequate information on consumption histories.

Thus, I embarked on this thesis to explore middle-income countries in a particular region where targeted marketing falls short. Throughout my own academic career, I have always had a keen interest in consumer behavior, media studies, and the culture of the Arab world. The theories, frameworks, and events I studied in the classroom came to life during my time studying abroad and work experiences and led me to vital observations that inspired this thesis. Namely, targeted marketing in the MENA region leaves many unanswered questions. The research and segmentation methods used in the Western world are not commonly instituted in this region, and when they are, there is arguably much less depth in comparison.

I chose to investigate Egypt and Lebanon. As middle-income countries that also serve as hubs of entertainment and media in the Arab world, Egypt and Lebanon have rich cultural, political, and social histories—both locally and with multinational firms—that have shaped their

populations' attitudes and values around consumption today. Studying how the consumption history of both countries plays a role in the formation of their broad cultural sentiments—a concept I later define in Chapter I and constantly revisit in this thesis—and targeted advertising techniques better informs marketers on how best to appeal to those populations when advertising a product. This thesis uses Egypt and Lebanon as case studies to analyze the frequency of product advertisement elements that are representative of unique cultural sentiments that are derived from both observable culture and consumption history in both countries. In doing so, I focus on one particular aspect of their cultures: socioeconomic class. Thus, to answer the broad question of which types of demographic and psychographic traits are most commonly captured in ads in middle-income countries of the MENA region when considering such cultural sentiments, I focus on studying how socioeconomic class is signaled to audiences in Egypt and Lebanon. Although the most significant cultural differences between the MENA region and the Western world in regard to media representation relate to gender and religious identities, class is a significant demographic identity that is less present in marketing research of the region. In this thesis, I analyze advertisements from both countries that focus on class inclusivity, or resonance with the lower and middle classes, comparing the presence and absence of ad elements between the two. My intention with this research is ultimately to identify the most common and comparable ad elements that reflect or reinforce cultural norms and values around class in middle-income countries of the MENA region.

Overview

This thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter I is the introduction, which includes the background and research questions, the theoretical frameworks applied in the investigation, important definitions, background information on the selection of the chosen variables, the rise and use of targeted marketing, and an overview of Egypt and Lebanon's integration of targeted marketing with a brief discussion of the reference groups selected to represent socioeconomic class. Chapter II includes a more in-depth overview of the commercial histories of both countries as they pertain to the formation of their modern class structures and marketing footprints, followed by a discussion of the specific elements communicated through video advertisements. Chapter III includes the analyses of both television and social media video ads for the cases of Egypt and Lebanon, identifying indicators that signal a resonance with the lower and middle classes or class inclusivity based on the chosen reference groups and supported by background research to substantiate the associations made. Chapter IV includes a summary of findings and further insights and considerations from the results of the analysis, highlighting potential angles for future research. Finally, this thesis concludes with a reflection on the implications of this investigation and insights that can be drawn for Egyptian and Lebanese marketing research.

Chapter I: Setting the Scene

Introduction

Throughout civilized human history, the Middle East and North Africa have been participants and promoters of commerce. From regional trade between city-states during the Iron Age to shareholder meetings for multinational corporations in the 21st century, the growth of industries and spread of market value is familiar to the region. According to renowned philosopher and "Father of Economics" Ibn Khaldun (*1332-1406 A.D.*), commerce is closely related to the rise, maintenance, and fall of polities. Where there is thriving trade, there is a thriving population, and, in turn, a system to structure a society and support continued trade. (Spengler 1964, 295-296) Seven centuries later, his sentiments still hold true. Today, the MENA region has been defined by religious, intellectual, and political movements that extend far beyond national borders. Many of these movements have both created and dismantled aspects of governments and economies that have changed social structures through processes like social mobility, educational emigration, and foreign investment.

Throughout all of this change, however, many cultural behaviors have remained constant. Just as Ibn Khaldun distinguished between the actions and behaviors of those who belonged to different societies, researchers today identify differences in the attitudes and decisions of those who adhere to different classes. (Abaza 2006, 43-46)

Today, many of those class differences contribute to marketing research that is utilized to target products to certain subsets of a nation's population, influencing purchasing decisions. This targeting is primarily done through advertising, which reflects and reinforces prevailing cultural

sentiments. Therefore, advertisements are an effective medium of study to examine how such sentiments are reflected in consumer behavior.

Although there are many studies and works based on marketing to different demographics in the MENA region or on cultural norms and values reflected in the media, the intersection between its nations' unique consumption histories, observable culture, and evidence-based advertising techniques has largely been unmet. This is an important topic to investigate because in our rapidly developing world, and especially in a socially, politically, and economically dynamic region like the Middle East and North Africa, it is no longer enough to build marketing strategies by applying previously successful methods to general cultural norms and values. Rather, as highlighted in the Preface, to create marketing messages that most effectively help the most people resonate with a particular product, an approach that incorporates such methods and elements of observable culture into an approach that is sensitive to that country's relationship and history with consumption is necessary.

Upon further exploration, I learned that much remains to be said about this intersection, and so much of it can be synthesized from combining existing research. Thus, this thesis intends to explore this intersection in order to identify ways in which demographic inclusivity is commonly reflected through targeted advertising in the MENA region. More specifically, I chose to study the demographic trait of socioeconomic class and to focus this study on Egypt and Lebanon, the media cornerstones of the Arab world.

In this investigation, I analyze video advertisements from popular Arabic media from Egypt and Lebanon, two representative countries, over the past two decades in an effort to identify common cues, elements, or themes that "signal" (in other words, resonate with or appeal to) the low and lower-middle classes. This signaling is accomplished through demonstrating

evidence-based associations (via background research) between certain consumption behaviors, attitudes, or decision patterns with specific classes. I then compare insights from both countries and identify common cues, elements, or themes (henceforth denoted "indicators") between the two that suggest the possibility of a standard to be applied to the region when interpreting similar advertisements. My goal is to uncover which sentiments demonstrated in certain advertisements can reflect inclusivity within socioeconomic class identity in marketing material of this region.

My samples include television and social media video advertisements released in Egypt and in Lebanon. In order to analyze advertisements for insights into class-related consumption behavior in both countries, I must use wealth-based socioeconomic groups as references, because a standard grouping that distinguishes class is best represented by income or accumulated wealth when it comes to purchasing behavior. (World Bank ICP 2017, 1-2) Of course, with rich and expansive histories encompassing colonial rule, political reform, ideological movements, and unique foreign investments, consumption behaviors for either the Egyptian or Lebanese people cannot be diluted to wealth-based social classes alone. There are many aspects of both societies that can influence and have influenced cultural sentiments around consumer goods. Much of the Lebanese population, for example, relies on sectarian identity as a result of the confessional form of government (Roumie 2020, 5-8), while many Egyptians have strong affiliations with their geographic origins within the nation. (Ambrose 2001, 248-250) These aspects will be discussed in more detail in the coming chapters of this study, but my investigation aims to distinguish the consumption behaviors and attitudes that *can* be attributed to social class, and to trace the best of my ability the formation of social classes in both nations and the ways in which they have grown to be associated with particular cultural sentiments that are reflected and reinforced in the advertising of consumer goods.

Broadly, *cultural sentiments* are rooted in social psychologist David Heise's (1937-2021) research within the symbolic interactionist framework described later in this chapter. Cultural sentiments are considered generally stable and collective emotional meanings that originate from personal experiences or through constant exposure. (Hunzaker 2016, 1227-1228) This concept is commonly applied to many studies that follow the symbolic interactionist framework and appears consistently throughout this thesis. Distinct from stereotypes, over-generalizations, or collective memory, cultural sentiments capture prevailing attitudes and values of a population through evidence and learned impressions, which is fundamental in describing the advertisement indicators selected for the analysis in the coming chapters.

The investigation of indicators within advertisements released in Egypt and Lebanon and their association with class-related cultural sentiments can reveal insights about consumption behavior that is important from both marketing and sociological perspectives. An analysis of how advertising from the most recent decades communicates meaningful signals to differentiated classes in a region that has undergone rapid and significant changes politically, economically, and socially can be significant for marketing research for multinational marketers interested in penetrating or expanding MENA markets or local marketers interested in brand identity and loyalty dynamics. Similarly, this analysis can contribute insights into the sociology behind effective marketing as a business process within economies that have unique political systems– systems that are different from those that the techniques originated from.

Background Questions

In order to lay the foundation of my investigation of how social class is signaled through advertising, relevant background research about the commercial histories and marketing landscapes of Egypt and Lebanon must be discussed, in addition to the general principles of targeted marketing and purchasing behaviors. The questions below guide the investigation I designed from this background research, leading up to the theoretical framework and research questions with which I approached this topic. My intent is for each background question to be adequately addressed throughout Chapters I, II, and III.

- Why can Egypt and Lebanon be utilized in an investigation of popular Arabic media's relationship with socioeconomic class associations? Likewise, why can television and social media video advertisements be utilized to analyze signals that demonstrate this association?
- In both Egypt and Lebanon, how strong are the associations between wealth-based social classes and behaviors, attitudes, or patterns around consumption? How did these associations form?
- How does advertising, as a means of communication, reflect and/or reinforce a nation's practiced or perceived cultural sentiments around class?
- Based on the marketing and consumption histories of Egypt and Lebanon, what types of ad elements most commonly or recognizably illustrate class inclusivity/resonance with lower and middle classes?

Theoretical Frameworks

At the basis of my research questions and purpose are theoretical frameworks in marketing and sociology that conceptualize an intersection between marketing and social structures. My main inquiry inherently implies that advertising, within the realm of marketing, acts as a reflector and reinforcer for certain elements of a society. There are particular mechanisms in place for advertising to exert this influence, and they began with the evolution of targeted marketing and what is known today as the market orientation. (Pride & Ferrell 2020, 13-17) These frameworks were paired with the *interactionist perspective* of *social stratification theory*, which conceptualizes the way socioeconomic status can affect interactions at the individual level. (Carter & Fuller 2016, 932-937) Together, these frameworks shape the underlying principle of my investigation that advertising's relationship with society affects the consumption behaviors of different social classes in different ways.

Targeted Marketing and the Market Orientation

Targeted marketing identifies customers within a larger population who are either more or less likely to purchase a product or service. Demographic information like income level, gender, age, and family role (parent, older sibling, pet owner, etc.) also provides insights into a particular customer's potential buying behavior and intrinsic wants, which marketers take into consideration when designing the content and delivery of their messaging. Products must be differentiated to be competitive, and targeted marketing is the most effective strategy to highlight the uniqueness of a product to consumer groups that are potentially interested in them. In practice, this type of marketing is also the most reputable–it is worth noting that all Fortune 500 and successful multinational companies use targeted marketing, as is evident from their

customer-focused market research, which is conducted via multiple channels of communication. (Pride & Ferrell 2020, 26-28)

From a cost perspective, targeted marketing strategies also allocate finances and sales efforts to focus on the most profitable customers (who are either already consumers of a product or willing to be), while giving little to no attention to nonprofitable customers. Targeted marketing inherently follows consumer trends and cultural shifts, so it gives marketers better insight into how to re-brand, adapt, or phase out products if necessary. Thus, targeted marketing is more cost-effective for firms and helps build a stronger brand identity—meaning that consumers have a defined/strong association or attitude towards the firm. This marketing framework has been applied historically to what is known as the market orientation. (Pride & Ferrell 2020, 158-160)

The *market orientation* is a widely adopted framework that commits to using market intelligence, data, and insights to serve consumer wants and needs. (Pride & Ferrell 2020, 13-17) The second half of the 19th century marked the heyday of the Industrial Revolution in the United States. During this period, mass production and new technologies pushed products out into the marketplace with great efficiency, meeting increasing consumer demands. This era was characterized by an approach known to marketers as a "product orientation". As production increased, so did competition, and firms realized by the early 1900's that they needed to focus on selling their particular products to more customers. Known as the "sales orientation", this approach relied on sales, rather than production, to maximize profits. As the need to sell to more customers evolved into a need to understand more about customers, the "market orientation" took hold of businesses and scholars of economics, marketing, and sociology in the mainstream during the 1950's. Whereas the product orientation era was supplemented by broadcast

advertising that attempted simply to spread the word about a product through as many media avenues as possible, the transition into a market orientation era (which is the prevailing approach across many industries today) relied on targeted marketing, which builds advertising and promotion strategies around consumers' desires, behaviors, and attitudes.

Over time, as barriers to international trade and communication slowly fell, globalization swept the world, and many other nations began adopting the market orientation approach from the United States and Europe. Thus, by the end of the 19th century, the MENA region utilized the market orientation. (Pride & Ferrell 2020, 242-243)

This history and framework are crucial to the basis of my investigation because it highlights the ways in which the practice of targeted marketing reached Egypt and Lebanon and reveals that consumer-based marketing is a relatively new concept, born from interdisciplinary approaches and the trial and error of advertising techniques that allowed firms and consumers to meet in the middle. The way the concept of targeted marketing came about also elucidates the turning points in history at which Egypt and Lebanon adopted these practices, which are discussed later in this chapter. It is important to revisit here the point made in the Preface that targeted marketing was developed in the Western world and later applied in the East, meaning that the comprehensive studies of sociological and economic structures and values it took to create strategic models in the West were largely absent in the East, where it was applied in a top-down fashion. This observation is crucial in the forthcoming discussion of how marketing has developed in Egypt and Lebanon.

Interactionist Perspective on Social Stratification Theory

Developed in the early 20th century by Western philosopher and sociologist George Herbert Mead, symbolic interactionism defines social stratification at the micro-level. This perspective identifies daily interactions as an avenue through which individuals express their social status. Those with the interactionist perspective believe that societies can thus be defined through a conglomerate of individual interactions. Those who perceive themselves as belonging to a particular social status or standing or ascribe such status to themselves allow this aspect of their identity to dictate their interactions with other people to a degree. Though some interactionists are dismissive of social class because it is impossible to generalize the thoughts and conduct of all members of one class, this framework largely attempts to integrate the social motivations behind peoples' interactions with existing social class structures, since they serve as identity strongholds for almost all societies. (Carter & Fuller 2016, 932-937)

One important facet of the interactionist perspective is that many of its adherents reject traditionally positivist methods like quantitative data collection, taking the stance that statistical data does not provide an accurate representation of what societies are truly like and that quantitative research with a hypothesis is inherently susceptible to confirmation bias, since it imposes a preset conclusion. Thus—although there are exceptions across multiple schools of thought—many interactionists rely on qualitative methods of data collection, such as observations and content analysis. (Carter & Fuller 2016, 932-937) This perspective is a crucial basis for my investigation, which utilizes content analysis of advertisements to draw conclusions about specific societies and to assess whether there is potential for the content signaling those insights to be generalized across a wider region.

One application of the interactionist perspective is to conspicuous consumption, a practice that extends beyond the assumption that individuals purchase products based on need or utilitarian desire. Conspicuous consumption occurs when aspirations to reach or maintain a particular social standing motivate someone to purchase and use a product. In reality, the product may be a greater price or quality than needed. (Conerly, Holmes & Tamang 2021, 253-254) This practice defies the intuitive assumption that product affordability and willingness to pay dictate purchasing decisions. Because social status can be expressed and reinforced through the interactionist conceptual model, one can deduce that social status may also be expressed and reinforced through conspicuous consumption.

While this form of consumption typically involves products on the luxury end, this application can be more broadly applied to consumption in general, since aspirational classes can be relative based on which class one belongs to–a class with average income just above the poverty line, for example, can indulge in conspicuous consumption for products attainable by the middle class, which are typically not luxury products.

The interactionist perspective on social stratification and conspicuous consumption are incredibly important to this body of work because they inform the approach to my analysis. The indicators used to assess my selection of ads from both countries are based on the principle that different attitudes, behaviors, and opinions about products resonate with consumers of different classes, and that observable culture can be used to capture those differences qualitatively. With these marketing and sociological frameworks forming the basis of my investigation, I can thus ask my ultimate research questions.

Research Questions

- Based on the marketing and consumption histories of Egypt and Lebanon, what types of ad elements most commonly or recognizably illustrate class inclusivity/resonance with lower and middle classes?

- What implications can be drawn from observable trends of such elements?

Definitions

- "Signaling" as it is used in this thesis describes an effect that expresses, reflects, or reinforces a particular socioeconomic class. Distinct classes in both Egypt and Lebanon are further defined in the background research of this chapter.

- "Targeted Marketing" is an evolution of traditional broadcast/mass marketing, which is media transmitted through radio and television and disseminated to the population across a geographic area. Targeted marketing draws the attention of specific consumer groups within those populations. (Pride & Ferrell 2020, 158)

- A "cue" as it appears in this thesis is a verbal, visual, or auditory expression for any length of time within a video advertisement.

- An "element" as it appears in this thesis is a concept or execution of a marketing strategy, such as product placement, mood-influencing music, or stereotyping within a video advertisement.

- A "theme" as it appears in this thesis is an idea, moral, or narrative that is conveyed within a video advertisement, such as women wanting to beautify their home or children needing to socialize to grow up healthy.

- "Cultural sentiments" are generally stable opinions, ideas, or attitudes about anything that are popularly held by one or more communities in a society. As highlighted in Hunzaker's work, they are derived from collective personal experiences or repeated mental impressions. This investigation focuses on cultural sentiments around identity of self and others within a nation.

Background

Before addressing the previously highlighted background questions, it is important to discuss the purpose of my selection of Egypt and Lebanon and the modes of advertisement–television and social media videos–in this research.

The countries I include in my investigation are Egypt and Lebanon. This focus is due to both:

(1) accessibility--I can obtain television advertisements and marketing material with relative ease for both countries via the Internet from my current position compared to a few other countries in the MENA region, and

(2) the cultural significance of Egyptian and Lebanese media across the whole region; as highlighted in my secondary sources, Egyptian and Lebanese media have grown to become a cornerstone of Middle Eastern and North African pop culture and entertainment, being heavily consumed outside their national borders. (Abaza 2006, 29)

To expand my sample size as much as possible for a more thorough investigation, I am conducting content analysis on both television and social media video advertisements. I have selected these two types because of:

(1) accessibility--these types of ads tend to be more available on the Internet than magazine or newspaper print advertisements that do not always have online editions or unrestricted access; billboard ads, which would provide a significantly smaller sample size and prove more difficult to obtain photos of from my current position; or digital display ads that tend to be more graphic or image-based with minimal wording (and also too targeted--only people in a specific geographic area or social environment or age group would be exposed to these types of ads, which would detract from my purpose to investigate this topic in the context of the general population) (Pride & Ferrell 2021, 501-511), and

(2) availability of more possible cues to identify--video advertisements have more elements than radio or written words with accompanying visuals; visual elements like lighting, object placement, and transitions combined with auditory elements like tone, inflection, and music can be analyzed exclusively with advertisements in video format.

It can be noted here that social media advertisements follow the principles of targeted marketing in all of their execution, because of the personalized nature of social media algorithms. Television advertising, on the other hand, is considered broadcast media because of its exposure to entire populations across a select geographic region, with little to no demographic segmentation. For the purposes of my investigation, targeted marketing messages must be used. However, the issue of whether television advertisements are an appropriate mode to analyze is

addressed by the prevalence of targeted marketing strategies in broadcast outlets. Though all

members of a population in a select geographic area (who have access to the network) are

exposed to television advertisements, in order to have an effectively differentiated product and

earn a higher return on marketing campaign budgets, it is always in the best interest of marketers

to use targeted marketing strategies. (Thomas 2009, 105-117) For television ads, this is done

through airing ads with certain content on channels that have viewers who would be interested,

airing ads for childrens' products during times that they would not typically be at school, and

similar methods that alter the timing and placement of advertising. This means that there are

undoubtedly elements or cues present in television advertisements that appeal to certain

consumers over others, on some kind of demographic basis such as age or gender.

Ultimately, in order to explore signals of socioeconomic class within advertising in

popular Arabic media, I found it most valuable to conduct analyses in the context of Egypt and

Lebanon. Likewise, I found that the most effective types of advertisements to demonstrate such

signals are television and social media video ads released in each country, respectively. In order

to intersect the theoretical frameworks used here, I must also define the relationship between

targeted marketing within the market orientation and social stratification in Egypt and in

Lebanon, discussing how the two areas became intertwined. I will first make the case for Egypt.

Egypt's Social Stratification and Class-Related Cultural Sentiments

A crucial event that solidified the market orientation and its accompanying targeted

marketing principles was the *infitāḥ*—literally "opening"—period in Egypt that took place in the

1970's. Under then-president Anwar Sadat, the *infitāḥ* was intended to mark the opening of

Egypt's doors to foreign private investment. Ultimately a widely recognized disappointment by

the Egyptian public due to its inequitable effects on those working in the public sector, this period did introduce multinational corporations (MNCs) to the local economy of Egypt. (Shechter 2008, 762-770) Before the *infitāḥ*, Egypt's public sector dominated the nation's productivity. Although the economic and marketing history of the nation is discussed in more detail in Chapter II, it is important to note that from its establishment as a republic in 1953 to the beginning of the *infitāḥ* era in 1973, Egypt's government-controlled market did not nurture a large middle class or create substantial social mobility.

In the 70's, most successful MNCs in the consumer products industry were based in the United States and Europe and had been operating under the market orientation for a couple of decades by then. When the *infitāḥ* period began, many corporations brought with them marketing strategies that differed from what was seen in Egypt's then socialist economy. However, there was now a need to conform to the needs and wants of the local population. In order to achieve this, research, promotion, and advertising services had to be supported by Egyptian marketers.

In the course of this research, it was found that certain commodities were preferred to be sold to some classes over others. Imported household goods, for example, were associated with modernity by marketers from MNCs, who likely associated their home countries' higher standard of living with societal advancement. (Shechter 2008, 773-775) Thus, since upper-class Egyptians were the closest emblem to modernity relative to the rest of the population in these marketers' perceptions, imported household goods were sold to the affluent classes the same way they were sold to other affluent classes across the globe. In this way, many behaviors and tastes of the upper vs. lower classes were projected by marketers as being a certain way and were categorized as such.

Shortly after the effects of the *infitāḥ* took hold, living standards for all classes in Egypt rose with structural reforms (made in conjunction with the government and international financial institutions) at the turn of the 21st century, and advertising in all avenues (i.e., posters, shopping centers, television, etc.) became more popular and supported consumption for individuals to both reach an aspirational class and to form an identity around their own class belonging. From eating more food outside of the home to spending more time window-shopping at malls, consumption became associated with the lower, middle, and upper classes, particularly in urban areas. (Abaza 2006, 103-154) According to Abaza, aspirational classes were often defined by efforts to imitate old, classic Western styles of furniture, decor, and art, while belonging to certain classes was defined by buying behaviors.

For example, middle-upper class Egyptians are more likely to shop in malls than bazaars for the efficiency and variety (including speed, as some affluent families may live closer to malls). The products offered at malls typically have more variety and higher value than those offered at the bazaar, which are usually sold by local vendors rather than a potential mult-national retailer. Thus, the way either products are advertised by Egyptian marketers are different due to the awareness that there is likely a class difference among many of the buyers. (Abaza 2006, 200)

In another example, Abaza cites an excerpt from Pierre Bourdieu's *Distinction* (1984) explaining how even food tastes depend on a class's general perception of the body and how food affects it. (Abaza 2006, 184) The central argument she makes is that class perceptions in Egypt are largely defined by behavior and attitudes that trace back to consumption and one's accessibility to it. Abaza also discusses the influential role of advertising in spreading and sustaining the notions around those behaviors and attitudes. This idea is crucial to my

investigation–the notion that advertising is a force of media that can capture different sentiments within a culture and in turn, reflect them to consumers who do agree or want to agree with them.

During this same time period of increased consumption ushered in by the *infitāḥ*, rapid privatization overtook much of Egypt's urban areas. Gathering areas and outdoor spaces that were once widely enjoyed by everyone transformed into for-profit building sites, or spaces that were exclusive to certain people. Common public services like educational instruction outside of allocated lecture time became private. Television very closely followed suit and became a vessel through which advertisers controlled the timing and content of programs in order to make product sales. (Amīn 2000, 171-173) With television now privatized, consumers had a new avenue through which to view products and its users, creating a demographic stratification that did not necessarily exist for the general public pre-*infitāḥ*.

From this major cultural shift through the 1970's and 80's came a shift in long-standing class structures. Because money began to move freely in the economy, many people who were once at the bottom of the social ladder–who might not have received a Western education or had generational wealth and land passed down to them–were able to move up and even surpass those who were at the top, pushing them down. This changing socioeconomic class structure combined with the consumption culture that largely defined the Egyptian population during this period was recognized and reinforced through advertising. (Amīn 2000, 7-30)

By 1991, however, privatization (among other reasons) had weakened Egypt's public sector to the point that it drove the need to reform its economy structurally through an IMF-backed plan. Though social mobility thrived under privatization, rising interest rates and the banking system grew unmanageable. Part of this structural reform shifted tax burdens from

foreign trade to consumption, causing a decline in the consumer frenzy that persisted for almost two decades. (Zavajil, 1995)

Amīn discusses the impact social mobility has had on collective behavior in Egypt. In particular, he cites a study conducted by renowned sociologist Pitirim Sorokin, in which it was found that lower classes tend to imitate behaviors associated with higher classes when the social structure is stable, but in periods of rapid mobility like what Egypt was experiencing, lower classes tend to adopt behaviors associated with low and rising classes. (Amīn 2000, 25-270) Thus, there was a broader sense of class identity to which marketers were now able to appeal.

As Abaza mentions in her work, these behaviors encompass patterns of consumption, which include diet, clothing, and avenues of entertainment. Since there was a growing distinction among the socioeconomic classes in Egypt regarding these behaviors, marketers and advertising agencies signaled these behaviors to target groups when selling their products. For the purposes of my investigation, whether these signals are intentionally or unintentionally placed is irrelevant, since my focus is on whether any components of video advertisements are essentially associated with a behavior or belief or ideal that is characteristic of a particular socioeconomic class in Egypt.

These insights provide a better understanding of how targeted marketing's prevalence in Egypt interacts with the local economy and culture to inform marketers of the desires and behaviors of consumers. Existing scholarship demonstrates that in general, there are many different sentiments around demographic identity and that advertising uses these sentiments to its advantage to sell products. (Hunzaker 2016, 1227-1228; Pride & Ferrell 2020, 482) Thus, there is a deeper relationship between local consumers in Egypt and class signaling, and this signaling is reinforced or at least supplemented by large media forces like advertising.

Lebanon's Social Stratification and Class-Related Cultural Sentiments

In the case of Lebanon, many major events established the nation as a large commercial cornerstone and emblem of liberal media and entertainment in the Arab world. To highlight the formation of its modern social stratification adequately, it is necessary to mention the pivotal points of its history that led to modern-day Lebanese society.

The introduction of silk production in this region as an export to Europe in the 19th century is widely regarded as what set the ultimate foundations for the formation of the original socioeconomic class structure in the Emirate of Mount Lebanon, the country's initial autonomous region in the Ottoman Empire. Silk production attracted foreign merchants and fostered wealthy communities, remaining the economy's cash crop throughout revolts and political reform that arose due to tax inequality, religious and ethnic disputes, and regime changes. (Ṭarābulsī 2012, 3-9) Though silk has had a major part to play in many aspects of modern Lebanon's history, for the purposes of my investigation, I will focus on its relation to the nation's commercial history and its ties to class distinctions in the modern day.

As silk exports become a state monopoly, the Beirut port was expanded, and the city as a whole was further developed by the mid-1800's. Because the growth of this industry in conjunction with similar crops and products led to a commoner and overlord type of social system, revolts and civil unrest in the region ensued into and through the World Wars. Beirut, however, continued to expand and to attract immigrants and foreign investment, growing to accommodate more commerce and lines of business. With the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and Lebanon's falling under French colonial rule in 1920, Beirut was designated as a center of commerce and progress. The city soon began to exert economic domination over the entire region, which led to regional and class tensions. Although there was a middle class in Beirut (due

to the entry and growth of other industries), much of their work aligned with the French Mandate's financial interests. (Ṭarābulsī 2012, 88-93) This dynamic exacerbated a decline in classes that were not affiliated or socialized with French corporations or the new bourgeoisie and pushed poorer classes farther down the social ladder.

At the same time, societal distinctions along religious lines were strengthened during French rule. The beginning of French Mandate marked the creation of a system of political representation in Lebanon that was based on a division of power between religious groups, dividing their society between Christians and Muslims but ensuring that Christians were favored. The Lebanese Constitution, initially written in 1926, formally outlined specific roles to be held only by members of a particular religious group. For example, even today, the head positions of President, Prime Minister, and Speaker of Parliament must be held by a Maronite Christian, Sunni Muslim, and Shi'a Muslim, respectively.

Tensions over social inequalities and injustice quickly ensued. In fact, within four years of the official institution of the French Mandate in 1923, the Lebanese Communist Party was founded to voice critiques of class inequality largely caused by disproportionate possession of wealth between the Christians and Muslims, but it did not become a major political actor and social influencer until after French occupation ended in 1944.

Lebanon overcame many obstacles with national independence after French rule, through which the social stratification was largely defined by rural migration and emigration. For over two decades after the end of French occupation, Much of Lebanon's labor force was exported to other countries, and non-Lebanese workers flooded in to take their place in industries like agriculture and construction. As the emigrated locals returned with education and experience, they elevated to middle class or bourgeoisie status. This process constituted much of the

population's social mobility and quickly allowed rising classes with newly acquired wealth to be involved in the country's political sphere. Unfortunately, this social mobility existed in an environment in which business was monopolistic and price controls were not imposed on merchants, domestic or foreign. As a result, the cost of living gradually increased and made it harder for an increasing portion of the population to make ends meet. (Ṭarābulsī 2012, 160-165) Combined with negative sentiments toward political figures, these tensions and large-scale class divisions culminated in a Civil War in 1975 that lasted for fifteen years.

During this conflict, the press played a major role. Utilized as a tool for sharing cultural and economic news, marketing, and advertising, as political and social tension fluctuated in Lebanon, the press provided journalists with an outlet to voice their grievances. It was prized as being a liberal and free institution, but with the onset of political turmoil that led up to the war, it became a place from which both Communist and right-wing writers were incarcerated. (Ṭarābulsī 2012, 177-181) The press in Beirut transformed into a channel through which wealthy rulers and military dictators alike wanted to spread their propaganda against opposing ideologies, further widening class divisions.

Although the sectarian system was still upheld throughout the rest of the 20th century, it was not until the Lebanese parliament accepted a resolution in 1989 that political representation along religious lines became more equitable because of transfers of power away from Christian communities. (Ṭarābulsī 2012, 247) Whether this outcome improved the conditions of political and social inequality in the country is still unclear on account of ongoing unrest, but this system has essentially upheld a split social structure–one being sect-based, and the other being class-based.

The prominence of marketing in Lebanon throughout the later half of the 20th century and into the 21st can be attributed to its far-reaching press and the influence of foreign wealth (acquired both by foreign investors via privatization and by local wealthy businessmen or officials dealing with foreign exchanges). As one of the earliest countries in the MENA region to privatize radio and television, Lebanon witnessed its marketers utilizing their autonomy to communicate with consumers and to drive consumption.

Today, despite Lebanon's fluctuating separation of powers over the past century due to its sectarian, or confessional, system of government, social identity has been kept largely intact through income groupings, making it easier for marketers to influence purchasing decisions through status and wealth signaling cues in advertisements. Sect groupings have maintained a strong hold over identity, changing the effect of targeted marketing principles on attitudes and behaviors that are typically ascribed to individuals belonging to certain classes. Reflective of Abaza's work on Egypt, different cultural sentiments are associated with different classes because of an intermingling of consumption culture and traditionally held values rooted in religion and history. A sect-based society, however, adds a layer to wealth-based groupings– income no longer solely determines class, but sect determines it, too. Lebanese citizens–as both social actors and consumers–largely identify more strongly with the sect they are in than their socioeconomic standing, which influences the way they are targeted by marketers and politicians alike. We can see evidence of this in the anti-government protests that surged at the end of the last decade to speak out against politics being used for sect leaders, on the one hand, to strengthen their own communities over the health of the national economy, funneling wealth into the hands of political officials in the process. (Roumie 2020, 32) Marketers, on the other hand,

continued to operate as they had earlier but with a cautionary understanding that purchasing

patterns would now be subject to a variety of other factors.

Ultimately, although the social structure of Lebanon when it comes to class is less

defined relative to most other countries in the MENA region, there are distinct classes present

and, much like Egypt, there are associations between these classes and behaviors, attitudes, and

decisions as they relate to consumption. There is a relationship between consumers and class

signaling based on cultural sentiments, and although it is heavily sect-influenced, its foundation

is still built on socioeconomic classes that exist in the nation and can potentially be better defined

through analyses of advertisements that invoke such signals.

Selection of Reference Groups

In order to attribute to advertisement indicators the qualities or characteristics associated

with particular socioeconomic classes in Egypt and Lebanon, I must also define what those

classes are using reference groups.

There are various ways to identify socioeconomic classes, and, depending on the metric

used, there can be a different number of classes present in a nation. In the case of Egypt, analyses

have typically identified a range of four to six social classes. As an example, one system of

stratifying Egypt's population into socioeconomic classes involves power-based hierarchies.

According to a 2018 report made by the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, there are

six distinct classes in Egypt: the "central ruling class", the "local ruling middle class", the "stable

middle class", the "poor middle class", the "working class", and the "underclass". These

distinctions include power hierarchies, something which is indicated by the use of "ruling".

However, my investigation relates to behaviors and attitudes pertaining to consumption. Because of this, it is more appropriate to identify socioeconomic classes in Egypt by income groups.

The World Bank Group's 2019 *Understanding Poverty and Inequality* report in Egypt defines income groups by daily per capita consumption (relative to the poverty line), which is most closely aligned with the reference groups needed for my investigation. As of 2019, the five distinct income groups are: the poor, the vulnerable, the lower-middle class, the upper-middle class, and the affluent class. Through Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) adjustments, in which Egyptian pounds were measured against United States dollars through comparing prices for specific goods in both countries to compare the absolute purchasing power of the currencies, these income groups can be characterized as follows:

The poor class has a daily per capita consumption of less than 3 USD. The vulnerable class is identified as those with between 3-4 USD, and the lower-middle class has between 4-6 USD. The upper-middle class is defined as having between 6-8 USD. Finally, anyone with a daily per capita consumption level of above 8 USD is considered to be a part of the affluent class. (World Bank Group 2019, 26)

Finding reference groups to categorize socioeconomic classes in Lebanon proves to be more difficult because of the sectarian nature of its government. It is pertinent first to define and distinguish between "sect" and "class" in Lebanon. Sects in Lebanon are distinct religious (or confessional) communities with proportional political representation. There are eighteen sects in Lebanon, twelve of which are Christian and four of which are Muslim. For Muslims, there are: Alawite, Isma'ili, Shi'a, and Sunni. For Christians, there are: Armenian Catholic, Armenian Orthodox, Assyrian Church of the East, Chaldean Catholic, Coptic Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Maronite, Protestant, Roman Catholic, Syriac Catholic, and Syriac Orthodox.

There are also Druze and Jewish sects. The three primary politically represented sects are Maronite, Sunni, and Shi'a, each with their own appointment in the Lebanese Parliament and in descending order of power. (El Rajji 2014, 7) Roumie confirms in her work that it matters less to adhere to the exact teachings of a sect than to identify with one, as this ensures representation. Social class, on the other hand, is based on economic hierarchy and the social implications that arise from this hierarchy.

The creation of modern Lebanon gave rise to a confessional system of government based on sects, resulting in the population identifying through their religious communities that also double as political entities. Since representation is proportional to the sects, this leaves minority sects in more vulnerable positions during times of turmoil, which also reinforces the strength of their identities. (Roumie 2021, 84-85) Thus, the socioeconomic system in Lebanon is arguably much more sect-based than it is class-based, but class and distinct class divisions still exist in Lebanon due to uneven distributions of wealth among the population.

Though it is intuitive to think that certain sects hold more wealth than others and that this defines the class system in Lebanon (where "sect" is essentially synonymous with "class"), Roumie explains in her first chapter that during Lebanon's Post-Civil War era, many wealthy and influential people (i.e., businessmen, militia leaders, landowners, etc.) used their local influence to enter the political sphere and make their power more concrete. It is in this manner that the former Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, infamous for using his position to fill his and other government figures' pockets, exerted control over the state himself in the 1990's. (Roumie 2021, 32) This insight implied that there is a system of wealth transfer in Lebanon that extends past sects, as one does not necessarily need to belong to a particular sect to have more wealth than another, especially if one works in a lucrative field. Thus, wealth-based socioeconomic

classes *can* be used as reference groups for my investigation, but with an awareness that sect-based identity can have a strong hold over behaviors and attitudes around consumption in Lebanon as well and have heavily influenced the formation of wealth-based classes, with certain sects historically being generalized to hold more wealth than others.

Though Lebanon has been experiencing an economic crisis and banking collapse as of 2019 that has seen an increasing number of middle-class citizens disappear into the growing population living closer to or under the poverty line, distinct classes based on income groups still exist. There is not currently a consensus on what changes the current state of the middle class will ultimately result in, but, according to the World Bank's most recent data prior to financial crisis (2015), there are four classes: the impoverished (who make an annual income of or less than $2,500 USD), the moderate middle (who make approximately $9,000 USD), the upper middle (who make between $15,000-$27,000 USD), and the highest upper (who make at or above $30,000 USD). (World Bank Group 2015) It should be noted that these conversions in USD are likely quite different today on account of inflation yet are included to conceptualize relative income levels across classes.

Likewise, there are many historical events that have impacted Egyptian and Lebanese society that have undoubtedly changed consumption culture. For the sake of brevity and maintaining a focus on targeted marketing, I only provide context on a few of such events. The Arab Spring, for example, was a tumultuous revolutionary period for much of the MENA region in the early 2010's that resulted in new conversations about Arab identity, politics, religiosity, and many more aspects of society. It is reasonable to deduce that there must have been changes in consumer dynamics as a byproduct of economic and cultural change. However, as of now, there is not enough research to concretely define what those precise changes may be.

Fortunately, the consumer research used in constructing this investigation was all conducted in the 21ˢᵗ century, meaning that the general consumption culture of both Egypt and Lebanon is still largely upheld and applicable.

The development of the social stratifications of Egypt and Lebanon over time are important in visualizing consumption in both countries. The historical events and political developments that occurred over the past two centuries heavily shaped each country's general class-related sentiments today. In my quest to uncover the most class-inclusive elements reflected in marketing messaging in middle-income countries of the MENA region, highlighting the class formation of its two most prolific media hubs is fundamental. Thus, with the appropriate theoretical frameworks, defined terms, overview of investigation components, and reference groups for socioeconomic classes in the countries of study, I can move forward in addressing the critical components of Egypt's and Lebanon's marketing footprints and further framing my research question.

Chapter II: Advertising as a Reflector and Reinforcer of Cultural Sentiments

It is imperative to highlight the ways in which cultural sentiments have formed in Egypt and Lebanon and how such sentiments relate to the current marketing environments in both nations. In order to introduce adequately the class-related advertisement indicators chosen for this investigation, the way characteristics of each country's observable cultures are communicated must be discussed. This communication ultimately informs the concepts I draw from in selecting elements that reflect class-related associations. In both Egypt and Lebanon, different elements of advertising can hold different meanings and significances for the general population, and the intention of this chapter is to explain the reasons for this at a high level.

Overview of the Development of Cultural Sentiments around Identity Groups in Egypt

Egypt's long history of ancient civilization, foreign influence, and regional transformation have all lent a hand to cultural sentiments that exist in Egyptian society today. As mentioned numerous times throughout Mona Abaza's work and highlighted in Chapter I above, the introduction of foreign investment and economic liberalization in Egypt mingled with the nation's existing deep-rooted values in Muslim tradition and rich ethnic history. Familiarized with Western culture through trade and British colonization (1882-1956), Egyptians, until the onset of consumerism in the late 20th century, were more distinctly stratified into low-income classes and the high-income, Western-educated class. (Abaza 2006, 141) Before the colonial period, the upper class was typically made up of landowners. When the British came into power, the rising industrial class–largely specializing in fields supporting the cotton industry–soon

joined landowners in holding much of the nation's wealth (Sayyid-Marsot 2007, 110). By 1922, Egypt had become an independent state with a monarchy, but British commercial influence over trade and industrialization persisted (notably its control over the Suez Canal) until the last of their naval forces left the country in 1956, four years after the Egyptian monarchy was overthrown. (Sayyid-Marsot 2007, 98, 130-131)

Establishing itself as a republic in 1952, Egypt's leadership under its first two presidents, Mohamed Naguib and Gamal Abdel Nasser, marked an era of socialist reform after their acknowledgment of the nation's struggle to find balance with representative government and constitutional rule in the previous three decades. (Sayyid-Marsot 2007, 128) Such reforms were reflected in laws that limited land ownership, which progressively decreased from an initial upper limit of 200 *faddans*/person to 50 *faddans*/person a few years later (one *faddan* is roughly one acre) (Sayyid-Marsot 2007, 129). Thus, a power ceiling was set on wealthy landowners.

When Anwar Sadat stepped into office after Nasser's death in 1970, he gained global recognition as a leader for his regaining of Egyptian territory from Israel during the Six-Day War. (Sayyid-Marsot 2007, 156-158) Though Sadat did not quite view the West as friendly allies due to their lack of support during the War, he did hope to attract Western technology and capital in order to improve Egypt's economy. Thus, as soon as his authority was fully established in 1973 following the war, Sadat catalyzed the *infitāḥ* period that turned to the nation's previously discouraged bourgeoisie to embrace free enterprise. (Sayyid-Marsot 2007, 159). It was in this period that Egypt's social class structure saw a rise in entrepreneurs and foreign merchants.

By 1977, the *infitāḥ* was seen as a failure because it minimized the public sector, reaching a point where the government ceased to provide subsidies for food staples. The riots that ensued were largely spearheaded by the poor and working class, who long pushed to have

their voice heard. After much financial structural reform in the early 90's following a debt crisis after the closing of the *infitāḥ* period, Egypt has had a stable economy in recent years with promising growth performance. (World Bank 2020, 61)

It is important to note that although Sadat catalyzed it, capitalism in Egypt did not begin under his regime. Capitalism was practiced in Egypt up until the onset of socialist reforms in the mid-20th century. However, marketing during this time period is not illustrated here due to its broadcast implementation (i.e., most advertising was done through print and radio, with television being less common) and its significant predating of social media. Thus, Egyptian television ads from the mid-20th century are not only largely inaccessible, but incomparable with the other ad type used in my investigation.

Egypt has experienced many shifts in its class structure over the past two centuries. The rise and fall of occupation-based groups paved the way for versatility in income levels and their historical representation. As highlighted previously, according to the World Bank, Egyptian society today consists of five distinct income groupings, with 30% of the population under the poverty line. (World Bank 2020) Because these income groups are so closely integrated with cultural, political, and economic events, it is clear that they also fulfill the role of *identity* groups. As exemplified by Abaza's work, this identity aspect of social categorization is what upheld Egypt's consumption culture and formed behaviors around consumption in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. (Abaza 2006, 190)

Income determines the living standard one can obtain and the ability for one to purchase a good or service of a particular price, so consumption behaviors are primarily dictated by income. That is, those with a higher disposable income will have patterns of buying behaviors (such as types of stores visited, frequency of purchases, and perception of particular products)

that are more similar to others of the same income level than to those of a different income level. (Pride & Ferrell 2020, 66-68) In a consumption society, which is what Egypt became after foreign investment expansion followed by structural reform and technology-driven globalization increased the national standard of living and made more product lines accessible over the span of a few decades, income groups can thus serve as identity groups when they have distinguishable behaviors and attitudes.

Since identity groups coexist with others in the same society, cultural sentiments around differing groups naturally arise. In other words, many members of any given group may associate particular characteristics with their own group and other groups. This dynamic also applies to outside members, such as marketers from multinational firms or foreign merchants, who played a large role in reinforcing Egypt's cultural sentiments around identity groups.

Prevailing modern-day cultural sentiments in Egypt are both observable and data-based. It is important to revisit the distinction made between cultural sentiments and stereotypes–though they are similar in that they are both generalized opinions and can be negative, stereotypes are simplified and tend to be more inelastically biased, while cultural sentiments are deeply rooted in observed and lived experiences and change as lifestyles and social expectations change. (Hunzaker 2016, 1227-1228) In Egypt, cultural sentiments around income-based identity groups that developed over time because of the course of the nation's history uphold that socioeconomic classes can be distinguished by behaviors and attitudes. For example, the poor and lower-middle classes are more receptive and trusting of Arabic than English because of their more limited exposure to secondary languages that are taught in schools. (Abaza 2006, 231-233, 278) Another example of an Egyptian cultural sentiment is that women of the upper-middle and affluent classes are seen in a more public view or play a more public role in society as compared to

women of low-income classes, because of the formers' decisions to vote, teach, and participate in activism among other things. (Black 2014, 28-29)

Such examples demonstrate the types of cultural sentiments that are recognized by Egyptian society. Though this recognition is not necessarily made explicit, evidence can be drawn to show that these sentiments arise from lived experiences and are understood by others, as the sources listed above. It is also evident that sentiments around income-based identity groups can intersect with other demographic groups, such as gender, age, ethnicity, and religion, because every member of a society belongs to several such categories. Thus, as lived and consciously perceived ideas, cultural sentiments are often reflected and reinforced within a society. Because this investigation concerns the way in which these sentiments are reflected and reinforced through advertising, it is critical to define the relationship between them and Egypt's marketing environment.

Setting the Marketing Scene in Egypt

The primary question to be addressed now is how marketing relates to established cultural sentiments in Egypt. As highlighted in Chapter I, marketers from multinational firms during the *infitāḥ* period played a major part in catalyzing the nation's consumption culture in the following decades. As targeted marketing was already well-practiced in the Western world by the 1970's and familiar to Egyptian natives, foreign marketers saw a need to adapt their strategy to the local culture in order to maximize audience engagement. Thus, cultural sentiments needed to be utilized. Influenced by observations and insights from native Egyptian marketers and existing Western perceptions and stereotypes about MENA culture, foreign marketers

representing multinational companies made their products known largely through reflecting and reinforcing those ideas. (Abaza 2006, 11)

Marketing in Egypt has evolved much since the colonial capitalism that prevailed during British rule. (Vitalis 1995, 218-220) Driven by the cotton industry, market efficiency and profitability in Egypt were controlled by British colonial and business officials to benefit their empire. Upon gaining independence in 1952, however, Egypt began to focus on building its own infrastructure, laying down lasting foundations for its public sector and turning to the bourgeois class to support a liberal industrialist economy (Vitalis 1995, 215-216). At this point, marketing efforts were primarily made at the state level and largely intended for commercial and wealthy audiences, because the product market had yet to expand to include buyers at all income levels.

As political and economic unrest led to an overturning of the post-colonial era Egyptian monarchy into a republic in 1952, however, socialist principles began to resist a continued liberalized economy. As limitations were put on private ownership and public services were expanded, marketing efforts–while remaining largely with the state–shifted to include a wider target audience, since more members of Egyptian society now had an economic and political voice. These efforts were largely broadcast rather than targeted as a consequence of limited product differentiation, a common characteristic of a socialist-leaning economy (Sayyid-Marsot 2007, 143).

Following Sadat's open-door policy to foreign investment during the *infitāḥ* from the early to late 70's, marketing became more inclusive of a growing middle class. With increasing social mobility and newly introduced products on the market, consumerism planted its seeds in a now privatized economy. This period marked the entry of foreign and multinational marketers,

establishing an era of targeted marketing in Egypt that prevails today despite large economic reforms and changes in public ownership and regulation of media.

Thus, the marketing scene in Egypt resembles that of most other middle-income countries of the MENA region (which has also largely experienced financial structural reform and a wave of consumerism)–a mixture of foreign- and native-produced advertisements targeted toward demographic segments that are predicted to be the most profitable buyers and users of the products being advertised. (Abaza 2006, 32-34, 45) This type of advertising necessarily relies on cultural sentiments to appeal to such segments, meaning that advertising acts as a reflector and reinforcer of those sentiments in Egyptian society–a reflector because of its ability to depict familiar sentiments for a wide audience and a reinforcer because of its ability to maintain and agree with those same sentiments when new material is created and disseminated to more people over time.

To conclude with a specific example, the cultural sentiment previously mentioned of women from the upper-middle and affluent classes being seen in a more public view than those from lower classes can be seen in advertisements such as a 2012 advertisement for women's products from Cottonil–a globally renowned Egyptian consumer product brand (Hany Gamal EL-Din, YouTube, 2021). In this advertisement that is intended for women, the women shown wear fashionable clothes and accessories in a studio setting, posing with a vintage car and in front of racks of clothing. The message that the advertisement conveys is that Cottonil has all the right products for women, but the women being represented are associated with symbols of wealth that are generally unattainable for women belonging to lower classes. The feminism promoted in this advertisement, a form of citizen activism, is shown to be carried out by wealthier women. Though subtle and not necessarily intended, this advertisement ultimately has

the effect of reflecting the particular cultural sentiment that poorer Egyptian women play a more private role in society.

In summary, marketing and advertising reflect and reinforce popular cultural sentiments in Egypt, conveying messages that are either explicitly or implicitly understood by target audiences and leave them with a certain impression of different products and services. Before specifying which cultural sentiments have been chosen in this investigation to indicate potential socioeconomic class signaling, I must also give an overview of how cultural sentiments and the marketing environment developed in the case of Lebanon, whose identity groups are integrated into a unique political system.

Overview of the Development of Cultural Sentiments around Identity Groups in Lebanon

As mentioned in Ṭarābulsī's work, Lebanon has a long-standing history of playing a regional role in commerce. The nation's economic and political structure today is most commonly associated with its sectarian system of government, but the scope of Lebanese society extends well past this system. Sectarianism, Ṭarābulsī explains, presents a way to resist the inequalities of the market and effectively integrates a distinctly defined and thriving social system into a capitalist society, which is not often seen in nations in which the free market dictates much of their cultural and social systems. (Ṭarābulsī 2012, viii) This sectarianist, or confessional, political model can be traced back to when the nation was under the French Mandate from 1920 to 1944. However, its roots extend even farther back to the 16th century, when the region was known as Mount Lebanon under Ottoman rule.

Mount Lebanon's social system was feudal along religious lines. Favored communities like the Druze had privileges over less-favored communities like the Maronites (Roumie 2020, 26). After rebellions erupted into a civil war in the 1800's, the Christians' continued lack of representation and social mobility in the region despite their population size became a major cause of outrage and deepened social divides among religious groups. This tension continued up until Mount Lebanon was swept under French colonial rule with the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1920. The formerly economically capable but socially disabled Maronite Christian majority now found themselves privileged over other religious communities. (Roumie 2020, 26-27)

The association of certain religious groups with a particular level of power and standard of living gave rise to an ingraining of sentiments from one group towards itself and others. Over this period of feudalism and colonialism, sectarian identity emerged among the different ethnic and religious communities that lived in Lebanon for generations. Although there was frequent interaction between different communities, largely due to work and trade, they considered socializing and living amongst *themselves* as preferred and most legitimate. (Cammett 2019, 6-11) Shifts in power structure in the midst of an increasingly growing economy led to the formation of strong cultural affiliations, as people of all religious communities wanted to acquire and maintain a reliable social standing and political representation in the region without assimilating with groups they felt were fundamentally different historically, religiously, ethnically, and often geographically. (Roumie 2020, 33)

By the time that French rule began in 1920, Christian, Muslim, and minority religious communities had already developed strong social codes amongst themselves. Institutions like marriage, inheritance, and political parties were largely exclusive from group to group, with the consequence of ostracization if members deviated from expected practices or behavior. Although

it is an overgeneralization to say that every Lebanese individual thought this way, this social

structure was evident enough for the French to observe and lay foundations for laws and codes

that formally established such institutions and other ingroup activities (Cammett 2019, 6).

Because of their heavy influence, by the time Lebanon was declared sovereign and became a

republic, dividing politics and society along equal sectarian lines seemed the most reasonable

way to ensure representation and equity.

Since the establishment of the Republic of Lebanon in 1943, its confessional system has

become more deeply entrenched despite the continuous economic and political unrest and civil

war that are largely thought to be caused by the system itself. (Cammett 2019, 1-2, 10) The

impact this has had on the cultural identity of the Lebanese people is (1) that political, social, and

geographical (given that much of the nation's land is occupied along sectarian lines (Roumie

43)) identities are often inseparable and (2) that cultural behaviors and norms are based most

strongly on sectarian group than on other demographic categories, meaning that these groups

have the strongest social influence and consequence on individuals (Roumie 38).

Thus, regardless of how much one adheres to the religious doctrines of the community

one belongs to, affiliating with a group is vital to identity and social standing. The resulting

popular cultural sentiments held in Lebanon today retain elements of their historical influences.

Europeans' impact gave Catholics a strong sense of sectarian self-confidence that remained with

them even as they fell to a minority demographic of less than 33% today (US Department of

State, 2019). Their inclusion and representation in Lebanon's modern power-sharing government

are largely due to their cumulative efforts to unite and voice grievances. (Harris 2012, 126)

Likewise, from the early twentieth century up until the 1970's, illiteracy among Muslims was

higher than among their Christian counterparts, largely because of the latter's advancement in

private schooling and university education in the country. (Harris 2012, 228-229) Although the state successfully expanded its public school network to improve the disparity between the two, some Christian religious communities still hold the cultural sentiment that Muslim groups are less educationally refined, which is a sentiment also rooted in the surge of terrorism in the name of Islam by pro-militant groups over the past few decades. (Harris 2012, 228-229) Although these sentiments are founded in sect divisions, it is important to note that they have class implications because of the resulting attitudes around lifestyle, occupation, and education.

Simultaneously, religious values upheld by the respective doctrines of each community still have an influential presence on cultural sentiments. For example, studies show that Christian men, on average, tend to have more egalitarian views towards the role of women than do Muslims. (Moaddel 2008, 5) These types of sentiments are shown to stem from sect-based grouping, which further conveys that sect-based grouping likely drives other demographic groupings, such as class-based. Thus, cultural sentiments around different socioeconomic classes in Lebanon, though functioning distinctly (one can see greater similarity in lifestyle and cultural attitudes among higher classes regardless of religious group affiliation, for example) cannot be separated from their sectarian roots. (Roumie 2020, 28-29) The analysis in this investigation thus focuses on cultural sentiments driven by class divisions but aims to acknowledge their foundations and dynamics with sect-based identity.

As highlighted in Chapter I, it is evident that much of the Lebanese public, although not as likely now to state it explicitly when speaking about larger notions afflicting the country, internalizes their sect identity. (Cammett 2019, 10) There is a higher level of perceived trust and protection among individuals in the same religious community, and this is the basis of the strength of each group's cultural values. The development of cultural sentiments around identity

groups in Lebanon do, of course, play a role in the region's advertising. As previously discussed in the case of Egypt, advertising acts as a reflector and reinforcer in Lebanese society as well.

Setting the Marketing Scene in Lebanon

It is evident that Lebanon has a unique history of identity group formation and social stratification. It is not surprising, then, that its marketing history has also evolved in a unique way. During the era of Ottoman-controlled Mount Lebanon, Druze feudal lords relied on Christian peasant labor for farming a variety of commodities, but primarily the silk for which the region was arguably most prosperous. (Harris 2012, 137-147) As highlighted in Chapter I, this cash crop catalyzed the commercial growth of the Beirut port, which facilitated trade with other Middle Eastern, North African, and European nations.

Under Ottoman rule, marketing was largely done through word-of-mouth advertising on trade routes. Beirut thrived under its renowned positioning as a major silk exporter and port for the Levant region. By the 1900's, silk production constituted half of Mount Lebanon's income (Harris 2012, 12). However, after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire and onset of French colonization, European commercial practices influenced the entire region. In the mid 1900's, there was an administrative decision to focus on tobacco marketing and production, which thrived during Ottoman rule and was already a well-established market in the Middle East. (Harris 2012, 187) Proponents of creating a streamlined monopoly to improve Lebanon's economic development preferred centralized, broadcast-style advertising. Although modern market segmentation processes and technologies did not exist to the extent they do now, monopolists did not necessarily see a need for them, either. Print advertising was largely employed during this area, albeit at a restricted level when the standard of living declined

nationwide in the 1930's as a consequence of the Great Depression's peripheral effects. (Harris 2012, 187)

As Lebanon recovered economically and stood stronger in the sphere of international trade, however, Beirut's and the surrounding cities' standard of living quickly grew as more communities generated disposable income. Although Lebanon was open to foreign trade and international merchants prior to the twentieth century, financial structural reforms aided by the United States after the civil war led to infrastructure expansion and a growing middle class by the 90's. (Ṭarābulsī 2012, 157) These events spurred a consumer culture that integrated seamlessly into a society that was already known for a large media and entertainment industry. Advertising maintained this culture primarily via television and print media, which are still popular to this day. (Ṭarābulsī 2012, 181) Lebanese society's unique cultural sentiments are often reflected and reinforced in such advertisements, such as the catchy television ad for *Tatra* dairy milk in the 1980's that depicts this European-made product being consumed by children engaging in western-inspired physical activities like karate class and ballet. (Tatra Dairy, YouTube, 2014)

It is clear that there is a correlation between cultural sentiments and consumption behaviors, with advertising as a mode of defining an actual or expected (or aspirational) version of that correlation. In analyzing ads from both Egypt and Lebanon, how these sentiments formed and how they can be depicted in the media are important topics to consider. With this information, it is now possible to outline the frequency of indicators in both Egyptian and Lebanese advertisements that may point to cultural resonance with the lower classes or class inclusivity. Prior to this, however, it is beneficial to provide more detail on the types of indicators that I select for my analysis.

Overview of Elements Communicated through the Selected Advertising Channels

It is imperative for my analysis to discuss the ways in which elements can be communicated through broadcast television and social media video advertisements. As highlighted in the first chapter of this thesis, the modes of advertising included in this investigation were chosen based on their broad qualities to capture multi-dimensional elements– unlike print or radio advertising, there is an animated visual element here that adds potency to the viewer's sense receptors. The level of creativity and directional depth that can be achieved by video advertisements is higher than that of print, radio, and other non-animated forms. Ultimately, this adds to the persuasive potential of video advertising. Thus, this chapter includes an overview of which elements (or "signal categories") can be notably expressed through television and social media video ads and how they will be investigated in the following analyses.

Visual

This category of elements and cues encompasses anything that can be perceived by sight, which includes a vast range of stimulation. It captures still visual features such as lighting, background scenes, and color schemes, as well as moving visual features such as the pace of movement or number of transitions. Additionally, themes or ideas can be demonstrated in the visual category. For example, product placement, the ratio of men to women present, or the absence of certain traits or characteristics in actors are all possible themes that can be captured here. The investigation utilizes a chart with elements, cues, and themes that could potentially

indicate that an advertisement is signaling a particular class(es), and several of these indicators belong to the visual category.

Auditory

This element and cue category includes anything that can be heard. Like the visual category, auditory stimulants are vast and cover a wide range of possible sounds, melodies, voices, and volumes. The tune of background music, the presence of silent gaps, and noises made by actors are all examples of what can be considered auditory elements or cues. This category can also include broader themes and ideas, such as the choice of instruments or vocals, the level of cacophony or euphony, or the fluctuation of volume. Auditory stimulants are typically reinforced with visual indicators or are used to enhance the ad's visual components.

Linguistic

Although this category is narrower than visual and auditory indicators, the linguistic component of ads encompasses a multitude of particular characteristics, such as the use of particular accents, colloquial language, and the frequency of items in verbal language. These characteristics can be thematic since they convey levels of demographic representation and culture-specific references in ads. The linguistic indicator category is explicitly included numerous times in the investigation's analyses charts.

Each of these signal categories can be manipulated or inserted to invoke a particular attitude or mental association. Visual, auditory, and linguistic characteristics are present in all advertisements to maximize the connection they can build with the user at both a realistic and

aspirational level, which is the basis for what is known as *demographic-based market segmentation*. (Pride & Ferrell 2020, 162) Signal categories are used in conjunction ultimately to appeal to a particular demographic, such as age, gender, familial role, and, specifically for this investigation, socioeconomic class. These "appeals" are driven by cultural history and sentiments and are unique to different regions.

For example, many toy advertisements in the United States picture warm colors such as pink, red, and yellow when advertising toys targeted towards girls, while using cool colors such as blue, green, and brown for boys. (Frisoli 2019, 22) This is a result of years of gender identity construction that reinforces colors stereotypic to the male and female genders *and* the corporate-driven result of categorizing toys by gender to sell more product lines. For example, play kitchenware and craft toys are largely associated with young girls in the United States (Frisoli 2019, 25). In contrast, many other countries market toys with a higher degree of gender neutrality. There are, for example, many European toy review channels on YouTube where a multitude of toys and games are reviewed by girls and boys alike (for example, *Like Nastya* and *Vlad and Niki*). Such channels and related advertisements reflect a broader difference in cultural sentiments toward child gender identity, while European countries may have a more inclusive sphere of children's activities.

Likewise, beliefs and stereotypes around age, familial roles, socioeconomic class, occupation, ethnicity, and many other identity traits can be reflected and reinforced through demographic-based market segmentation. (Pride & Ferrell 2020, 205-206) The opinions and sentiments which one country or culture holds towards certain identities differ from those held by others, and in all cases, these opinions and sentiments are a culmination of religion, societal development, history, and foreign influence. In a general sense, marketers use demographic

aspects such as those mentioned to drive and inspire the use and manipulation of visual, auditory, and linguistic components in advertisements and then to publish and disseminate an ad that will resonate with the group of people from whom the demographic aspects were taken. These aspects can be realistic when taken from a group that people already belong to, or they can be aspirational for people who may wish to be involved or associated with another group. The aspirational quality of advertisements is most commonly seen with demographic segmentation based on *socioeconomic class*. (Pride & Ferrell 2020, 204-205)

Aspirational or realistic aspects aside, to examine further the push-and-pull relationship between marketing and cultural sentiments around identity traits, it is necessary to explain the mechanisms in history through which beliefs and opinions about identity traits formed in the countries in question. Then, the convergence of marketing with both histories must be clearly defined to paint a better picture of how exactly advertising acts as a reflector and reinforcer of general and popular cultural sentiments within the two countries. Finally, the use and manipulation of visual, auditory, and linguistic signal categories can be applied to cultural sentiment-driven demographic segmentation to demonstrate how advertisement components can signal a particular demographic group, which will be analyzed through dissections of television and social media video advertisements. Additionally, since this investigation focuses on the demographic category of socioeconomic class, it is necessary also to distinguish between realistic and aspirational signaling, since advertisements that target audiences based on class segmentation will likely appeal to more than one group.

Finally, it is important to note that categories of demographic-based segmentation need not be mutually exclusive. Categories like gender, age, occupation, and familial role realistically intersect with socioeconomic class since all individuals belong to multiple demographic

segments. For example, familial role can be telling of which products someone is willing to buy, which can be different for different people within the same class. Likewise, age is a dynamic segment because it is subject to trends or varying levels of social influence, which can be seen with purchases made outside of one's class on both ends of the spectrum (from a higher to a lower class or a lower to a higher class). (Peng et al. 2016)

The elements/cues/themes I include in my analysis charts feature some of these aspects because they can be informative regarding the representation of certain classes. For example, it has been found that Egyptian mothers in more affluent classes are more willing and/or likely to buy child products than fathers, but in lower classes a more equal distribution can be seen, which can be attributed to a larger number of households in which women are less likely to leave the home because they have more transportation needs or time restrictions than their affluent counterparts. (Snider 2012, 4-6)

These are all intricacies that are included within the socioeconomic class category, but this investigation focuses on an analysis of the broader category itself. The last chapter of this thesis discusses how subgroups in context of specific classes can be an area for future study. Now that the communicative elements of advertisements have been defined, I will address how they represent certain class-related sentiments in the cases of Egypt and Lebanon.

Chapter III: Analyzing Class Indicators via Television and Social Media

Because of the unique political, economic, and social histories of the two nations, cultural sentiments in Egypt are not exactly the same as those in Lebanon. The indicators selected for the advertisement analyses in this investigation reflect shared cultural sentiments that can be applied to both societies based on background research and principles of consumer behavior, as exemplified in the work of Pride & Ferrell, Abaza, de Koning, Roumie, and Ṭarābulsī cited above. Additionally, notions of socioeconomic class in both countries have been reconstructed and redefined over time to reflect changing social, political, and economic climates.

Although this investigation stratifies consumer behavior by income level corresponding with particular classes, this stratification is not the only way in which either society is divided. Other identities and decisions contribute to an individual's attitude toward a product that are not class-related, and individuals of one class may have spending patterns or lifestyles more similar to another class than their own. Social mobility and the advent of technology, which has created new opportunities for sources of income, have also broken down traditional notions of distinct class structure and the identities associated with it. However, income-based class identity remains one of the largest drivers of consumption behavior and encompasses a variety of other cultural sentiments, making it a relevant topic of study through which to explore advertising as a social mechanism.

It is critical here to clarify that immense care was taken to avoid the imposition of a Western lens of morality or ethical idealism onto Egypt or Lebanon. It is not the intention of this investigation to fuel negative stereotypes against cultures of the MENA region that have too often permeated global media. The indicators that have been selected for analysis are not at all

based on personal observations, assumptions, or anecdotes, but strictly on research that has been done for the purposes of illuminating the workings of effective targeted marketing techniques or the societies of Egypt and Lebanon. Thus, it is my hope that concepts like "gender segregation" or "women with childlike attitudes or attributes" used in my investigation are not taken to be culturally insensitive or condescending. They are simply meant to highlight (in a concise manner) the existence of values or practices that are more prevalent in the lower classes in both countries, each for its own unique historical reason.

Part I: Selection of Indicators in Ad Analysis

There are ten questions, or indicators, in each chart below that have been chosen because of their potential to convey socioeconomic class-related associations in audiovisual advertisements. Driven by the theoretical frameworks discussed in Chapter I, the indicators were selected based on collective research of observable culture, evidence-based advertising techniques, and histories of consumption and consumer behavior in Egypt and Lebanon. Drawing on and integrating insights from each area of study, I produced ten indicators that I strongly believe capture class-related sentiments in ads from both countries. Each one is presented in a "yes" or "no" question format so that an indication of "yes" demonstrates that that particular element is present and potentially resonates with or appeals to the lower and middle classes viewing the ad. The explanation and reasoning behind each of the indicators are given below:

Indicator 1: *Are product technicalities or qualities narrated by a male voice?*

There is substantial evidence to indicate that lower-toned voices have historically been understood to evoke trust, confidence, and authority. Studies have shown that, at a global level, deeper voices are considered to be more reliable, regardless of one's own gender. Many of these studies–including some conducted in Lebanon–are cited throughout Mireille Raouf Ishak's work on gendered portrayals in Egyptian advertising in the late 1900's and early 2000's. In the case of Egypt, men have traditionally dominated advertisement voiceovers across a multitude of product categories because of cultural sentiments about male authority and capability of selling products. (Ishak 2003, 40, 59) Although this phenomenon has likely become less noticeable over time as the Egyptian revolution and globalization of social media have included more women in media representation, the sentiment that male voices convey higher feelings of trust and competency continues to persist for products that are not exclusively female or feminine.

This cultural sentiment can also be associated with class-related ideas. Ishak highlights the intensity of stereotyped gender roles in communities with high illiteracy rates, which are generally rural areas and disenfranchised low-income communities (Ishak 2003, 70). This finding suggests that perceived gender roles, such as male voices conveying authority and reliability, are stronger in lower-income communities. A point that supports the implication that such stereotypes are less often upheld in marketing messages catered toward higher classes is Ishak's discussion of modern advertisers' push to increase female representation in Egyptian ads to sell more products to women who have purchasing power, thus leading to the portrayal of women in non-traditional gender depictions for ads targeted to those with higher disposable income. (Ishak 2003, 56)

These findings, as Ishak highlights, were also deduced to be similar in much of the Arab

world, where gender-nuanced cultural sentiments are often shared (Ishak 2003, 34). Male

product narrations can therefore serve as a potential indicator that an advertised product appeals

to particular lower-income groups or communities more than high-income ones.

Indicator 2: *Are there language (verbal or written) or visuals to indicate or convey references to*

Egyptian/Lebanese or broader Middle Eastern culture, history, or society?

This indicator was deduced from background research about the development of cultural

sentiments in Egypt and Lebanon discussed in Chapter II. References to specific cultural ideas,

events, attitudes, or behaviors ultimately strengthen the connection between the viewer and the

advertisement because of associated feelings of belonging and understanding that are not as

internalized when the audience views an advertisement produced in another country with foreign

imagery or elements. (Thomas 2009, 106-107)

Although viewers across all classes likely identify at a similar level with cultural

references like stories or events, multinational firms have a long-standing practice of releasing

reproduced ads (ads that were initially produced and released in another country but are also

broadcast in other countries that may recreate the ad using differing actors, making edits such as

cropping parts out or overlaying new writing, or simply adding a native language voiceover) for

foreign-produced goods that are intentionally targeted towards the middle or upper classes.

(Schechter 2008, 779) In these cases, the product–and sometimes, brand–is understood to be of

notable quality by virtue of being foreign without the need to accommodate the ad to local

audiences.

Additionally, the level of reproduction (whether the ad was completely re-created or only

given a voiceover) necessarily implies the suitability of the ad to local marketers and network

organizers. If a European ice cream advertisement, for example, is released in Lebanon with only an Arabic voiceover over the original audio, it can be concluded that local marketers approved of the content of the ad as it was, even though it likely contained no Middle Eastern actors, scenery, or music. The content in these types of ads is not as necessary as recognition of the brand and the product itself, implying that there is no need to convey cultural similarity to convey the quality of the product. The need for cultural similarity in advertisements arguably resonates more with lower- and middle-income level communities, who are not as familiar with or inherently trusting of foreign ideas, activities, and events illustrated in non-natively produced ads. (Schechter 2008, 777-778) Thus, although they can indicate targeting aimed at multiple classes, the inclusion of specific cultural references can indicate a targeting of less affluent classes with whom they may resonate more.

Indicator 3: *Is there gender segregation?*

The work of several sociologists and researchers mentioned in earlier chapters has included comprehensive discussions of the relationship between gender segregation and consumption behavior in the Middle East. Both Abaza's and de Koning's books detail the development of retail spaces in Alexandria, Cairo, and Beirut with consideration of cultural ideals around free mixing between the genders. Although sentiments have changed among the younger generations over the past few years, broader Middle Eastern culture generally discourages the co-mingling of genders beyond a social or professional context, with more conservative regions discouraging it altogether. Although it has been a cultural norm for centuries, with the introduction of consumerism in Egypt and Lebanon at the end of the 20th century, gender-mixing in public spaces received much backlash–often with harsh judgment

from community members toward the morality and respectability of women who participated. (Snider 2012, 4-5) (Tabar & Skulte-Ouaiss 2010, 138)

Although these cultural sentiments are no longer strongly upheld in some urban areas or depicted in pop culture, gender segregation remains a cultural standard due to Islamic tradition in both countries and is often seen in family-friendly media. (Khalil & Dhanesh 2020, 678) Advertisements that are viewable to the general public are considered family-friendly and thus still convey gender segregation much of the time.

This indicator is class-related upon inspecting that the cultural ideal of gender segregation is more loosely defined and executed in more affluent social circles and entertainment media that depicts such circles, namely with music videos. This can be seen within evidence such as de Koning's numerous anecdotal examples of mingling young professionals from the 1990's and early 2000s and music videos by popular Lebanese and Egyptian singers like Haifa Wehbe and Amr Diab. (de Koning 2009, 87) (Haifa Wehbe, YouTube, 2018) (Mazzika - مزيكا, YouTube, 2012)

Much of this relaxation of gender segregation can be attributed to the Western-introduced concepts of dating that became particularly popular among young adults in the MENA region over the course of the 20th century. (Abaza 2006, 233-234) Since exposure to Western culture and media was and is (notwithstanding the development of today's digital world) most accessible and learned by the middle and wealthier classes, ideas of gender mixing became more socially accepted in those communities. In contrast, many lower-income people live in communities that maintain the traditional standard in which acceptance of this mixing is more limited. Whether an advertisement depicts one or more genders and whether they are segregated can therefore reveal which class/es the ad aims to target.

Indicator 4: *Is English/French written or spoken more than Arabic?*

In accordance with background research highlighted in Chapter II, the use of either written or verbal foreign language in an ad targeted toward an Arabic-speaking population inherently emphasizes a level of exclusivity. Although English and French are very widely spoken and taught in schools in Egypt and Lebanon, respectively, it is generally expected that those belonging to the upper-middle and high socioeconomic classes have a higher proficiency level due to a higher level of exposure to foreign languages. This may be explained by their social and community circles, more opportunities to travel to foreign countries, or greater time and money invested in private education relative to poorer populations in these countries. Additionally, Abaza's research supports the finding that the poor and lower classes in Egypt are more receptive to Arabic than English, because it is better recognized and understood. (Abaza 2006, 231-233, 278) Thus, it is understood that when an ad is published in either country that utilizes written or verbal language other than Arabic, some of the audience may feel alienated by it or not understand it.

Since familiarity and comfort with foreign languages are largely class-related attributes, it can be deduced that an advertisement containing English or French is intended for an educated middle class and above. The amount of the foreign language used can also make more targeted appeals–an ad with minimal and widely understood expressions in English or French, for example, is likely to be more inclusive of lower classes than an ad that uses very little spoken or written Arabic.

Indicator 5: *Are women (late teenaged or older) shown to be childlike in presence or attributes, or otherwise with a childlike attitude?*

Although this indicator intuitively seems exclusively gender-related, research suggests that the strength of perceptions that equate women to children can have class implications. The idea of women having childlike attitudes, preferences, and perceived habits can be conveyed through media in various ways, including depicting women playing children's games, singing children's songs, adhering to a "soft" aesthetic of pastel hues and animatedly patterned attire, exuding delicacy in demeanor or behavior, or being inserted in whimsical or fantastical settings. (Khalil & Dhanesh 2020, 671-672; Carlson 2010, 1) An example of such infantilization of women is evident in a 2016 Egyptian television advertisement for Penduline hair oil, in which a woman is frolicking in a lush, blooming field with animated butterflies and roses. Her spinning and touching blossoms are similar to activities children are typically shown doing in the media. (Mohamed El Fouly, YouTube, 2016) The Penduline brand primarily has product lines catered to children, and, according to the credits in the video's description, this particular advertisement's writing and creative team was almost exclusively men. It can be deduced in this case that the producers of this ad held similar perceptions of women and children to a certain degree.

This concept is seen more frequently in some communities than others, and in this way, it serves as a class-related indicator. In the middle and lower classes, it is not uncommon for women to take on domestic and financial duties from younger ages to support their families or to work in professions that are not considered to embody feminine ideals of "refined" or "graceful", such as manual labor jobs. In contrast, women in the upper-middle and affluent classes often do not need to work or can pursue schooling for longer periods of time. This latter view results in a popular sentiment that women who are sheltered and indulge in typically feminine activities can

afford to do so, thus forming a similarity with children in that both live similar lifestyles. (de Koning 2009, 44-45)

Additionally, an important finding from a 2010 meta-analysis of gender roles in advertising in modern society–based on 64 independent studies–indicates that such gender stereotypes in advertising are primarily related to occupational status. (Eisend 2010, 418) When elements of this similarity are seen in advertisements, it is possible to deduce what class/es could appreciate or relate to the ad more.

Indicator 6: *Are slang vocabulary items or expressions used?*

Similar to the second indicator, cultural references can come in the form of colloquial language. Sayings or expressions that are unique to Egypt and Lebanon would elicit feelings of familiarity and recognition from audiences that formal advertisements might not be able to achieve. The use of colloquial vocabulary in marketing messages can create intimacy with viewers and an accepting attitude towards the product. (Pride & Ferrell 2020, 207-208) Evidence shows that this usage can also appeal to some groups more than others. In other words, some viewers would be more receptive to slang vocabulary or expressions than others, who may find it unprofessional or undesirable. In humorous contexts, the use of slang likely has generally similar effects across various socioeconomic classes (like, for example, in catchphrases), but in other ads, it can be employed to depict lower-income or less educated characters. (Fiske 2017, 791). This tactic is sometimes used by marketers to appeal to a wide range of demographics and to avoid appearing exclusive or exclusionary regarding the product itself or its users. (Pride & Ferrell 2020, 206) Thus, the presence of this indicator may demonstrate that an advertisement is being targeted either toward lower classes or to an inclusive range of classes.

Indicator 7: *Are women depicted in a private setting?*

As highlighted in Chapter II, research on the growth of consumerism in Egypt has uncovered a variety of gendered class distinctions through the lens of retail behavior. The work of sociologists like Mona Abaza delves into the origins and trends of the nation's consumption culture and women's role in creating and maintaining environments whose experiences and locations are stratified by class.

Middle Eastern architecture researcher Marika Dalley Snider investigated such distinctions in retail spaces of Alexandria between 1970 and 2011, much as Abaza explored the cases of Cairo and Beirut. In her research, Snider investigates the configuration of shopping malls and retail spaces and found that many Alexandrian women found themselves more socially fluid and comfortable in an upscale environment, where status could be reinforced and where gendered mixing was not as inevitable because spaces were less crowded. Because malls symbolized spaces for those who had leisure time and disposable income, they became spaces for women to socialize in the public eye (outside of their home or residential area) in a way that signaled their high standards of living. (Snider 2012, 4-6) Snider's work demonstrates that the mall serves as an example of the ways in which women belonging to upper-middle and high socioeconomic classes are generally associated with being in the public eye more.

This finding is also substantiated by anthropologist Anouk de Koning's work on the relationship between gender and public spaces in Cairo. Koning explains that upper-middle and high class women are likelier to establish themselves as professionals and activists or vocal citizens than lower-class women. (de Koning 2009, 123-125) Along with having limited access to public spaces that embody upward-mobility such as malls, lower-class Egyptian women are generally more associated with remaining in private settings. These findings are also consistent

with Abaza's discussions of consumer culture in Beirut, where high-class women have exclusive

sales and social events in private retail areas (Abaza 2006, 142)

Thus, in conjunction with background research from Chapters I and II about cultural

sentiment development and the role and scope of advertising, the depiction of women in the

public eye in an ad can serve as an indication that above-middle income women are being

targeted or used as aspirational signals.

Indicator 8: *Relative to the ad's duration, is there a prolonged use of obvious artificial lighting?*

Studies of advertising techniques, such as those highlighted by Pride and Ferrell, have

shown that the perception of non-natural lighting can quite drastically influence the attitude

viewers form after seeing an advertisement. A live-action advertisement that has a set and actors

typically uses a mixture of natural and artificial lighting, although one type may far outweigh the

other. For many product advertisements, artificial lighting is made to look natural to illuminate

models in a more appealing way. (Civan 2014) This is due to the fact that the richness of sunlight

softens facial features and highlights color contrasts in skin tones more effectively than artificial

lighting can. (Sunlight Inside 2018) Natural lighting subconsciously persuades viewers to have

greater feelings of warmth and positivity, which is why many service companies film

commercials in outdoor settings or with many windows where sunlight can enter. Egyptian and

Lebanese advertisements also employ this tactic, as is evident in advertisements for Telecom and

Autorento (Telecom Egypt, YouTube, 2018) (A. H. I., YouTube, 2017).

Natural lighting in itself appeals to viewers across all classes, but based on the

architecture and retail space research done by Abaza and de Koning, large display windows and

well-lit browsing areas in cosmopolitan Egypt and Lebanon are closely associated with upscale

environments like malls and department stores. (Abaza 2006, 240-241) (de Koning 2009, 1-2)

Likewise, the urban upper-middle and affluent communities tend to live in areas that are more spaced out or at a higher elevation, allowing more sunlight to surround their homes than in smaller, more densely-packed neighborhoods. The construction of retail spaces and homes that are intended to be upscale make use of natural lighting in the same way that the construction of low-end public spaces and poorer housing areas make use of artificial light sources because of budgetary restrictions and crowdedness. (Abaza 2006, 244) (de Koning 2009, 34) To emulate this, advertisements for high-end products–or affordable products that are intended to be an aspirational symbol–use far more natural lighting or what appears to be natural lighting than products that are not.

Although satirical or dramatized advertisements often manipulate lighting to convey artistic effects that may not relate to class targeting, this comparison between natural and artificial lighting is observable in standard product ads and can be used as an indicator to signal targeted class/es.

Indicator 9: *Is a clear time and place illustrated?*

When time and place–or, in other words, a basic setting–are made explicit in an advertisement, viewers are able to contextualize the product and make associations between it and the user. (Lee & Johnson 2005, 196-197) Of course, different settings can clearly communicate the types of environments in which the product might be used or which its users may frequent, but the absence of a clear time and place (for example, a solid-colored backdrop or a table) can remove the experiential aspect from a product. This experiential aspect is particularly appealing to working professionals and savvy consumers who constitute a substantial portion of the middle and affluent classes in Egypt and Lebanon. (Pride & Ferrell 2020, 308-309) Because many brands occupy the same household product space, it is important

for marketers to sell an *experience* along with the product, which is to impose feelings and attributes around the use of the product that do not directly involve the product's utility. In turn, these feelings and attributes can guide consumers' decisions when they choose to purchase that particular product as opposed to the same one from a different company. In this way, firms build and maintain a brand image that can keep their products favorable in the eyes of their target consumers.

However, building this image by constructing an experience cannot happen without contextualization, which largely comes in the form of establishing basic settings in advertisements and marketing communications. Lower-middle and poor classes, although often seeking the experiential aspect of aspirational products, are attributed more to utility and quality because price effectiveness is a greater factor in their purchasing decisions compared to their higher-class counterparts, who have more disposable income. (Pride & Ferrell 2020, 68, 204-205)

Although it is uncommon now to see product advertisements in either Egypt or Lebanon that do not illustrate a clear time or place, the absence of these elements can be an indicator that the experiential aspect of the product in question is not important, or at least not as important as its utility or quality. Ultimately, this absence can turn away some consumer groups of the wealthier classes.

Indicator 10: *Is there a primary emphasis of the product's benefits over its exclusivity or uniqueness?*

Another component to the concept of brand image highlighted in the discussion of the previous indicator is the value, or competitive advantage, on which marketers choose to compete.

Products from different firms can compete with each other on the variety of its models, their

durability, their benefits or cost-effectiveness, or their rarity among other things. (Pride & Ferrell

2020, 171-173) Values can be held to a different level or importance across different classes, and

some resonate more than others with a consumer who is making a purchase decision.

Research has shown that product exclusivity or uniqueness signals quality and is

considered important to many individuals who have a high level of disposable income or aspire

to have one, because these traits symbolize wealth and power. (Pride & Ferrell 2020, 311-312)

Ownership of something that is only attainable by few is a social advantage that many consumers

prize in order to maintain their social status or to rise to a higher one, and household products

(for example, those that are marketed as premium or luxury) are not excluded from this

mentality. Because household products are generally attainable by the majority of the population

in both Egypt and Lebanon, purchasing those that are presented as exclusive or unique holds an

aspirational value for those who may not have the means to buy real premium or luxury goods.

An advertisement's emphasis of product exclusivity, therefore, is an indication that it is

targeted towards those who can afford it or those who want to afford it, while an emphasis of its

benefits or features more likely communicates accessibility and equal consideration of any

consumer who might want to buy the product.

It is important to re-emphasize at this point that, although these indicators have

substantial potential to communicate general class discrepancies and sentiments, they are

received differently from individual to individual, and consumers often consider many factors

beyond income level and cultural norms when making purchase decisions. Those factors, in turn,

are likely to change over time or even from purchase to purchase. It should never be forgotten

that consumers in any part of the world are ultimately independent thinkers who make subjective

decisions and that this analysis only intends to provide a way of understanding how they may perceive the messaging that intends to influence those decisions.

Part II: Methodology

This exploratory research examines television and social media video advertisements for haircare products, paper products, and food/beverage products released in Egypt and Lebanon.

Ten advertisements were selected from each product category and each ad type (television or social media video) to include in the following analysis, totaling 120 advertisements. Each analysis chart, included in the Appendix, depicts or conveys varying levels of the pre-selected indicators and serves the purpose of providing qualitative data to illustrate the presence of elements that are associated with socioeconomic class and to indicate which class(es) is/are most likely being targeted or included based on the background research from Part I. The charts also show which elements are most and least common, and which are often used in conjunction. Finally, the accumulation of data from all analysis charts provides comparisons of featured elements across the three different product categories and the two countries.

The results and insights taken from the analysis are discussed in Part IV of this chapter, where important observations, trends, and comparisons are stated and explained before determining which chart indicators are the most reflective and/or reinforcing of cultural sentiments and popular opinions around socioeconomic class in both nations and, therefore, are the most likely to signal that a particular class(es) is/are being targeted.

Part III: Analysis

All data charts for ad selection, analysis, and result values are included in the Appendix, along with an overview of how to read the contents of each exhibit. Data was collected through viewing 120 distinct advertisements across the haircare, paper, and food and beverage product categories; specifically, 10 ads per ad type and product category were viewed for each country, totaling 60 for Egypt and 60 for Lebanon. All television ads were collected through YouTube, and all social media video ads were collected through Instagram and Facebook. Part that goes in appendix: In Exhibits 1 and 8, H=Haircare, P=Paper Products, F/B=Food and Beverage, and SMV=Social Media Video. The numbers after *TV* or *SMV* in the type column indicate the corresponding ad number in the analysis charts. In Exhibits 2-7 and 9-14, the leftmost column shows each indicator labeled with a letter and number corresponding to the x-axis values on the results figures.

Part IV: Results

In the following graphs, the indicator labels on the x-axes correspond to the indicators outlined in Part I of this chapter. Each analysis table in the Appendix also includes each labelled indicator. The y-axes of these graphs are the frequency measurements of each indicator, with data illustrated for both Egypt and Lebanon in each graph. For example, Indicator 1 (the primarily male narration of product technicalities) occurs a total of thirteen times in all Egyptian television ads.

Figure 1

Presence of Indicators in TV Ads

Figure 2

Presence of Indicators in SMV Ads
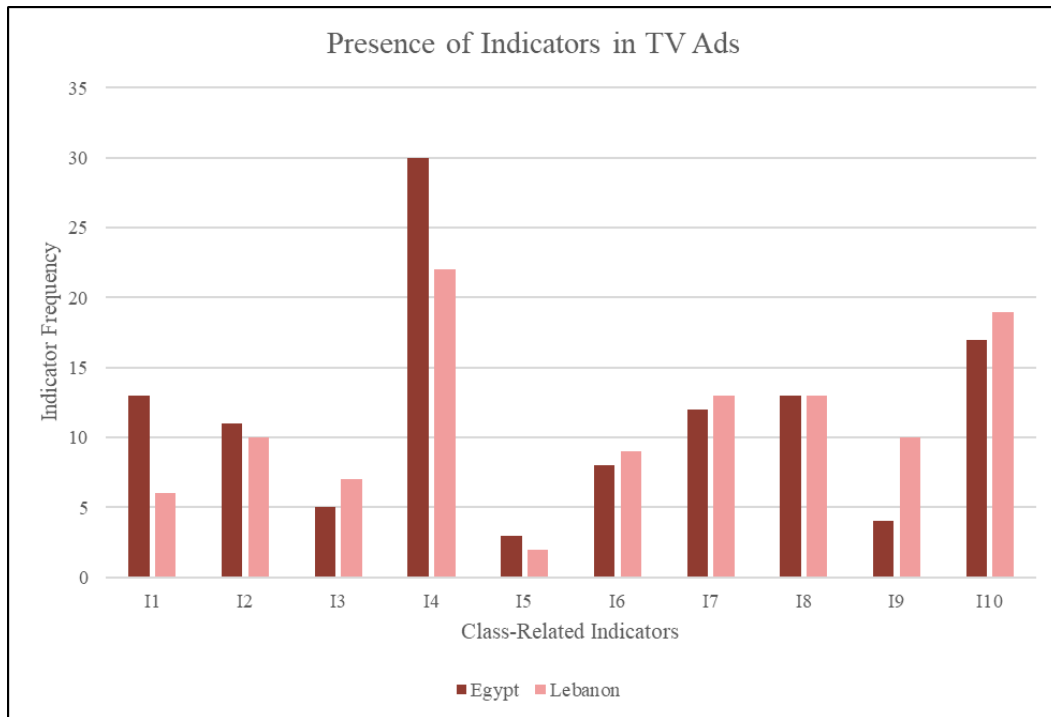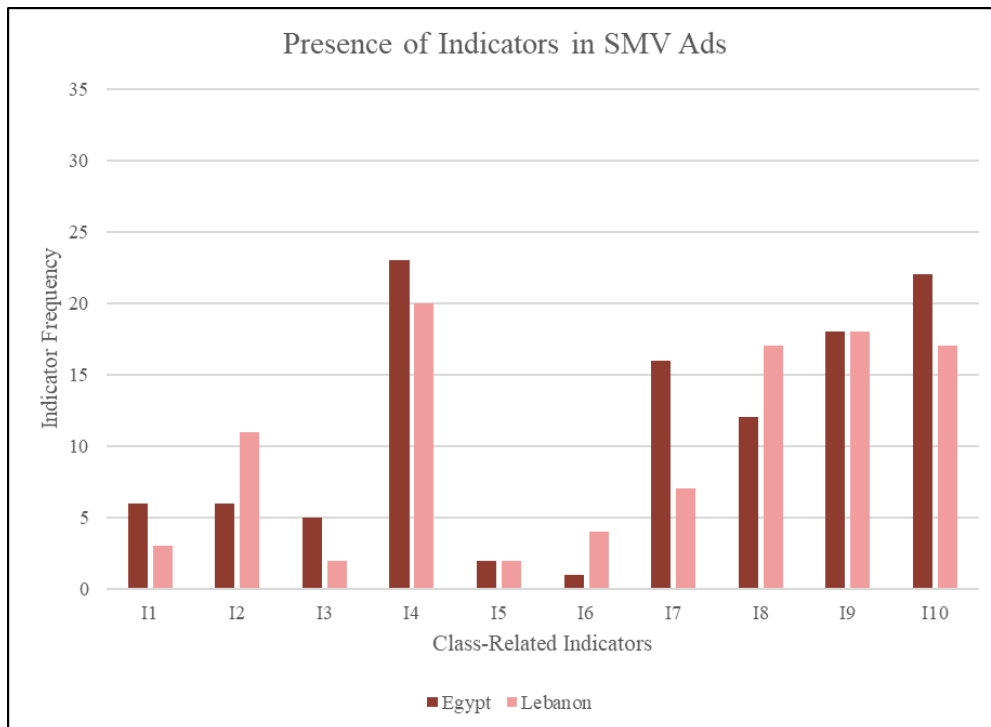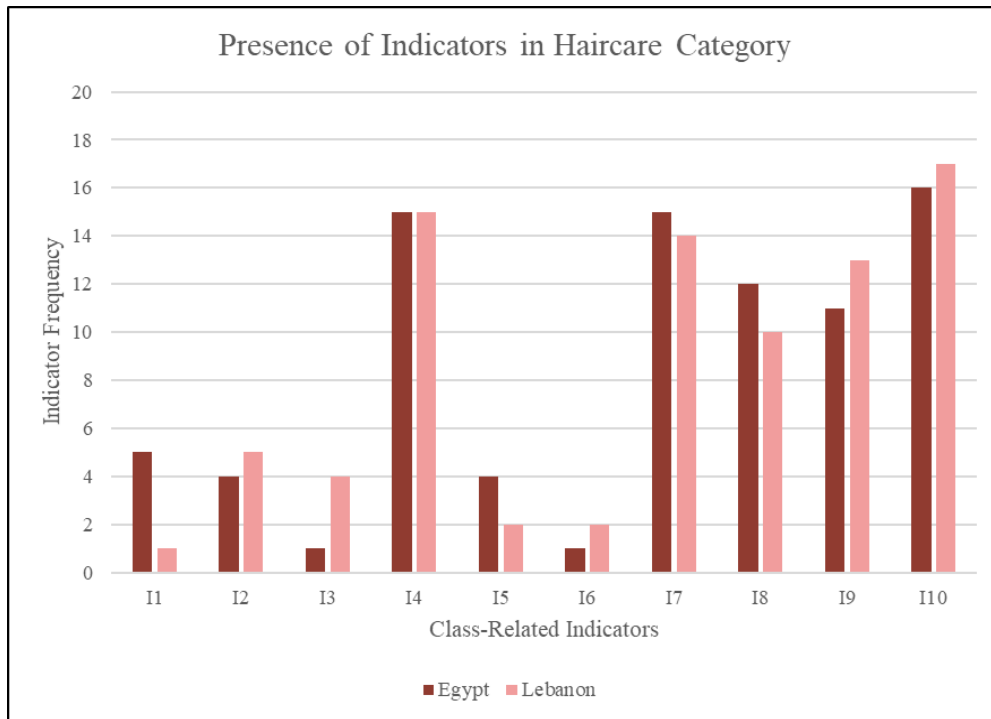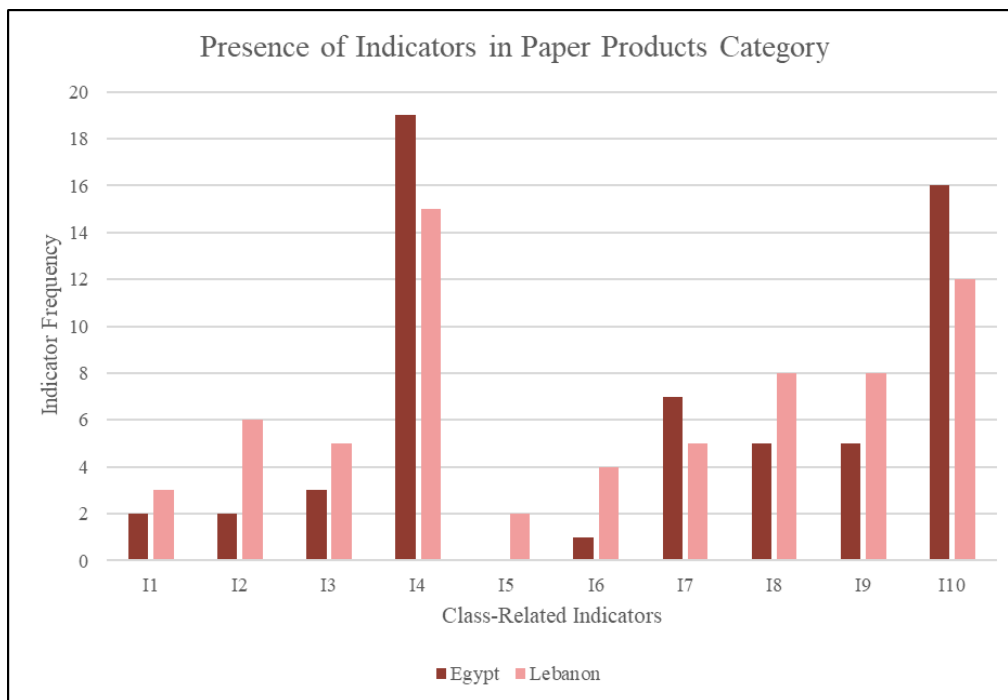
Figure 3

Figure 4

Figure 5
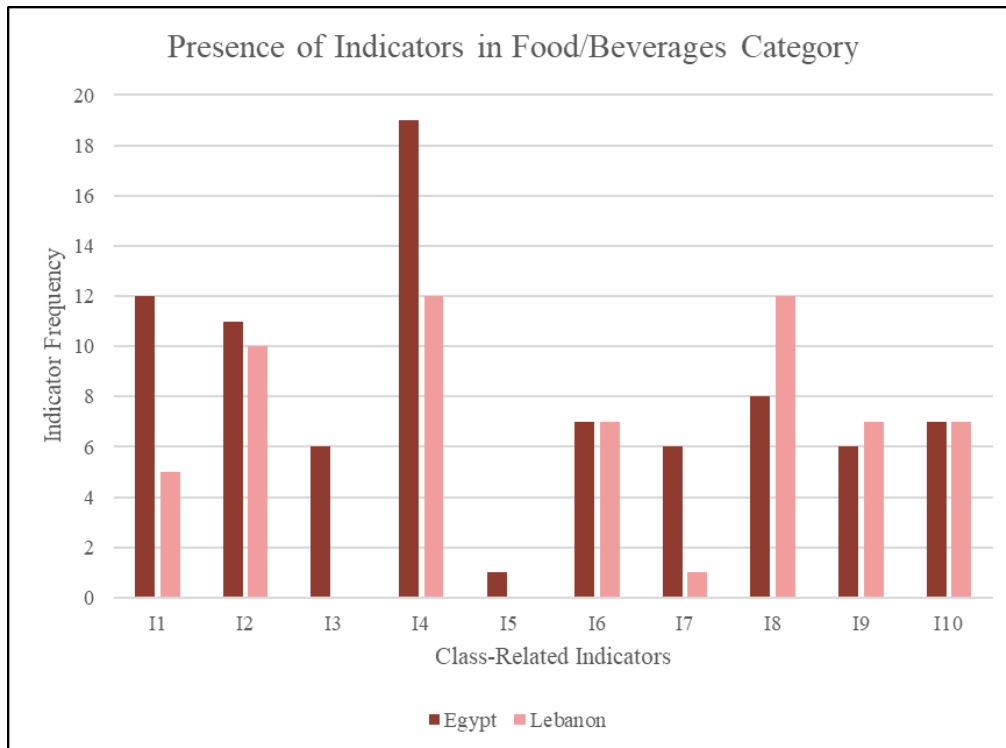
Figure 6
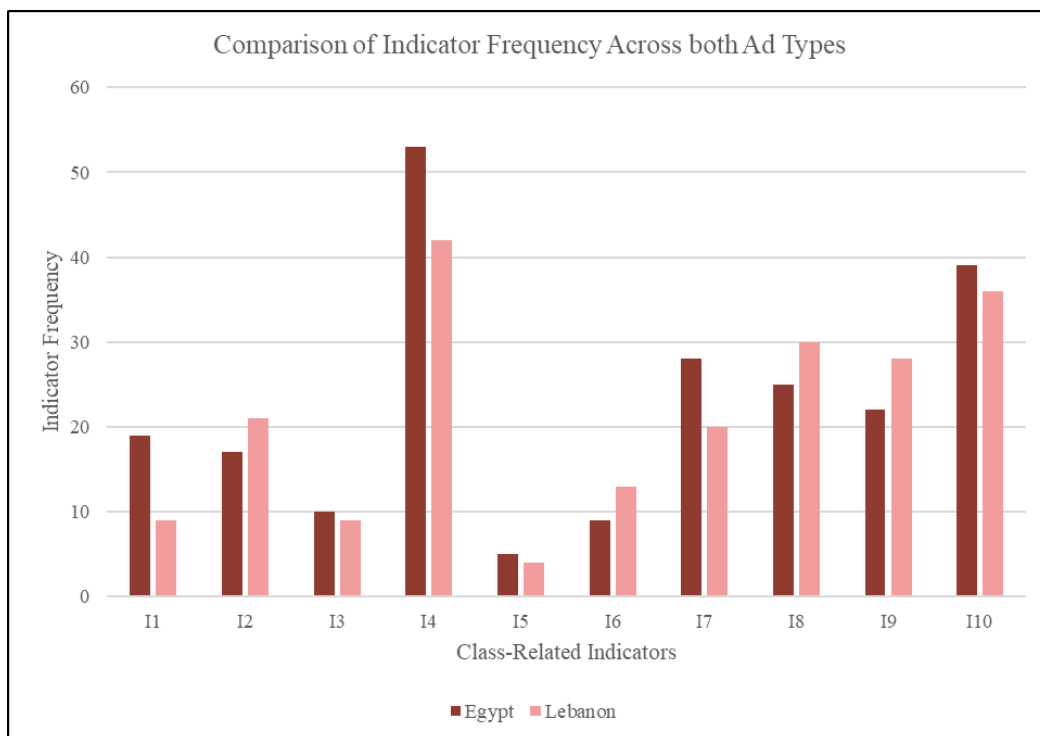
wThe results extracted from the Figures and Appendices above are as follows: For both countries and ad types, the **use of Arabic over other languages** was the most frequently present indicator, which is intuitive since Arabic is the predominantly spoken language in both countries. After this, however, the following three most frequent indicators in descending order are: (1) **Emphasis of product benefits over exclusivity/uniqueness**, (2) **Prolonged use of artificial lighting** in Lebanon and **ambiguous time/place** and **women being depicted in a private setting** in both countries. The least frequently occurring indicators in both countries were **gender segregation** and **women having childlike attributes/attitudes**.. Egyptian ads included the most indicators in terms of country, while food and beverage ads included the most indicators in terms of product category. Television ads also included more indicators overall than social media video ads. The most inclusive ads at the intersection of all three dimensions are Egyptian television ads for food/beverages and Lebanese television ads for haircare products. The indicators for both countries also largely trend together. Exact values are included in the Appendix and insights are discussed in the following section.

Part V: Insights

It is evident that Arabic is used for the vast majority of advertisements released in both Egypt and Lebanon because it is both countries' predominant native languages. Although this finding is intuitive and was predicted pre-analysis, it was beneficial to include this indicator nonetheless for the purposes of counting the overall frequency of all indicators to compare class inclusivity across product category, ad type, and country.

It is surprising, however, to see that some advertisements across both countries use minimal to no Arabic, which can indicate a greater resonance with or appeal to the wealthier and

more highly educated classes. The use of English or French (and in the case of Cornelli Ice Cream, Italian) in these instances is typically colloquial or conversational, with occasional slang words like "bae" (short for the endearment "babe"). This implies an expected audience that is familiar enough with foreign languages to recognize or use their slang words. The opposite effect occurs for the use of Arabic-originated slang or colloquial words, like "بالعَافِيَة" (*bal3afiya*) ("enjoy your meal") or "إنت قدّا" (*inti eddā*) ["you (female) can do it"]. Colloquial Arabic is used conversationally and more intimately by the masses than formal, standard Arabic in Egypt and Lebanon, demonstrating a wide understanding across classes.

Foreign colloquial or slang words were often used in conjunction with Western-influenced dancing and attire, further drawing similarities between the product's expected users and their lifestyles or standards of living. Although the same display of Western influences could be observed in ads using only Arabic, ads in Arabic often also conveyed broad cultural references or themes, such as the appearance of traditional foods or the use of titles like (*3ammo*) "عمو" (uncle) to address others. Such appearances play the role of anchors that distinguish the ad or product as Middle Eastern or North African, or its users as such. This, in turn, adds a layer of recognition across all viewers, regardless of whether the ad depicts a lavish or nontraditional setting–ads that used Western influences *without* references to broader cultural, historical, or social themes were virtually indistinguishable from ads produced in other countries and did not possess a level of recognition that would resonate with lower classes. In this way, the use of Arabic over foreign languages often appeared in conjunction with slang vocabulary and references to broader native themes.

Additionally, it is important to note that the majority of ads in Arabic did not use colloquial or slang language at all, keeping communications very formal. In some rare cases (but

only with multinational brands, such as Pantene), local accents or dialects were barely

discernible from the use of Modern Standard Arabic. This usage can reflect an aspiration towards

professionalism, which is not necessarily for class-related reasons, but can reflect a cultural

standard upheld in the media for both countries. In instances in which no slang or colloquial

vocabulary–a direct and obvious anchor to recognition inclusive of all classes–was used, cultural

references acted as more subtle anchors that made the product or ad familiar to people of varying

classes.

Interestingly, Lebanese ads exhibited just as many cultural, historical, and societal

references as Egyptian ones, while Egyptian ads used more colloquial or slang vocabulary than

did the Lebanese. Though the two seemed to be intuitively linked pre-analysis, this difference

could possibly be explained by the notions of nationalism and patriotism in Lebanese media

versus Egyptian media. In most Lebanese ads that contained these native themes, Lebanon

positioned itself as a country distinct from others in the Middle East and North Africa by

mentioning its nation, land, or civilization. Egyptian ads, in contrast, were very focused on the

products being advertised and the *people* who used them, thus reflecting and connecting them

through the use of colloquial phrases. The use of both indicators also varied across product

categories, with the food and beverage category containing the bulk of both native themes and

slang vocabulary for both countries: this is likely due to wider target audiences (in age and

gender) for this category over the haircare and paper products categories.

The visual indicators of lighting and setting were illustrated creatively across both ad

types and countries. Within the TV and Social Media Video categories, advertisements used

varying levels of live action, animation, computer graphics, and technology-based production

styles. Some advertisements, if fully animated, were not assessed on the lighting indicator at all

unless there was a clear and successful effort to depict natural lighting, as in the case with Mastro Wafers. As highlighted in the background research of this chapter, artificial lighting and ambiguous settings can sometimes convey lower quality, or, in the event that the product is already known to be of high quality or it is obvious that the lighting and setting are oriented a particular way for creativity or ad purpose, can convey inclusivity across class levels because the product is not being contextualized in an explicitly high-class, spacious, out of reach environment.

An important observation from this analysis was that even a lavish setting may not signal wealthier classes if the time and place are unclear. For example, in the case of Egyptian haircare ads, the Sparkle shampoo and conditioner advertisement depicted a woman wearing party clothes alone in a dimly lit room with lavish furnishings and gold undertones, but it was unclear where this place was or why she was there. This lack of clear context, along with artificial lighting used for the duration of the ad, decreased the potential that the ad would successfully resonate with the upper-middle and wealthy classes. To further substantiate this assumption, a quick search of Sparkle shampoo on Egyptian e-commerce site Jumia shows a 400ml bottle at 70EGP, which is comparable to same-sized and similarly functioning bottles from Pantene Smooth and Silky (67EGP) and TRESemmé Keratin Smooth (74EGP). The latter two brands do not depict upscale settings in the advertisements included in this analysis–instead using natural lighting and clear settings–yet are clearly targeted toward the same income groups. Thus, the ambiguity of time and place and overuse of artificial lighting in Sparkle's advertising, though incorporated into an affluent-looking setting, ultimately do not help to support an upscale image. In contrast, the advertisement for Bioblas shampoo shows a clear time and place within the home of a family with ample natural lighting and a cultural touch to the singing and dancing, signaling clear

quality and reliability in an understandable way. On Jumia, a Bioblas shampoo bottle half the size of the aforementioned brands can be found at a starting price of 104EGP. (Jumia Egypt 2022) Overall, Lebanese ads exhibited a higher presence of ambiguous setting and artificial light indicators than Egypt, implying that the visual layout of their advertising may resonate with or be more inclusive of lower classes than that used more often in Egypt.

Gender-related indicators were important to capture the types of cultural sentiments being upheld. Although some advertisements across all categories did not illustrate gender or human/animal subjects at all, those that did demonstrated a variety of gender mixing and segregation at different levels. The majority of gender-mixing for both countries was depicted in the context of family or friend gatherings, with romantic contexts making up a very small minority and shown only slightly more in Lebanon. Additionally, Egyptian ads showed a higher frequency of women having childlike attributes or attitudes, as evident in Figure 6. These factors can likely be attributed to heavy Islamic influence in Egypt, where gender segregation is a socially practiced norm and women across classes are more likely to be sheltered to accommodate this norm. In contrast, Lebanon's diversity encompasses a variety of religious influences and Western social customs through which women are less likely to be in the same environments as children as frequently as in Egypt, which is also evident in these advertisements. There are, of course, many exceptions and nuances both in their societies and in the advertisements, but the analysis supports long-standing cultural sentiments that still have value, even if only vestigial, in each society.

Finally, the angle of emphasis of product benefits versus exclusivity/uniqueness is a strong indicator of whether a product is meant to be associated with higher or lower classes. Across both countries and product categories, advertisements varied in how they emphasized

their products. Several ads from both countries were creatively produced in a way in which the product in question was not discussed at all, which is a tactic commonly used to build brand image, exposure, and association with the product's experience over its utility. As highlighted in background research, this tactic is effective across all classes, but the effort that goes into that angle of emphasis is more recognized and considered by the middle and wealthy classes because of their greater purchasing power and wider consideration set when purchasing basic items in haircare, paper products, or food and beverages. The emphasis of uniqueness/exclusivity was depicted verbally and visually in such advertisements in both Egypt and Lebanon, but most notably in the food and beverage category. In the haircare and paper products categories for both countries, functionality and benefits were of evidently higher importance, but Lebanese haircare advertisements took more liberty with emphasizing uniqueness/exclusivity over benefits.

The presence of certain indicators was also magnified or diluted depending on whether they appeared in a TV or social media ad for both countries. For example, Arabic was used less frequently as the primary language in both Egyptian and Lebanese social media advertisements compared to TV advertisements. Similarly, male narrations were used less. This discrepancy can likely be explained by the difference in age of the average TV ad viewer and the average social media video ad viewer in both countries. Teenagers and young adults are typically the most familiar with the social networking technology necessary to view social media ads and are more likely to be familiarized with Western languages in advertising. Likewise, many social media organizers and users are female and generally represented more frequently in this sphere than in television advertising studios in the MENA region.

That so many of these indicators trended together illustrates the significance of cross-indicators and the proportionality of frequencies across ad types and countries. In fact, at a

glance, all three figures displaying these frequencies are shaped the same, with just a few exceptions. What these observable trends imply is that the ten pre-selected indicators are generally used at similar regularity for both television and social media ads, which is surprising given that age and purchasing power stratify social media ad viewership in a way that suggests its target market resonates more with middle- and upper-class signals (or, in other words, a greater absence of the indicators) compared to television ad viewers. Another implication from the cross-indicator trends is that gender-related cultural sentiments may be more vestigial in marketing messaging than is generally perceived, whereas setting-based audiovisual elements are more commonly reflected and reinforced in favor of class inclusivity.

Although they look more similar to each other when compared across ad type, cross-indicator frequencies appear quite different across product categories. For example, it is apparent that setting-related audiovisual indicators are much more frequent in the haircare category than in paper products or food and beverages. In contrast, native themes and language-related indicators are more common for food and beverages than the other two categories. Upon consideration, one possible explanation of these findings is the nature of the products being advertised. Because haircare product qualities must largely be visualized to be understood, the most reasonable way to signal class-inclusive haircare products would be to include audiovisual indicators. Likewise, because food and beverages cannot be tasted or felt in ads, messaging must be centered around actors or consumers who can convey those sensations, thus relying more on ways to relate to the viewer. Incorporating indicators like cultural references or slang vocabulary would then signal a greater inclusivity across all classes for the food or beverage. In this way, there are many potential angles to study and explore upon further investigation of each resulting value from this analysis.

These insights were the most notable and significant aspects to come out of this analysis. The results summarized in Figures 1 and 2 highlight each indicator's frequency in a comparative way between the ad types and countries, illustrating their interconnectedness and observable trends. Likewise, Figures 3-5 compare indicator frequencies across each product category between the two countries, with Figure 6 illustrating aggregate data for all indicators between Egypt and Lebanon. The following section connects these figures and insights to the purpose and theme of this investigation to construct the concluding argument.

Discussion

Ultimately, the presence of more indicators, based on background research, suggests that the ad resonates with or reflects associations with the lower-middle and lower classes (though some exceptions are obvious because of artistic/ultra-creative expression). This inherently implies that the absence of more indicators can mean that the ad resonates with or reflects associations with the upper-middle and higher classes. This analysis demonstrates that the food and beverage product category has the most indicators. Resonance and reflection with the lower-middle and lower classes ultimately imply class inclusivity, which is the overarching theme of this investigation. In analyzing which socioeconomic classes can be signaled through the presence or absence of particular indicators, determining which of those classes show the most indicators is a means of identifying the elements that can make an advertisement the most inclusive of the lower classes in Egypt and Lebanon.

An important point to revisit is that some of these advertisements were reproduced and edited with a voiceover and/or minor stylistic/content changes before being released on TV or social media. However, this does not compromise the value of the analyses, since native studios

decide what media should be released and are the ones responsible for handling and editing any reproduced content. If they approve, this means that they find the foreign ads suitable and understandable for their audiences in the context of their culture and society, which is what the pre-selected indicators capture.

Thus, this analysis concludes that out of the three product categories, the food and beverage category produces the most class-inclusive ads in both Egypt and Lebanon. Additionally, after the use of native language, the most frequently used indicators of class inclusivity—or resonance with the lower classes—are an emphasis of product benefits over exclusivity or uniqueness, strong artificial lighting and setting ambiguity, and the depiction of women in a private setting, while the least frequently used indicators are gender segregation and women demonstrating childlike attributes. Also, although there are a few exceptions, the presence and absence of indicators in Lebanon and Egypt largely trend together.

Aside from the predominant use of Arabic being the most frequently occurring indicator, the results of this analysis were largely unexpected. For example, Egyptian ads overall included more indicators (specifically, fifteen) than Lebanese ones, implying that Egypt may produce more class-inclusive ads. This is surprising due to Lebanon's historically lower GDP than Egypt, which demonstrates intuitively that more Lebanese ads would resonate with the lower and middle classes. Likewise, it was interesting to see that paper products seem to be advertised the most exclusively, with little signaling that would appeal to or be inclusive of lower classes despite being among the most common of household goods. Perhaps one of the most surprising findings, however, was that even though social media video ad viewers are more concentrated by age and purchasing power than television ad viewers, indicator frequency for both ads is quite similar—television ads included just fifteen more indicators than social media ads. This finding

ultimately implies that although television ad audiences are much more demographically inclusive than those of social media ads, the two ad types use indicators that resonate with lower classes at roughly the same frequency. In turn, this suggests that class-related cultural sentiments may have a stronger alignment with consumer behavior than factors like age and purchasing power in both Egypt and Lebanon.

Another interesting finding is that at the conjunction of all three dimensions of country, ad type, and product category, indicators were the most frequently occurring in (1) Egyptian television ads for food and beverages and (2) Lebanese television ads for haircare products, each with 46 indicators total. This implies that such ads are the most class-inclusive of all the ads analyzed in this investigation. The difference in product category here may suggest that the way certain household products are perceived varies between Egypt and Lebanon, which is an interesting consumer behavior question to explore. This suggestion, however, would require an analysis of many more advertisements—because the sample size per product category and ad type for each country was ten ads, it may be that the brands included in the analysis were simply relatively class-inclusive brands.

Further discussion of the implication of such insights are highlighted in the conclusion of this research, but it is worth noting that many of the values illustrated in the Appendices reflect surprising outcomes of this analysis.

This investigation met at the intersection of three broad areas of study related to marketing research: observable culture, evidence-based advertising techniques, and consumerism/consumer behavior. Current global marketing research continuously develops and refines strategies to effectively communicate with target market segments with consideration for the sentiments of local cultures. The research that I have collected and synthesized for this study

spans all three areas in detail and often contextualizes them within specific localities or cultural

demographics (like gender or religion), but it is rarely the case that the integration of all three

areas is used to inform current methods of targeted marketing in the MENA region, by local or

multinational brands alike. The primary driver for the foundation of my analysis was this

absence—given what I have learned in my own studies of consumer behavior and the culture and

society of the Arab world, it is evident that global marketing strategies are communicated and

received differently in different cultures. However, every nation, even within the same region,

has its own distinct history of consumerism and the ways in which consumer behavior influences

and interplays with different facets of its culture. Thus, using observable cultural characteristics

and historical context of consumerism in Egypt and Lebanon, I was able to narrow down and

select indicators in product advertisements that accurately captured class-related sentiments in

those countries.

My intention with this investigation is to explore this intersection in order to uncover

ways that marketing messages can be made more class-inclusive in popular Arab media. Using

Egypt and Lebanon as areas of study, I believe there is much that can be deduced and explored

about middle-income economies in the MENA region by analyzing advertisements through a

lens that integrates distinct consumption histories into cultural practices and values. This

approach to analysis is not common. Existing marketing research in Egypt and Lebanon, for

example, typically deals with cultural practices and values independently, or, more rarely, in the

context of historical turning points like changing regimes or social revolutions. Other studies

based on quantitative data collection often address media representation or reinforcement of a

particular social value, such as gender segregation, religiosity, or ideals in the youth. The books,

articles, and studies I consulted for this investigation elucidated topics necessary to inform my

process of selecting class-related indicators to analyze, but the question of how truly to capture class inclusivity in marketing messaging in the MENA region persisted from the beginning of my journey to now. Before this investigation, I had vague notions of what kinds of class-related cultural sentiments would be reflected and reinforced through advertising in Egypt and Lebanon. This analysis has provided me with interesting and unexpected insights regarding socioeconomic class in middle-income countries in the MENA region that I strongly believe can only be reached through a careful, multidimensional approach of observable culture and evidence-based advertising techniques, contextualized within a nation's distinct history of consumerism.

Chapter IV: Insights and Future Research

The results and insights uncovered by identifying the frequency of the pre-selected indicators across country, ad type, and product category were ultimately fruitful. Some findings accurately reflected my predictions, such as the higher presence of indicators in social media video ads than in television ads and the way both countries largely trended together. Many other findings and interesting observations, however, were unexpected and raised new questions for further exploration, such as the way television and social media video ads showed proportionate frequencies and the rarity of certain gender-related indicators. This investigation ultimately achieved its purpose, but there is still much to be explored to determine which class-related indicators are best reflected or reinforced through local advertising.

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this investigation was to identify the frequency at which class-related indicators from a preselected pool were present in Egyptian and Lebanese product advertisements, but the broader goal was to explore elements used in a vital form of media that reflect and reinforce cultural sentiments built by history, economics, religion, and politics with the intention of identifying elements that can make an advertisement the most inclusive of the lower classes in Egypt and Lebanon.

In this particular investigation, the elements were assessed on the basis of their ability to signal socioeconomic class-related behaviors, opinions, and attitudes. The purpose of the comparison between Egypt and Lebanon was to observe similarities and differences within the sample ad group between two media and entertainment cornerstones of the Arab world. The

overarching theme of this research is to explore the overlap of local culture and media and identify certain techniques that can be used to guide each to the other. Using class as an aspect of local culture and advertising as an aspect of media narrowed down this theme to a manageable size and incorporated an assessment of consumer behavior, which is a fundamental dimension of social structures in an increasingly globalized and technologically advanced world.

The three most important insights that may be derived from the results of this analysis were the following: which class-related indicators appeared the most frequently in advertisements, which products were illustrated with the most class inclusivity, and how closely the data from both countries trend together. The analysis of 120 television and social media video advertisements from Egypt and Lebanon showed that the most frequently occurring class-related indicators after the predominant use of the Arabic language (which was intuitive pre-analysis) were the *emphasis of product benefits over exclusivity or uniqueness*, the *prolonged use of apparent artificial lighting*, the *depiction of women in a private setting*, and the *lack of a clear setting*. In contrast, the least frequently occurring indicators were the *illustration of women with childlike attitudes or attributes* and the *presence of slang vocabulary*. The frequency at which the pre-selected indicators were present or absent in the advertisements paints a clearer picture of particular class-related sentiments that are popular and unpopular (not necessarily in adherence, but in recognition) in Egyptian and Lebanese media. Based on these results, emphasizing product benefits over exclusivity or uniqueness may be a common indicator that an advertisement from either country resonates with or appeals to people across all classes, or, when used in conjunction with many of the other pre-selected indicators, resonates with or appeals to the lower and middle classes. Likewise, the depiction of women in a private setting is a more common indicator in Egyptian ads, implying that this idea, which is resonant among the lower and middle classes, is

also significantly recognizable among the general population. As highlighted in the insight section of Chapter III, the fact that this indicator appeared third-most often in the analysis may also imply that class inclusivity—rather than a specific class targeting—is being communicated.

Similarly, the absence of the least frequently occurring indicators illustrated that the ideas they represent are not as resonant or recognized by Egyptians and the Lebanese, or in the case of slang words, not the traditional media etiquette in either country. As highlighted in the background research on each pre-selected indicator in Chapter III, the use of slang vocabulary is widely associated with the lower and middle classes, and although many products in this analysis used elements to signal those classes, advertisements from both countries did not typically include it. This could suggest the presence of a broader media etiquette in the region in which slang vocabulary may be considered unprofessional or not family friendly.

Although portraying women with childlike attributes or attitudes is not commonly seen in either country, this indicator was more often present in Egyptian advertisements. This finding is very closely related with the indicator of women being depicted in private settings, which is also more frequent in Egyptian ads and likely the result of more conservative gender segregation norms that give rise to more spaces and occurrences in which women and children are together. However, the latter indicator is shown much more frequently than the former here, which may suggest that the infantilization of women is either a vestigial cultural sentiment or is not recognized or resonant with much of the Egyptian population compared to other subtle gender-related indicators of class.

The results of this investigation illustrated that many other indicators trended together in addition to the gender-related ones. Both countries shared the most frequent indicators of *primary use of Arabic language* and *emphasis of product exclusivity/uniqueness over benefits*,

and both countries also both had similar frequencies for the *prolonged use of artificial lighting* and *ambiguous setting* indicators. Likewise, the two least frequently used indicators previously mentioned were the same for both Egypt and Lebanon. In the case of the *reference to native themes* indicator, ads from both countries showed this at the same frequency. As highlighted in Chapter III's insights, a closer look at these references for both countries showed that they differed in how they portrayed nationalism, with Lebanon referring more to its civilization, history, and land and Egypt referring more to common, everyday people and experiences—in this particular case, Egypt's higher frequency of the *use of slang* indicator often correlated with its *reference to native themes* indicator.

The indicator that differed between the two countries the most in frequency was male narration of product technicalities, which was over twice as frequent for Egypt as it was for Lebanon. It was interesting that although the other three gender-related indicators largely trended together for both countries, this particular indicator had a much larger disparity. One possible explanation for this is that Egypt's more conservative and predominantly Islamically-influenced society that upholds a level of social gender segregation is reflected in the way common household products are advertised in that deeper, masculine voices are regarded as more credible and reliable (as was highlighted in the investigation's background research) to more of the population in Egypt than in Lebanon. Another possible explanation is that because the other gender-related indicators for both countries generally trend together, it can be reasonably inferred that gender norms are widely viewed similarly in Egypt and Lebanon, and that the selected product categories are simply more associated with female narrations in Lebanon. Because the ads spanned household product categories, it may be the case that women are deemed more credible and reliable when discussing their technicalities in Lebanon. This is an

interesting insight, as household products as a whole (though less so with food and beverages) are also generally considered more "feminine" in Egypt since they are purchased or used by women within families, yet ads for these products are more frequently narrated by men. This may indicate that though both societies have strong gender distinctions, Lebanese cultural sentiments suggest that women have greater jurisdictions over female-associated products, but Egyptian cultural sentiments suggest that men have greater jurisdiction over all products. Of course, with more data (both ad-wise and product-wise) and extensive research on this specific indicator, this insight can be substantiated beyond a mere speculation.

Another interesting finding is that food and beverages contained the most indicators out of the three product categories, illustrating that this category's ads either targets lower classes the most or is the most class inclusive. Pre-analysis, I expected each category to show indicators at around the same general frequencies by nature of being common household goods, but food and beverage ads included substantially more than haircare or paper products. This raises an interesting speculation: given that all three categories are common products widely available to all socioeconomic classes in both countries, the major distinction between the food and beverage category and the remaining two categories is the target consumer group. Food and beverages serve a broader segment across gender and age, while haircare and paper products are typically sought by women within a particular age range of teenaged to middle-aged. This may suggest the idea that class distinctions are represented more in advertisements primarily directed towards women in both Egypt and Lebanon. This speculation can be further substantiated by the work of Abaza and de Koning featured in Chapter III—their research on the formation of retail spaces in metropolitan Egypt and Lebanon delves into the ways in which many women communicated and upheld social classes through their buying behaviors and attitudes throughout the late 20th to

early 21ˢᵗ centuries. It is reasonable to deduce that advertisements—as reflectors and reinforcers of popular cultural sentiments—continue to illustrate this practice.

Overall, only one finding from the results of this investigation was intuitive: that the *predominant use of Arabic language* was the most frequently occurring indicator. Every other insight was unexpected to varying degrees—for example, I predicted pre-analysis that the *native themes* indicator and *use of slang* indicator would trend together, but results showed that they did not. Rather, it captured an interesting possible distinction between Egyptian and Lebanese expressions of nationalism and observation about common media practices in both countries. Additionally, *emphasis of product benefits over exclusivity/uniqueness* being the most frequently occurring indicator after the *predominant use of Arabic* language was surprising based on background research that exclusivity and uniqueness are aspirational product qualities often used in advertisements as a signal of maintaining or rising to a high social status, pointing to the probability that those traits would be emphasized over benefits in more ads than they were. Similarly, it was unexpected that the visual indicators related to lighting and setting would be as frequently occurring as they were (at least relative to cultural references and gender-related indicators) because of presumed avoidance of prolonged use of artificial lighting and ambiguous setting—such techniques do not typically depict products in the most appealing way.

In truth, I anticipated that all indicators (with the exception of the *predominant use of Arabic language*) related to cultural themes would be more frequent than turned out to be the case, and that all non-gender related visual and audio indicators (including *product emphasis of benefits over uniqueness/exclusivity*) would be less frequent. Based on background research from Chapters I-III and the Western-originated multinational marketing strategies with which I am familiar, I expected socioeconomic class to be signaled more through local cultural themes than

through technical indicators. In other words, even though most indicators in this analysis were relatively subtle, the presence of audiovisual indicators were significantly more frequent than thematic cultural indicators. This may suggest that culture- or gender- based signaling in advertisements is less relevant (even if incrementally) than product framing when appealing to lower classes or class inclusivity in Egypt and Lebanon.

The data charts in this analysis were formatted to illustrate that the more indicators present in an advertisement, the more strongly that ad signals lower socioeconomic classes or class inclusivity. Therefore, the ads that included very few indicators most likely appealed more to the upper-middle and wealthy classes, as well as potential aspirational levels for the lower classes, in both countries. Overall, each of the 120 analyzed ads included at least one indicator.

Egyptian advertisements ultimately included more indicators across both ad types than Lebanese ads. This finding suggests that Egyptian ads appeal to lower classes more often or are more inclusive of lower classes, which is interesting because—without accounting for Lebanese consumers who may be receiving money from relatives abroad—Egypt has historically had a significantly higher GDP than Lebanon for the past two decades, and currently did up until 2018 (this was the last year of data I compared the two on due to the onset of Lebanon's economic crisis—the nation's GDP pre-crisis more accurately reflects consumer behavior than the most current data from 2021) (World Bank Group 2018)

Differences in indicator frequency were also observed across ad types. Overall, social media advertisements included more indicators than television advertisements did, but which particular indicators were more present or absent varied by country. For example, Lebanese social media advertisements used more slang vocabulary than Lebanese television advertisements, but the opposite was true for Egypt. Likewise, more Egyptian television ads used

male narrations and references to native themes than Egyptian social media ads did. Some ads of a certain type lacked entire elements that were found in other ads. For example, unlike television ads, a few social media ads did not use language at all—either written or verbal. This finding was expected going into this analysis because social media ads are much more contextualized than television ads in that they are featured on pages dedicated to the product or brand itself, whereas television ads are viewed independently and surrounded by messaging from other products and brands. Thus, more social media ads are able to use more subtle indicators and still communicate a message effectively with viewers.

It is also not surprising that gender-related indicators were less present in social media ads than in television ads. As highlighted in Chapter III, social media ad viewers typically span both a younger age range and consumers who have purchasing power. These two traits are reasonably assumed by the social media presence that is necessary to view such ads, and access to outlets through which to purchase the products being advertised. Based on background research from Chapter II, young to middle-aged consumers with independent purchasing power align more closely with buying behaviors of the upper-middle and wealthy classes than those of the lower-middle and poor classes, who generally abide by cultural norms more stringently. Although still present, gender norms in Egypt and Lebanon are more flexible, either in practice or perception, among the higher classes. Thus, based on background research, it is reasonable that gender-related indicators are not as strong in social media advertisements as they are in television advertisements due to the concentrated demographic and psychographic traits of viewers. Another predicted reason for fluctuations across all indicators based on ad type was because of the different techniques each type employs based on differences in budgeting. Television ads, which are produced by independent studios or, in the case of large or

multinational companies, dedicated corporate departments, generally have more funding to go towards animation, set design, and casting. Social media ads, though sometimes made to supplement television ads for large brands, are typically for smaller-scale companies or products that have a smaller budget, or simply do not cost as much to produce due to the non-broadcast nature of the platform. This practice is evident in several ads—for example, the depiction of women in a private setting is more frequent for social media ads than television ads from Egypt, but that may be accounted for by production costs if the ads only illustrated one woman or a secluded setting that is easy to capture.

An important insight to expand on from Chapter III is that although some of these trends that account for the differences in indicator frequency between social media and television ads can be easily explained or predicted, it was surprising to see that the indicators generally remained the same *proportionally*, In other words, the most frequent and least frequent indicators were the same for both television and social media ads, and Figures 1 and 2 illustrate that majority of the indicators seem to trend the same, resulting in similar-looking graphs. What this says about these ad types is that although the target viewer group is more distinct and concentrated for social media, the overall use of class indicators is recognized and perceived in the same way as the general populations in both Egypt and Lebanon. This finding was unexpected because age and purchasing power, as traits that can defy class norms or attitudes in either country, evidently do not have a significant impact on how cultural sentiments are reflected or reinforced in marketing messaging.

Although these insights are specific to this investigation, their implications are relevant to the broad goal and overall theme of this research because they reflect some of the subtle ways in which local culture and media weave into each other. Keeping consumers at the heart of this

research was important to its purpose and direction, because they are the ultimate observers, upholders, and negotiators of cultural sentiments and advertising value.

Future Considerations and Research

As highlighted in previous chapters, the purpose of this investigation is to study the practice of targeted marketing messaging in the MENA region from a more inclusive angle and on a country-to-country basis. The existing work used to build this analysis's background and foundation encompasses much of the current research on the state of advertising in the MENA region and targeted marketing techniques. Studies of gender norms and religious influences, among other identifying demographic traits of the MENA region, are typically seen as the most significant cultural sentiment categories for marketers to be sensitive to and aware of. Likewise, consumer and retail research, such as that of Abaza and de Koning, focus on consumption behavior and attitudes shaping cosmopolitan areas of the region. However, there appears to be a gap between the influences on consumer behavior and how those influences are upheld and received in advertising. In other words, marketing in the MENA region, whether done by multinational or local companies, relies on observable cultural norms and ideals to inform targeted messages. In doing so, however, it largely overlooks how consumerism interplays with such cultural norms and ideals. Consumerism has a distinct history in each country of the MENA region, with different effects on consumption and different societal contexts and consequences. To communicate with target audiences most effectively, it is necessary to study the intersection of observable culture, evidence-based advertising techniques, *and* the history of consumption and how it relates to existing cultural sentiments. It is not enough to use just one aspect alone to effectively capture the sentiments of a target market segment. Exclusive dependence on

observable culture, for example, can lead to overgeneralizing or stereotyping. Likewise, focusing on advertising techniques alone is inadequate because global marketing strategies can be received very differently when applied to different countries, especially if there is insufficient consumer research. Only considering consumption history and how it relates to local cultural sentiments also does not help inform how those sentiments appear in and influence different types of communication channels.

Thus, to gather research for this investigation, I collected evidence from all three aspects—from texts and articles on economic and market histories (like the work of Pride & Ferrell, Ṭarābulsī, and Sayyid-Marsot) to studies on targeted marketing methods (such as those conducted by Frisoli, Ishak, Thomas, and Snider). Though all sources illuminated the topic I set out to explore and provided me with the collective information I needed to conduct this investigation, none addressed the precise question I wanted to answer. Thus, it is reasonable to posit that the intersection between observable culture, ad techniques, and effects of consumerism in the MENA region has great potential for study.

This investigation's purpose was to study this intersection and thus identify common messaging that uncovers widely recognized or appealing signals of the class-related aspect of culture in Egypt and Lebanon. Such signals could not be determined simply by taking insights from local culture or making assumptions based on historically successful advertising techniques—rather, those insights and assumptions needed to be substantiated by further research on how consumerism penetrated and grew in both societies. In actuality, there are hundreds of indicators that can be analyzed when trying to assess whether a product advertisement is being targeted towards a particular class or broadly to all of them. However, background research on Egyptian and Lebanese consumerism allowed me to narrow down this

potential set to ten indicators that I felt most strongly captured socioeconomic class-related sentiments for both countries.

On account of the exploratory nature of this investigation, the design and results of the analyses give rise to several questions and opportunities that address different facets of class representation and advertising techniques in Egypt, Lebanon, and potentially the broader MENA region. If this research were to be repeated, it would be beneficial to include more potential observable indicators of class signaling. There is a vast array of advertising techniques in the audio, visual, and linguistic realm, even beyond the scope of what I analyzed, and it would be useful to study to get a clearer picture of the more subtle ways in which marketing messages reflect and reinforce cultural sentiments in Egypt and Lebanon. Additionally, more time to view a sample size larger than 120 advertisements would provide more data to substantiate the results of this analysis and further identify differences in the frequency of the indicators between the two countries. Potential outliers could also be further identified and explored in a secondary investigation.

An expansion of this research could also include analyses from other countries across the MENA region. Countries can be categorized into economic development levels–such as low income, lower-middle income, upper-middle income and high income–and compared with each other on the use of indicators (for example, high-income Arab Gulf nations can be compared in the way that Egypt and Lebanon, as middle-income countries, were compared in this study). Then, each economic development level could be compared with the others to identify strengths and similarities in the relationship between advertising and cultural sentiments for countries with varying levels of wealth and living standards. Similarly, the inclusion of more product categories would capture a more representative sample of all possible target consumer segments in each

country, given that different products are used by different demographic groups. Additionally, a significant adjustment to this investigation that could yield many more insights is to change the demographic category used. In other words, assessing cultural sentiments related to categories like gender, occupation, familial role, or religion (as opposed to socioeconomic class) on the basis of different, respective sets of evidence-based indicators would delve into a wide variety of other angles through which ad techniques' ability to culturally resonate can be observed. Any of these variations would add to the value of this research by expanding the scope of insights to be gained from observing advertising as a mode of cultural expression.

Another beneficial way to expand this investigation would be to broaden the discussion featured in the insights section of Chapter III that highlighted the retail prices of similar haircare products from different brands advertised in Egypt in order to substantiate the effect of a specific indicator. Pricing is an effective way to capture a general idea of consumers' perceived value of a product and their willingness to pay as well as a brand's own positioning on how well its product fares in value or benefits compared to its competitors. Thus, obtaining the average retail prices of each product in this investigation using e-commerce and company websites and classifying them based on price ranges can provide deeper evidence of the effectiveness (or non-effectiveness) of certain indicators, as was done with Sparkle shampoo. This method could also classify products according to what people can afford according to the income groupings selected for both countries in Chapter I. Using both pricing and affordability observations, it can then be further analyzed whether certain indicators used in advertising by certain brands effectively resonate with or appeal to the right target group(s).

On a similar note of including analyses from other countries, a benefit of this investigation is the ease at which it can be replicated for different regions. This methodology

could theoretically be used to uncover the frequency of certain class-related indicators in developing countries in other regions, for example, if a similar process of indicator selection based on consumption history from a country-to-country basis was undertaken. In the cases of Nigerian life insurance and Indian mobile marketing highlighted in the Preface, this approach could even be applied with age-related indicators to uncover more detailed consumption patterns. I believe such replications could yield similar results in that many countries of the same region will trend together in indicator frequency and some product categories will include more indicators than others. However, interesting and unexpected findings will also likely be uncovered as the analyses may demonstrate that certain subtle indicators are significantly used or that particular aspects of the culture have influences on class—or age, or any other demographic category—that are contrary or undetected to popular belief.

An important aspect of this investigation is that it is not concerned with whether or not advertisers use indicators *intentionally* to achieve a desired effect that appeals to a class(es). Rather, it aims to identify *which* and *how often* indicators of local class sentiments appear in advertisements and to compare how present/absent those indicators are across two countries. Thus, there are many opportunities to observe and draw more insights through future research to advance this purpose. The insights from my analyses could also be used in the design of experimental research by serving as the basis for hypotheses concerning the relation between the presence or absence of certain ad indicators and product affordability/pricing (like, for example, a brand marketer's use of prolonged artificial lighting in multiple ads and how the brand's product pricing compares to other competitors, which could help to determine how significant of a socioeconomic class signal that ad indicator is). Overall, research relating to this topic has the potential to add a more comprehensive approach to the ways in which class sentiments are

perceived and upheld through advertising as a form of cultural communication in the Middle East and North Africa and the extent to which the expression of such sentiments are similar across different countries in the region.

Conclusion

During his travels, Ibn Khaldun may not have foreseen the level at which consumerism has changed cultures globally. He may not have predicted that advertising would be one of the strongest, yet most dynamic, forms of media. What he anticipated with notable accuracy, however, is the persistent way in which commerce and social structures reflect and reinforce one another. Whether marketing multi-nationally or on a community level, researchers and advertisers must constantly adapt their approaches to keep up with the MENA region's unique commerce-driven side of culture, which has shaped and reshaped itself abundantly due to political, economic, religious, and technological factors. Generally, the more vibrant and diverse a culture is, the more efforts that need to go into curating marketing messages to capture the hearts and minds of its people. In the context of societies as culturally and historically rich as Egypt and Lebanon, these efforts must, at times, be viewed from even the most subtle of angles to reveal potential implications around consumer identity and behavior.

Elements that can signal class-related ideas, behaviors, and attitudes generally held or perceived in these societies are a product of cultural development meeting global consumerism. In today's world, it is impossible to detach one from the other regardless of differences in media autonomy, because whether consumerism is practiced by all, it has certainly influenced all in some capacity. At the intersection of Egypt and Lebanon's distinct cultural developments and responses to consumerism is their consumers' behavior–a small part of which this investigation

set out to capture. With the insights and implications of this research, class inclusivity is a targeted marketing message that can be increasingly incorporated anywhere, and, more broadly, that approaching advertising techniques' cultural resonances one demographic category at a time and on the basis of evidence-based indicators is an effective way to identify what works best, keeping consumers at the heart of it from beginning to end. Above all, marketing in a region that has been historically mis- or under-represented in multinational marketing research can be driven more by a contextualized approach to consumer behavior in Egypt, Lebanon, and the greater MENA region beyond simply studying local customs and traditions, but more specifically the relationship *all* aspects of their cultures have with consumerism and commerce.

Appendix

Each exhibit in this appendix illustrates all data from the ad collection, analysis, and results processes of this investigation. The Figures in Chapter III aggregate all of the data found below, and for ease of access, are also placed at the end of the Appendix. Exhibits 1 and 8 are ad collection charts, Exhibits 2-7 and 9-14 are analysis charts, and Exhibits 15-24 are results charts, the values from which are visualized as graphs in Exhibits 25-31.

In Exhibits 1 and 8, H=Haircare, P=Paper Products, F/B=Food and Beverage, and SMV=Social Media Video. The numbers after *TV* or *SMV* in the type column indicate the corresponding ad number in the analysis charts. For example, any given entry in the ad collection charts belongs to a specified product category (H, P, or F/B) and ad type (TV or SMV), further denoted by a number (*TV1*, *SMV6*, *TV9*, etc.). This information corresponds to the analysis charts, where each chart is dedicated to a specific product category, ad type, and country. The presence or absence of each indicator in each ad is marked in these charts. Thus, each ad in the analysis charts corresponds to an entry in the ad collection charts, where direct links allow the viewing of all ads.

In the analysis charts of Exhibits 2-7 and 9-14, the leftmost column shows each indicator labeled with a letter and number corresponding to the x-axis values on the results graphs (Exhibits 25-31). The y-axes of these graphs are the frequency measurements (or, in other words, how many times an indicator occurs) of each indicator, with data illustrated for both Egypt and Lebanon in each graph. For example, Indicator 1 (the primarily male narration of product technicalities) occurs a total of thirteen times in all Egyptian television ads.

All charts and graphs in this Appendix explicitly label product categories, ad types, and countries in their titles, content, and axes.

*The *Paper Products* category consists of baking sheets, paper towels, facial tissues, toilet paper, diapers, and feminine care products.

Exhibit 1: Selected **Egyptian** Advertisements

Product	Prod. Category (H, P, or F/B)	Brand/Company	Release Date	Length	Type (TV or SMV)	Link to Ad
Vatika Cactus Enriched Hair Oil	H	Vatika	2015	0:45	TV1	https://youtu.be/ZLKkabQw69c
Magic Touch ماجيك تاتش	H	Eva Cosmetics	2021	1:05	TV2	https://youtu.be/Z8jhXDy3c-E
Penduline Hair Oil بيندولين	H	Penduline	2016	0:31	TV3	https://youtu.be/Iice017jau8
Kayan Hair Oil زيت شعر كيان	H	Kayan Hair Oil	2021	1:00	SMV1	https://youtu.be/6r-Woyx7Su8
White Tissues Compressed	P	White Tissues	2021	0:21	SMV1	https://fb.watch/b9ygTwpsyN/
Panda Cheese	F/B	Panda باندا	2014	0:30	TV1	https://youtu.be/At0kIRjs0ms
Chipsy شيبسي	F/B	Chipsy شيبسي	2019	0:58	TV2	https://youtu.be/nQfPkYxgll4
7UP Egypt سڤن اب	F/B	7UP	2019	1:17	TV3	https://youtu.be/7776HFzbalY
Pepsi & Chipsy شيبسي	F/B	Pepsi, Chipsy شيبسي (Co-branding)	2015	2:29	TV4	https://youtu.be/dFv7Eov5A9g
Venous فينوس Product Lines	P	Venous Tissue Products	2016	1:50	SMV2	https://youtu.be/SoE1DgrZVyY
Ganna جنة	F/B	Ganna جنة	2016	0:46	TV5	https://youtu.be/A6axfoIQgiQ
Freska Wafer	F/B	Freska	2012	0:31	TV6	https://youtu.be/hwV17EEn4_Y
Crunch كرنش	F/B	Crunch Egypt	2016	0:54	TV7	https://youtu.be/GM9AhgBria4
جبنة فيتا نباتى الدهن Teama Vegan Feta Cheese	F/B	Teama Milk طعمة	2017	0:51	TV8	https://youtu.be/9ZaZmCtDEKw
Maxibon ماكسيبون Chocolate Ice Cream	F/B	Nestlé Maxibon	2013	0:38	TV9	https://youtu.be/BdtN1MxcL-4

PicPac's Peanuts بيك باكس	F/B	Lorenz PicPac's	2015	0:30	TV10	https://youtu.be/kcWboe778EM
Sparkle Shampoo and Conditioner سباركل	H	Sparkle سباركل	2011	0:34	TV4	https://youtu.be/SAeMplosESE
TRESemmé Keratin Smooth ترسيمى	H	TRESemmé	2017	0:34	TV5	https://youtu.be/yO6lXFWmico
Garnier Color Naturals غارنييه كولور ناتشرلز	H	Garnier	2020	0:30	TV6	https://youtu.be/HU_sOtRP50I
Perfectil Original بيرفكتل أورجينال	H	Vitabiotics	2021	1:11	TV7	https://youtu.be/gpYqiegavtU
Garnier Color Naturals غارنييه كولور ناتشرلز	H	Garnier	2017	0:46	SM V2	https://youtu.be/7NY1n6EIqrg
Harir Hair Oil زيت شعر حرير	H	Harir حرير	2021	0:45	TV8	https://youtu.be/O_rqAguNsfY
Bioblas Liquid Conditioner بيوبلاس	H	Vamer Care | Bioblas	2021	0:42	TV9	https://youtu.be/fmDuG2iUWQc
Juhayna Pure 100% Natural Juice	F/B	Juhayna Pure	2016	0:20	SM V1	https://www.instagram.com/p/BGjtmFsvqG1/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
HairDo Hair Products هيردو	H	HairDo	2017	0:51	TV10	https://youtu.be/ZKua43CNMYw
Familia Antibacterial Tissues	P	Familia Tissues	2020	0:33	TV1	https://youtu.be/427_FNRadh8
Bebem Natural Baby Diaper بى بم طبيعى	P	Bebem Natural Egypt	2021	0:43	SM V3	https://youtu.be/Llyzrlkf6lc
Lara Wet Wipes لارا للمناديل المبللة	P	Lara Cosmetic لارا	2017	0:32	TV2	https://youtu.be/sL5OPsNLc14
Abeer Tissues	P	Abeer Tissues عبير	2010	0:31	TV3	https://youtu.be/zQn2Kja4Dp0
Zeina Sponge سفنجة	P	Zeina Tissues	2021	0:09	SM V4	https://youtu.be/AmbbOZ6P6zQ
Pampers	P	Pampers	2019	0:45	TV4	https://youtu.be/KQcLPydCAtQ
Bonny Diapers بوني	P	Bonny بوني	2021	0:25	TV5	https://youtu.be/lRLdu9PsKac
Wasm Tissues وسم	P	Wasm وسم	2019	0:28	SM V5	https://youtu.be/WYs99ngDxPc
Familia Paper Towels Plus	P	Familia Tissues	2022	0:30	TV6	https://youtu.be/uKOD_0YA8TQ
Good Care Diapers جود كير	P	Good Care جود كير	2020	0:12	SM V6	https://youtu.be/M764mISk8lc

Molfix Pants مولفيكس	P	Molfix مولفيكس	2020	0:27	SM V7	https://youtu.be/zxIpHeFjhdk
Molfix Comfortfix مولفيكس	P	Molfix مولفيكس	2015	0:30	TV7	https://youtu.be/X_zTgF1kUI0
BabyJoy Compressed Diapers مضغوطة	P	BabyJoy	2021	0:50	TV8	https://youtu.be/q3VXN24FMEs
Fine Slimpack	P	فاين Fine Tissues	2021	0:30	TV9	https://youtu.be/9UTzu3s5fCk
Clorox Disinfecting Wipes المناديل المطهر كلوركس ة	P	Clorox كلوركس	2021	0:06	TV10	https://youtu.be/8nyoHbPvVwA
Bebem Natural Baby Diaper بى بم طبيعى	P	Bebem Natural Egypt	2021	0:41	SM V8	https://www.instagram.com/p/CPXzGwEHfIk/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Clorox Disinfecting Wipes المناديل المطهر كلوركس ة	P	Clorox كلوركس	2021	0:07	SM V9	https://www.instagram.com/p/CRD-PqprgKZ/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Pampers Pants/Culottes	P	Pampers	2021	0:35	SM V 10	https://www.instagram.com/p/CLwoiOXI_ZY/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Molto Chocolate Croissants	F/B	Molto مولتو Egypt	2017	0:39	SM V2	https://www.instagram.com/p/BR1Y6GYAZZW/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Galaxy Chocolate	F/B	Galaxy Chocolate Egypt	2018	0:06	SM V3	https://www.instagram.com/p/BfyHQo_hIAd/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Tiger Chips	F/B	تايجر Tiger	2018	0:38	SM V4	https://www.instagram.com/p/BjvinfAg0GW/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Pretzo Pretzels	F/B	Pretzo Egypt بريتزو	2021	0:57	SM V5	https://www.instagram.com/p/CN90qlihwvw/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Kata Kito Chocolate كتاكيتو	F/B	El-Shamadan الشمعدان	2020	0:45	SM V6	https://www.instagram.com/p/CJMHl98hU7K/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Todo Brownie Cake	F/B	Todo Egypt	2021	0:06	SM V7	https://www.instagram.com/p/CViH2vXoDid/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Chiclets Chewing Gum	F/B	Chiclets Egypt	2020	0:20	SM V8	https://www.instagram.com/p/CGXLZW-hqR6/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Novy Sweets	F/B	Novy Egypt	2021	0:10	SM V9	https://www.instagram.com/p/CO-FuEFBEmo/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Bisco Biscuits	F/B	Bisco Misr بسكو مصر	2021	0:30	SM V 10	https://www.instagram.com/p/COh8vw0hlpI/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Biopoint Repair and Beauty & Speedy Hair Sets	H	Biopoint Egypt	2021	0:23	SM V3	https://www.instagram.com/p/CRBwc7Fgb2r/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Garnier Color Intensity	H	Garnier Egypt	2016	0:25	SM V4	https://www.instagram.com/p/BNP0gJlBrB2/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Joviality Hair Products	H	Joviality	2021	0:07	SM V5	https://www.instagram.com/p/CQyO4XUgskg/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Bræs Hair Products	H	Bræs	2019	0:44	SM V6	https://www.instagram.com/p/B55t7goh9W4/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
The Hair Addict Christmas Box	H	The Hair Addict	2021	0:30	SM V7	https://fb.watch/b3MEkTS9Al/
Aloe Eva	H	Eva Cosmetics	2018	0:30	SM V8	https://www.instagram.com/p/Bh33fQgHQSt/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
In Natural 7 Secret Beauty Set	H	In Natural	2019	1:00	SM V9	https://www.instagram.com/p/BuOXuXSANSE/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Areej Nourish Oil	H	Areej Aromatherapy	2021	0:29	SM V 10	https://www.instagram.com/tv/CWQpNiAjmHW/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Exhibit 2: The Presence of Pre-selected Indicators in Egyptian TV Ads for Haircare Products

	TV1	TV2	TV3	TV4	TV5	TV6	TV7	TV8	TV9	TV10
I1: Primarily male narration of product technicalities?	X		X	X					X	
I2: Verbal or written language or visuals with references to Egyptian or Arab culture, history, or society?		X		X					X	
I3: Gender segregation?	X		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A			N/A
I4: More Arabic than English/French?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
I5: Women having childlike attributes or attitudes?			X					X		
I6: Use of native slang vocabulary?		X								
I7: Women depicted in a private setting?	X		X	X	X			X	X	
I8: Predominant use of apparent artificial lighting?		X		X			X	X		X
I9: Absence of a clear time and place?			X	X						X
I10: Primary emphasis of product benefits over exclusivity/uniqueness?	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		

Exhibit 3: The Presence of Pre-selected Indicators in Egyptian SMV Ads for Haircare Products

	SMV 1	SMV 2	SMV 3	SMV 4	SMV 5	SMV 6	SMV 7	SMV 8	SMV 9	SMV 10
I1: Primarily male narration of product technicalities?					N/A			X		
I2: Verbal or written language or visuals with references to Egyptian or Arab culture, history, or society?		X								
I3: Gender segregation?	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
I4: More Arabic than English/French?	X	X	X	X				X		
I5: Women having childlike attributes or attitudes?			N/A			X	X			
I6: Use of native slang vocabulary?										
I7: Women depicted in a private setting?	X	X	N/A	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
I8: Predominant use of apparent artificial lighting?	X	X	X	X		X	X			X
I9: Absence of a clear time and place?	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X
I10: Primary emphasis of product benefits over exclusivity/uniqueness?	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X

Exhibit 4: The Presence of Pre-selected Indicators in Egyptian TV Ads for Paper Products

	TV1	TV2	TV3	TV4	TV5	TV6	TV7	TV8	TV9	TV10
I1: Primarily male narration of product technicalities?								X	X	
I2: Verbal or written language or visuals with references to Egyptian or Arab culture, history, or society?								X		
I3: Gender segregation?				N/A	X				N/A	N/A
I4: More Arabic than English/French?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
I5: Women having childlike attributes or attitudes?					N/A				N/A	N/A
I6: Use of native slang vocabulary?									X	
I7: Women depicted in a private setting?				X	N/A	X		X	N/A	N/A
I8: Predominant use of apparent artificial lighting?	N/A			X		N/A	X		N/A	
I9: Absence of a clear time and place?										
I10: Primary emphasis of product benefits over exclusivity/uniqueness?	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X

Exhibit 5: The Presence of Pre-selected Indicators in Egyptian SMV Ads for Paper Products

	SMV 1	SMV 2	SMV 3	SMV 4	SMV5	SMV6	SMV7	SMV 8	SMV9	SMV 10
I1: Primarily male narration of product technicalities?										N/A
I2: Verbal or written language or visuals with references to Egyptian or Arab culture, history, or society?					X					
I3: Gender segregation?	N/A		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	X	N/A	
I4: More Arabic than English/French?	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
I5: Women having childlike attributes or attitudes?	N/A		N/A	N/A	N/A					
I6: Use of native slang vocabulary?										
I7: Women depicted in a private setting?	N/A		N/A	N/A	N/A	X		X	X	X
I8: Predominant use of apparent artificial lighting?	N/A	X			N/A	N/A	X			X
I9: Absence of a clear time and place?	X		X		X	X		X		
I10: Primary emphasis of product benefits over exclusivity/uniqueness?	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	N/A

Exhibit 6: The Presence of Pre-selected Indicators in Egyptian TV Ads for Food/Beverage Products

	TV1	TV2	TV3	TV4	TV5	TV6	TV 7	TV8	TV9	TV 10
I1: Primarily male narration of product technicalities?	X	N/A	X	N/A		X	X	X	X	X
I2: Verbal or written language or visuals with references to Egyptian or Arab culture, history, or society?		X	X	X	X	X	X			X
I3: Gender segregation?					X	X	X			
I4: More Arabic than English/French?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
I5: Women having childlike attributes or attitudes?					X	N/A	N/A			
I6: Use of native slang vocabulary?	X	X	X		X		X	X		
I7: Women depicted in a private setting?					X	N/A	N/A	X		X
I8: Predominant use of apparent artificial lighting?			X	X	X		X	X		X
I9: Absence of a clear time and place?	X									
I10: Primary emphasis of product benefits over exclusivity/uniqueness?				X			X			

Exhibit 7: The Presence of Pre-selected Indicators in Egyptian SMV Ads for Food/Beverage Products

	SMV1	SMV2	SMV3	SMV4	SMV5	SMV6	SMV7	SMV8	SMV9	SMV10
I1: Primarily male narration of product technicalities?	X	X		N/A		X	N/A	X	N/A	X
I2: Verbal or written language or visuals with references to Egyptian or Arab culture, history, or society?	X	X			X					X
I3: Gender segregation?			X	X	N/A		N/A	X	N/A	N/A
I4: More Arabic than English/French?	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
I5: Women having childlike attributes or attitudes?				N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
I6: Use of native slang vocabulary?	X									
I7: Women depicted in a private setting?	X	X	X	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
I8: Predominant use of apparent artificial lighting?						X	N/A	X	N/A	
I9: Absence of a clear time and place?				X	X	X			X	X
I10: Primary emphasis of product benefits over exclusivity/uniqueness?	X		X		X			X		X

Exhibit 8: Selected **Lebanese** Advertisements

Product	Prod. Category (H, P, or F/B)	Brand/Company	Release Date	Length	Type (TV or SMV)	Link to Ad
Pepsi	F/B	Pepsi	2006	0:30	TV1	https://youtu.be/b-7DGa_dAgc
Siblou Seafood	F/B	Siblou	2013	0:37	TV2	https://youtu.be/kcCuvKNbD98
Taanayel Farms Milk Products	F/B	Taanayel Farms مزارع تعنايل	2008	0:48	TV3	https://youtu.be/oraIZIFCt_0
Fruit Fusions	H	Herbal Essences	2010	0:22	TV1	https://youtu.be/4KDTuHGZNUg
Cornelli Ice Cream	F/B	Cornelli	2010	0:34	TV4	https://youtu.be/-G0ckS9qmuk
Najjar Coffee نجّار	F/B	Najjar Coffee نجّار	2018	0:33	TV5	https://youtu.be/d6Vq0IQEYq8
Head & Shoulders Shampoo	H	Head & Shoulders	2009	0:32	TV2	https://youtu.be/7wQBGY2sEMM

Black Label Whisky	F/B	Johnnie Walker	2010	0:40	TV6	https://youtu.be/tgUIdb4prxM
Krikita Gold Nuts	F/B	Krikita	2018	0:33	TV7	https://youtu.be/F2WfsiyoIW4
Pepsi	F/B	Pepsi	2011	0:48	TV8	https://youtu.be/co21SusQpHE
Buzz Vodka-Mix	F/B	Buzz	2012	0:44	TV9	https://youtu.be/DNppb3SSa1w
Khoury Products	F/B	Khoury Dairy خوري	2013	0:33	TV10	https://youtu.be/FYuVeLTysTE
Cosmaline Products	H	Cosmaline	2019	0:24	SMV1	https://youtu.be/I4VP1CPmN5E
Pantene Products	H	Pantene القوة جمال	2017	0:25	TV3	https://youtu.be/K0sjB3sNvfg
Garnier Olia	H	Garnier	2021	0:06	SMV2	https://www.instagram.com/p/CKwdQppn7Y6/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Gipsy Tissues	P	Sanita Gipsy	2016	0:23	SMV1	https://youtu.be/5l_Jvdb5gEQ
Happies Baby Care	P	Sanita Happies	2017	0:39	TV1	https://youtu.be/_9788KFZewA
Sanita Products	P	Sanita	2021	1:45	TV2	https://www.instagram.com/tv/CWiJMALAnAb/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Baby Diapers	P	Oui Oui وي وي	2019	0:44	TV3	https://youtu.be/BDaPH5AbBR0
Little Walkers	P	Huggies Lebanon	2009	0:19	TV4	https://youtu.be/GuLd3g8g19c
Baking Paper	P	Sanita Handy	2021	0:19	SMV2	https://fb.watch/b459KjMPLr/
Superflex Superdry	P	Huggies Lebanon	2007	0:17	TV5	https://youtu.be/OassDOtoPG4
Petra Tissues	P	Petra Tissue	2021	0:56	SMV3	https://www.instagram.com/tv/CWvvnRwguOA/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Happies Diapers	P	Sanita Happies	2010	0:51	TV6	https://youtu.be/vSly6dhsKxk
Kleenex Tissues	P	Kleenex	2014	0:30	TV7	https://youtu.be/4NIi-FpnOYY
Kotex Maxi Pads	P	Kotex كوتكس	2015	0:30	TV8	https://youtu.be/M8BtTgJ8mOs
Garnier Color Naturals	H	Garnier غارنييه	2012	0:30	TV4	https://youtu.be/RUmCp_7yowY

Kleenex Tissues	P	Kleenex	2016	0:31	TV9	https://youtu.be/JuVIFsJLwh4
Always Ultra Thin	P	Always	2020	0:25	TV10	https://youtu.be/iMcGuwQ7CNc
Always Products	P	Always	2018	1:00	SMV4	https://www.instagram.com/p/Bf0ozowDb8f/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Happies Products	P	Happies	2020	0:21	SMV5	https://www.instagram.com/p/B9_V8wipNiT/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Optimal Products	P	Optimal Lebanon	2019	0:53	SMV6	https://www.instagram.com/p/Bz-GjnZnYux/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Huggies Wet Wipes	P	Huggies Lebanon	2017	0:24	SMV7	https://youtu.be/uUqf23WOHJY
Private Cotton Pads	P	Private	2021	0:40	SMV8	https://www.instagram.com/p/CTwyEnBjolx/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Gipsy Products	P	Sanita Gipsy	2021	0:40	SMV9	https://www.instagram.com/p/CNm_HbPFmpT/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Bambi Pants	P	Bambi by Sanita	2021	0:27	SMV10	https://www.instagram.com/p/CRpM8VfgMf_/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Cosmaline Box	H	Cosmaline	2021	0:59	SMV3	https://www.instagram.com/p/CPk1mwzge3W/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Keplex Haircare Set	H	Keplex	2020	0:34	SMV4	https://www.instagram.com/p/CBIFlw7gq17/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Oh My Curls	H	Cosmaline	2020	0:31	SMV5	https://youtu.be/_ZFrKACRRK8
K Keratin Products	H	K Keratin	2015	0:24	TV5	https://youtu.be/BHfMrAMfvh4
Dream Long by Elvive	H	L'Oréal Paris Lebanon	2020	0:15	TV6	https://youtu.be/QRYbGrez4EY
Pantene Oil Replacement	H	Pantene	2012	0:30	TV7	https://youtu.be/effw2Tz7Prg
Herbal Essences Products	H	Herbal Essences	2012	0:40	TV8	https://youtu.be/EzAn1rzRriM
Detox ديتوكس الفحم	H	Head & Shoulders	2021	0:06	TV9	https://youtu.be/iAh9csaeREA
H&S Product	H	Head & Shoulders	2006	0:28	TV10	https://youtu.be/_yl4M_a-3kg

Soft Wave Natural Care Line	H	Cosmaline	2022	0:36	SMV 6	https://www.instagram.com/tv/CZRalXmoa0S/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Soft Wave Natural Care Line	H	Cosmaline	2022	0:33	SMV 7	https://www.instagram.com/tv/CZO2GIjIN98/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Ultra Doux	H	Garnier غارنييه	2021	0:06	SMV 8	https://www.instagram.com/p/CU7RV5aLKOA/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Garnier Olia	H	Garnier غارنييه	2021	0:11	SMV 9	https://www.instagram.com/p/CTXYrE7l8FJ/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Kérastase Products	H	Kérastase	2020	0:46	SMV 10	https://www.instagram.com/p/B_XxqWgJj49/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Tamria تمرية	F/B	Gandour Biscuits	2018	0:45	SMV 1	https://www.instagram.com/p/BeqAptahGZe/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Mastro Wafers	F/B	Mastro	2021	0:22	SMV 2	https://fb.watch/b4m-YdTS2l/
Gandour Products	F/B	Gandour	2020	0:20	SMV 3	https://www.instagram.com/p/CAM2xW_jzEo/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Junior Mini Croissant	F/B	Junior Mini Croissant	2021	0:46	SMV 4	https://fb.watch/b4nq5BKkeq/
Pepsi	F/B	Pepsi	2015	0:07	SMV 5	https://www.instagram.com/p/00B_gsDuHr/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Fantasia Chips	F/B	Fantasia	2019	0:05	SMV 6	https://www.instagram.com/p/B4USlnVpSZZ/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Unica Chocolate	F/B	Unica اونيكا	2016	0:30	SMV 7	https://fb.watch/b4of_OiaL_/
Master Products	F/B	Master Chips ماستر	2019	0:17	SMV 8	https://fb.watch/b4oF7v6osf/
IXSIR Products	F/B	IXSIR Wine	2020	0:57	SMV 9	https://www.instagram.com/p/CGsGsmVp9WT/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link
Rim Products	F/B	Rim Sparkling Water	2018	0:42	SMV 10	https://www.instagram.com/p/BfCH9YrB9F3/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Exhibit 9: The Presence of Pre-selected Indicators in Lebanese TV Ads for Haircare Products

	TV1	TV 2	TV 3	TV 4	TV5	TV6	TV 7	TV8	TV9	TV 10
I1: Primarily male narration of product technicalities?					X					
I2: Verbal or written language or visuals with references to Lebanese or Arab culture, history, or society?				X			X	X		X
I3: Gender segregation?	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A
I4: More Arabic than English/French?		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
I5: Women having childlike attributes or attitudes?										
I6: Use of native slang vocabulary?										X
I7: Women depicted in a private setting?	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
I8: Predominant use of apparent artificial lighting?	X	X					X		X	X
I9: Absence of a clear time and place?	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		
I10: Primary emphasis of product benefits over exclusivity/uniqueness?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Exhibit 10: The Presence of Pre-selected Indicators in Lebanese SMV Ads for Haircare Products

	SMV 1	SMV 2	SMV 3	SMV4	SMV5	SMV 6	SMV7	SMV 8	SMV9	SMV 10
I1: Primarily male narration of product technicalities?										
I2: Verbal or written language or visuals with references to Lebanese or Arab culture, history, or society?	X									
I3: Gender segregation?	X	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	X	N/A	N/A	N/A
I4: More Arabic than English/French?	X	N/A			X	X	X	X	X	X
I5: Women having childlike attributes or attitudes?	X		N/A				X			
I6: Use of native slang vocabulary?		N/A			X					
I7: Women depicted in a private setting?		X	N/A	X	X	X	X	N/A	X	
I8: Predominant use of apparent artificial lighting?		X		X	X				X	X
I9: Absence of a clear time and place?		X		X	X			X	X	X
I10: Primary emphasis of product benefits over exclusivity/uniqueness?		X		X	X	X	X	X		

Exhibit 11: The Presence of Pre-selected Indicators in Lebanese TV Ads for Paper Products

	TV 1	TV 2	TV 3	TV 4	TV 5	TV 6	TV 7	TV 8	TV 9	TV 10
I1: Primarily male narration of product technicalities?			X			X	X			
I2: Verbal or written language or visuals with references to Lebanese or Arab culture, history, or society?		X								
I3: Gender segregation?	N/A		X	N/A	N/A	X	X	X	N/A	X
I4: More Arabic than English/French?		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
I5: Women having childlike attributes or attitudes?				N/A	N/A			X		X
I6: Use of native slang vocabulary?									X	X
I7: Women depicted in a private setting?	X			N/A	N/A		X		X	X
I8: Predominant use of apparent artificial lighting?		X				X				
I9: Absence of a clear time and place?				X	X					
I10: Primary emphasis of product benefits over exclusivity/uniqueness?	X		X	X	X	X		X		X

Exhibit 12: The Presence of Pre-selected Indicators in Lebanese SMV Ads for Paper Products

	SMV 1	SMV 2	SMV 3	SMV4	SMV5	SMV 6	SMV7	SMV 8	SMV9	SMV 10
I1: Primarily male narration of product technicalities?					N/A			N/A		
I2: Verbal or written language or visuals with references to Lebanese or Arab culture, history, or society?	X	X	X	X					X	
I3: Gender segregation?		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
I4: More Arabic than English/French?	X	X	X	X			X	X		X
I5: Women having childlike attributes or attitudes?		N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	
I6: Use of native slang vocabulary?			X					X		
I7: Women depicted in a private setting?		N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	X
I8: Predominant use of apparent artificial lighting?	X		X			X	X		X	X
I9: Absence of a clear time and place?					X	X	X	X	X	X
I10: Primary emphasis of product benefits over exclusivity/uniqueness?	X				N/A	X	X	N/A	X	X

Exhibit 13: The Presence of Pre-selected Indicators in Lebanese TV Ads for Food/Beverage Products

	TV1	TV2	TV3	TV4	TV5	TV6	TV7	TV8	TV9	TV10
I1: Primarily male narration of product technicalities?						N/A			X	X
I2: Verbal or written language or visuals with references to Lebanese or Arab culture, history, or society?	X		X		X	X				X
I3: Gender segregation?						N/A				N/A
I4: More Arabic than English/French?			X		X		X	X	X	X
I5: Women having childlike attributes or attitudes?						N/A				N/A
I6: Use of native slang vocabulary?		X		X	X		X		X	X
I7: Women depicted in a private setting?					X	N/A				N/A
I8: Predominant use of apparent artificial lighting?	X	X	X		X		X		X	
I9: Absence of a clear time and place?						X				
I10: Primary emphasis of product benefits over exclusivity/uniqueness?		X				N/A				X

Exhibit 14: The Presence of Pre-selected Indicators in Lebanese SMV Ads for Food/Beverage Products

	SMV1	SMV2	SMV3	SMV4	SMV5	SMV6	SMV7	SMV8	SMV9	SMV10
I1: Primarily male narration of product technicalities?	N/A	X			N/A		X	X	N/A	
I2: Verbal or written language or visuals with references to Lebanese or Arab culture, history, or society?	X	X			X		X		X	
I3: Gender segregation?	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A			N/A		
I4: More Arabic than English/French?	X	X		X	X		X	X	N/A	
I5: Women having childlike attributes or attitudes?	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A					
I6: Use of native slang vocabulary?	X								N/A	
I7: Women depicted in a private setting?	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	N/A				
I8: Predominant use of apparent artificial lighting?	X	N/A	X	N/A	X	X	X			X
I9: Absence of a clear time and place?	X	X	X		X	X		X		
I10: Primary emphasis of product benefits over exclusivity/uniqueness?		X		X		X		X		X

Exhibit 15: Television Ad Indicator Frequency by Country

	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I6	I7	I8	I9	I10
Egypt	13	11	5	30	3	8	12	13	4	17
Lebanon	6	10	7	22	2	9	13	13	10	19

Exhibit 16: Social Media Video Ad Indicator Frequency by Country

	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I6	I7	I8	I9	I10
Egypt	6	6	5	23	2	1	16	12	18	22
Lebanon	3	11	2	20	2	4	7	17	18	17

Exhibit 17: Haircare Product Ad Indicator Frequency by Country

	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I6	I7	I8	I9	I10
Egypt	5	4	1	15	4	1	15	12	11	16
Lebanon	1	5	4	15	2	2	14	10	13	17

Exhibit 18: Paper Product Ad Indicator Frequency by Country

	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I6	I7	I8	I9	I10
Egypt	2	2	3	19	0	1	7	5	5	16
Lebanon	3	6	5	15	2	4	5	8	8	12

Exhibit 19: Food/Beverage Ad Indicator Frequency by Country

	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I6	I7	I8	I9	I10
Egypt	12	11	6	19	1	7	6	8	6	7
Lebanon	5	10	0	12	0	7	1	12	7	7

Exhibit 20: Total Indicator Frequency by Country

	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I6	I7	I8	I9	I10	Total
Egypt	19	17	10	53	5	9	28	25	22	39	227
Lebanon	9	21	9	42	4	13	20	30	28	36	212
											439

Exhibit 21: Total Indicator Frequency by Ad Type

	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I6	I7	I8	I9	I10	Total
TV	19	21	12	52	5	17	25	26	14	36	227
SMV	9	17	7	43	4	5	23	29	36	39	212
											439

Exhibit 22: Total Indicator Frequency by Product Category

	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I6	I7	I8	I9	I10	Total
H	6	9	5	30	6	3	29	22	24	33	167
P	5	8	8	34	2	5	12	13	13	28	128
F/B	17	21	6	31	1	14	7	20	13	14	144
											439

Exhibit 23: Total Indicator Frequencies at Union of Ad Type and Product Category for Egypt

	TV	SMV
H	42	42
P	28	32
F/B	46	37
Total	227	

Exhibit 24: Total Indicator Frequencies at Union of Ad Type and Product Category for Lebanon

	TV	SMV
H	46	37
P	36	32
F/B	29	32
Total	212	

Exhibit 25

Comparison of Indicator Frequency Across both Ad Types

Exhibit 26

Presence of Indicators in TV Ads

Exhibit 27

Presence of Indicators in SMV Ads

Exhibit 28

Presence of Indicators in Haircare Category

Exhibit 29

Presence of Indicators in Paper Products Category
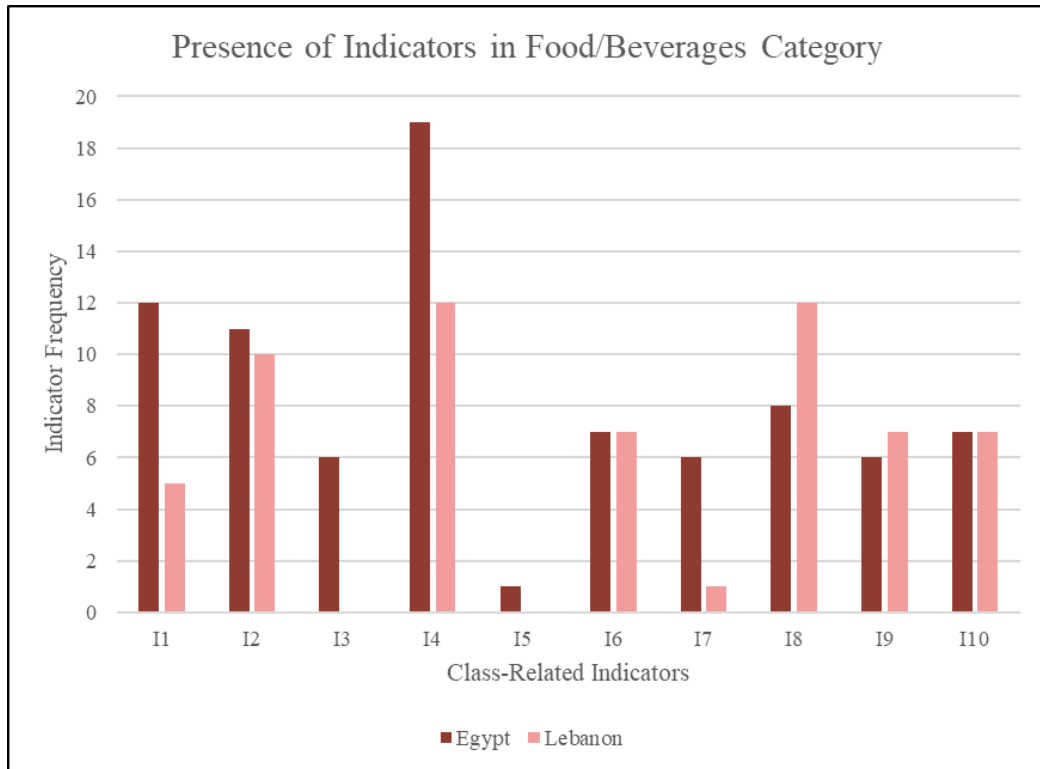
Exhibit 30

Presence of Indicators in Food/Beverages Category
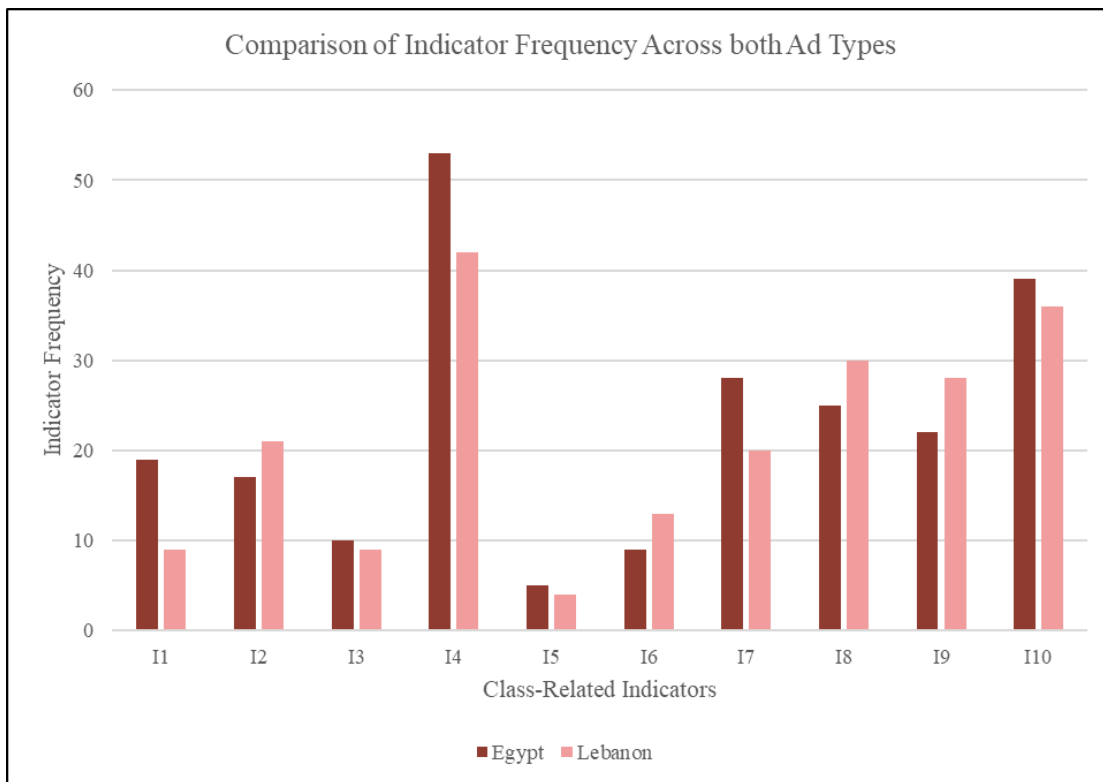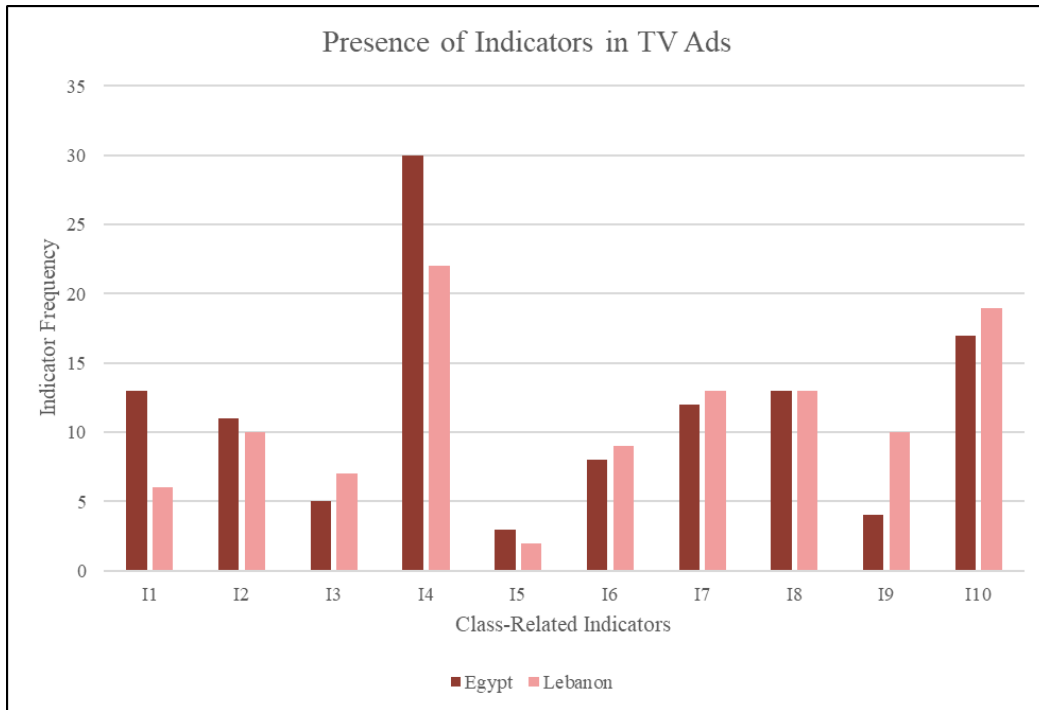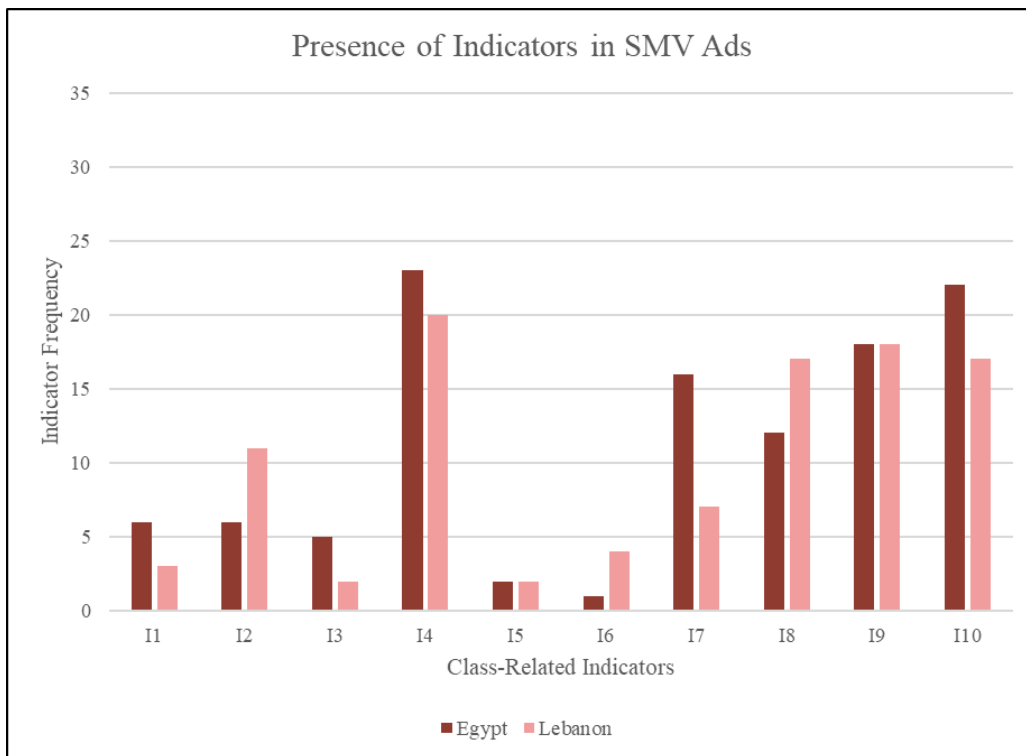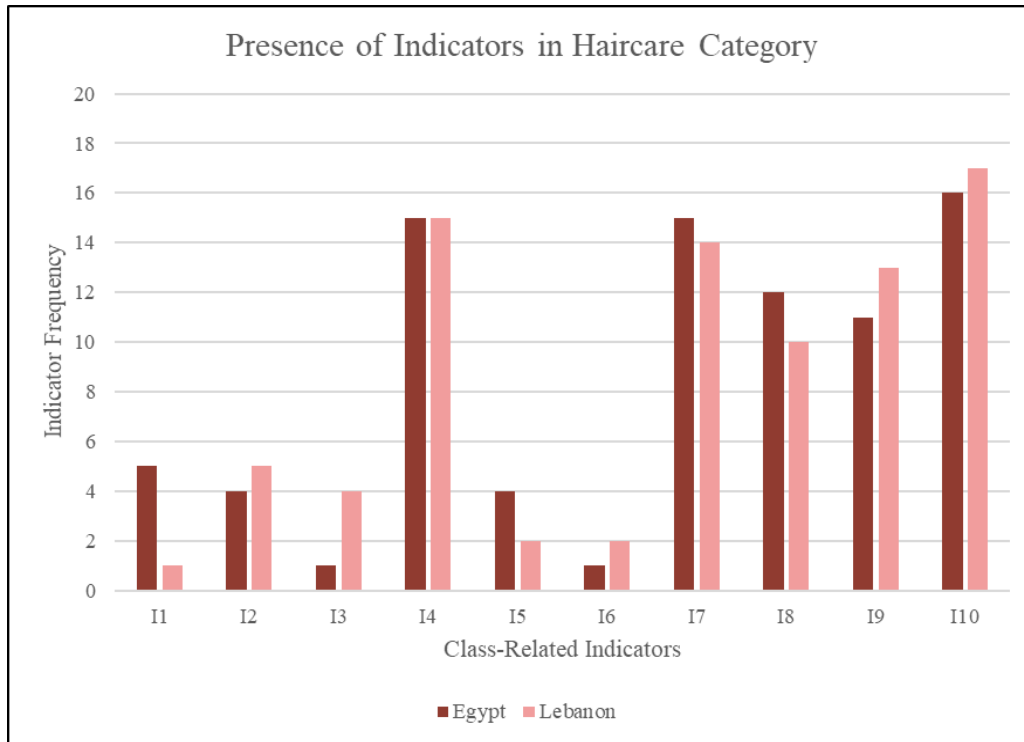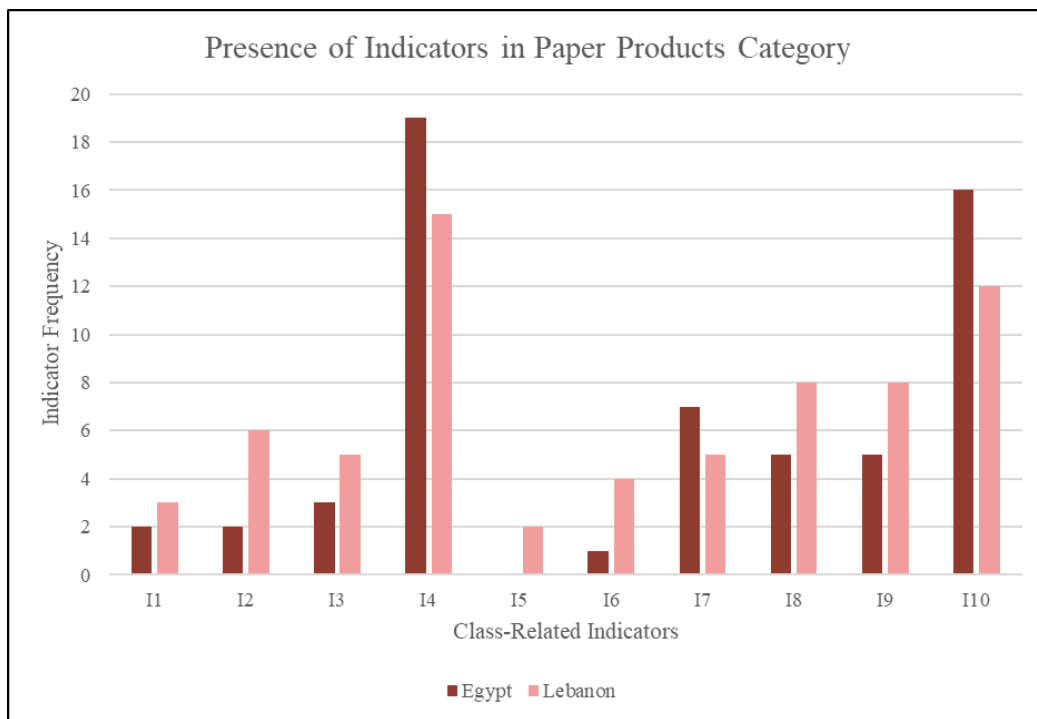
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