

**Media and the Creation of Self-Identity: An  
assessment of how the Kenyan youth construct their  
Self-Identities through consumption of television  
advertisements**

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**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement  
for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in  
Sociology, University of Nairobi**

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**DECLARATION**

I declare that this is my own original work and that it has not been previously submitted to any institution as an academic research thesis.

Joseph Nyamwange Nyanoti

Sign-----Date-----

This thesis has ben submitted with our approval as University supervisors.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This is a study of television advertisements as media texts and the Kenyan youth consumers of these advertisements from a cultural studies perspective. The study investigates the relationships between the meanings encoded by the advertising industry and the meanings the youth decode from these advertisements to construct their self-identities. The study has three main objectives: (a) To deconstruct the ideological/mythical meanings embedded in Kenya's television advertisements; (b) to investigate how the Kenyan youth perceive themselves; how they define their self-identities; and (c) to analyse how youth consumers decode meanings from what is encoded into television advertisements for their self-identity formation.

Available literatures suggest that television advertisements create meanings that resonate with the target audiences. The advertisements project the lifestyles and tastes of the targeted demographics and psychographics of the audiences in order to create a familiarity towards the goods and services advertised. Empirical literatures show that consumption of television advertisements is much more than messages sent from the media houses to the audiences with predictive response, in the linear communication model. Audiences who consume television advertisements, on the contrary, engage these texts, where they are either convinced or they reject the messages of the advertisements. They can also negotiate, taking in part of the message and rejecting the rest of it. This is the main concern of this study, where the research sets out to investigate what meanings are circulated by the advertising industry and how the Kenyan youth engage these meanings to construct their self-identities. The study is conceptualized in the premise that when the youth interact with media content, like television advertisements, they deploy their self-identities, already constructed from traditional socialising agents like family and schooling. After this interaction they are able to redefine their self-identities, which are often reinforced by media interaction.

The study, therefore, employs a combination of semiotic analysis and focus group discussions to gather data on the ideological or hidden meanings in the advertisements and the views of consumers of these advertisements. To ensure credibility of these qualitative data the researcher employs triangulation, where the researcher gathers quantitative data through a survey and key informant interview data from a creator of television advertisements.

From the findings it is concluded that the Kenyan television advertisements are encoded with meanings that resonate with the Kenyan youth, reflecting their tastes and lifestyles. However, it is also concluded that the Kenyan television advertisements are replete with ideological or hidden meanings that reflect the gender, racial and class power imbalances that are characteristic of the patriarchal capitalist society. Another conclusion is that the youth in Kenya, as television advertisement audiences, are unpredictable and therefore hard to classify demographically and psychographically. This makes them appreciate those advertising messages that resonate with their tastes and reject those that are dissonant with their ways of thinking. The thesis of this study, therefore, is that the Kenyan youth know their way around television advertisements and are able to use them for their social, affective and cognitive needs. From these conclusions the researcher makes three main recommendations: (a) There should be large-scale research to investigate the impact the various ideologies embedded in television advertisements have on the Kenyan youth; (b) television advertisements make many claims, some of which are at variance to national cohesion and social change. Large-scale investigations should be conducted to interrogate these claims; and (c) cultural studies in general, and semiotics in particular, should be mainstreamed in the Department of Sociology and Social Work of the University of Nairobi in order to strengthen the study of mass communication from a sociological perspective.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### **Background**

This is a study on television advertising texts and how they are consumed by the youth in Kenya from a cultural studies perspective. According to Pitout (2007) this tradition “studies the social construction (formation) of meaning by institutions and members of the society and their distribution in industrial heterogeneous societies” (p. 276). This study makes an attempt to investigate how television advertisers and youth consumers construct and distribute meanings in the Kenyan mass media milieu.

The advertising industry is the backbone of mass media institutions. Most media houses rely on advertising support for their survival. As Craig (2007, p. 350) puts it “Advertising serves as one of the primary sources of financial support for radio, TV, magazines and newspapers; and most of the free content on the internet.” Most of the content of the mass media must therefore reflect the wishes and interests of advertisers or directly promote advertisers’ products and services. At the same time most advertising relies on the mass media to reach its targets (Hiebert and Gibbons 2000). The rapid expansion of the media industry has therefore seen a parallel proliferation of advertising globally (Mac Chessney 2004). In order to understand the relationship between mass media institutions, like television, and their audiences it is important to understand what Turow (2009) calls the commercial forces behind media materials.

Many studies on advertising and television audiences have often focused on the negative impact of advertisements on television viewers from the “media effects” tradition (Bryant and Zillman 2002; Burton 2010, Deveroux 2003, Hiebert and Gibbons 2000). The present study takes a different view: the social interaction between television advertisements and

youth audiences in Kenya. The aim of the study is to establish how consumption of television advertisements help the Kenyan youth define their self-identities. In order to situate this study in the context of mass media content consumption it is important, first of all, to contextualize the role of the media in society.

### **1.1 The Role of the Media as a Socializing Agent**

In order to contextualise this study in the Kenyan media landscape it is critical to understand the youth's socialisation in general before the mass media come in as socializing agents. Socialization is the way individuals learn skills and knowledge that make them take up and play a rightful role in the society (Michener and DeLamater 1999, Baumeister 1999, Myers 2010). Some of the agents of socialisation include family members (parents and siblings), peers, school, workplace, religion and mass media (Giddens 1994). According to Baran (2010) the mass media create and maintain culture of a society. He posits that the media should be seen from two perspectives: as cultural storytellers and as a cultural forum.

The other side of the coin is that the mass media do not change behaviour but reinforce the people's values and beliefs. As Tan (1980, p. 255) puts it, "What people bring to media is what they take away." For example, children who are likely to behave aggressively after watching televised violence must have had that aggression reinforced in real life, or they must be coming from backgrounds where violence is either the norm or is tolerated. Research in media effects demonstrates that many media campaigns fail because people tend to pay attention to media messages that agree with their own beliefs. The media have always been perceived to be powerful and their influence has always worried parents and moralists over the impact of media messages on, especially, young people (Turow 2009). From the 1830s, when Benjamin Day introduced the penny press,



which heralded the advent of true mass communication (before then, newspapers were accessible to a select elite who could afford them) there has been a misconception that media messages are always influential (Wimmer and Dominick 2006). This is the position taken by proponents of the Magic Bullet theory. Media audience research, however, indicates that people know their way around media messages. Pioneering studies by Herta Herzog and Bernard Berelson in the 1940s revealed that the interaction between media content and audience members depends on individual predispositions (Lowery and DeFleur 1995). According to DeFleur (2010) people's individual differences and cognitive organization lead them to interpret media messages differently:

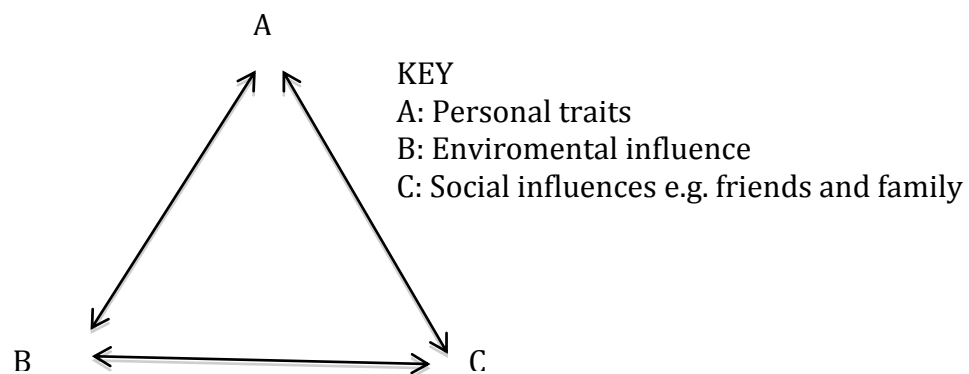
*Individual differences in psychological background and personal cognitive organization ... are the heart of ways in which people attend to and interpret mass communications. These differences are directly linked to personal interests, habits, preferences and tastes that are products of prior learning experiences (p 136).*

Sociologist Joseph Klapper came up with a typology of three ways through which media consumers select content (Baran and Devis, 2009). These are *Selective Exposure*, *Selective Retention* and *Selective Perception*. In *selective exposure* people deliberately pick out what they want to read, watch, listen to or surf in the media. A television viewer who is not interested in news, for instance, switches to other channels for entertainment during prime time news. In *selective retention*, a media content consumer chooses what to remember from the many messages offered by a media outlet because this is what is relevant to his or her context, aspirations and needs. *Selective perception*, on the other hand, is the interpretation a consumer gives a media message to suit his or her predisposition. Baran and Davis (2009, p. 147) call it "The mental or psychological recasting of a message so that its meaning is in line with a person's beliefs and attitudes." This researcher was under no illusion that media content in general and television advertisements in particular are all powerful and therefore likely to influence and change

behaviour of youth consumers. The youth know what they want from television advertising and therefore are able to select what they want for their cognitive, affective, and functional needs. They are likely to select and consume what resonates with their lifestyles and cognitive dispositions.

An explanation to this can be found in Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory. According to this theory causes of human behaviour is a function of interaction between an individual's disposition (traits like cognitive abilities, physical characteristics, beliefs and attitudes), his or her environment (situations like physical surroundings; family and friends and other social influences), and the person's behaviour (motor responses, verbal responses and social interactions). Bandura (1986) calls this model *Reciprocal Determinism*. As Figure 1 shows, a person's personal traits, the environment, and social influences like friends and family, all influence each other in triad reciprocity.

**Figure1.0: Schematization of the relations between the three classes of determinants in a triad reciprocal causation.**



Source Bandura (1986).

Consumption of media messages, according to Bandura (1986), can also help individuals build self-efficacy (how they gauge their personal capabilities). Bandura argues that people build their self-efficacies through “vicarious experiences,” i.e. observing similar situations from other people. He posits:

*People do not rely on inactive experience as the sole source of information about their capabilities. Self-efficacy appraisals are partly influenced by vicarious experiences. Seeing and visualizing other similar people perform a task successfully can raise self-precepts of efficacy in observers that they too possess the capabilities to master comparable activities (p. 399).*

In this argument Bandura (1986) posits that when people watch others they perceive to be similar to them succeed it boosts their self-efficacy. But when such people fail the viewers are also demoralised:

*By the same token, observing that others perceived to be similarly competent fail despite high effort lowers observers’ judgments of their own capabilities and undermines their efforts (p. 399).*

In explaining Bandura’s theory, Tan (1980) says people learn behaviours that they see in other people if those behaviours are rewarded or fail to follow those behaviours that lead to some punishment:

*The main determinant of learning is reinforcement, or the extent to which the organism is rewarded (or punished) for performing the response. The response will be repeated (and therefore learned) if the organism is rewarded. The response will not be repeated if the organism is punished or if the response did not lead to some desired goal (p. 243).*

Young people learn from role models in society and tend to copy those traits that look rewarding. With the media increasingly becoming part of young people’s socialisation the behaviours young people learn from their role models or heroes in the mass media are prevalent. As Tan (1980) puts it:

*Social learning theory is particularly relevant to mass communication because many of the behaviours we learn through modelling are first observed in the mass media (p.244).*

The implication of this argument is that a young man watching his favourite footballer scoring a goal and being cheered by huge crowds in the stadium would like to be like the footballer and copy his traits. This is because the young man has seen his hero (the footballer on television) vicariously rewarded. When he sees the same football hero drinking a Tusker beer surrounded by adoring fans, this young man will take up to drinking since his role model drinks.

As cultural storytellers the media perpetuate the people's values and beliefs since "cultural values and beliefs reside in the stories they tell" (Baran 2010, p. 15). Media workers are expected to tell the stories professionally and ethically while audience members are expected to listen critically and give feedback in order to help the media promote cohesion in society. As audience, Baran (2010) argues:

*We have a responsibility to question the tellers and their stories, to interpret stories in ways consistent with larger or more important cultural values and truths, to be thoughtful, to reflect on the stories' meanings and what they say about us and our culture. To do less is to miss an opportunity to construct our own meaning and thereby, culture (p.15).*

In Baran's (2010) view, if the mass media report stories that carry racial or tribal prejudices or stereotypes it is the duty of the audience, through call-ins, email, telephone texts or letters-to-the-editor and interactive online comments, to point out that this is a deviation from the cultural value of that society so that such messages are withdrawn.

In order to understand the role of the mass media in society and the obligations media workers have to their audiences it is important to point out the context under which the media operate (Miller 2005, Jenkins 2008). Various media outlets operate according to the main objective for which they were established. This often dictates the nature and slant of their contents. As Hallin and Mancini (2004) put it:

*...one cannot understand the news media without understanding the nature of the state, the systems of political parties, the pattern of relations between economic and political interests and the development of civil society, among other elements of social structure (p.8).*

Hallin and Mancini (2004) argue that the media always take the form and the colouration of the social and political structures within which they operate. The authors posit that the types of contemporary media systems take their classification from the pioneering Four Theories of the Press proposed in 1957 by Fredrick Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm. These are the Authoritarian Theory, Communist/Soviet Theory, Libertarian Theory and Social Responsibility Theory (McQuail 2005). There are now three broad categories of media: State-owned, commercially operated and the ones that are a blend between the two.

State-owned media are set up and financed by the state. Their workers are public servants who are paid by the Exchequer like any other civil servants or state corporation staff. However, as journalists the state-owned media workers are expected to deploy their professional skills to inform, educate, and entertain their audiences while at the same time taking care of state interests. They are also expected to portray the government in good light and at the same time play a propaganda role for the government. In most cases the state-owned media are not supposed to take up advertising since all their funding comes from the state (like Britain's British Broadcasting Corporation). However, some government-owned media take up advertising as a source of extra revenue, besides collecting license fees from television and radio owners. In Kenya, the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) is state-owned and operates as a parastatal. All its employees, including journalists, are government employees (Mbeke et al, 2010). The KBC is funded by the National Treasury and generates extra income from advertising

revenue. The KBC has been mandated by The Constitution of Kenya (2010) to report balanced news according to the tenets of journalism.

Commercially-operated media are run as businesses, selling information as a commodity. They disseminate news that is appealing enough to attract large audiences. They also produce entertainment and information programmes that attract audiences who end up becoming loyal fans of these media outlets. Manufacturers, service providers and campaigners place their advertisements on the media on the strength that these advertisements will be seen by a large segment of target audiences. This way, media houses make their money to sustain their industry through advertisement. The bigger the audience for news and programmes for a media house the more advertising revenue it enjoys (MacChessney, 2006). Although media houses in Kenya operate within a legal framework that restrains them from unethical practices, competition for advertisers' attention makes commercial media to run a diverse range of programmes, some of which elicit complaints from the public, moralists like religious leaders; and regulators like the Media Council of Kenya (Mbeke et al, 2010). Most of the media outlets in Kenya operate commercially in radio, television, print and online platforms.

The third category of media is one that is neither state-owned nor profit-oriented; it falls in between the two. Media outlets in this category are expected to play the traditional role of journalism i.e. being the watchdog of society. They are expected to promote moral practices and point out wrongs in society (supporting the state) but remain nonpartisan to either the state or commercial interests (embodied by the advertising industry). In order to meet their production and equipment costs, however, they have to raise revenue from one source or the other. In Kenya, the faiths (Christian and Muslim), which are close partners with the civil society, run this type of media. Family TV and Radio, and Iqbal FM fall

under this category. Community media, which by law are expected to be free of advertising influence falls under this category. Although the first community radio station was set up in Kenya by UNESCO, with support from the government in 1982 (in Homa Bay) community media in Kenya are not yet fully established (Econews, 2008). Ghetto FM, which broadcasts mainly in Nairobi, falls under this category.

Although this study was concerned with commercial media in general and television in particular, it is important to point out that the three media categories exist in Kenya. Given that this is the media landscape within which the Kenyan youth are socialised in it is worthwhile to point out that, if this is the milieu within which the Kenyan youth makes meaning while constructing his or her self-identity, then this identity is likely to be fragmented between meanings circulated by state, commercial and community/religious media. There are a number of theories that support the view that the mass media industry is a socializing agent. From a theoretical framework perspective the media are used as (a) a tool for persuasion (b) entertainment and (c) agenda setting institutions.

#### **1.1.1 The Media as a Persuasion Tool**

The rapid expansion and pervasiveness of the mass media today have made the study of the media as a persuasion tool more critical than ever before (Dainton and Zelle, 2005). The media are used as a persuasion tool by social marketing campaigners and politicians during elections. Governments persuade people to support domestic and foreign policies, including declaring war on other states. The advertising industry sets aside huge budgets to persuade media audiences to buy goods and services and to elect certain politicians (McGuire 2010). Public health campaigners use radio and television messages to persuade people about diseases and their prevention (Severine and Tankard 2005). Social marketing experts also use the media to persuade people to adopt new innovations (Rogers 2003).

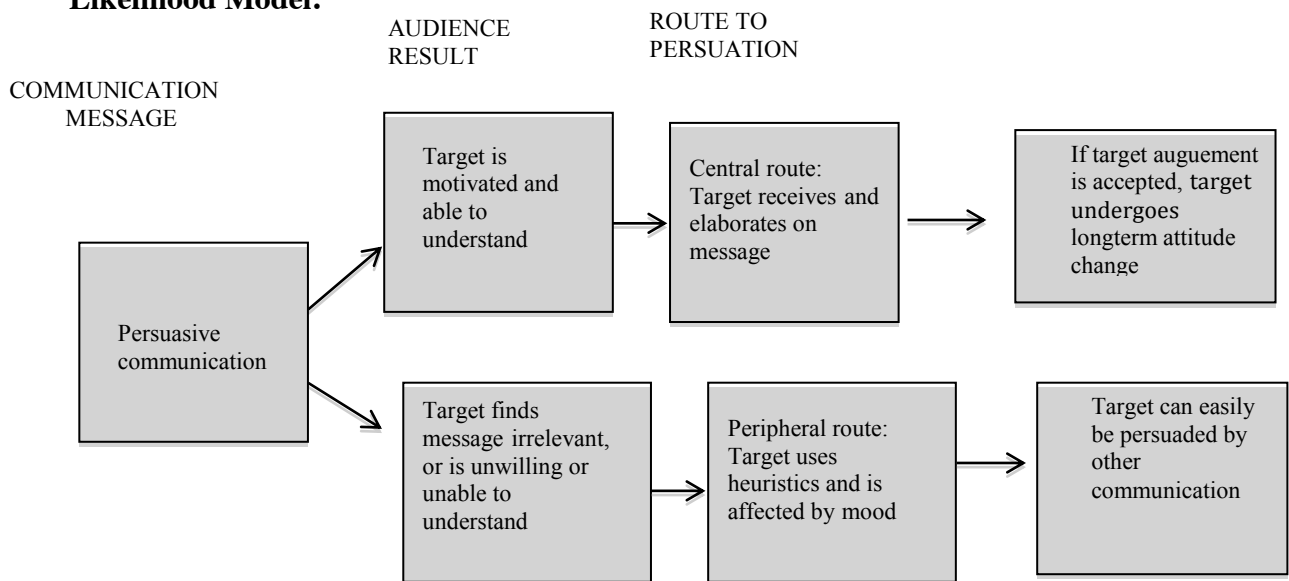
Understanding of how persuasive messages work or fail in the media “is central for surviving in today’s advertising and media-blitzed society” (Dainton and Zelle 2005, p. 103). Persuasion has been defined by Simons (1976, p.21, quoted in Dainton and Zelle 2005, p. 104) as “human communication that is designed to influence others by modifying their beliefs, values, or attitudes.” In other words persuasion is about changing people’s attitudes to respond favourably towards something or somebody.

There are a number of communication theories that explain how the media are used as a persuasion tool. These include Social Judgment Theory, that suggests that people make evaluations (judgments) about messages based on their stance or belief about a certain topic; and Cognitive Dissonance theory, which argues that people take in persuasion messages that support their beliefs and ignore those messages that make them uncomfortable (Dainton and Zelle 2005, Wood 2004 ).

Persuasion theory is graphically captured by Richard Petty and John Cacioppo’s Elaboration Likelihood Model of persuasion (Sparks 2006). According to Petty and Cacioppo there are two ways through which people are persuaded: The central route and the peripheral route. As diagram 2 shows the central route is highly rational and cognitive, where people scrutinise messages and come up with counterarguments to build defences against the persuasion message.



**Figure 1.1: Two routes to persuasion in the Petty and Cacioppo's Elaboration Likelihood Model.**



**Source Horowitz and Bordens (1995).**

Sparks (2006) gives an example of a person receiving a telephone call from a salesperson. The individual prepares to resist the salesperson's message however good it might be because of the negative attitudes people tend to have towards salespeople.

The *central route* is usually difficult for persuaders compared with the second route, the *peripheral route*. In this route certain cues in the message lead people to accept the persuasive proposition. Persuaders using this route always embed their serious messages in entertainment so that the target audience is persuaded while it is being entertained. Since people already know that television advertisements are out to persuade and influence them they tend to build defences against them. According to Sparks (2006) creators of these advertisements use the peripheral route of persuasion:

*If people process an ad as another entertaining bit of media, they may be more willing to change their attitudes or behaviours with little thought or scrutiny instead of carefully weighing the relative advantages of a particular product (p. 151).*

### 1.1.2 Mass Media as Entertainment

Entertainment is one of the major roles the mass media industry plays as a socializing agent in contemporary society. The Uses and Gratifications theory suggests that people reach out to the media for their own use as opposed to being victims of the media's manipulative messages. Researchers in this area are not concerned with the question: "What do media do to people?" but rather: "What do people do with media?" People turn on television, for instance, to satisfy various needs (Tan 1980).

Katz Blumler and Gurevitch (1973), for instance, conducted a research and found that media are used by individuals for cognitive needs (to acquire knowledge, information and understanding), affective needs (emotional, pleasurable experience), personal integrative needs (strengthening self-image), social integrative needs (strengthening social cohesion) and tension release needs (escape and diversion from stress).

Besides storytelling i.e. news dissemination, soap operas and advertising play key roles in the socializing function of the media. Since the 1940s, when soap operas were serialised on radio, the genre has become popular entertainment, especially for women television viewers all over the world. As Rogers (2003), a feminist critic points out:

*Soap operas are the only fiction on television, that most popular of mass cultural media, specifically created for women (p. 476).*

Women viewers find soap operas good entertainment because they resonate with their lifestyles and psychological dispositions. This view is supported by Fiske (2003), who posits that the narrative format in the soap opera "constitute a feminine aesthetic"( p. 470) i.e. it resonates with women's way of doing things. He posits that soap opera creators understand the psychology of women and therefore create a narrative that appeals to women viewers. For instance, he argues, women, unlike men, do not like a

romantic relationship to climax (be concluded) very fast. They enjoy a long courtship period that takes years with a sudden ending (culmination in marriage). A man would want to court a woman and climax in a wedding within days. According to Fiske (2003) this is the structure of all television soap operas like *The Bold and the Beautiful* and *Days of Our Lives*. In fact, *Days of Our Lives*, which has been a subject of study by feminist and Cultural Studies scholars for decades (Rogers 2003, Scodari 2003) has been running on NBC in the USA since 1965. Some of them run for years and women viewers enjoy this extended climax. This makes soap operas socializing agents whose fans use for passing time, emotional release and to have something to discuss with fellow fans (DeFleur, 2010). Audience research within the 21<sup>st</sup> century indicate that young people are avid consumers of soap operas (Quin 2004).

Advertising is another domain for media socialization. When advertising became a major component in the mass media in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, advertisements were meant to alert potential consumers about an existing product or service (Fowles, 1996). As the mass media technology developed and audiences became more sophisticated advertisers also changed the way they presented their content. Contemporary advertisers on television, for instance, are aware that people do not like advertising messages (Tan, 1980). The industry has therefore come up with a way that makes advertising messages attractive and entertaining. According to Turow (2010) although some people claim that they do not like advertisements they can be heard humming jingles from television advertisements.

According to *Daily Nation* Columnist Harrison (2011):

*People love to talk about advertising because great ads capture the imagination...They are part of the currency of everyday life. They help to shape our world...There is nothing better than sharing the gist of a new ad campaign with friends who have not seen it yet (August 30).*

When people meet they are heard discussing a popular television advertisement, while some people appropriate these advertisements for everyday conversations (Fowles, 2006). For instance, the mobile phone company Yu money transfer television advertisement with the rider “Pesa Pap” was appropriated in Kenyans’ daily conversations. For instance, a university student praising a new book collection could be heard saying, “If you read this book, ‘A’ [grade] Pap!” This makes advertising a form of entertainment besides its role of selling goods and services.

### **1.1.3 Agenda-Setting and the Mass Media**

The mass media have always spearheaded major debates until these debates achieve national and even global importance. This is the concern of the Agenda-Setting Theory.

Bernard Chen in 1963 Summarized the Agenda-Setting theory saying:

*The press is significantly more than a purveyor of information and opinion. It may not be successful much of the time in telling its readers what to think but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about (DeFleur, 2010).*

American scholars Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw conducted a research in 1972 and came up with empirical evidence that news stories given prominence on television and newspapers were taken to be the most important by their audiences. This makes individuals to turn to the media for guidance in major discourses. Individuals tend to tailor their attitudes and behaviours to fit those of media presentations. Lifestyles presented in the media, because of their tenacity, come out as the ideal. Television and radio presenters are held with the same esteem as sports and entertainment celebrities. Their mode of dress, the restaurants they go to and generally their likes and dislikes become the ideal for their audience members. The advertising industry is aware of this and these media presenters are used in testimonial advertising (Moskowitz and Schweitzer 2009). Sometimes the presenters endorse products without the audiences

knowing that these are embedded advertisements (Turow, 2008). In Nairobi, for instance, the media have created an impression that living in the “Eastlands” of Nairobi is being poor, lacking taste and even living among criminals and other outlaws (Gathu 1985, Nyairo 2007). When radio presenters in the morning advise their listeners about the traffic situation in the city, they rarely mention roads in eastlands unless there is a major accident that can be a news bulletin item. It is therefore not uncommon to see a young person in Nairobi feeling embarrassed to tell his or her friends that he or she lives in Dandora, the largest low income estate in Nairobi’s eastlands. When *Tusker Project Fame* Season Five (2012) was being shown on Citizen Television viewers realised that all officials were displaying Samsun Galaxy tablets that had just come into the Kenyan market.

### **1.2 The Youth and Self-Identity**

The concept “youth” has been defined as “the period of life between the boundaries of dependent childhood and independent adulthood” (Levi and Schmitt, 1994, cited in Capuzzo, 2001). Kenya’s Ministry of Youth Affairs (2006) defines the youth as those people aged between 15 and 24 years. According to the ministry the youth account for 32 percent of Kenya’s population and 60 percent of the country’s labour force.

This study addressed this category of people and their relationship with television advertisements as they build their self-identities.

The youth in Kenya, like many young people from other parts of the world, face many challenges as they move into adulthood. They face challenges of school or college life; personal relationships, demands from agents of authority like parents or guardians; school administration, religious leaders and the government. In traditional societies there were social institutions that guided young people on how to cope with the challenges of graduating from parental care to social independence.

With urbanization and modern education these structures do not exist anymore. Parents, who are supposed to give guidance, only give advice to children when they are much younger and under their direct care (Lull 1980). As the children join high school, and later college, they gain more and more independence since parents are too busy with their own urban challenges to closely watch over their teenage children. This leaves young people to turn to the mass media to learn values as they construct their self-identities in the society. Television in particular is popular with the youth owing to its rich entertainment menu (Real 1994, Garanzini 1994). Many media audience studies suggest that television is useful as a learning tool and at the same time harmful to youthful audiences who are likely to copy negative values from the medium (McQuail 2005).

Unlike functionalist audience studies, the cultural studies tradition sees the media as a site where social class hierarchies play out in the late capitalism environment. Television, for instance, is a forum where texts circulate dominant ideologies to audiences (Jhally 1987). The audience is however not a vulnerable target like it was perceived in the “powerful effects” tradition. From a cultural studies point of view, the audience member is an active consumer who can choose to accept, negotiate or reject the content of the message (Hall, 1996). This is the premise within which the present study attempts to investigate how young people in Kenya read television advertisements as they construct their self-identities. Self-identity is the perception people have of themselves. This is how individuals evaluate themselves in terms of their skills, personality attributes, occupation hobbies and physical attributes. Social psychologists define self-identity as the various ways of attempting to answer the simple question, “Who am I?”

Simon and Trotschel (2008) have defined the “self” as the interplay between the personal mind and the social environment. An individual, they posit, defines his or her “self”

through self-concept, self-schema, self-complexity, self-knowledge, and introspection. Self-concept is a cognitive representation of oneself that gives meaning to one's experience and relationship with other people while self-schema is a cognitive generalization about the self-derived from past experience that organizes and guides self-related information within an individual's social experience. Self-complexity is a joint function of the number of self-aspects and the degree of their relatedness, while self-knowledge is knowledge about one's own characteristics, abilities, opinions, thoughts, feelings and motives. Introspection, on the other hand, is the examination of one's own thoughts, feelings, motives and reasons for behaving in a particular way.

Self-identity evolves from the Self-awareness theory, which Aronson (2005) summarises as: "The idea that when people focus their attention on themselves, they evaluate and compare their behaviour to their internal standards and values." Cote and Levine (2002) suggest that the best way to study self-identity formation is to adopt the Personality and Social Structure Perspective (PSSP), proposed by House (1977) and Symbolic Interactionism, associated with George Habert Mead (1967), but prefer the PSSP model. According to this model an individual constructs personal identity by synthesising the interaction between personality (the self) and social structure.

The present study investigates self-identity construction among the Kenyan youth consumers of television advertisements guided by the Symbolic Interactionism theoretical framework. Knowledge of how the youth construct their identities helps the researcher link this process to meaning making from television advertisements. The researcher is guided by the question: "How does a Kenyan youth define his or her "self?" The youth in Kenya are often portrayed as a generation in peril. They are portrayed as individuals, who are voiceless and powerless in society; who are rarely taken into account

in official statistics, policies and programmes (GYCA 2006). The youth themselves complain that they are a misunderstood lot, growing up in an environment of too many restrictions from parents and guardians, who don't create role models for them.

Writing in the *Saturday Nation*, Wanja (2010), highlights the problems and challenges facing the country's teens as they go through adolescence. Wanja, who interviewed 50 boys and girls aged between 13 and 19 years in Nairobi estates, churches, parties, and clubs; says teenagers she spoke to had five fears that were associated with peer pressure. These were fears of rejection, failure, and embarrassment; the unknown, and pregnancy (for girls). Girls in her feature's interview complained of too much surveillance from parents while boys said they were confused on how to handle the challenges of adolescence, accusing their fathers of failing to provide mentorship and role modelling. Some of the consequences of parental failure, according to this article, are teenage pregnancy incidents, narcotic drugs and alcohol abuse among boys and girls and withdrawal among the boys, who said they were not sure of what to do with the pressures of adolescence.

Whereas Wanja's article was not generated through a scientific methodology, it points out that there is a problem among the Kenyan youth. Two psychologists the writer spoke to said teens in the age bracket she interviewed were searching for identity, and "are concerned about how to have fun and, depending on the company they are in can experiment on sex and drugs. Girls would like to try out fashions and they want love and affection, although they are more cautious about trying out sex than boys" (January 2). Although this article does not talk about the influence the media could have on the youth it quotes a statement from psychologist Mary Pipher's book, *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls*, which is useful to the present study: "We live in a look-



obsessed, media saturated, girl-poisoning culture...” The implication here is the media’s pervasiveness and preoccupation with beauty, both of which are common in advertising. The present study is not concerned with the possible negative influence of media content on the youth; rather it is concerned with the meanings encoded in media texts and how the youth read these texts in general and television advertisements in particular as they build their self-identities.

The concept “youth” is sometimes used interchangeably with “adolescence” (Abma 1992). Abma isolates two schools of thought that define the theoretical framework of studying young people. Psychologists define the youth as the transition stage between dependent childhood and independent adulthood, while the sociologist perspective concentrates on the social function of the phase when an individual is young (the youth culture). The youth culture can be traced to the 1950s, when young people started to be recognised as a class of their own as opposed to the pre-World War II era, when youth was just a transition phase to adulthood. After the war Britain was economically stable and it looked like a classless society with state welfare. The post-war children who had a lot of resources at their disposal led carefree lives, marked with lavish expenditure and trendy fashions. The “teenager” was soon to win the admiration, even envy, of adults who hitherto looked down upon young people. However, “the youth subculture led to a new social polarity, the generation gap” (Abma 1992, p.101). The rise of the welfare state after World War II had erased the class distinctions and the youth had become a new class, competing with adults (Rowntree and Rowntree 1968, Friedenberg 1969; quoted in Abma 1992).

According to Abma (1992), the rising youth culture led to a lot of interests from psychologists and sociologists keen to study this sub culture. The University of

Birmingham's Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), which is credited with founding the discipline of Cultural Studies, was involved in the study of the youth subculture at inception in the early 1960s (Turner 2003). The CCCS's main objective was to study the youth subculture during leisure time activities. This was one of the concerns of the CCCS with one of the founding theorists, Stuart Hall's Encoding/Decoding model guiding most of the research. The present study is concerned with how the youth interact with media texts in the cultural studies perspective as opposed to "media effects" on the youth, which is more functionalist.

The distinction between cultural studies and functionalist studies of media audiences is brought out clearly by Severine and Tankard (2001). They draw a distinction between cultural studies and the transmission model of mass communication studies, which has been the main preoccupation of scholars of the empirical school. Severine and Tankard quote communication scholar James Currey, who proposed a different model from the transmission model that he called the "ritual model" of communication. The ritual model "is directed not towards the extension of messages in space but towards the maintenance of society in time; not the art of imparting information but the representation of shared beliefs" (quoted on p. 16). According to Currey, "the art of reading a newspaper has less to do with sending or gaining information and more to do with attending a religious mass – a situation in which a particular view of the world is portrayed and confirmed" (p. 16).

While defining the youth, psychologist Erik Erikson came up with eight stages of development an individual goes through from infancy to old age (Cote and Levin 2002, Boeree 2006). According to Erikson all these stages must be followed systematically with their stipulated timeframes if an individual has to grow up with the desired societal values. The most interesting of Erikson's stages is stage five, which deals with

adolescence. According to Boeree (2006), this is the stage that Erikson started with in his analysis and it was what he was interested in most. He says adolescence begins at puberty and continues to about 20 years. An adolescent's task is to achieve ego identity, knowing who he or she is and how to fit in society.

An adolescent takes all he or she has learnt about life and moulds it into a unified self-image. Erikson says that in order for this to happen, society must have "mainstream" respectable adult culture; one with adult role models with clear lines of communication. Society should provide clear rites of passage with certain rituals to distinguish an adult from a child. If a young person lacks these then he or she develops an uncertainty about his or her role in society; what Erikson calls "role confusion." When an adolescent is suffering from role confusion, Erikson argues, he or she has an "identity crisis." Erikson adds that most youth in contemporary societies have identity crises because they lack proper societal training like in traditional societies.

*In primitive and traditional societies, an adolescent boy may be asked to leave the village for a period of time to live on his own, hunt some symbolic animal, or seek an inspirational vision. Boys and girls may be required to go through certain tests of endurance, symbolic ceremonies, or educational events. In one way or another, the distinction between the powerless, but irresponsible, time of childhood and the powerful and responsible time of adulthood, is made clear (Boeree, 2006, p.11).*

In Kenyan traditional societies, the youth were trained on life skills by their parents and grandparents. Grandparents in particular were held as an institution that educated young people (grand children) on how to face the future as adults. The grandparent institution is however disappearing owing to urbanization and challenges of modernization (Ocharo, 2011). As Ocharo (2011: 343) posits:

*The grandparents and the role they played in socializing young members of the community were pivotal in passing on the community values from one generation to another. Grandmothers were responsible for the socializing of young girls and*

*women while grandfathers were responsible for the socializing of young boys and men.*

The author, who conducted a study among the Gusii community of western Kenya, says modernization

*“has introduced a variety of socializing agents, ranging from the media, formal school, and children’s homes to religious organizations, which are preferred by the modern parent over that of their children learning outdated values from their grandparents” (p. 344).*

Ocharo (2011) states that since young parents have moved to towns, leaving their elderly parents in the rural areas, the young parents’ children are separated from their grandparents and this “distance limits the chances of the grandparents playing their role as a socializing agent” (p. 344).

The disappearing grandparent institution as the youth socializing agent in Kenya is aggravated by lack of what Erickson calls “adult role models” within the “mainstream adult culture.” Many young people in Kenya today lack “mainstream” parents who can act as their role models. A large number of young people in Kenya are children of single mothers, who were impregnated as teenagers by young men that were not ready to take responsibility. Nzioka (2009) calls such men “willing fathers” who are “reluctant parents.”

The author, who conducted a study in Makueni District of eastern Kenya, found that young men were willing to impregnate young women but were neither ready to marry them nor encourage them to abort. A majority of respondents (82 percent) of Nzioka’s study disapproved of abortion although they knew their sexual liaison had no commitment beyond the pleasure of it. These respondents gave moralistic/religious reasons why these love children had to be born. According to Nzioka (2009):

*To the vast majority of them, abortion should be resisted because: first, children are perceived as a gift or heritage from God, which should be jealously protected. Second, according to this doctrine, God is sovereign over conception, and therefore, nobody should tamper with that which God created, and third, a child is seen as a blessing while childlessness is a curse (p.31).*

When such children are born from fathers who disappear after conception, and the mothers are hardly adults after birth; they have no fathers around as role models. They inevitably must turn to other socialising agents like the mass media to build their self-identities. Whether the youth in Kenya have an identity crisis or not is not the subject of this study since it is not a functionalist research. However, this background, especially about the decreased roles of traditional agents of socialization, is important in confirming the motivation for the youth to desire to seek non-traditional agents of socialisation. It also points to the lack of inhibition in the youth reaching out to the pervasive media in general and the ubiquitous advertising in particular as a source of self-identity building.

### **1.3 The Youth and Television Advertising**

The urban youth in Kenya have grown up in a culture where their view of the world is shaped by what they consume from television and other mass media. Television as a site for circulating cultural meanings tells the youth how to dress, how to associate with peers and even what to eat (Conrad 2002). Although television is known for its news bulletins and programmes there is another aspect of the medium that viewers take for granted but is what is watched most – advertisements (Parenti 1986).

Advertising as a cultural form is ubiquitous (Fowles 1996, Jhally 2009), pervading every public space. Radio, newspapers and magazines; billboards, supermarket till screens, park seats, websites and sides of buses advertisements, is prove of the pervasiveness of advertising. Television viewers therefore see more advertisements than they could be aware of.

According to cultural studies scholars, television advertisements are potentially more harmful than ordinary programmes that have been the subject of media effects criticism for many years (Longhurst 2005). For instance, advertising has been accused of creating unnecessary demands and unattainable standards among consumers (Fowles 1996, Leiss, Klein and Jhally 1987). In their quest to sell beauty products, for instance, advertisers create a standard of beauty that no woman can achieve by simply using their products. The advertising industry has also been accused of creating a culture of consumerism, leading to frustrations because buyers of commodities never attain satisfaction as the advertising industry cheers them on to buy more.

The dominant imagery of advertising, according to Fowles (1996), is creation of images of idealised people, whose lifestyles, beauty and sense of achievement are unattainable. The people portrayed in advertising are usually engaged in “pleasurable leisure”, “off-hours” activities and they tend to be young, happy and successful (Fowles 1996, p.151).

Besides selling commodities and services, advertisements are laden with ideologies aimed at promoting the ideals of modern capitalism. Television advertising is a sight for circulating inequalities of class, gender and age. Women in the advertising world, for instance, are portrayed as sex symbols (skimpily dressed, in bedtime dress and lying down), whose strengths are portrayed as being in their beauty as opposed to their skills (Killbourne, 2003). They are also portrayed in their stereotypical gender roles as mothers, and wives (and therefore, nurturers). Men on the other hand are portrayed as macho, professional and ambitious. There are no disabled people, old people or fat people in advertisements dealing with consumer goods like cosmetics and food (Fowles 1996).

Arguing that advertising is more of a cultural than a commodity marketing tool Jhally (2009: 418) posits:

*Culture is the place and space where society tells stories about itself, where values are articulated and expressed, where notions of good and evil, of morality and immorality, are defined. In our culture it is the stories of advertising that dominate the space that mediate this function. If human beings are essentially a storytelling species, then to study advertising is to examine the central storytelling mechanism of our society. ...The correct question to ask...what values does advertising consistently push?*

From these analyses there is no doubt that mediated advertisements can influence and manipulate audiences. They can also cause harm to their consumers. The present study however is not concerned with analysing the dangers of advertising to the youth but how the youth read these texts. The study sets out to find out how the Kenyan youth interact with advertisements on television and what meanings they make from this interaction in their self-identity construction process. This is informed by the argument that media are increasingly becoming interactive and message consumers are no longer mere decoders but actively participating readers who negotiate meanings (Wodak and Busch 2004). The youth, who are the subjects of the present study, have been described by Nava and Nava (1996) as “discriminating audiences who sometimes are not easily duped by advertising propaganda (p. 768).”

This view echoes Fiske’s (1987) analogy of television and its audiences. Fiske (1987) does not see the television viewers as vulnerable to content. According to him any message on television is placed there with an ideological motive. However, the reader (viewer) sees three reading positions: the preferred reading (from the producer’s perspective) the resistive position (from the reader’s negative perspective) and the negotiated position (a sort of compromise between the producer and the consumer/reader’s perspective). Fiske (1987) posits that the encounter between the text

and the reader is a sort of negotiation and the final say lies with the reader. Fiske's view is an elaboration of Hall's (1996) Encoding/Decoding model, which is the present study's guiding model.

Television's influence on its audiences has a long tradition in research since television was adopted as a mass medium in the 1950s. Albert Bandura, who first led a team of researchers to come up with the Social Learning Theory in the 1960s concluded that individuals do learn from television (DeFleur, 2010). Bandura, who had earlier conducted laboratory experiments on modelled violence, had to revise his theory in the 1970s, when television had become more developed. He concluded that people learn many patterned actions by directly seeing other people do them and also seeing the behaviour being portrayed in the media. The mediated behaviour, however, must prove to come with rewards to the actor. Bandura points out that "visual" media i.e. television, influences behaviour modelling than print (newspaper) or audio (radio). The present study is concerned with depictions of behaviour and lifestyle on television advertisements and how their youth consumers view them.

This researcher is under no illusion that the Kenyan youth are vulnerable victims of television content in general and advertisements in particular. Audience studies theories like *selective exposure* and *uses and gratifications* support this view. The assumption of this researcher is that the Kenyan youth is an active consumer of television content in general and advertisements in particular for his or her gratifications. The researcher seeks to find out what meanings are encoded into television advertising by the advertising industry and what meanings are decoded by Kenyan youth consumers of these advertisements.



#### **1.4 Statement of the Problem**

In the past 15 years, a number of developments that impinge on youth socialization have taken place in Kenya. Before then, the government fully controlled the electronic media with print media operating within a restrictive legal and political framework (Mbeke et. al., 2010). In 1998, a law, the Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) Act, was passed, paving the way for liberalization of the media industry in the country. Private media operators were allowed to run radio and televisions stations, hitherto a preserve of the state. Expanding the media landscape and especially introducing commercial radio, television and websites meant more media interaction for the youth. It also meant competition among various media, leading to a wide range of programmes that could appeal to young audiences.

In 2005, the government established the Ministry of Youth Affairs to address youth-specific issues.

The Ministry in 2006 released the Kenya National Youth Policy (MOYA, 2006), a blueprint that spelt out the various issues affecting the youth that needed government attention. Section 8.0 of the policy document (Priority Strategic Areas), spells out the broad thematic areas under which the government was to address youth issues. The relevant part to this study is sub section 8.7 under the title “Youth and Media.” Here the Ministry sees the media as detrimental to the youth and the expanded media landscape as an ogre that needs to be tamed before it destroys the country’s youth:

*The proliferation of radio and TV stations witnessed in the country in the recent past has not translated in [sic] commensurate information targeted at the youth. Little positive impact has been registered in terms of behavioural change. Campaigns against HIV/Aids and drugs, and programmes addressing unemployment and other problems affecting the youth have not been strong and aggressive (p. 12).*

The policy also sees the programmes popular with the youth as a form of exploitation that promotes moral decadence among the Kenyan youth:

*Instead, the youth have been exposed with (sic) music and film that only serve to perpetuate Western Culture. And while the Internet is a source of information, it has also served to expose the youth to pornography (p.12).*

Going by Klapper's thesis on how media consumers select and consume media content and Simon and Trotchel's (2004) definition of the "self" then it can be argued that the youth who select and consume television advertisements are basically doing so to reinforce who they are. In spite of making these claims about the possible impact of liberal media content among Kenyan youth the ministry neither cites any study nor states whether this policy statement, which demonises the media wholesale, is informed by any scientific data. This begs the question of whether a correlation exists between what the youth in Kenya consume on television and the way they construct their self-identities.

The concern for the present study is not the entire media content but television advertisements with an aim of finding out whether the youth consumers in Kenya do construct their self-identities based on these advertisements. There are many television advertisements, especially during prime time viewing (7 pm-10 pm) and the assumption is that the youth do consume these advertisements, given their (the advertisements) pervasiveness.

Addressing the issue of self-identity, Fowles (1996) poses the question: "What is the role of the advertising/popular culture mix in the formation of personal identity (p. 198)? Fowles (1996) argues that the best way of understanding the relationship between advertising and popular culture is to study the youth's consumption of media content like advertising and popular culture. He further argues that the project of the 'self' in media's symbol domains like advertising and popular culture, which he sees as complementing

each other, can best be understood by studying the gender identity. To him most advertisements project the self in terms of maleness or femaleness.

*The development of selfhood and the relationship of the symbol domains of advertising and popular culture to that process can become more of an addressable topic if the entirety is momentarily limited to the matter of gender construction, gender being the keel of self-identity (p.199).*

This view is supported by Jhally (1987), who posits that self-identity has many facets but gender is what the advertising industry finds most prominent in defining individuality:

*Gender is only one aspect of human individuality; the political, occupational, educational, creative, artistic, religious and spiritual, and so on are also very important elements of individuals' lives... In modern advertising, gender is probabaly the social resource that is used most by advertisers. Thousands of images surround us every day of our lives that address us along gender lines (p.135).*

Although the gender imagery is obvious in many advertisements, argues Fowles (1996), there is need to investigate how the youth make use of these images:

*The simple availability of mediated gender imagery ... is not informative about the uses the young make of it, because what is sent is never identical to what is received. To understand youths' purposeful exploitation of the imagery requires a change in emphasis from the content that is transmitted to the practices of reception (p.214-15).*

The present study examines the embedded meanings and how the Kenyan youth exploit television advertisements to construct their self-identities.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

This study was guided by three research questions:

1. What ideological/mythical meanings are embedded in Kenyan television advertisements?
2. How do the Kenyan youth define their self-identities?
3. How do the Kenyan youth use television advertisements to construct their self-identities.

## **1.6 Justification**

The youth in Kenya (persons aged between 15 and 30 years) form 32 percent of the total national population and 60 percent of the country's active population (MOYA, 2006). In the past seven years, the government of Kenya has made deliberate initiatives to mainstream the youth in the country's development agenda. According to the *Vijanaa Bulletin* (<http://www.youthaffairs.go.ke/>), the official website of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MOYAS), the ministry was created

*...to address youth concerns in the country. This was grounded on the realization that the Government may not achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals without adequately dealing with the many socio-economic challenges facing the Kenyan youth.*

It is however notable that much as the government is determined to address the various aspects of the youth, there is no evidence that the youth's interaction with the media, as the main site for circulation of cultural meanings, has been addressed. Given that the media in Kenya are now fully liberalised their role in defining the self identities of young audiences is crucial. This is the gap this study seeks to address.

## **1.7 Objectives of the Study**

### **1.7.1 Overall Objective**

The overall objective of the present study is to investigate the meanings circulated by television advertisements and how the Kenyan youth construct their self-identities from these advertisements.

### **1.7.2 Specific Objectives**

- (a) To deconstruct the ideological/mythical meanings embedded in Kenya's television advertisements.
- (b) To investigate how the Kenyan youth perceive themselves; how they define their self-identities.

- (c) To analyse how young consumers decode meanings from what is encoded into television advertisements for their self-identity formation.

### **1.8 Scope of the Study**

This was a study of Kenyan television advertisements as a cultural form and how they were read by their youth consumers. It specifically focused on youth drawn from college and university level, a category of the Kenyan youth who can make independent decisions about their media consumption. This category also represents the youth who are about to join the employment market and therefore are consumers and potential consumers of the many goods and services advertised on television. Besides, this group of youth already has some disposable income either as study loan or pocket money from their parents and sponsors. This study therefore did not investigate the youth in high school since most of them were under parental or school authority control in media content access. It also did not target the out-of-school/college youth because this category of youth is out of the youth culture cluster (Bernard, 1961). The study targeted students from Nairobi city urban setting and the rural setting, represented by small towns of Kajiado and Thika, male and female youth.

### **1.9 Limitation of the Study**

This study analysed sampled advertisements as they appeared on television as cultural artefacts. The impact the advertisements had or were likely to have on their audiences was not be analysed. This is a limitation because the researcher could not have a chance to understand the effectiveness of these advertisements as intended by their creators. The researcher interviewed sampled respondents in focus group discussions on how they viewed these advertisements. The researcher did not make any attempt to measure the impact of the advertisements on these consumers' behaviours. This is a subject of behaviour change investigation, which does not fall under the cultural studies strand of

audience research. The study findings are also limited to what the respondents reported to the investigator. This is a major weakness in focus group discussions as a method because some respondents can give responses they think the researcher expects (Wikinson, 2009; Kamberis and Dimitriadis, 2005), leading to the problem of Hawthorne effect.

### 1.10 Definition of Key Terms

**Consumption:** Viewing and making meaning from media content like television advertisements

**Cultural Studies:** An academic discipline where the media industry is seen as a site for social power struggle

**Focus group discussion:** A group of about ten people discussing a research problem

**Judges:** A group of youth evaluating television advertisements to pick those most ideal for youth audience.

**Key informant interviews:** Research respondents involved in one-on-one interview

**Media:** Channels of communication through technology e.g. newspapers, radio and television.

**Myth:** A commonly held believe in a culture but may be unfair to some members of the culture

**Reading:** Viewing and interpreting television advertisements

**Rural setting:** A small town outside Nairobi (like Kajiado and Thika), where television reception is clear.

**Self-identity:** The image individuals want to project about themselves

**Television advertisements:** Persuasive messages on television

**Youth:** young people in college or university who watch television advertisements

### **1.11 Thesis Structure**

After chapter one that gives the introduction and background to the study, including definition of key terms, this thesis comprises five other chapters followed by references and appendices sections. Chapter two presents the literature review, where theoretical and empirical literatures on the youth television advertising and self-identity are reviewed in order to come up with the knowledge gap that this study sought to fill. The chapter ends with a conceptual framework that guided this study.

Chapter three presents the methodology, where the researcher lays out the research design that enabled him to collect data. Before data collection the researcher sampled youths whom he used as judges to select a sample of television advertisements best suited for youth consumers both in urban and rural setting in Kenya. These are the advertisements that the researcher subjected to semiotic analysis and focus group discussion to generate qualitative data. The chapter also presents the design of triangulation where the researcher explains how data was collected through a survey and key informant interview and how the two sets of data i.e. the main qualitative data and the triangulation quantitative data were analysed.

Chapter four presents all the findings of the qualitative data which was the main research design of this study and data from the survey that were aimed at giving credibility to the study (Lindlof and Taylor 2011).

Chapter five discusses the findings of the study by showing the implications of the various semiotic analyses of the television advertisements as well as the various readings the participants of the focus group discussions gave them.

Chapter six presents the conclusions drawn from the various findings in the study as discussed in chapter five. The chapter concludes by giving recommendations on how the findings of the present study can be utilized in academic and advertising industry circles.



It also recommends the need for further research in this study's topic area. Chapter six is followed by references and appendices section.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter starts off by reviewing empirical literature in the research area i.e. television advertisements, the youth, and self-identity. It then looks at the theoretical literatures in media cultural studies that are relevant to the present study. The chapter also gives an overview of the theory of Symbolic Interactionism, which forms the theoretical framework of studying self-identity in the context of consumption of cultural artefacts like television advertisements. The chapter concludes by laying out the conceptual framework guiding this study.

### **2.1 Empirical Literature**

This is a study of the meanings embedded in Kenya's television advertisements and how the youth make meaning from these advertisements to build their self-identities. Available empirical literatures suggest that television advertisements are laden with ideological meanings (Hall 2003) intended to convince consumers to buy the products or services advertised. The literatures also suggest that television audiences do attend to advertisements and make meanings out of them, sometimes subverting the meanings intended by the advertisers (Abercrombie and Longhurst 2003).

Bernerd, Matu, and Oketch (2013), who studied 10 advertisements on Kenyan television and interviewed supermarket shoppers that were also television viewers, concluded that television advertisements manipulate meaning through words and images to the extent that the interpretation that viewers make are to the advantage of the advertisers. They also concluded that advertisers manipulate viewers to promote consumerism and globalization. The researchers believed that advertisements have manipulative power and the researchers attempted to proof that. They did not, however, investigate the self-identities of the respondents to determine why they were influenced by the advertising

messages. Advertisers usually design messages according to the prevailing cultural codes and the lifestyles of the target consumers (Harms and Kellner 1991). Berger (2011) posits that people's perceptions of themselves are connected with the way advertising helps them shape their identities. According to Berger (2011),

*“...brands [in advertising] are signifiers that we use to help define ourselves to others...we can say that we are the brands we assemble to forge a public identity” (p. 232).*

Correa (2011) believes that television advertisements use existing cultural codes to stereotypically construct gender identities. Correa (2011), who studied television advertisements appearing in Indian television stations over a six-month period, concluded that the dominant images of masculinity and femininity define the ideal man and ideal woman in Indian television advertisements. Her study could, however, not state how effective these messages were in influencing the meaning-making processes of the viewers since the researcher did not go beyond the semiotic analysis to investigate the target consumers (Hall 1996). Mayr (2013) posits that a semiotic analysis unfolds the obvious and hidden meanings in a television advertisement. After conducting a semiotic analysis on beer television advertisements Mayr (2013) demonstrated how codes and context within social relations play an important role in creating meaning. The study, which was aimed at using semiotic analysis as a tool to teach culture to foreign language students in Germany, however, failed to interview consumers of these advertisements as a way of understanding their self-identities and gauging the meanings created from semiotic analysis with what consumers decoded as meaning. This combination has been attempted by Kates, Shaw and Garlock (1999). In their study of advertisements in women's magazines, they combined textual analysis with long interviews with consumers of these advertisements (women readers of the magazines). They concluded

that in order to understand the relationship between the ideologies and discourses in women's magazines you must talk to the women who consume them.

The issue of youth and identity is a rich area in media and cultural studies research (Craig 1998, Edensor 2002, Hermes 1999, Shields & Heineken 2002). Charles (2003) conducted an experimental study among Jamaicans, who bleached their skins to look brown or less black, and concluded that the concept of identity is in a state of flux. In the study the researcher concluded that Jamaicans did not want to change the colour of their skins because of self-hate but because of a number of reasons, including self-hate. He concluded that there was no single black identity but a range of black identities. The present study, whose project is television advertisements and self-identity, combines semiotic analysis of the texts (television advertisements) and interviews with consumers of these advertisements.

## **2.2 Theoretical Literature**

### **2.2.1 The Meaning of Cultural Studies**

Cultural studies is an academic discipline that evolved out of Marxism but whose concern is the relationship between culture and power (Hansen 2002, Jordan and Weedon 1995). In other words how the dominant group in society uses culture to influence the subordinates. Italian theorist Antonio Gramsci calls this use of culture as tool for subjugation, *hegemony* (Kellner 1997). Cultural Studies is a multi-disciplinary field that borrows from many other disciplines, including literature, linguistics, sociology, and mass communication (Stevenson 2002). As Barker (2012) puts it, cultural studies

*has always been a multi- or post-disciplinary field of enquiry, which blurs the boundaries between itself and other 'subjects'. Yet cultural studies cannot be said to be anything. It is not physics, it's not sociology and it's not linguistics, though it draws upon these subject areas (p.5).*

### 2.2.2 Evolution of Cultural Studies

Cultural studies evolved in Britain in the 1950s with the writings of Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams. In his writing Williams, for instance, advocated for the recognition of cultural forms such as the arts as symbolic goods and values of ordinary people in their everyday lives (Bark 2012, Real 1996). Tomaselli (1995) traces the roots of cultural studies to the Frankfurt School whose scholars blamed the mass media for the failure of the proletarian revolution to overthrow the capitalist system as predicted by Karl Marx. According to Tomaselli (1995):

*The school found the answer to social subordination in the 'mass' influence of the 'culture industry.' By this they meant the then, modern mass media of print, radio, music and cinema. Consumed on a large scale, this industry provided a centralised mechanism for socialisation. But at the same time, it created an illusion of individual freedom of choice (p.5).*

This according to Tomaselli (1995, p. 5) this is what ultimately provided “the germination in the 1950s of ‘cultural studies’ in the sense that the question of power was being addressed on a cultural platform.

However, it was the establishment of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at the University of Birmingham by Richard Hoggart and Stuart Hall in 1964 that institutionalised the study of cultural studies as an academic discipline (Samova, Porter and McDaniel 2010). The work of CCCS was inspired by the writings of Italian intellectual Antonio Gramsci, who linked media cultural production to the support the fascist government in Italy received from the working class despite their deprivation. Through studies in youth subcultures the CCCS scholars demonstrated how culture came to constitute distinct forms of identity and group membership. Kellner (2003) captures the contribution of CCCS scholars in making cultural studies a mainstream discipline in communication studies:

*Through a set of internal debates, and responding to social struggles the movements of the 1960s and 1970s, the Birmingham group came to focus on the interplay of representations and ideologies of class, gender, race, ethnicity and nationality in cultural texts, including media culture...They also focused on how various audiences interpreted and used media culture differently, analysing the factors that made different audiences respond in contrasting ways to various media texts (p.10).*

### **2.2.3 Hegemony vs. Ideology and Self-Identity**

Hegemony has been described by Lull (2003) as “the power of dominance that one social group holds over others” (p. 61). The term hegemony was coined by Antonio Gramsci, who fell out with Italy’s fascist government over his Marxist thoughts. According to Gramsci the working class and other subordinate groups are ruled by the dominant group with their (the subordinates’) consent. Instead of using coercive power like the police, military or the legal system the ruling elite use socialising institutions like schools, religion and the mass media to make their ideologies look part of everyday culture (Hall 1996, Rose 2012, Thomson 1990, Wasserman 2008).

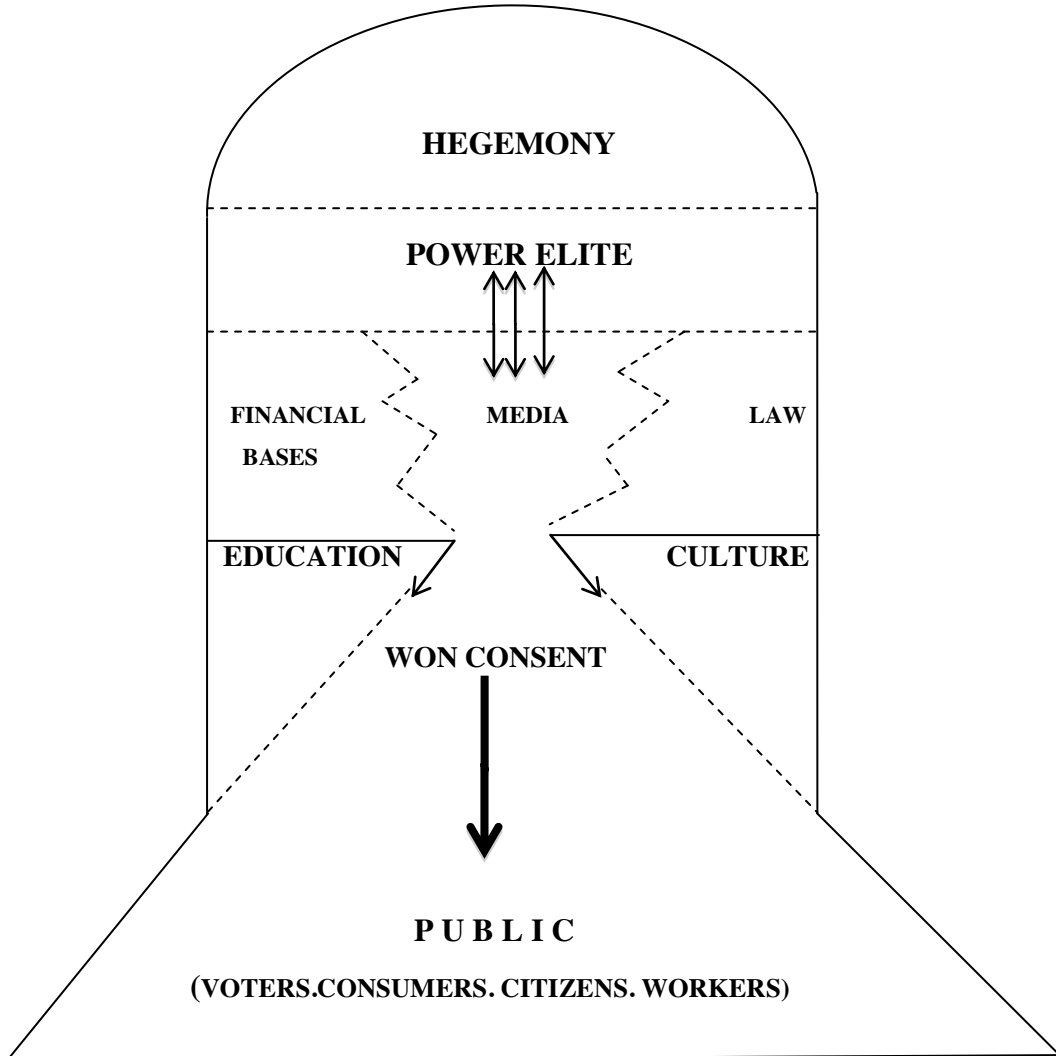
According to the cultural studies perspective the capitalist system uses ideology to reproduce social relations of domination and subordination (Katz 2009). Media texts reproduce social inequalities of race, gender and class but because of hegemony consumers of these texts see the inequalities as normal or common sense (Hansen et al. 1996; Haywood and Ghail 2003; Sichru 2004, Woodward 1997, Crane 2003). This is because, as Kellner (2003) points out,

*Ideologies make inequalities and subordination appear natural and just, and thus induce consent to relations or domination (p. 11).*

Watson (2008) describes hegemony as “rule by won consent.” Watson (2008), who has come up with a model to demonstrate how hegemony operates, posits that the media are the most powerful agencies in hegemonic control:

*Of all the agencies of hegemonic control the media are generally perceived to be the most powerful...(p. 22).*

**Figure 2.1: Features of hegemony.**



**Source Watson (2008).**

It is from this point of view that Jhally (2009) views television advertisements, like any other media texts, as a creation of the capitalist system, whose aim is to sell not only goods and services but also lifestyles and capitalist ideologies. If that is the case, then ideology in advertising can be understood by critically analyzing advertisements.

It has, however, been argued that the media do not create people's identities but reinforce and circulate the values and lifestyles already existing in that culture (Harms and Kellner 2006). According to Jhally (1987):

*The job of the advertiser is to understand the world of the segmented audience, so that the stimuli that are created can evoke the stored information: it has to resonate with information that the viewer possesses (p. 129).*

If society views women as sex objects, for instance, this is the view that society's media project to their audiences. Wasserman (2008, p. 248) posits that when analyzing media construction of identity "a link should be made to how these identities also circulate in other discourses." Williamson (1978) argues that the advertising industry uses ideology to structure the way we identify with ourselves using the goods and services advertised in the media. According to Williamson (1978):

*Advertisements are selling us something else besides consumer goods: in providing us with a structure in which we, and those goods, are interchangeable, they are selling us ourselves (p. 13).*

Williamson (1978) argues that trying to understand the relationship between advertised goods and their target audiences is trying to understand self-identity. The present study is concerned with two aspects of television advertising as a cultural form. The first is to understand the ideology or mythic meanings encoded in the advertisements by the advertising industry. The second is to investigate how youth consumers read these texts; the meanings they create from them to build their self-identities.

#### **2.2.4 Media Symbols, Social Reality and Representation**

The project of cultural studies is about representation (Barthes 1967, Gastelum 2009, O'Barr 2006, Thomas 1995). While discussing representation Hall (1997) argues that representation is at the centre of cultural practices, given that "culture is about shared meaning" (p. 1). For meaning to be exchanged, Hall (1997) posits, it must have a medium and this medium is language:

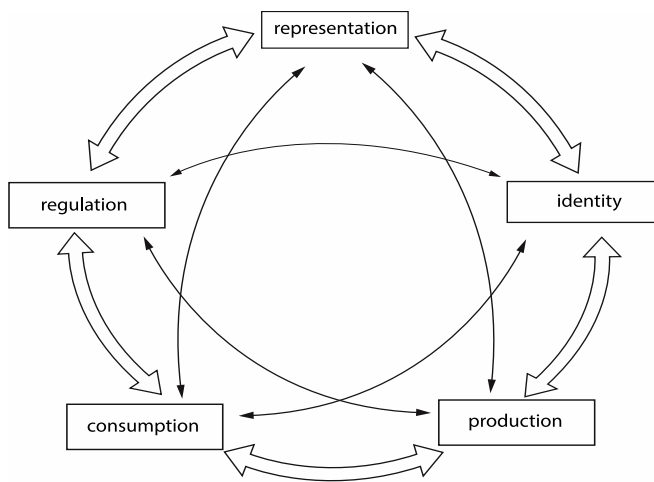


*...language is central to meaning and culture has always been regarded as the key repository of cultural values and meanings (p.1)*

Hall (1997) goes ahead to explain what constitutes language in cultural production and exchange of meaning:

*In language, we use signs and symbols – whether they are sounds, written words, electronically produced images, musical notes, even objects – to stand for or represent to their people our concepts, ideas and feelings (p.1).*

**Figure 2.2: The Circuit of Culture.**



Source, Hall (1997).

Television advertising is about representation. The goods and services presented on television are supposed to represent people's everyday lives so that prospective buyers can construct their identities through the goods' consumption (Moog 1990). The most accurate way of studying the representation of a media artefact like a television advertisement is through semiotic analysis, a structuralist approach that evolved out of linguistics and literary criticism (Eco 1979, Mayr 2013, Noth 1995, Weston 1998). Reid (2008) posits that this is the best way to understand the various meanings embedded in media texts:

*As a mode of analysis, the semiotic approach allows for the detailed deconstruction of the representation in order to uncover the sign's various meanings at the connotative, mythical and ideological levels. Semiotics has allowed us to rethink how meanings are produced and read in representations, be they visual, written or verbal (pp. 215-216).*

This echoes the views of Leiss, Kline and Jhally (1990), who see advertisements as complex representations of society:

*Looking at advertisements today is a bit like walking through a carnival hall of mirrors, where the elements of our ordinary lives are magnified and exaggerated but are still recognizable. That is why semiology is so appropriate, for it is about trying to answer some very basic questions concerning meaning: 'How is meaning reconstituted both by advertisers and viewers of messages?' More simply: 'How do ads work?' Semiology is the study of signs. Signs are things that have a meaning that communicate messages to people (p.200).*

### **2.2.5 Semiotics and Television Advertising**

Semiotics is the discipline that studies signs and their functions in the society (Bignell, 2002). It is also known as 'semiology' (Rose 2012) but 'semiotics' is commonly used. The present study prefers to use 'semiotics.' The founding of semiotics, as a field of study, is associated with two scholars: French Linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and American pragmatist Charles Sanders Peirce in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. According to Saussure signs are made of sounds and images, which he calls signifiers and these sounds and images, which bring to mind concepts of things, he calls them *signifieds* (Berger 2000, Copley and Jansz 1998, Bignell 2002).

Peirce proposed that there are three types of signs: icons, indexes and symbols (Watson 2008,). An icon, Watson posits, is a signifier that has a direct resemblance with the signified. For example a photograph is an icon of the object that was photographed. An index is a signifier that has a direct relationship (one that shows the presence of the other) with the signified; for example smoke is an index of fire. A symbol is a signifier that has an arbitrary relationship with the signified; it is only associated by convention or shared cultural practices. For instance, a cross is a symbol of Christianity among the people who understand that faith.

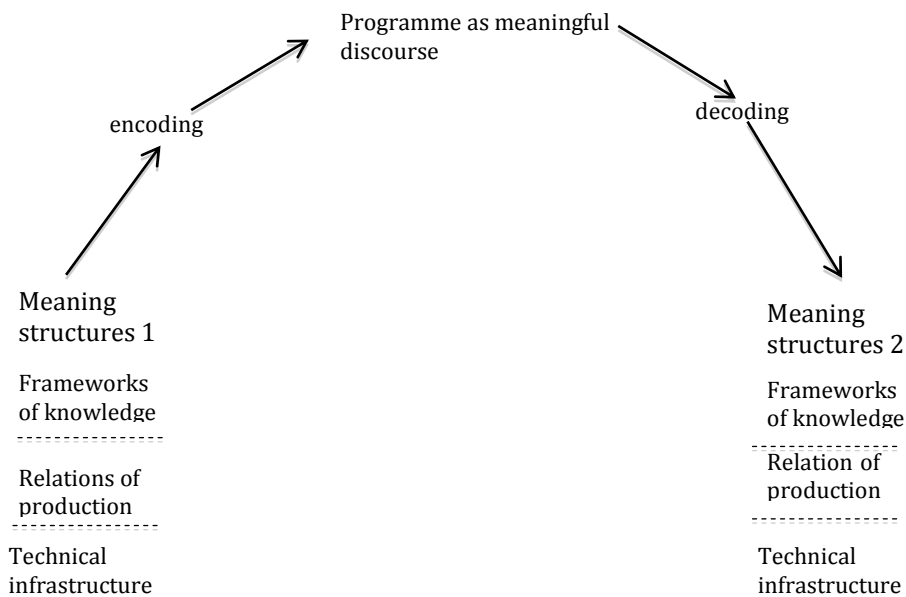
Using Saussure's theory of signification, French critic Roland Barthes identified three levels of significations: Denotation, connotation and myth. Denotation is the obvious meaning, which everybody can see in a text. Connotation is the hidden meaning that needs interpretation in a text. Barthes, who was the first theorist to apply semiotics in analysing advertisements, illustrates this by analysing the cover photograph of a French Magazine, *Paris Match*, he finds at a barber shop (Hall 1997, Laughty 2010, Deacons et al. 1999). In the photograph, there is a Black soldier saluting the French flag. Barthes sees this as a myth where the magazine wants to claim that there is no colour discrimination in France since even the military has loyal Blacks among its ranks.

A television commercial showing a young mother jogging with her son in the evening (in the Dettol television advertisement) is a myth; it looks natural but it is not universal at all in the African context. As Hall (1996) points out creators of a television text use semiotic knowledge to create the content with preferred reading "with the institutional/political/ideological order imprinted in them" but the viewer also employs semiotic competence to engage the text. Hall has demonstrated this through his classic model, Encoding/Decoding.

#### **2.2.6. Stuart Hall's Encoding/Encoding Model**

The Encoding/ Decoding model proposed by Hall (1996) has been seminal in the study of cultural studies. The article that was written in reference to television content consumption criticises the "sender/message/receiver model of communication for "its concentration on the level of message exchange" (p.51). The encoding /decoding model summarises the processes, which Hall (1996) calls "moments" in the creation and consumption of a media text like a television advertisement. These moments are "production, circulation, distribution/consumption and reproduction" (p. 51).

**Figure 2.3: Encoding/Decoding model.**



**Source: Hall (1996).**

Watching a television advertisement, for instance, is not simply a consumer receiving a televised message, probably, with a predictable feedback. It is a complex processes that involves a technical team creating an advertisement that takes into account the knowledge levels and relations with television advertisements of the audience, and the genre. This text is laden with the preferred/dominant meanings, which are encoded into the television watching experience (Nightingale 2006, Goldberg 2009). The viewer on the other hand decodes meaning according to his or her predisposition and world view. The meaning created by the consumer is discreet from the meanings encoded by the producers. This model in Hall's (1996) words revolutionalises the way of doing television audience research: The model, he posits,

*...has already began to transform our understanding of the older term 'television content.' We are just beginning to see how it might also transform our understanding of audience reception, 'reading' and response as well (pp. 54-55).*

The encoding decoding model sums up the essence of cultural studies in that it advocates for semiotic analysis of the text by readers who must employ the linguistic (including

visual) signs and codes to the various signs to get the cultural meaning as they perceive them in their meaning-making moments.

### **2.2.7 Strategies and Tactics of Everyday Life**

In cultural studies ordinary people use tactics to survive the strategies of the powerful in the capitalist society. De Certeau (1984) posits that ordinary people use guerrilla tactics to create their own *spaces* within the *places* constructed by the powerful. They use their own tactics to make do with the strategies of the system. He compares the subordinates with readers who invade an author's text and turns it into their own:

*A different world (the reader's) slips into the author's place. This mutation makes the text habitable, like a rented apartment. It transforms another person's property into a space borrowed for a moment by the transcient. ... as do pedestrians, in the streets they fill with forests and their own desires and goals. In the same way the users of social codes turn them into metaphors and ellipses of their own quests (xxi-xxii).*

De Certeau (1984) posits that although oppressed and ignored by the powerful the subordinates have their own power over the dominant class in the capitalist society. In his celebrated article *Walking in the City*, de Certeau (1984) compares someone on top of New York's tallest sky scraper (the World Trade Center), who sees the whole city from the top, with pedestrians who walk through the streets and alleys and concludes that the walkers understand the city better than the aerial "God-like" viewer:

*The ordinary practitioners of the city live down "below," below the thresholds at which visibility begins. They walk – an elementary form of this experience of the city; they are walkers... whose bodies follow the thick and thins of urban "text" they write without being able to read it (p. 93).*

Fiske (1995) points out that de Certeau's concern in the tactics of everyday life is how the ordinary people use their own trickery to manipulate what the systems of the powerful provide, to create their own spaces. In other words, "people have to make do with what they have" (p. 34). The emphasis here is the power of the subordinate and the capitalist system's point of weakness. Using de Certeau's argument Fiske (1995) posits that consumers of commodities of the capitalist system use these commodities as raw

materials to produce cultural meanings for their own benefits (to build their self-identities):

*Every act of consumption is an act of cultural production, for consumption is always the production of meaning. At the point of sale the commodity exhausts its role in the distribution economy, but begins its work in the cultural. Detached from the strategies of capitalism, its work for the bosses completed, it becomes a resource for the culture of everyday life (p.35).*

The present study has attempted to investigate how the youth, a subordinate group, owing to their class in terms of age, view television advertisements, given that these texts were creations of the (dominant) economic system. According to Fiske (1995) advertisers try to control commodities' cultural meanings (to build their self-identities):

*Advertising tries to control the cultural meanings of commodities by mapping them as tightly as possible onto the workings of the financial economy (p.29).*

An investigation on how the youth decode meanings circulated by the advertising industry through television advertisements has never been undertaken in Kenya. The present study makes an attempt to close this knowledge gap.

### **2.3 Theoretical Framework**

This study is informed by the theory of Symbolic Interactionism. This theory was developed by social psychologist George Herbert Mead in the 1930s to demonstrate how people use culture to learn (Littlejohn 1996, Baran and Davis 2003). Although Mead's theory was concerned with interpersonal communication it later became useful to the study of mass media audiences. This theory did not have a stable name until 1969, when Herbert Blumer, a former student and long time associate of Mead's, gave it its present name. It is after this that mass communication researchers started applying it in their investigations. Michael Solomon (1983, quoted in Baran and Davis, 2003) summarises the parts of the theory that are relevant to media research into four points:

- a) Cultural symbols are learned through interaction which are then mediated through that interaction.
- b) The “overlap of shared meaning” by people in a culture means that individuals who learn a culture should be able to predict the behaviours of others in that culture
- c) Self-definition is social in nature; the self is defined largely through interaction with the environment.
- d) The extent to which a person is committed to a social identity will determine the power of that identity to influence his or her behaviour. (p. 241)

The central concern of symbolic interactionism is not how people mentally create meanings and symbols but how they learn them when they socialize with other people (Ritzer 1988). According to this theory, people learn meanings and symbols within their social contexts (family members, friends, colleagues). For instance, people who meet at a place of worship have agreed that a cross stands for Christianity. The key words in this theory are “symbols” and “interaction” in an individual’s (self) identity creation. This makes it relevant for the present study whose task is to understand how young consumers of television advertisements build their self-identities from the experience of interaction.

#### **2.4 Conceptual Framework**

The main objective of the advertising industry is to sell goods, services, and ideologies. Traditionally advertisers used to design messages whose aim was either to alert the prospective consumer about the product or to describe the qualities of a product (Fowles 1996). But not any more. From the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century advertisements do much more than that. Besides selling goods and services advertisements sell lifestyles and identities (Williamson 1978). Advertisements also sell lifestyles that reflect the desired standards

for the target consumers as Danesi (2004, p. 262) puts it, “they [the advertisements] are constructed to create signification systems for the product.”

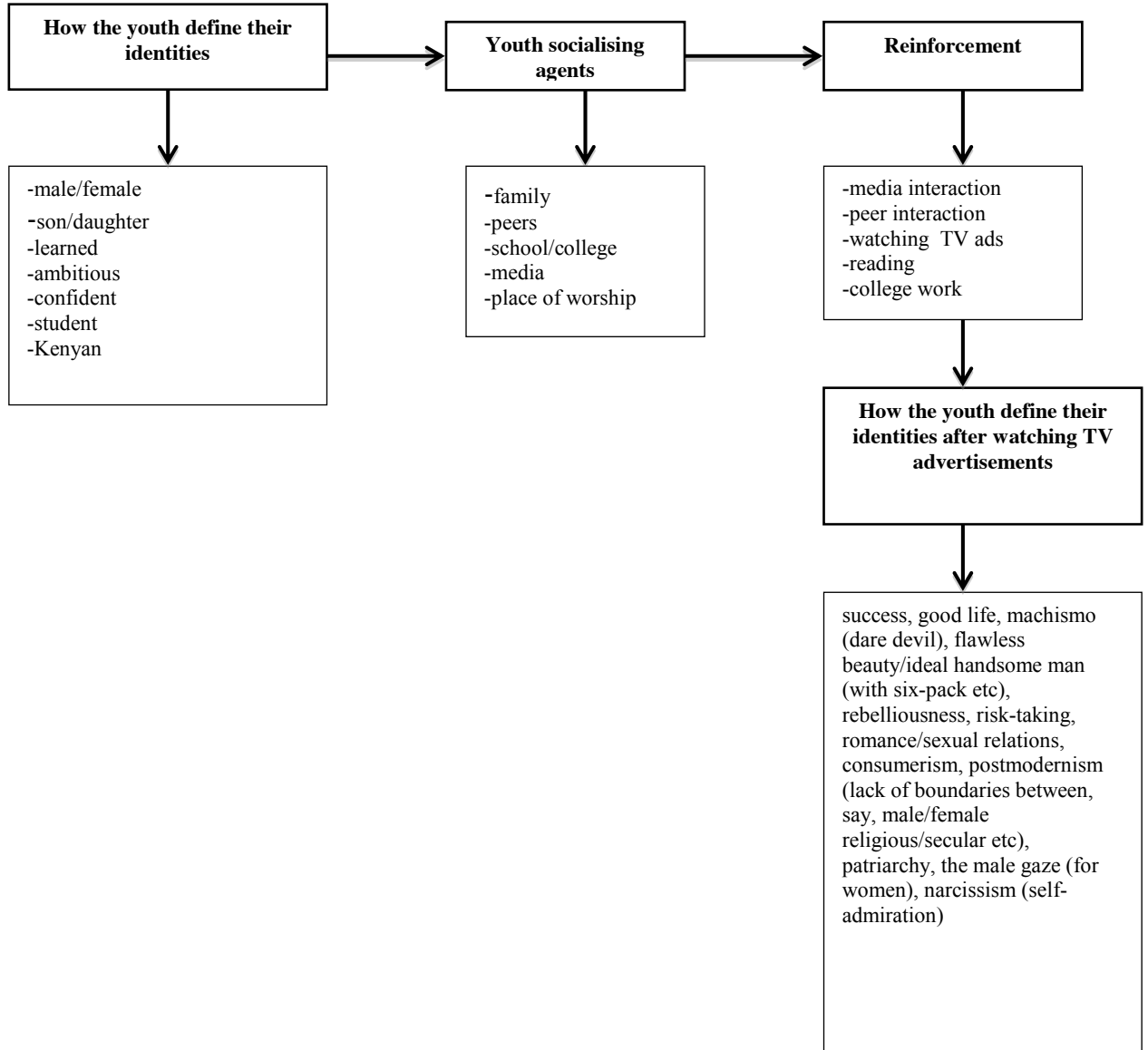
This signification is what makes people identify with the product. For instance, a television advertisement of a body lotion is packaged in such a way that not only identifies the product to the prospective buyer but also creates a special meaning around it, for example, a beautiful model who has the qualities society has been enculturated to believe is the ideal of beauty. Every woman watching the advertisement would like to be like the model and the only way of achieving that is by buying the lotion. This is because the qualities of the model glide into the product and eventually to the consumer (Fowles, 1996). Men would also like to associate with such a woman so they will buy the lotion for the women they associate with. Williamson (1978) posits that advertisers take people’s dreams and sell them back to them. If they know young men want to look successful and attractive to young women they will create a model who embodies the ideal cool man and make him walk around with the a particular mobile phone they are marketing. The advertising industry designs messages that suit our dreams, they sell us our selves. As Berger (2011) puts it, “our sense of ourselves is connected to the way advertising helps us shape our identities...” (p.232). This researcher attempts to find out how young people perceive themselves and how they read meanings in television advertisements. This is analysed against ideological meanings embedded in the advertisements by the creators of these advertisements.

Youth Identity according to Buckingham (2008) is never stable and has various dimensions. These are national identity, social identity, cultural identity and gender identity. In other words the self is defined in relation to “others” or “who am I” varies with “whom Am I with. The multiple identities that individual youths have varies over



time and context. Buckingham (2008) argues that identity formation is no longer a fixed process but a life long struggle.

**FIGURE 2.4: Conceptual framework**



## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the design and method of data collection for this study. The researcher employed a qualitative research method as it is typical in media cultural studies research (Baran and Devis 2006; Heath 2000, Mack et al. 2005; Kayton 2006). The reason why the researcher chose the qualitative method is because the study of mass communication audiences is increasingly shifting from the “effects’ and the “uses and gratifications” traditions to the “social uses of the media” approach. This tradition emphasizes “the active interpretation of meanings in mainstream media texts” (Lindlof and Taylor 2011, p. 23). In this study the researcher was interested in the ideological or mythical meanings encoded in television advertisements and how youth consumers of these advertisements read them against the backdrop of construction of their self-identities. The concept ‘myth,’ as it is used in this study, was coined by Barthes (1957), who describes it as “depoliticised speech.” This is how Barthes (1972) explains ‘myth:’

*... myth has the task of giving an historical intention a natural justification, and making contingency appear eternal. Now this process is exactly that of bourgeois ideology. If our society is objectively the privileged field of mythical significations, it is because formally myth is the most appropriate instrument for the ideological inversion, which defines this society... (p. 142).*

While explaining what Barthes means by ‘myth’, Strate (1991) posits:

*...myth is not a falsehood or fairy-tale, but uncontested and unconscious assumption that is so widely shared within a culture that it is considered natural.. (p.115).*

This researcher therefore combined textual analysis (semiotically analysing sampled television advertisements in order to find out the meanings the advertising industry was circulating to consumers of the advertisements) with focus group discussions of sampled youth consumers. In doing this the researcher took the advise of Strate (1991), who

posits that mythical meaning circulated by television advertisements can only be understood through qualitative research methodologies:

*...myths need to be analysed through qualitative, critical methodologies. It is possible to determine the percentage of beer commercials that contain images of cars. It is possible to measure physiological and emotional reactions of audience members to those images. But it is not possible to measure or calculate the cultural meanings of those images...(p.115).*

### **3.1: Research Design**

#### **3.1.1 Selection of Advertisements Targeting the Youth**

The researcher watched prime time television advertisements appearing on Kenya's television stations with national coverage and selected those advertisements that bore characteristics that rendered them to be targeting the youth. This was determined by the products and services advertised like communication and entertainment gadgets; beauty products, alcohol, and sports. The youth are known for buying "luxury" items and therefore advertisers target young consumers because they are free spenders of their money (Carney 2007). Advertisements with youthful characters and those with characters projecting good body image were also considered as targeting the youth. Advertisements depicting a sense of rebelliousness/defiance also target the youth. As Carney (2007) puts it, marketers

*capitalise on important teenage issues and anxieties like body image, peer acceptance, coolness and a need for power. They use these themes repeatedly in advertising geared towards children and teenagers. Marketers also often hone in on themes and attitudes that parents might find inappropriate or offensive, like sex or alcohol and drug use, further escalating the "cool factor" of the product (p. 125).*

In this study the researcher also sampled advertisements aimed at behaviour change like campaigns against teenage sex, use of condoms and discouraging drink-driving.

### **3.1.2 Sampling Procedure**

Since this study combined textual analysis with interviews, sampling was done at different levels. Television advertisements were sampled first through accidental sampling i.e. those advertisements that were available on television at the time of the study. This method was chosen because advertisements do not appear consistently on television and it is difficult to obtain these advertisements from television stations or advertising agencies. The advertisements were recorded from television using a video camera after which they were classified into categories of those that were controversial i.e. their messages were incongruous with societal values; those whose messages were straight forward, and those that were abstract – their messages were difficult to understand immediately. A sampled group of youths was used to rank the advertisements for semiotic analysis and focus group discussions (FGDs). Since some of the advertisements recorded from television were not clear enough for viewing on a projector the researcher downloaded YouTube versions from the internet, which were used for the ranking and FGDs (Figures 4.4-4.18).

Since it was not practical to obtain a list of all youths who had experienced television advertisements and were ready to discuss them, the researcher drew a sampling framework of youth according to their religious persuasions. A cluster sampling method was employed, where respondents were sampled from Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, and “other” faiths. For the ranking of the advertisements, two respondents were picked from each faith in the Nairobi urban setting and two respondents each from Kajiado, a rural setting outside Nairobi. Two respondents were also picked from the urban and two from the rural setting from each faith for the focus group discussions. The two respondents from each category represented men and women for gender differentiation. Initially there

was a sample of 37 advertisements selected through accidental sampling from television. A sample of eight judges from the urban setting ranked three advertisements from each of the three categories to come up with a sample of nine advertisements. Eight sampled judges from the rural setting also sampled nine advertisements from the three categories. Since some of the advertisements from the two groups of judges overlapped the total number of the sampled advertisements was 15, representing the urban and the rural settings. These are the advertisements that were subjected to semiotic analysis and focus group discussions.

### **3.1.3 Semiotics analysis**

The 15 sampled advertisements were semiotically analysed by the researcher in order to deconstruct the hidden meanings embedded in them (Stacjs and Hocking 1990; Stokes 2005, Berger 2007). In semiotics, according to Baxter and Babbie (2003, p.360), “analysis involves a search for the meanings intentionally or unintentionally attached to signs.” The researcher studied each of the 15 advertisements and picked the various meanings encoded by the by creators of the advertisements.

### **3.1.4 Focus Group Discussions**

The Focus Group Discussion has been described by Lindlof and Taylor (2011, p. 183) as “a useful social laboratory for studying the diversity of opinions on a topic, the collaborative process of meaning construction, and the cultural performance of communication.” Wilkinson (2009) also recommends the focus groups interview, supporting it for its flexibility:

*“... one reason for the contemporary popularity of focus groups ...is its flexibility. It can be used as a stand-alone or as part of multi-method project” (p. 178).*

The researcher borrowed the experience of Ritson and Elliot (1999), who studied consumption of television advertisements among university students. Ritson and Elliot

(1999) combined focus group discussions with semi-ethnographic research method. This researcher conducted a total of four FGDs from the research sites, two in the urban setting of Nairobi and the other two in the Kajiado rural setting. Two FGDs were for men and the other two for women. This is because in investigating self-identity and media text consumption men have different constructs of themselves from women. Each of the FGDs had between eight and 10 participants (Lindlof and Taylor 2011; Juan and Ong'ondo 2011; Deacons et al. 1999). In recruiting participants for the FGD the researcher purposively sampled youth from the urban set up and the rural set up, who had experienced television advertising and were capable and willing to discuss these advertisements (Deacons et al. 1999, Hansen et al. 1998). The reason for picking a rural town set up and Nairobi city urban set up youth was because the meanings that urban youths make from television advertisements are different from those made by rural-town youths, since their cultural codes are different (Berger 2006). The researcher took cue from Lindlof and Taylor (2011, p. 111), who posit that focus groups “often bring together individuals who already engage in a social practice.” According to Lindlof and Taylor (2011):

*We recruit particular persons for interviews because they have had experiences that are vital to our research questions, or because they possess specific kinds of knowledge, or because of the stories they have to tell (p.111).*

A focus group discussion question guide (Appendix I) was used to guide the discussions.

### **3.1.5 Triangulation**

The main approach for this researcher was qualitative method, a combination of textual analysis of media texts and focus group interviews for television advertisement consumers. In order to ensure that data from this method was credible the researcher had to triangulate the findings with data generated from other tools and methods. According to Lindlof and Taylor (2011,)

*Triangulation involves the comparison of two or more forms of evidence with respect to an object of research interest. If the data from two or more methods point toward the same conclusion, then validation is enhanced (p.274).*

Juan and Ongondo (2011, p. 37)) describe triangulation as "...the application of multiple perspectives in collecting data." They posit that triangulation is used by qualitative researchers to clarify meaning from other perspectives:

*In qualitative research, the researcher is interested in diversity of perception and the multiple realities within which people live (p.37).*

This researcher used triangulation to validate the qualitative data collected through focus group interviews and textual analysis. In order to achieve credibility of the qualitative data this researcher conducted a survey on students from The Technical University of Kenya in Nairobi urban setting and Mount Kenya University's Thika Campus in Thika, rural setting to collect quantitative data. A self-administered questionnaire (Appendix II) was used to collect data. The respondents were selected purposefully since the data were meant to validate the main data (Deacons et al. 1999). A key informant interview was conducted with a creator of television advertisement concepts from ScanAd, the leading advertising agency in Kenya, where a key informant interview guide was used to collect data (Appendix III). The questions for both the self-completed questionnaire and key informant interview guide centred on self-identity, youth, and television advertisements.

### **3.2 Research Site**

Television advertisements were recorded at home during prime time (7pm-10pm) between 2009 and 2013. The FGDs were conducted among youth drawn from the University of Nairobi's main Campus, in Nairobi city, for the urban setting and Maasai Technical Institute in Kajiado, a rural town in Kenya, for the rural setting.

The FGDs separated respondents between men and women since gender is an important variable in investigating self-identity. However, there was no distinction between respondents from poor and rich backgrounds. That is outside the scope of this study, whose objective is to investigate the relationship between television advertisements and

the youth consumers from all socio-economic backgrounds. This is because the advertisements selected targeted the youth in general. The key informant interview was conducted by the researcher himself after all the other data had been collected and analysed. The researcher spoke to a creative director with Scan Ad, the leading advertising agency in Kenya, at his office in Nairobi.

### **3.3 Research Instruments**

The research instruments for this study were a television set with clear reception, and a video camera for capturing the advertisements at home. A video camera, a voice recorder and a focus group schedule (Appendix I) were used for the focus group discussion sessions. A self-administered questionnaire (Appendix II) and key informant interview guide (Appendix III) were used to generate triangulation data. The researcher took into account the fact that observation is an instrument of research (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006) and therefore the researcher himself was an instrument. The researcher took field notes on observations during and after the focus group discussions. He also took photographs and video clips of the sessions, which he later analysed as part of the field notes. According to Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011), who recommend this approach:

*...observational data – usually made up of notes taken by a researcher as s/he interacts with participants, or composed from video recordings and or pictures taken by the researcher or any other source (p. 63).*

They are supported by Mack et al (2005), who praise qualitative research methods like FGDs because it is “culturally specific and contextually rich data it produces (p. vi). A laptop computer and an LCD projector were used to show the advertisements to the focus group participants. White walls were used as screens to project the advertisements. For those advertisements that were recorded from television and were not clear enough during the FGD the researcher replaced them with similar ones from YouTube for the discussions.



### **3.4. Data Collection**

The researcher worked with three assistants to collect data for this study. For the ranking of the advertisements and focus group discussions the research team, consisting of the researcher and the three assistants gave some small incentives for each group of participants in order to create a friendly environment for data collection. In each session participants were given snacks of soda and cakes before the discussions started. Ranking of advertisements to be subjected to focus group discussions were conducted with the sampled judges using a questionnaire (Appendix V). This involved showing the judges the television advertisements, after which they were asked to rank them using the questionnaire. In the FGD the research assistants did the recording and managing the equipment while the researcher was the moderator, leading the discussions. One of the research assistants also took photographs and did video recording, which were later used as part of the field notes. The researcher also took field notes. Using the focus group guide the respondents were asked to discuss their self-identities after which they were shown the sampled television advertisements. The advertisements were projected on the wall in each site using the LCD projector and the respondents were given time to study them before the group discussions. The respondents were guided to discuss the meanings they made from the screened advertisements and their responses were audio- and video recorded for ease of analysis. The research assistants also administered the survey questionnaires.

### **3.5. Data Analysis**

Data analysis was done in three levels to reflect the design of the study. First, data from the ranking of the advertisements were analysed to explain the results of the rankings and why the judges ranked the advertisements the way they did. Second, each of the sampled advertisements was semiotically analysed using the theoretical underpinnings of cultural

studies (Bignell, 2002; Cobley and Jansz, 1998). This was to enable the researcher unpack the ideologies or myths encoded by creators of the advertisements. Third, transcripts from the focus group discussions and field notes were analysed. Data from focus groups were transcribed manually and coded into various thematic categories to come up with a substantive theory (Bryman, 2012) or model about the youth's consumption of television advertisements and construction of self-identity. Transcribing was done manually by the researcher himself because this is what Juan and Ong'ondo (2011) recommend:

*We strongly suggest that the researcher transcribes all the data on his/her own; that is, without the assistance of another person... Time spent in transcription is not wasted, as it informs the early stages of analysis, and you will develop a far more thorough understanding of your data through having transcribed it (p106-7).*

Data were analysed manually as is the tradition with qualitative research where subjectivity is taken into account (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006). Data from the triangulation survey were analysed using computer software, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), while the key informant interview data were analysed manually.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS**

### **4.0 Introduction**

#### **4.1 Ranking of Television Advertisements**

Television advertisements that had been video recorded during prime-time viewing (7pm-10pm) and 37 of those that were relevant to this study were sampled. The sampled advertisements were divided into three; the abstract, the non-controversial (straightforward) and the controversial. Those classified as abstract (category A) are advertisements in which the product or service being advertised is not clearly defined. Instead, some drama or dialogue is created where the product or service is shown at the end or it is only implied within the narrative. The persuasive message in the advertisement is not straightforward. This category of advertisements uses drama, where images are emphasized more than the words. In the non-controversial category (Category B), both the narrative and the product and service being advertised are clear. The characters in the advertisement speak in clear simple language and the product or service is clearly described. The persuasive message is also clear. The advertisements classified as controversial (category C), are those whose messages are often a subject of debate among religious or social groups. They touch on such subjects as sex and alcohol. Advertisements that tend to restrict youth's social life were also classified under this category. The messages and the designs of advertisements in this category are like those used in category A and B. Table 4.1 shows the various categories of the sampled advertisements.

**Table 4.1: Classification of advertisements recorded from television**

Category A	Category B	Category C
1. Dysney Blue Band	1. Always	1. Abstain (suicide)
2. Faiba	2. Barclays Ultimate Account	2. C-word (shy ones)
3. Guinness be the Boss	3. Contraceptives (watoto kama siafu)	3. C-word (class 8)
4. Niko na Safaricom	4. Dettol Cool	4. Drink Drive
5. Pilsner Kama Simba	5. Dettol Skin Care	5. Drop of Guinness
6. Safaricom Sambaza	6. Nivea for Men	6. Guinness Football Scout
7. Safarocom Bundle	7. Nokia	7. Kenya at 50 (Tusker)
8. Trust Condom	8. Utahama Lini	8. Love Bila Regrets
9. Tumechill (boys)	9. Wacha Mpango wa Kando	9. Nakufeel
10. Tumechill (girls)	10. Smart TV	10. Contraceptives (supermarket)
	11. Nivea Hydra	11. Viceroy
	12. Nivea Skin Protection	12. Weka Condom Mpangoni
		13. Snapp Beer
		14. Dr Love

Looking at Table 4.1 above it is not easy to understand the type of message in the advertisement by looking at their titles in the table. The titles given to the advertisements are not the titles the creators gave them. These are names that were created by the researcher by taking a prominently used line from each advertisement to make it easier for the respondents to identify them during the judging and focus group discussions. *Tumechill (boys)*, for instance, is an advertisement with boys characters, where the word “Tumechill” is prominently used. It is an advertisement about the virtue of abstaining from teenage sex. *Contraceptives (watoto kama siafu)*, on the other hand, is an advertisement promoting family planning, where one of the characters says, “*huyo ana watoto wanafwatana kama siafu* (That one with children trailing each other like safari ants). Some of the names were given to capture what comes to the mind of a viewer

immediately after seeing the advertisement. This is how *Abstain (suicide)* was given the name. It gives a first impression of a man committing suicide.

#### **4.1.1 Ranking of Urban Advertisements**

After viewing the advertisements each of the 16 judges was given a chance to rank advertisements after viewing one category. After viewing all advertisements in each category, the judges were given a print out of the names of all the advertisements to enable them get the titles of each. Sometimes the research team was requested to replay some advertisements or a whole category for clarification. After each judge nominating the first, second and third.

After the eight judges presented their rankings with each of them giving a list of the best three advertisements, the researcher analysed their rankings manually to come up with the best three in each category. In the analysis each of the ranked advertisements was assigned a value of numbers 1-5 after which each advertisement's scores were added and the one with the highest score was assigned first in rank while the one with lowest score was assigned lowest ranked. From this analysis it was possible to know not only the highest three ranked but also the lowest three ranked as it was possible to rank all the 37 advertisements from the highest ranked to the lowest ranked in each category.

For the urban judges, *Faiba* was ranked number one, followed by *Nikon na Safaricom*. The third was *Guinness the Boss*. In category B, *Dettol Cool* was ranked as the best overall followed by *Barclays the Ultimate Account* as number two and *Always* as number three. In Category C *Abstain (suicide)* was ranked as overall best followed by *Love Bila Regrets* as number two and *Drink Drive* as number three. Table 4.2 shows the best three advertisements ranked as the most suitable for youth audiences by the urban setup judges.

**Table 4.2: The top three advertisements from each category according to urban judges**

Category A	Category B	Category C
1. Faiba	1. Dettol Cool	1. Abstain (suicide)
2. Nikon na Safaricom	2. Barclays.	2. Love Bila Regrets
3. Guinness the Boss	3. Always	3. Drink Drive

Although the judges had been asked to rank the best three it was noted that out of the ranked advertisements some were more popular with the judges than others. Figure 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 below show a summary of how all the ranked advertisements fared.

**Figure 4.1: Ranking for category 'A' from all the urban judges**

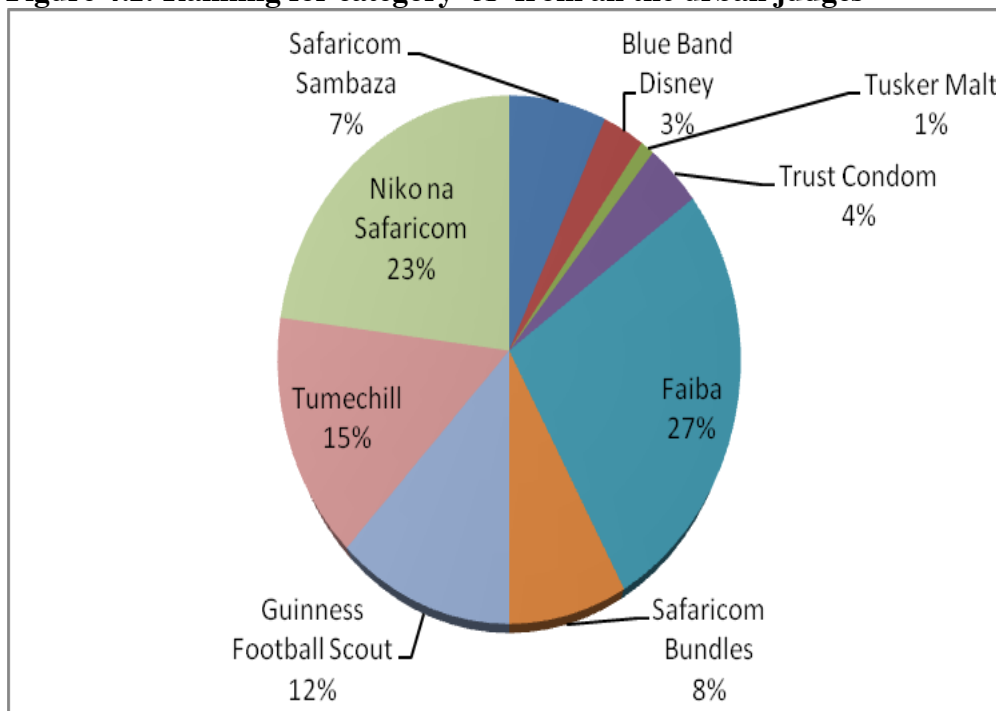


Figure 4.2: Ranking for category 'B' from all the urban judges

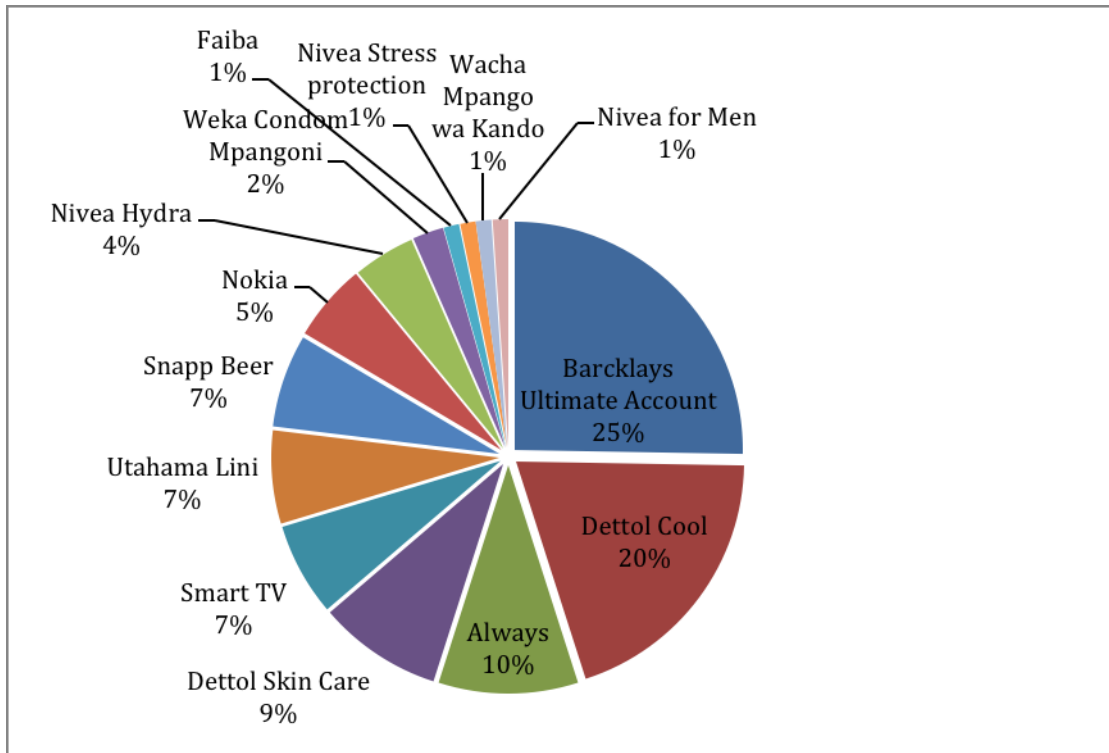
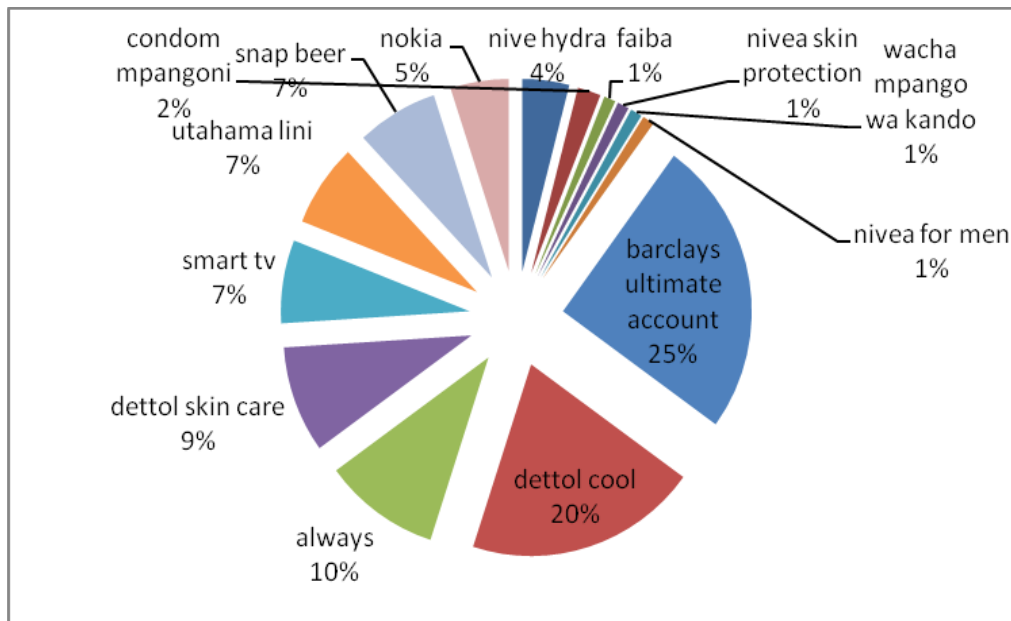


Figure 4.3: Ranking for category 'C' from the urban judges



#### 4.1.2 Ranking of Rural Advertisements

In the rural setting, the judges ranked *Safaricom Sambaza* as number one in category A and *Faiba* as number two. They ranked *Disney Blue Band* as number three in this category. In category B, *Wacha Mpango wa Kando* was ranked as number one overall, *Dettol Skin Care* and number two and *Contraceptives (watoto kama siafu)* as number three. In category C, *Love Bila Regrets* was ranked as number one overall followed by *Guinness Football Coach* as number two and *Abstain (suicide)* as number three. Table 4.3 shows the advertisements ranked as the best three overall from each category

**Table 4.3: The top three advertisements from each category according to city judges**

Category A	Category B	Category C
1. Safaricom Sambaza	1. Wacha Mpango wa Kando	1. Love Bila Regrets
2. Faiba	2. Dettol Skin Care	2. Guinness Football Coach
3. Disney Blue Band	3. Contraceptives (watoto kama siafu)	3. Abstain (suicide)

Although the rural judges had been asked to rank the best three it was noted that out of the ranked advertisements there were those that were ranked highly and others were not selected. Table 4.4 shows a summary of how all the ranked advertisements fared from the rural judges' selection.



**Table 4.4: Ranking for all the advertisements by the rural judges in the three categories**

<b>Category A</b>	<b>Category B</b>	<b>Category C</b>
1. Safaricom Sambaza	1. Wacha Mpango wa Kando	1. Love Bila Regrets
2. Faiba	2. Dettol Skin Care	2. Guinness Football Scout
3. Dysney Blue Band	3. Contraceptives (watoto kama siafu)	3. Abstain (suicide)
4. Tumechill (girls)	4. Smart TV	4. Drink Drive
5. Trust Condom	5. Barclays Ultimate Account	5. Nakufeel
6. Tumechill (boys)	6. Utahama Lini	6. Contraceptives (supermarket)
7. Guinness the Boss	7. Always	7. Kenya at 50 (Tusker)
8. Safaricom Bundles	8. Nokia	8. Weka Condom Mpangoni
9. Niko na Safaricom	9. Dettol Cool	9. C-word (class 8)
10. Pilsner Kama Simba	10. Nivea Hydra	10. C-word (shy ones)
	11. Nivea for Men	11. Viceroy
		12. Drop of Guinness
		13. Snapp Beer
		14. Dr Love

#### **4.1.3 Justification for urban Ranking**

When the urban judges were asked to explain why they made the choices they made they gave various reasons. Most of the judges explained by pointing out the way the contents of the advertisements were presented. Use of music, humour, educative messages, and entertainment in general were mentioned as devices that were likely to attract the youth to watching and enjoying television advertisements in all the three categories. The judges said that the youth were usually obsessed with technology and anything appearing on television with a message on technology was likely to attract youth attention. The subject of sex, irrespective of whether it was positive or negative, was likely to capture the

youth's attention on television advertisements, according to the urban judges. Other subjects that judges felt would inspire the youth to watch advertisements on television were fantasy, art and use of youthful characters on television advertisements.

In category B, the judges said the advertisements contained educational or informational messages and elements of entertainment. They were therefore likely to attract youth audiences. Other aspects they pointed out in category B advertisements were evidence of creativity, use of role model characters and use of authoritative characters. The judges said some of the advertisements had functional messages that would make the youth interested with the product, service or campaign being advertised as they were well explained. Other advertisements, according to the urban judges ranking category B, were likely to draw the empathy of youth audiences as they shared some of the experiences or problems mentioned in the advertisements.

In category C, the subject of sex and its risks and pleasures, was likely to attract youth audiences to the category C advertisements the judges had selected. They also pointed out that youth could identify with the issues raised in the messages in the advertisements. For example one judge said, "It [the advertisement] captures what many youths undergo." The aspect of motivation in the messages like "you will have a bright future," was pointed out as a reason for young people to watch television advertisements.

#### **4.1.4 Justification for Rural Ranking**

The rural judges, while justifying their choices for category A, gave various reasons why young people were likely to be attracted by the advertisements they chose. Most of the judges said young people were attracted by what was trending at the time, like all aspects

of the internet and other new media. The youth were also attracted by fantasy and what promised a bright future or what promised to fulfil their ambitions. Music and other entertainment; use of language resonant with the youth's own language and the use of youth characters in the advertisements were cited by rural judges as some the reasons why youth were likely to find the advertisements selected interesting. The advertisements that projected the youth as enjoying good lifestyle, the solution to the risk of pregnancy and sexually-transmitted diseases; were also cited as making young people like advertisements displaying these issues.

On category B, the judges justified their choices by saying that the youth liked to uphold moral values. According to the judges the youth were sensitive about relationships with the opposite sex and that they were therefore likely to watch advertisements that talked about cheating in relationships. The youth also liked beauty and good looks as a yardstick for their own, according to the rural judges. They were therefore likely to admire advertisements showing beauty and affluent lifestyles. Family planning was another subject the rural judges felt was likely to attract the attention of the youth. According to the rural judges, the subject of contraceptives would interest the youth since some of them used them in their relationships.

Justifying category C, the judges said the youth would always like to live a healthy, risky-free life. The youth were also likely to be attracted by the subject of sex. According to one judge, "everyone knows how painful it is to regret; it's touching." This was in reference to the advertisement *Love Bila Regrets*. The youth were therefore likely to watch advertisements addressing these issues, according to the judges. The rural judges

also said the youth liked football and that they were likely to be attracted by advertisements showing or implying football activities.

#### **4.1.5 Comparison Between the top Three and the Bottom Three Advertisements in the Urban and Rural Rankings**

Comparing ranking of the advertisements between the urban and rural judges there was a marked difference in the advertisements they selected as the top three in all the categories. In category A, only *Faiba* was ranked among the top three in both groups. In category B, the selection for the urban was different from that of the rural judges while in category C, two advertisements were selected among the top three by both groups of judges. These were *Love Bila Regrets* and *Abstain (suicide)*. When all the selected advertisements were ranked overall, it was noted that some of the advertisements that were ranked among the top three by one group ended up being among the bottom three in the other group. For instance, *Nikon na Safaricom*, which was ranked among the top three by the urban judges in category A, was among the bottom three in the rural ranking. *Disney Blue Band*, which was ranked among the top three by rural judges, ended up in the bottom three in the city ranking. Tables 4.5 and 4.6 show the top three and the bottom three advertisements in both urban and rural ranking.

**Table 4.5: The Top Three Advertisements From Each Category According to Rural Judges**

	<b>Category A</b>	<b>Category B</b>	<b>Category C</b>
<b>Top three advertisements</b>	1. Faiba 2. Nikon na Safaricom 3. Guinness the Boss	1. Dettol Cool 2. Barclays. 3. Always	1. Abstain (suicide) 2. Love Bila Regrets 3. Drink Drive
<b>Bottom three advertisements</b>	1. Trust Condoms 2. Disney Blue Band 3. Tusker Malt	1. Nivea Hydra 2. Nivea for Men 3. Contraceptives (watoto kama siafu)	1. Weka Condom Mpangoni 2. Viceroy 3. C-word (class 8)

**Table 4.6: Top three and bottom three advertisements in Rural ranking**

	<b>Category A</b>	<b>Category B</b>	<b>Category C</b>
<b>Top three advertisements</b>	1. Safaricom Sambaza 2. Faiba 3. Disney Blue Band	1. Wacha Mpango wa Kando 2. Dettol Skin Care 3. Contraceptives (watoto kama siafu)	1. Love Bila Regrets 2. Guinness Football Coach 3. Abstain (suicide)
<b>Bottom three advertisements</b>	1. Safaricom Bundle 2. Nikon na Safaricom 3. Pilsner Kama Simba	1. Dettol Cool 2. Nivea Hydra 3. Nivea for Men	Drop of Guinness Snapp beer Dr Love

It can be concluded that, in ranking, the three advertisements in every category as the best suited for youth audiences the judges, who themselves were youths, seemed to draw from their own personal experiences. The responses they wrote down when asked to justify their rankings tended to suggest that they were expressing their views from their own experiences while interacting with the advertisements. For instance, this was evident

from responses in category one like: "...so *Faiba* can be used to retrieve PDFs, read mails with assignments from ...lecturers," "... mother nature, so captivating," and "Long distance relationships have been made easier." In category B there were responses like, "Ladies [women students] cannot do without sanitary towels;" "There are many practical facts in *Mpango wa kando* [advertisements] which can make one to try to think about it." In category C, responses like "*Nakufeel* is realistic and more appropriate to the youth, " and "All men [youth] must realise the importance of condom [use]" demonstrate that the judges were speaking on behalf of the youth from their own perspectives after interacting with the television advertisements.

#### **4.2 Semiotic Analysis of the Sampled Advertisements**

The aim of this section was to critically analyse the social meanings embed in the television advertisements by creators of these advertisements. Creators of advertisements develop their messages targeting specific audiences whom they map out through audience segmentation (Leiss, Kline and Jhally 2011). Advertisements like any form of social communication is circulation of shared meanings. This is captured by Wood (2004, p. 9), who defines communication as "...a systemic process in which individuals interact with and through symbols to create and interpret meanings." The originators of this form of communication therefore design advertisements with particular audiences, who share the worldview of the narratives created in this "symbol domains" (Fowles 1996, xii), in mind. In other words, they strive to create advertisements whose meanings resonate with the meanings circulating within the cultural environment of the target audience (Goffman 1979).

Since advertisements are aimed at selling goods, services and values to specific potential consumers the creators of these advertisements employ various communication strategies

that use words and symbols that are common in the everyday discourse of the people targeted. In the process the advertisers end up not only selling goods and services but also lifestyles and dominant ideologies (Williamson, 1978). Semiotic analysis is therefore employed as a way of understanding the meanings the advertisers want to circulate. Semiotic analysis also brings out the hidden (ideological) meanings that are circulating within this discourse (Rose 2012). This perspective, whose origin is linguistics and literary criticism, was first applied in analysing advertisements by French critic Roland Barthes (Berger 2011). Williamson (1978) employed semiotics to analyse print advertisements while Goffman (1979) used it to analyse newspaper and magazine advertising photographs. Jhally (1990) semiotically analysed television advertisements for his PhD thesis, which was later published as a book.

The present study took this approach *inter alia* to analyse Kenyan television advertisements. The analysis, whose main objective was to decode the ideological or mythical meanings embedded in the advertisements, did not attempt to analyse all the semiotic aspects of the sampled advertisements. This analysis focused on three aspects of the advertisements: The signification aspects, that is, the main signifiers and what they signified in the advertisements; the social codes employed to create meanings and the hidden meanings that came out through the ideological or mythical codes inherent in the advertisements. First, the advertisements' story lines were outlined as a way of putting the arguments in perspective. These synopses are the syntagms (narratives) that are created by series of paradigms (scenes/episodes) to give the advertisements' denotations (Berger 2000). Advertisements can only make sense among the consumers if both the creators of the advertisements and the target audiences share certain social codes in order to share meanings. Advertisers also employ certain technical codes like camera work and

lighting techniques to deliver various meanings (Fiske 2006). Jhally (1987) talks of the social ‘codes,’ of advertising, which he defines as

*...the concept that unifies the different elements of the process of meaning construction... A code is a store of experience upon which both the advertiser and the audience draw in their participation in the construction of commodity meaning (p.140).*

Williamson (1978) posits that advertisers draw from discourse familiar to their target audiences, which she calls “a referent system” (p. 26). In the process certain mythical or ideological meanings come out, in most cases without the intention of the creators of the advertisements (Baxter and Babbie 2003). These are the meanings this researcher was interested in.

The researcher used the semiotics approach to analyse fifteen advertisements promoting various products services and behaviours. The 15 advertisements, which had been selected by judges from urban and rural settings, were *Faiba* (advertising Jamii Telcom’s broadband service), *Niko na Safaricom* (Safaricom mobile telephone network in Kenya), *Guinness Football Coach* (promoting Guinness beer), *Guinness be the Boss* (promoting Guinness beer), *Barclays Ultimate Account* (promoting a Barclays Bank of Kenya account), *Safaricom Sambaza* (promoting Safaricom telephone network service of sharing internet bundles), *Dettol Cool* (promoting Dettol Cool antiseptic soap), *Always* (promoting Always sanitary pads), *Abstain – suicide* (Discouraging teenage sex), *Love Bila Regrets* (promoting Trust condoms), *Drink Drive* (Discouraging drink driving), *Blue Band Disney* (promoting Blue Band margarine), *Contraceptives – watoto kama Siafu* (promoting Medical family planning services), *Dettol Skincare* (promoting Dettol Skincare body cream) and *Wacha Mpango wa Kando* (promoting how to avoid disease infection in marriage)



#### 4.2.1 Faiba

This advertisement is promoting internet broadband called Faiba, a product of Jamii Telcom. The setting of the advertisement is an office, where two men in stone-age attire are working on a Monday morning.



Figure 4.4: Faiba - Wife wellgroomed

One of the men goes to his computer

and decides to video-call home to talk to his wife to find out how she is faring together with their son. The face of the wife comes on screen and she excitedly asks the husband if he can see her. He replies in the affirmative and goes on to explain that he is busy working although it is a Monday morning and his colleague, behind him, seems to be suffering from Monday morning “mood swings.” He bids the wife bye, promising to see her after work so that she can let him work. He signs off with excitement and praising the service, Faiba, which has enabled him to talk to his wife on video call that easily. Some sound is heard off the screen and the man alerts his colleague with a cheeky question: “Boss, is that your wife calling?” The colleague hurries off as the scene fades into a green golf course-like lawn, where someone is beating a drum, which emits waves of smoke into the air. A text appears on screen with the logo of Jamii Telecom and the voice-over explains the capacity of Faiba, as the best broadband for video streaming.

There are various paradigms (mini episodes) in this advertisement, which make the whole narrative (santygms) above. These are two men dressed in stone-age clothes in a modern office. One of the men talks to his wife, who is at home through a video call. A sound is heard from outside and one of the men panickily rushes off. There is also a voice over of a man praising Faiba as a high-speed broadband, good for video streaming. A figure is

seen at a green lawn beating a drum. At denotation level this is a narrative of a man in the office who decides to call his family to know how they are faring. The advertisement also denotes an unsettled man working at his desk and is startled by a wife “calling.”

The connotation in this advertisement that carries the hidden meaning is that the man talking to his wife is a loving man who is the breadwinner of the family as the wife and son remain at home. There is also the connotation that this man, unlike his colleague, whom he calls boss, is a man of taste who uses modern technology, a video call; instead of a primitive drum and he calls his wife “babe.” There is also a connotation of forced affluence. The man speaks with a rural demeanour, in Kiswahili with heavy Kamba accent, dresses like Early Man but calls his wife “Mbeibe” for “babe,” a Western way of addressing a loving wife. His wife speaks to him in refined English but he replies with a mixture of badly pronounced Kiswahili and some English.

Various codes are used to create meanings for the prospective consumers of this advertisement. The codes are social, technical and ideological/mythical. The social codes in this advertisement are communicated by appearance, clothing and language, including body language. The setting of this advertisement is in the office and therefore a number of social codes that make all Kenyan viewers to agree that this is a formal office setting. Each of the two men has his own workstation; there is a computer, pen holder and a skeleton model, probably for scientific studies. The men are casually dressed because it is a men-only office and the language they use is a common feature in Kenyan offices, where people refer to their colleagues as “boss.” It is common for people to talk in a mixture of Kiswahili and English and sometimes with heavy mother-tongue interference. Men fondly call their sons ‘junior,’ meaning that that is the miniature versions of the men

themselves. The discomfort expressed by one of the men when he is told that his wife is calling is a common code for many Kenyan men in offices. There is a general belief (shared code) among Kenyan men that a wife does not make a telephone call to the husband in the office unless there is an emergency.

The technical codes in this advertisement are conveyed by camerawork. A combination of medium, close-up and long shots help to position the viewer in perspective (Fiske 1999). According to Fiske (1999)

*The normal camera distance in television is mid-shot to close-up, which brings the viewer into an intimate, comfortable relationship with the characters on screen (p. 224)*

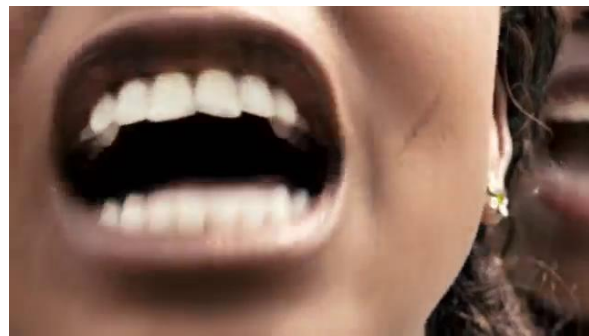
The man video-calling his wife is shown in close up since he is the one who is using the product being advertised. The other man, who is portrayed as a lazy man suffering from “Monday mood swings,” with a wife who uses traditional modes of communication, is shown in medium shot. The wife of the man calling is also shown in a close-up to give the viewer a well-groomed radiant face of a loved wife. The person in the lawn, who is not clear, but could be the other man’s wife beating a drum, is shown in a long shot.

The ideological or mythical codes this advertisement communicates include patriarchy, class capitalism and racism. These ideologies are created by the capitalist patriarchal system for exploitative purposes but are taken by society as normal and common sense. These are the “go-without say” everyday practices that have been stripped of their historical foundations (Barthes 1957). In this advertisement the man has come to work but the woman has remained at home to groom herself and take care of “his” son “my boy junior.” The man is depicted as techno-savvy but the wife expresses her naivety

when she is excited that the husband can see her on his computer screen. The wife of the man identified as ‘boss’ is projected as a troublesome woman, whose call makes the man panic. This reinforces the negative stereotype that wives cannot call the office except to nag the husband or during an emergency. There is a stereotypical talk among Kenyan urban men that if a wife calls the husband in the office, it must be an emergency, hence the panic of the man in this advertisement.

#### 4.2.2 Niko na Safaricom

This advertisement opens with a song led by a female soloist atop a mountain peak before the scene shifts to other picturesque landscapes, where the



**Figure 4.5: Nikon a Safaricom: Women in close-up shots**

soloist is now joined by a large choir of men and women dressed in white shirts, trousers, and dresses. A man is now the soloist as scenes shift from the high mountain peak to a crater lake, a beautiful cliff, Savannah grasslands, lowlands with river meanders and coastal beaches with the clear blue sea and sandy beaches. The scene then cuts into a large tea plantation, where the choir seems to replace the plantation tea pickers. The shots also show a desert landscape with sand dunes, and lake scenery.

Those familiar with Kenyan geography can tell that the mountain peak, where the advertisement opens, is Mt Kenya and the crater lake is atop Mt Long’not in the Rift Valley. Familiar features are also the lower Tana river, Suguta Valley near Lake Turkana, one of the national parks, Lake Victoria, at the coast and in Kericho tea plantations. The song ends, fading out as the soloist begins another stanza but is cut short. The Safaricom logo is splashed across the screen.

The message in this advertisement is anchored by the sentimental song that is well choreographed and sung in clear Kiswahili that all Kenyan Kiswahili speakers can understand easily. The song talks about the hard working nature of Kenyans (see song translation in Appendix VI) and how they are proud of their national unity. The song says every Kenyan has what it takes to be successful, which is Safaricom.

The main signifiers in this advertisement are a large choir, which signifies working happily in harmony. The picturesque landscapes, which signify how beautiful Kenya is as a country. The snow-peaked Mt. Kenya is a symbolic signifier of Kenya as a country with the white colour of the snow and the choir's uniform signifying purity. The various shots denoting Kenya's geographical features signify potential for tourism and adventure.

The various paradigms i.e. the various shots taken from different camera angles help to build a santygm of Kenya the great country full of attraction, where its people live happily in harmony as brothers and sisters, where they enjoy the fruits of their hard work. There are various codes that help create meaning for the prospective consumers of this advertisement. Beautiful well-groomed women leading choirs is a familiar code for all Kenyans. Choirs are known to dress in full dresses or plain gowns that would not be offensive to any culture. That is what the choir in this advertisement has done. In the technical codes the various shots from the establishment or panorama shots to extreme close-ups (Fiske 1999) help capture the attention of viewers who are made to be part of the action. The choir is placed in various parts of the country to enable many Kenyans from different parts of the country feel that this advertisement is talking about their locality.

This advertisement connotes national unity, where all Kenyans, in spite of their ethnic diversity, work together as brothers and sisters. The shots denote various geographical locations of the country. The connotation here is that Kenya is a beautiful land of diverse irresistible attractions. The white gowns and plain trousers and shirts worn by both men and women also connote gender equality and by extension, equality among all Kenyans from different geographical locations.

However, there are ideological or mythical codes in this advertisement that give it different meanings. One myth employed in this advertisement is to project Kenya as a patriarchal capitalist society. It is a common myth in Kenya that women are expected to appear beautiful in whatever they do; their skills don't matter. In this advertisement the faces of the women singers are emphasized (tight close-ups) but for men their physical strengths are projected. It is not enough that women in this choir have good voices, there are close-ups of their made up faces. There is no single facial close up of any man in the choir. Feminists would find this emphasis of the women singers' beauty a projection of what Laura Mulvey (1975, quoted in Laughty 2010, p.102) calls "the male gaze." This theory that was developed out of studies on Hollywood movies, where female characters in the movies were positioned for the satisfaction of 'visual pleasure' of the audience, presumed to be men. According to Laughty (2010), while commenting on Mulvey's analysis of Hollywood movies:

*Female spectators are excluded from this male-oriented perspective on visual pleasure. Moreover, this visual pleasure is a heterosexual male pleasure that is both narrow-minded and divisive because it constructs a voyeuristic position for the assumed male spectator akin to 'playing peeping Tom' (p. 103).*

From this argument the women in this advertisement, unlike their male counterparts connote "to-be-looked-at-ness" (Laughty 2010, p. 103).

There is also a connotation that the many beautiful sceneries shown in this advertisement can only be approached by air, not by public means or on foot. There are no roads indicated or ordinary people in their common mode of transport like walking, *matatus* and *boda bodas* (public transport vans and motor bikes). This capitalist code is reinforced by the fact that the inhabitants of the beautiful places shown in the advertisement are absent. This further reinforces the fact that Kenya is seen as a wasteland of animals only good for safari (wildlife tourism), which echoes the name of the company being advertised. There is a racial stereotype undertone here because many Kenyans do not know their country as a land of safari; only good as a tourist destination, where White people come to watch animals in their natural habitats.

#### 4.2.3 Guinness Football Scout

In this advertisement a football scout tours the world looking for new talent. The advertisement opens with young men playing football in a poorly-lit back street. Next, the football scout and his driver stop at a run-down dusty pitch, where young men are playing football.



Figure 4.6: Guinness Football Scout – White expertise

The scout joins them but quickly gives up when he cannot cope with their game. There is a voice-over in the background that accompanies the travels: “Travelling the world in search of talent.” The football scout is chauffeur-driven as he passes city neighbourhoods

looking for football matches where he can spot talent. He looks frustrated and exhausted as he comes to a poor neighbourhood football pitch where a match is going on. He tells his driver to stop and they both come out of the car. The game that doesn't seem to impress the scout as he scribbles away using a clipboard until the ball is kicked off the pitch, landing next to the driver. The voice over comes on again, "Here give a man half the chance, and he takes it." The driver takes the ball, tosses it about, heads it and adeptly kicks it back to the pitch. Everybody, fans and players, are mesmerized by this man's football talent. The scout realizes that he has been looking for talent when he has been traveling with the best footballer. The shot cuts into a bar, where the newly discovered football star is seen enjoying a drink of Guinness with friends together with the football scout. The voice over comes on, as the shot fades into shots of Guinness beer, concluding, "I guess it is true what they say; there is a drop of greatness in every man."

There are various signifiers in this advertisement that helps deliver meaning to the viewers. The poorly lit streets, where people play football, dusty stadia and footballers who have no proper uniforms signify the problems facing football in Africa.

There are various paradigms in this advertisement, which make the santygm above. Two men, a Black man and a White man, are driving in isolated suburbs. They come to a rundown football pitch and stop to watch the match. The ball is kicked off pitch and the man who has been driving surprises everybody how competent a player he is. The next paradigm is a scene in the bar where the driver is drinking with other revellers. The paradigms are anchored by the words of the voice over and the viewers learn that the White man is looking for football talent among the Black population.



At denotation level the advertisement talks about a man looking for a talented footballer to recruit and it concludes that this man with whom he has been driving is a good footballer. It is all attributed to his favourite drink, Guinness. At connotation level, however, another layer of meaning is created. Football is a game of many Black people but it is not easy to come by a good player. Football talent can only be discovered by a White man. The voice-over says that “there is a drop of greatness in every man,” but this scout did not even bother to ask his driver where he can get a good football player. Maybe because the man does not look like a sportsman, a case where looks can deceive. There is also connotation that African footballers have no facilities to train in and a chance to be headhunted by a foreign scout is a chance to be taken out of poverty. The White man tries to play with players at a makeshift pitch and he comes out as a poor footballer. The connotation here is that all these scouts recruiting professional footballers may have never been footballers themselves.

This is an advertisement promoting Guinness beer and various codes are used to create meanings for the prospective consumers of the drink. The codes are realist/social, technical, and ideological/myths. The social codes in this advertisement are communicated by the setting, appearance and clothing. The setting of this advertisement is poor neighbourhoods of African towns or cities. It is socially held that most football teams in this part of the world play at beaches and rundown stadia, from where scouts from European countries recruit them. The White man in this advertisement is dressed simply in bright colours that go with the tropical sunshine. The driver and other men in the advertisement are dressed cheaply; some of the footballers even fold their trousers to knee-level to make football shorts. At the football pitch the White scout uses a clipboard to take notes, to the admiration of those around him.

The technical codes employed in this advertisement are lighting, sound and editing. Lighting is used to create an impression of how poorly equipped footballers are; they even play on dark streets at night. It is also used to show the hot sun of the tropics, where footballers play in the open. The camerawork in this advertisement employs long shots to show insignificant characters like the football fans (Fiske 1999), medium shots and close-ups to show the football scout, the newly-found star and the bar scene, where people are enjoying a drink of Guinness.

The ideological codes in this advertisement help reinforce patriarchy, racism, the stereotypes of poverty in Africa and Western benevolence. These are taken-for-granted issues, where, as Barthes (1957) puts it, history has been turned into nature. This is an advertisement of a beer that is taken by both men and women but the advertisement is only talking about men with lines like “give a man half a chance and he takes it” and “there is a drop of greatness in every man.” This might sound obvious but bars and football stadia are often populated with both men and women. Harris and Sanborn capture the myth about beer and drinking in this advertisement when they posit:

*Beer is seen as a reward for a job well done (particularly after physical activity) and is a common marker for the end of a work day, such as stopping for a drink with friends after work. ...the bar, ... is always clean, smokeless, and full of polite and non-intoxicated, upper middle-class people. Also no one ever seems to pay for a drink, either in cash or consequences (p. 85).*

The poor state of football pitches in this advertisement reinforces the stereotype of poverty in Africa, where every infrastructure is run down. There is a code of racism when the advertisement connotes that it can only take a White man to discover good talent. The fact that this football scout is travelling the world looking for a talented footballer whom he would probably airlift to Europe reinforces the stereotype of Western benevolence,

where a White man comes to rescue people with no opportunities in their land. The bar scene where crowds are enjoying drinking with abandon hints at another stereotype of African overindulgence.

#### 4.2.4 Guinness (be the boss)

In the advertisement a group of young men dressed in suits are anxiously waiting for what looks like an interview.



Figure 4.7: Guinness (be the boss): White 'boss'

The shot cuts into a bus stop, where a young man in a suit is

listening to what could be a football manager tutorial from a Walkman. As he waits for the bus he is behaving like a football coach, cheering, instructing, and cursing at an unseen team. A white man in a Mercedes Benz car passes and leaves the young man waiting for public transport. When the bus comes the young man continues to behave the way he was at the bus stop (cheering to some imaginary team in the *matatu*) The White man turns out to be a trainer of prospective football managers. He goes ahead to instruct each of them how to be “football boss.” The man who, was waiting for the *matatu*, sneaks in late and joins the rest, still with his headphones on.

The trainer notices him and goes to him and acknowledges that he looks like a potential manager but asks him whether he can act the part. He raises his shoulders to indicate the affirmative. The trainer shouts as he starts the training, “If you want to be the boss you’ve got to raise your game.” They start the training session mimicking a football match and how a manager cheers, curses and reprimands players. After that session he asks them, “What do you want to do?” to which they answer in chorus, “Be the boss.” He replies,

“So let’s do it.” They carry the trainer shoulder high the way players carry their manager after winning a match as the shot fades into the words on the screen with a Guinness logo: “The football manager promotion wins you incredible prizes every week.” At the bottom of the screen there is a warning against selling beer to underage people in very small type.

There are various signifiers that can make viewers make meaning from this advertisement. Dressing in a suit signifies official attire, a Mercedes Benz signifies riches while earphones signify youth culture. All these signifiers give the advertisement a straight forward meaning — denotation.

The scene at the bus stop and the White man passing in an expensive car, leaving the interviewee waiting for a matatu(commuter bus); the training sessions and the carrying of the trainer shoulder high are all paradigms that help create the syntagm of how to prepare to be a football manager. Various social and technical codes are employed by the maker of the advertisement to deliver meanings to the audience who are likely to identify with the advertisement. It is a common code for people attending an interview to be dressed in suits. It is also a common code for people waiting for interviews or auditions to be anxious or nervous. The behaviour of football managers (cursing, cheering and jeering and reprimanding players) is a common code with lovers of football.

Technical codes employed in this advertisement are the camerawork of medium shots and close-ups to emphasize points and the use of colour. The dark colours of Guinness are employed to convey the meaning to Kenyan viewers, where Guinness is the only drink that is dark in colour, that the dark alcoholic drink is what is ultimately being advertised.

There are however mythic codes inherent in this advertisement. It might look common sense that a White man driving a Marcedes Benz has come to audition young men in an African country so that they can train as football managers. However, this narrative has a Eurocentric connotation. This narrative is natural because it has been stripped of its historical perspective. Europeans brought football to Africa during colonialism; they are the ones who can train football mangers better. This is the perspective of the postcolonial theorists, who argue that the Western media not only export their media products to other parts of the world but aso set standards for states that were once colonised, where they oproject people from these ex-colonies as lesser beings (Laughty, 2010) or what Bristor, Lee, and Hunt (1995, p. 50) call “an ideology of white superiority.” There is a connotation of capitalist conspicuous consumption. The trainer drives alone in a Marcedes Benz as the young man, who is so poor that he plays an old-school Walkman instead of an iPod or smartphone, is left to wait for a public transport. There is also connotation of patriarchy. Guinness is a drink taken by men and women but the narrative in the advertisement projects it as a men-only drink sold in a man’s world.

#### 4.2.5 Barclays Ultimate Account

This advertisement is promoting a a bank service, the Barclays Ultimate Account. A smartly dressed man is shown in a tastefully furnished house. He addresses the viewer as different shots show him enjoying the benefits of the bank account.



Figure 4.8: Barclays Ultimate Account – Western values

He explains that he is successful

because he has Barclays Bank Ultimate Account, which can make him afford to live and dress well. The verbal explanation anchors what is going on in the commercial.

[A medium shot in a house where the man is reading a book. He stops reading the book and addresses the viewer] “Hello, Look at me. Now, look at yourself. Do you possess the ultimate power, the ultimate success. Can you make the ultimate impact? Well, if you open the Barclays Ultimate Account, you can enjoy an ultimate lifestyle, just like me. Look down [a close up of the man’s legs showing shoes and trousers up to the knees]. “Now back to me [the rest of the body of the man in a designer suit is now visible]. “Where are you? You are in a bank; with a man who can get a free savings account by just opening an ultimate account [a close up shot of the man in a bank still addressing the viewer]. “What is in your hand? Back to me. I have; it is a free debit card. The ultimate account allows me to pay my bills conveniently, use the ATM, access all online banking, the 24-hour call centre and do my mobile banking for free. That’s right, for free. Look again.” [A long shot of the man dressed as a tourist in a wild place like an animal park]. “The ultimate account is my ticket to an ultimate lifestyle.” [voice over] “Live life easy, open a Barclays ultimate account.”

A semiotic analysis of this advertisement helps the viewer to understand why this advertisement targets young people who want to live a good life. The various paradigms, that is: the man in his well-furnished house; the man in the bank doing stress-free transactions and the man as a tourist, help to construct a santagm that is a whole narrative of how to live a good life using Barclays Bank of Kenya services.

Various signs are used to create meanings for the viewer. A man reading a book in the couch is a signifier of good life. A house that is furnished leaving a lot of empty space is

a sign of good taste and affluence (Flowles 1996). A suit is a signifier of a successful man with a professional job; an open wild space is a signifier of tourism and a man dressed in shorts and carrying a camera and a pair of binoculars is a signifier of a tourist seeking leisure. This is connotative signification that is anchored by the man's direct address to the viewers.

Various codes are employed by the creators of this advertisement to give meaning within the audience. These are social/realist, technical and mythical or ideological. It is an acceptable code among Kenyans that when a man is in his house he lazes in the couch, reading a book but when he goes to the bank he wears a suit and when he goes for safari he dresses casually. There is also a social code that tells every Kenyan that if you want to show how well you are doing you go for holiday at a wild place. Just like rich foreigners from Western countries, who come to the country to spend money on safaris. The technical codes employed in this advertisement are the long shots, close ups and extreme close ups. For instance, when the man is holding an ATM card it is shown in an extreme close-up, amplifying the most important part of the advertisement; at the animal park it is a long panoramic shot.

There are however ideological codes which Barthes (1957) calls myths, which the creators of the advertisement may not have intended. These are the connotations or hidden meanings. At denotative level this is a man promoting a bank account but there are a number of hidden meanings in this advertisement. Ideologically this advertisement promotes consumer capitalism i.e. is the idea of spending money extravagantly to promote the capitalist system. The advertisement talks about the various ways of depositing and spending money without mentioning how this money is generated. There

is also an aspect of conspicuous consumption in this advertisement. This man is displaying good grooming, his house and how he spends money and even challenges the viewer whether they have the same capacity. Another mythical meaning in this advertisement is promotion of Western values. It looks common sense that this man is enjoying the efficiency of the Barclays account to go for game viewing but this has Eurocentric connotations. Kenya from the colonial history is known as the land of wildlife safaris and these safaris were synonymous with the White people. There are several home-grown ways of how Kenyans spend their money and tourism doesn't rank highly. The way the character in this advertisement behaves and addresses the audience promotes narcissistic tendencies.

Although it might not be easy for many Kenyan television viewers to access and utilize the Barclays Ultimate Account the advertisement creates an impression that this is a service for all regardless of their level of income or social status. Advertising critics see this as an exploitative ploy by the capitalist system.

#### **4.2.6 Safaricom Sambaza**

In the advertisement the setting is at an urban bus stop. A man of exaggerated masculine features swaggers across the screen, intimidating a young man, with a smaller physique, sitting at the bus



**Figure 4.9: Safaricom Sambaza – Women dependent on men**



stop bench. Next he walks past a girl, who looks mesmerized by his body features. When he realizes that he starts showing off prompting the girl to take him a photograph with her smart phone. A close-up of the man's face can be seen on the girl's phone screen. The man continues to brag about his toughness, giving the girl time to savour the moment as he gives her flying kisses. The girl is however frustrated when she discovers that she has no internet bundles to share the picture with friends. The bragging man cannot help her either. The man sitting next to the girl moves closer and offers to *zambaza* (share) bundles with the girl, who instantly discovers that she now has bundles to share things from her mobile phone. She cannot hide her admiration of the smaller man and asks him to show her how to *sambaza*, to the chagrin of the heavily-built man. The muscular man leaves the screen in a huff, knocking himself against the bus stop signpost.

The setting of this advertisement is at a bus stop and the sign post with the symbol of a bus and the bench under a shade are signifiers of a bus stop. The behaviour of the girl in the advertisement is a signifier of romantic admiration. The bragging man's bulky body is a signifier of handsomeness. The man showing off to the girl, the girl taking a picture and the other man sharing broadband bundles are all paradigms that make the santagm of the convenience of sharing bundles for a young person.

Various codes are employed to deliver the meaning of this advertisement to its target consumers. Waiting at a bus stop and busying oneself with the mobile phone is a common code among Kenyan young people. It is also a common code for girls to admire well-built men or men with no special physical features but exceptional skills, or who can help a girl at the time of need. Technically this advertisement is an animation, a technical code that helps it resonate with young people's media text consumption.

However, there are different connotations in the advertisement that may not have been intended by the creators but deliver hidden meanings. The advertisement creates a patriarchal meaning where women are portrayed as dependent on men. When the first man swaggers across the screen the girl can't resist his masculine looks; she takes his photograph. When she cannot share the photo another man comes to her rescue and she switches her admiration to the second man. There is no indication that either of the men is her friend as this is a public bus stop. The girl is portrayed as naïve to the simple technology of sharing internet bundles and yet she has a smart phone with which she is able to take a sharp photograph. This is an ideological connotation depicting women as subordinate to men (Goffman, 1979).

#### 4.2.7 Dettol Cool

A couple, in the advertisement, comes in and starts talking as if they are preparing to go out for the evening. Their son, Michael, comes in dressed in basketball uniform. He looks exhausted and dirty. They



Figure 4.10: Dettol Cool – Stereotypical role of women

indicate to him that he should be ready

so that they go out. Michael dismisses them as he collapses into a sofa, “You guys go; am tired.” The mother produces a box of Dettol Cool soap and shows him as she teases, “Tired?” Michael is excited about the soap. He jumps up and dashes to the bathroom with the words, “Dettol Cool!” He is seen dancing in the bathroom as he takes the shower. After a short while Michael emerges, neatly dressed and looking radiant as he says to himself, “And now she will say...,” as if prompted by Michael’s words, his mother

repeats her earlier statement, “If I don’t take care of him...” Michael completes it as he dives into the sofa to join her, “who will?”

Signifiers that help deliver meaning to the advertisement’s consumers include Michael’s clothes that signify the game of basketball, which is popular with the youth, and the conversation of Michael and his parents that signifies a happy family. The furniture, the dressing and the bathroom are signifiers that denote affluence. This affluence is further denoted by the fact that this family wants to go out for an evening. The idea that Michael is playing basketball, not other common games like football, is a sign of a well-to-do family.

Michael playing with his teammates, the family wondering whether he can accompany them out and the bathing scene and Michael rejoining the parents in the couch are all paradigms that help to build the syntagm of a family living happily together because of using Dettol Cool soap. Michael, the young man playing with his friends and coming home exhausted, is one of the codes that will help the viewers make meaning from the advertisement. Parents worrying about their children after long hours of play is another common code among families. It is also common for parents to discuss their children and offer solutions when they can. At the Technical level, the creators of this advertisement use medium and close-up shots to create the home setting.

The connotation of this advertisement, however, brings out the ideological codes that carry with them hidden meanings. Although Michael is a young man, no longer a baby, the mother is portrayed as a nurturer, who is ready to take care of Michael. It looks natural that a mother has to take care of her son however old but historically women in

the patriarchal society have been condemned to be home keepers and nurturers. This advertisement at mythic level reinforces this stereotype (Leiss, Kleine and Jhally 1987).

#### 4.2.8 Always

Two women, in this advertisement, are having two different experiences in the night. The first woman seems to be having a disturbed sleep. She has to wake up many times in the night and check her beddings, and

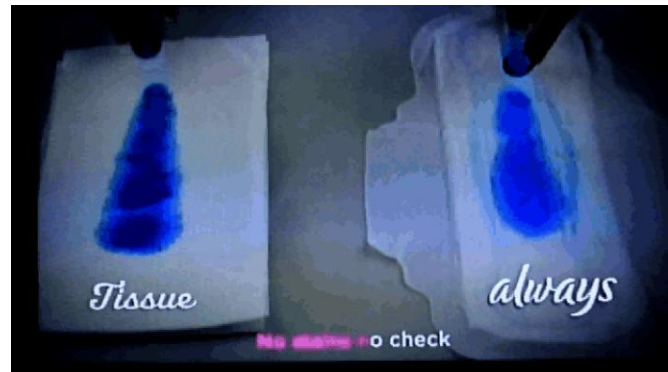


Figure 4.11: Always - Display of capitalism

sometimes going to the window to see if

it is morning. The second woman sleeps blissfully until morning when she opens her window to appreciate the morning light. A sentimental song accompanies the shots. After the two women are shown alternately in the shots there are two demonstrations where a liquid is poured into two different materials. One (labelled 'always') absorbs the liquid, leaving no stain, while the other (labelled 'Tissue') is soaked through and becomes messy.

The signifiers in this advertisement include dark blue colours that signify a dark night. There is also a woman who gets out of bed and examines the bedding. The signified here is that the woman is worried that something might have happened to the beddings. The woman waking up and going to the window signifies that she is disturbed and wants the (troubling) night to end. The sleeping woman signifies a comfortable night with no troubles. Two liquids are poured on some surface and some material is pressed over them. This signifies someone wanting to test the absorbing capacity of the two materials.

This is an advertisement promoting sanitary pads and targets women. Various social and technical codes are employed to enable women identify with the advertisement and the product being advertised. The dark blue colour code suggests a dark eerie night. The woman who has a disturbed sleep (anchored by the song) is shown in this light. This is contrasted with the warm soft colours of a bright daybreak. The woman who can't sleep wakes up and checks her beddings. This is a social code among women. Women in their menstruation season have to, all the time, check whether their beddings are stained red when they wake up. Even when they stand up from their sitting positions they have to check their backside if their dresses are stained. This is what is implied by the song's line, "No stain, no check." When the song further points out that with Always you can stay for eight hours in the night with Always; this is another code understood by women that good sanitary pads should keep you worry-free through the night. It is an acknowledged code among all women of menstrual age that tissue paper is often used as an alternative to sanitary pads. This is the code employed here.

This advertisement projects ideological codes as well. There is a capitalist consumer code suggested here since the economics of buying the Always sanitary pads is not mentioned. Only its functions and superiority to alternatives used by the masses, like tissue paper. There is also a connotation of conspicuous consumption. The woman with a troubled night sleeps with many expensive beddings, even when there is a risk of staining them. Women using tissue paper have been made by this advertisement to look primitive. It could be because of poverty. This is an ideological code of class discrimination. There is an ideological code suggesting that all women, especially during their menstrual days,

only need to buy Always sanitary pads and all their unhappiness will end. This is a common narrative in the advertising industry (Jhally 2009).

#### 4.2.9 Abstain (suicide)

In this advertisement a young man climbs onto an apartment rooftop dressed in comic book superhero, Batman, attire. He looks tense as he pulls a Batman mask over his face. There are writings on the screen: “Do you think this is dumb?” The young



Figure 4.12: Abstain (suicide)- The youth depicted as reckless

man jumps down into the street. A crash of breaking glass and a groan are heard as the shot cuts into bold writings in red and black on the screen, “Be smart, abstain from teenage sex.”

Some of the signifiers in this advertisement include a tense facial expression and clenching of a fist, which signify anxiety. There is also a signifier of rusted roofs and unpainted flats that signify a poor urban neighbourhood. The dress code in this advertisement shows the kind of dress worn by comic book superhero Batman. This is understood by urban youth as a tough character who can do, among other things, fly across buildings. The residential blocks shown in this advertisement have a common code shared among low-income urban dwellers. This is denoted by peeling off paintwork and clothes hanging to dry from balconies.

The connotation in this advertisement brings out the mythical meanings it conveys to its viewers. The young man denoted here as committing suicide in the name of proving heroic feats is from a poor neighbourhood. The connotation here is that youth from poor neighbourhoods are reckless with their lives and therefore the ones who engage in teenage sex. This may look like natural or common sense but marxist critics would see it as a way of frowning at poverty. Another ideological myth here is class discrimination. There is a dominant narrative in the capitalist society that sees the youth as a reckless lot that is always ready to court death at the slightest excuse.

#### 4.2.10 Love Bila Regrets

In this advertisement different men and women of different ages seem to be regretting what they have just done. They are cursing using the words “no,” and its sheng and Kiswahili variants “zi,” and “hapana” as they bang walls, scratch their



Figure 4.13: Love Bila Regrets - Youth and risky sex

heads and hit anything near them in anger. They include a young woman in nightdress, a woman on the stairs of a public place, a young man at a corridor, and a middle-aged man without a shirt in bed. Also seen cursing are a young woman in a public transport vehicle, a man in front of a car, a young woman in a bathroom, a young woman sitting forlornly on the stairs, a man training at a gym, and a man who is driving at a lonely countryside place. Then a box of trust condoms appears on the screen with the words “LOVE BILA REGRETS.” Then a couple is seen cuddled up in bed and the man says excitedly, “Yes!”

There are different signifiers in this advertisement that signify people regretting and ultimately it is evident that they have just had unprotected sex. The last shot of a man and a woman who are in bed signifies that they have had sex and they like the experience. There is a binary opposition here where the two lovers' joy is contrasted with the various individuals who have just had sex and their partners are not even seen. The words, "love bila regrets" (having sex without regrets) help to anchor this.

There are various social and technical codes that help deliver the meaning of this advertisement. The cursing girl in the bathroom is a common code that people usually bathe after having casual sex.

The people regretting on the corridors of public places and while driving is a common code that people usually engage in casual sex in lodgings, hostels or after driving to a hideout alone or taking a public transport vehicle to a date. A colour code is used to create the meaning of where risky sex takes place. The dark colours used imply that it is either at night or in remote places. The sunset indicates that the man is regretting at the end of the day. There is an ideological code that suggests that majority of people engaged in unprotected sex are either young people or students. The two young women shown at the staircase, with one expressing regrets, are carrying back packs. This is a code that suggests college or university students. The mythical or ideological meaning here is that university students engage in risky sex.



#### 4.2.11 Drink Drive

Three men, in this advertisement, are seen walking past a sign written 'bar.' Next, they are seen taking drinks in a bar. A voice-over proclaims: "Friendship is about looking out for each other. Friendship is about taking the key as the designated driver. Friendship is about being ready to call



Figure 4.14: Drink driving – Cars and drinking

a taxi." The men shout in a chorus, "aaha, taxi." The voice over continues: "Friendship is all about making the right move for your group; like being the designated driver after a great night out." At this point two women walk out past the men and all the men stand up as if to volunteer to take them home. They are forced to sit back with embarrassment when one of the women shows them car keys, apparently indicating that she is the designated driver. As the voice-over goes on one man from various tables in the bar shows car keys as the three men raise their glasses to cheer them up. Writings appear on the screen on top of a taxi: "Friends don't let friends drink and drive," as the voice over concludes: "Log on to drink and drive.com for what friendship is all about." A taxi is seen driving off and writings of East African Breweries Limited (EABL) with its logo fill the screen. Below the bold brewer's brand name are small writings on reverse black: Excessive consumption of alcohol is harmful to your health. Strictly not for sale for persons under 18 years. Please drink responsibly.

This advertisement, whose theme is drinking beer, has many signifiers that signify the culture of drinking beer at a public place. The sign of the word bar, past which the men walk, is a signifier that the men are entering a beer drinking place. The many keys that the various people in the bar display signifies that all these people have cars. The yellow hump on top of the car in the advertisement is a signifier that it is a taxi.

Various codes employed give the meaning of this setting as a bar and the set up public drinking. The dark colour is a code that beer with friends is enjoyed in the evenings (Leiss, Kleine and Jhally 1987). The dominating colour yellow gives meaning of the corporate colours of EABL while the brown and green bottles is a common code for the bottles of EABL beers.

There is however mythical or ideological meanings delivered by this advertisement. The connotation that you need a car to enjoy your favourite beer sounds natural but it is not the case. Capitalism has made this look natural. As Barthes (1957) suggests capitalism has homogenised personal practices, like beer drinking in this case. There is misogyny connoted when the three men volunteer to take the women home before they are repulsed. The connotation is that any woman in a public place must be approached by a man who pretends to be of help, but wants sexual favours in return. The suggested myth is that women are not supposed to be in a bar unaccompanied by men.

#### 4.2.12 Blue Band Disney

In this advertisement, Teacher Wanjiku, the popular comedian of Kenyan television, is talking to school children in uniform and their teachers next to a yellow bus written “Blue Band School Bus.”



Figure 4.15: Blue Band Disney - Women and teaching stereotype

She speaks in poor Kiswahili with

a heavy Kikuyu accent: “*Kama Unapeda Blue Band sema dio* (if you love Blue band say yes) (the children say *ndio*, for yes). She continues, “*Leo tumekuja hapa kujipamba na Blue Band; si dio?* (today we have come here to have fun with Blue Band; isn’t it?); *Wahenga walisema halaka kalaka haina balaka* (There is a wise saying that hurrying has no blessings). *Na mini ninasema, halaka halaka iko na bahati* (and I am saying hurrying has good luck). *Kipindi ni cha lala salama* (It’s your last chance). Collect as many tokens and fill the puzzle board or you will miss the bus *na utakosa kuenda Disneyland* (and you will miss a trip to Disneyland). Tumejasha puzzle board with your Blue Band tariff, *halafu?* (then?). Gifts – skateboards, bikes, PlayStations. [turning to the cameras] *Ninakuja shure yenu kaa landa* ( I am headed to your school, watch out).” Words appear on a slice of bread thickly smeared with Blue Band next to a tin of the margarine: “Grow

with every yummy slice.” A voiceover proclaims, “Blue Band margarine: Daily Blue Band, daily growth.”

Various signifiers are used in this advertisement. The children in uniform, the bus, and the writing board signify a school set up. The various gift items shown and mentioned, i.e. PlayStation, bicycle and skateboard, signify a child’s play. The codes employed include teacher and pupil class sessions, where children are asked questions and they raise their hands competing to answer. The colour code of yellow gives the meaning of the familiar Blue Band margarine brand colours.

The English and Kiswahili, spoken with heavy vernacular interference connotes a negative stereotype of teachers. Another stereotype connoted here is that all teachers tend to be women, they talk too much, sometimes not making sense, and they overdress. This advertisement shows school children with different uniforms, meaning that they are from different schools. All the teachers are female. There is a connotation that teaching is a lowly profession only taken up by women, who are not meant for higher male professions. This is a patriarchal myth.

#### 4.2.13 Contraceptives (watoto kama siafu).

In this advertisement, women are gossiping at a salon in a low-class shopping centre. “*huyo, ana watoto wanafwatana kama siafu. Kwa hivyo hajui family planning*” (That one has children trailing each other like safari ants. So she doesn’t know that family



Figure 4.16: Contraceptives (watoto kama siafu) - Women and gossip

planning exists). One of the women retorts: “*Hiyo family planning yaweza kumfanya mwanamke awe tasa* (that family planning can make a woman barren). All are suddenly silent, apparently horrified by the statement. A woman dressed in a medical personnel uniform comes on screen and explains: *Si kweli. Wanawake waotumia family planning hupata watoto muda mfupi baaada ya kuacha kutumia family planning. Hupata watoto wenye afya. Ni idadi ndogo tu ya wanawake uchelewa kuwa wacha wazito lakini hatimaye hao pia upata watoto. Mengi yasiyo na ukweli wa kisayanzi yamesemwa juu ya mbinu za kisasa za kupanga uzazi; isiyazikiize. Wacha waseme, pata ukweli kwa muhudumu wa afya.* (It’s not true. Women who use family planning have children shortly after they have stopped the family planning. They have healthy children. It’s only a small number of women who delay to become pregnant but they too later fall pregnant. A lot of claims with no scientific basis have been made about modern methods of family planning; do not listen to them. Let them talk; get the truth from a medical expert). One of the women in the salon, who has been listening blocks her ears with her hands. The shot fades into writings on the screen with the face of the medical woman at the background in watermark colour: “For More information call 1190 (free from Safaricom) or SMS M4RH to 21222 (free).”

The signifiers in this advertisement include the open-air hair salon and the outdoor tailoring, which signify a low income neighbourhood. The woman in white uniform explaining family planning is a signifier of an expert from the health profession.

The codes used by this advertisement to communicate meaning to low income women, who may also be ignorant, is the way the women chat as they work at a salon. The ideological code in this advertisement is gender stereotype, where women take low professions like hair dressing or nursing. A patriarchal myth is also projected when

women are presented as gossips, who talk ignorantly about a subject they ought to learn from an expert before they start advising their friends. *Watoto wanafuatana kama siafu* (children trailing each other like safari ants) is an ideological code held among Western societies that Africans are fond of having too many children. This is the myth created by this advertisement.

#### 4.2.14 Dettol Skin Care

In this advertisement two young women at a living room are sharing printed out photographs. They engage in a conversation.



Figure 4.17: Dettol Skin Care - Women and looks

1<sup>st</sup> woman: Wow, I like your pictures, why can't you frame some.

2<sup>nd</sup> woman: Thanks.

1<sup>st</sup> woman: (looking at her sternly) What; with your skin break out?

2<sup>nd</sup> woman: I tried to keep my skin with daily cleansing routines with beauty soaps...

1<sup>st</sup> woman (interrupting) ...but daily exposure to dirt, germs and sweat makes our skin susceptible to an outbreak of rashes. That's why I started using Dettol Skin Care. Only Dettol Skin Care contains the right balance of moisturiser and 24 hours non-stop protection from germs. Dettol Skin Care enters deep within your pores and removes germs that leaves it feeling smooth and even-tones every day.

2<sup>nd</sup> woman (reappears smiling broadly).

1<sup>st</sup> woman: Wow, your skin looks lovely.

Man: (appearing in the scene). Yes, you look, radiant and beautiful.

2<sup>nd</sup> woman: Thanks to Dettol Skin Care. Now I have the face to face the world.

Both women: If we don't take care of ourselves, who will? (they both laugh as they go off screen).

Voice over: New Dettol Skin Care, for beautiful germ-free skin. Now also available in shower gel. In partnership with Kenya Medical Association. Dettol; be 100% sure.

The logo of the Kenya Medical Association fills the screen as the line is being said.

There are a number of signifiers in this advertisement that are anchored by the conversation to create meanings for prospective consumers of the product being advertised. The house furnishings, the dressing gown and the huge shopping signify affluence. The anxiety on the face of the 2<sup>nd</sup> woman signifies her initial unhappiness with her skin. The codes employed to deliver meaning to prospective consumers of Dettol Skin Care in this advertisement includes how women notice each other's appearance when they meet. How women wash their faces and how an ideal living room should look are the other codes. The ideological codes here include a patriarchal myth of gender stereotype, where women can only be successful if they have a good looking face, "now I have the face to face the world." The implication here is that she has been avoiding the world because of fear of exposing her bad-lookinf face.

There is also a connotation that the first woman has a boyfriend owing to her good looks.

The connotation here is that good looks created by products bought in the market like Dettol Skin Care can qualify a woman to earn a man's love. This is a patriarchal myth.

#### 4.2.15 Wacha Mpango wa Kando

In this advertisement, two married men are talking at a party. The first man asks the second man if he is still in love with a mistress called Stacy and the other man



answers in the affirmative. **Figure 4.18: Wacha Mpango wa Kando – Blaming mistresses**

“Why?” his friend asks and he answers that it is only one girlfriend. His friend tells him that she must be sleeping around with other men besides him and yet he has a wife. He gives him an example of himself how a girlfriend he used to have had other men on the side. He had to use condoms all the time to protect his wife against disease infection. He advises his friend that if he must continue with the mistress he must use condoms. And if he doesn’t think he needs protection he should think about his family – wife and children, who are present in the party. Then a voiceover proclaims, “*Utafithi unaonyesha kuwa, karibu nusu ya wanaoambukizwa UKIMWI wako katika ndoa*” (Research has shown that about half of those being infected with AIDS are married). Then words come on screen as the voice over continues: “*Wacha mpango wa kando. La sivyo weka condom mpangoni* (Stop extramarital affairs. Or else, use a condom). *Wakinge unaowapenda* (protect those whom you love).

Various signifiers help to deliver meaning to the intended consumers of this message. The facial expressions in the men talking is a signifier meaning that they are conspiring

over a weighty issue. The woman ferrying food across the room and children playing around is a signifier of a party or families visiting each other.

The men going aside to conspire, as women prepare meals and children playing around, is a common code among Kenyan urban families. The use of close-ups to show the men's facial expressions and medium shots to show the women and the children is a technical code that establishes the setting of the advertisement in order to drive home the meaning. It shows that the meaning in this advertisement is conveyed through the men talking hence the close-ups.

The hidden meaning in this advertisement is brought out by the ideological codes. This advertisement brings out the patriarchal ideology, where women are supposed to be seen not to be heard. The men are talking about women in their lives but even the woman present in the advertisement is not allowed to say anything. As the men talk about their extra-marital exploits it comes out that the mistresses these married men have associated with are unfaithful — that they lie to them that they are the only ones, only to learn that they have other men on the side. To the man giving advice it is the mistresses who are promiscuous, hence the cause of the spread of AIDS, not the men themselves who have mistresses and yet they are married.

#### **4.3 Decoding Meanings from What is Encoded in Television Advertisements**

This section describes the findings of the focus group discussions for all the participants of the study. The section starts by describing how the participants defined their self identities i.e. how they perceived themselves and what their perceptions of the ideal young man (for male participants) and ideal young woman (for females participantts).

The section also captures how each group of participants decoded the meanings encoded in each of the nine television advertisements.



#### **4.3.1 Advertisements in the Urban Setting Male Focus Group Discussions**

When the male participants of the urban setting focus group discussion were asked to give perceptions of themselves most of them described themselves as University of Nairobi students, who were ambitious. Some described themselves as easy to work with, “a gentleman” and “young at heart” and “fun loving.” One participant described himself as a lover of technology while another one described himself as “an introvert and pragmatic.” One participant explained that he wanted people to know him as a family member.”

R5: What I can say about myself is that, eh, I belong to a family. I am a child to someone.

When the participants were asked about the qualities that made an ideal young man from their own perspective their answers were varied. One participant (R1) said “he must be an individual who is ready to learn” while another participant (R4) said “he should be a go-getter, who knows the purpose of life.” Another participant was elaborate on what he expected of such a person:

R2: ...should appreciate his youth, be responsible for how he carries himself; carrying himself with dignity and not doing things that will render his youth bad.

Others described an ideal young man as an individual who was “self-driven,” “goal oriented,” ready to learn new ideas,” “respectful” and who was ready to take initiative.

**Table 4.7: Television advertisements discussed by the urban men and women focus group discussions.**

Category A	Category B	Category C
1. Faiba	1. Dettol Cool	1. Abstain (suicide)
2. Niko na Safaricom	2. Barclays Ultimate Account	2. Love Bila Regrets
3. Guinness be the Boss	3. Always	3. Drink Drive

#### **4.3.1.1 Faiba**

The participants were shown the nine sampled television advertisements (Table 4.7) and the moderator led the discussions. The first advertisement to be shown was *Faiba* and the moderator started the discussion by posing the question: “Do you think the message being promoted about the product is clear?” The participants said they found the message in the advertisement clear. When one participant (R5) gave his views most of the participants seemed to agree with him from the way they were nodding their heads:

R5: It is clear because you can see the visual undertones, the aspect of them talking about *Faiba*, analyzing the company and also justifying the company.

R6: It meets the goal of telling us the goodness of *Faiba*; the speed of *Faiba* in internet use.

R8: [interjecting] ...it is clear because am getting the content.

One participant (R8) said, the lifestyles being promoted was “a tech-savvy lifestyle, where people have to be communicating using technology.” Another participant said it was promoting self actualization, which, according to him, was demonstrated by fast communication using modern technology. It can be concluded that the participants were not only informed about technology but also were ready to talk about it.

One participant said the main character in the advertisement came out as a good family man because he set aside some time from work to communicate to his family. According to the participant the advertisement showed a contrast between modern and “conservative” marriages:

R5: The two characters presented show a difference; the man and his wife are progressive and the other guy in the office is conservative; still stuck to the past. The other man [main character] and the wife are progressive.

R8: I believe that guy is caring; he would like to know what is happening with his family. The participants found the contradiction between the mode of dress and the modern technology being advertised repulsive. They said the men were dressed like cavemen but what was being promoted was cutting-edge technology, video calling.

One participant found the use of English mixed with Kiswahili with a heavy vernacular accent repulsive. He also found the contrast where the wife spoke in refined English while the husband spoke a mixture of informal languages a repulsive contradiction in a marriage. One participant (R6) found the advertisement off-putting because the cost of installing Faiba was not indicated:

R6: It does not show the cost of installing that Faiba; how quick would it take to install and the general citizen cannot afford to install it.

Other participants however said there were aspects of the advertisement they found useful, entertaining or educative. The use of animation was identified by some participants as the main attraction of the advertisement. They said animation was popular to both young and old viewers of television. The dramatization of the characters was also identified as one of the entertaining aspects of the advertisement.

Two participants found the advertisement convincing for someone to subscribe to Faiba.

R4: ...it shows that distance does not matter; you can communicate easily and faster even if you are far away and someone else is far away.

R6: ... it shows you how life can be made simple if you have Faiba and how quickly you can communicate when you are at work.

From the body language and how some participants were talking among themselves, participants who did not contribute seemed to have reservations about the relationship between the advertisement and the service being advertised. For instance, R6 shook his head and smiled sarcastically but did not comment.

#### **4.3.1.2 Niko na Safaricom**

Some participants said they liked the message in the *Niko na Safaricom* advertisement as they got the message while others found the message of the advertisement unclear.

R6: I just like the sentimental touch of the song and everything but at the end of the song am just left with a question mark what are they.....it's like I have just seen something pass through my TV. It's like am watching a normal programme everyday and I don't get anything from it.

This view was supported by other participants who felt the message was not clear.

R3: I don't think the message is clear because Safaricom has so many services; so if they are trying to give us one they have to be specific...

R1: I don't think the message is so clear. Are they advertising their call back tone or what? What are they trying to tell us. Should we use that song, eeh... am confused.

There were however participants who felt the message was clear and they gave their reasons:

R7: I don't think that they are talking about the network alone. I think they are saying that when you have Safaricom you have everything ..*uko na uwezo uko na* [you have the capacity with...].if you follow the lyrics and watch the thing you will get the message... So with Safaricom, you have everything.

R8: They are trying to say that Safaricom network coverage is very good irrespective of where you are; whether you are on top of a mountain, down the valley the network is very good. They have a good network coverage.

One participants felt the message was clear but some people were likely to miss it.

R2: I think the message is there though it's not direct. For someone who is educated you will be able to link the different places that are there and see there is good network coverage. But for someone who is not knowledgeable, it may pass for just entertainment. so I think there is a message but its not for everyone it's a little bit.....

Commenting on the lifestyles being promoted in the advertisement, only one participant gave his view linking the advertisement with tourism:

R9: The first time I saw that advert, the first thing that came into my mind was tourism, so I am thinking, go around the country, carry your phone. Safaricom will be there.

The characters in the advertisement appealed to some participants, who praised the singing and choreography of the singers, saying the song was easy to understand.

R1: First, the person who chose the theme was very talented. They have nice voices. If you listen to it thrice you get the song. So kudos; that was a good job.

On what they found repulsive in the advertisement, only one participant (R2) termed the advertisement “too serious.”

R2: I think the advert is too serious if you get to watch it many times. The first time you look at that advert, it's entertaining but the moment you watch it so many times, it becomes boring because it's too serious.

Two participants however found the advertisement likable:

R7: There is something I like about the advert; they have very nice video clips. So they will make me watch it again and again.

R8: The people singing in the video are singing joyfully, meaning that they like what they are doing and are so passionate about their country.

The participants however did not find the advertisement convincing for for them to join Safaricom network:

R1: For me, no. First, for a stranger, let's say an alien, you will get the word 'Safaricom.' There's nothing to do with the network in that advert. There is no indication that this is a network...whatever I will be asking, what is this Safaricom?

R8: To me I think if you are an alien you will question yourself about the advert because the advert is in Kiswahili so you won't understand what the advert is all about. Join the Safaricom network?

One participant (R6), however, said the advertisement may only convert someone who is already using a competing mobile phone network in Kenya:

R6: I would say since the message is not clear it cannot really persuade me to go and purchase a sim card for Safaricom but maybe if I was in another network like Airtel; if I

see that advert, maybe because of the sentimental song, it can make me at least have some thinking of maybe to buy that one.

From the discussions of this advertisement it can be concluded that the *Niko na Safaricom* advertisement is liked by the youth for its entertainment but this liking does not translate to buying the Safaricom service. In other words, some participants found the 4 advertisement appealing but no one thought it could make them join the network.

#### **4.3.1.3 Guinness be the Boss**

The *Guinness be the Boss* advertisement came out as abstract to many participants although some participants said they understood it. The participants did not sound convincing about their views as they did not fully explain why they said it was clear or not clear. For instance this is how R3 (who said it was clear) and R1 (who said it was not clear) gave their views:

R3: I believe the message is clear because it is talking about Guinness the manager and it is clear in relating a manager to a football coach.

R1: It is not clear, they talk about Guinness, which is an alcoholic beverage, it shows you are not enjoying it as you should when taking one because it relates being a boss with a lot of stress.

The participants found the advertisement lacking seriousness, saying it promoted reckless enjoyment, lack of seriousness, which they associated with beer takers and football fans:

R7: It's just promoting enjoyment, yah; where you take alcohol you can shout as you want, like when you are watching football.

R4: It does not promote a serious lifestyle, because if you are going to be a boss of a company and you just go wearing earphones, it's not a serious lifestyle.

R8: It's messed up with this guy coming late to an interview; it means that he is going to be kicked out.

One participant said one of the characters in the advertisement seemed to lead an easy life, according to the participants. He could afford to enjoy music through earphones although he was dressed formally in a suit. Another participant identified the same characters as individuals who enjoyed what they did:

R3: I think the coach and the guy who comes late are passionate on what they do; because we see the coach who is teaching on how to be boss or manager and the guy who came late had been probably listening to a tutorial on how to be a manager. That's why he is coming late.

One participant found the anger and frustration acted out in the advertisement repulsive, saying it made the viewers hate the product being advertised. This was supported by other participants who seemed to dislike the character that came in late:

R8: The teacher condones lateness.

He was however contradicted by another participant:

R5: This person who comes late; actually he comes at the right time but after others. He is the only one who is confident and these ones who came before are anxious and they are to be confident.

One participant (R1) found the late comer character repulsive for a different reason:

R1: The guy who comes late is listening to a cassette player and we are in a digital world; he should be using something like iPods.

The participants however found some aspects of the advertisement useful. The way the characters were dressed, in formal suits, was pointed out as what made the advertisement likable. One participant (R3) found the character that came in late as the most entertaining aspect of the a advertisement:



R3: I find the advert entertaining; the guy who arrived late; he is actually, he makes the advert lively. If the guy was missing no one would watch the advert for more than two seconds.

Another participant (R2) found the advertisement educative on matters dealing with football management.

R2: The way they are showing how the managers are in the football pitch, the actual football pitch, the timings, the outbursts, shouting at people...

No participant however found the advertisement convincing for them to buy Guinness. They felt that it was not easy for viewers to link the advertisement to Guinness beer:

R8: You cannot really see what is being advertised, there is a contradiction between Guinness the beer and the manager. They are not sure on what they are advertising.

R7: I think it's contradicting; the product advertised is not in line with the message, they are not advertising Guinness; so I cannot be persuaded to buy it.

R4: I won't buy Guinness because they are acting confused; being late. They are advertising and discouraging us from using the product.

The conclusion in these discussions is that although some participants found some aspects of the advertisement likable the whole message did not convince the youth in urban setting to develop a liking for Guinness beer.

#### **4.3.1.4 Dettol Cool**

The Dettol Cool advertisement message came out clearly according to the participants in the group.

R1: I think the message is quite clear about the effectiveness of that particular soap of Dettol; it makes you be refresh.

R8: The content is so clear; it makes me like Dettol Cool.

Participants seemed to admire the lifestyles being promoted by the advertisement.

R8: It promotes the family life. You see Michael the son, then you see the mother and the father behaving responsibly.

R1: I think they are trying to portray the hygienic lifestyle. For example, the character Michael is playing outside there and is so tired that he doesn't want to take a shower. But because Dettol soap ensures his hygiene, he has to.

One participant (R8), however, expressed his dislike for the main character, Michael:

R8: The character Michael is repulsive; when he is invited to go out he says he's tired until the Dettol [soap] comes in. He has no stand.

However, another participant (R5) disagreed with him, expressing admiration for the family:

R5: The parents are social; they want to go out but not by themselves; they want to take Michael along. Michael also is a cool guy because he plays basketball.

Another participant however found stereotyping the boy-child repulsive:

R5: This is stereotypical; they show boys being playful, coming home sweaty and they don't want to shower. It shows that boys do not want to shower and it's their mom who forces them to do this.

Other participants, however, found the advertisement entertaining and educative:

R1: It is informative. The soap called Dettol Cool, makes you feel fresh when used.

R6: It tells you that after playing and all that what you do during the day, you should take a shower and you should use Dettol Cool; you'll feel good.

Two participants said after watching the advertisement they were persuaded to buy the soap while one said he wouldn't buy the soap.

R8: Yah, I will be persuaded because the way that Dettol is advertised, and you are seeing its effect.

R6: No. After having a tiresome day, just taking a shower can refresh you. You don't have to necessarily use Dettol Cool; just any soap can make you feel fresh.

R5: I have to be honest and say that it is persuasive. In fact, I use Dettol because of that advert. The first time I saw it I bought it. So mine is from experience.

It can be concluded that the participants not only liked the message in the advertisement but they were also convinced that the product being advertised was good for their use.

#### **4.3.1.5 Barclays Ultimate Account**

Participants gave different responses on the message in the *Barclays Ultimate Account* advertisement. There were those who thought the message was clear while others felt it was not. Those who found the message clear said they understood the Barclays Bank product that was being advertised while the respondent who found the message unclear blamed the model's presentation.

R6: I think the message is very clear, it shows you that when you open an account with Barclays, there are some offers that come with it that can help you. Like a trip to somewhere; Maasai Mara and all that. It encourages people to open accounts with Barclays.

R1: I don't think the message is clear. To start with, the guy is too fast. When it is played in the evening after work the people are tired and they may not follow it. Another thing that makes the message unclear; I don't know about that card; how to use it.

Participants were unanimous that the advertisement promoted an affluent lifestyle. They justified this by pointing out the well furnished home, the dress code of the character and a tour to an animal park. One participant said the advertisement was promoting a lifestyle of self-sufficiency, where an individual is expected to have all things modern lifestyle provides.

Commenting on the character in the advertisement one participants said the man was proud when he compared himself with the people in the audience. However, another participant said the character came out out as a motivator.

R5: The guy is proud. He basically compares himself with other people.

R6: I think he is a motivator. He motivates you to do something, 'have done it why not you.'

Some participants found the lifestyle portrayed in the advertisement was unattainable by many ordinary Kenyans.

R6: What I find repulsive is that, at the end, you live a partial lifestyle. It is not always a must that if you start down there you will always reach the top.

R1: It does not capture all people from all walks of life. When you look at Barclays it banks for people from all walks of life but if you look at the advert it does not capture all people.

However, some participants found the advertisement persuasive and entertaining.

R8: The guy there is so persuasive; he is so entertaining and appealing. When he comes out he is nicely dressed; even the way he talks.

When the participants were asked if watching the advertisement made them want to subscribe to the Barclays service there were mixed views. Some participants said the advertisement was convincing while others said it was not.

R6: This man is persuasive; he tells you about the goodies that come with opening account with Barclays Bank.

R5: It is convincing ; I can open an account with Barclays Bank and achieve an ultimate lifestyle.

R8: It is not; the guy does not tell us where to get the money. I may not be at the starting point that this guy is at.

R7: It does not show us where he has come from.

From these discussions it can be concluded that although there were mixed reactions as to whether the advertisement could convince the participants to subscribe to the service it was clear that the way the message is tailored it can attract the youth to the Barclays bank's service.

#### **4.3.1.6 Always**

Some participants found it uncomfortable to discuss the Always advertisement. While some said they found the message in the advertisement clear others found it abstract.

R2: I think the advertisement is so clear. It shows how they are comparing the product with other products and how each can absorb the liquid.

R7: This advertisement is not clear; it does not show the group in society which is supposed to use that product.

The participants found it uncomfortable to comment on the lifestyles depicted in the advertisement. This unease continued throughout the discussions of this advertisement. However, two participants commented after prodding by the moderator.

R5: They are hygienic lifestyle, because they start by talking about the tissue paper and how it fails to retain the liquid ; but Always protects and keeps other garments clean.

R6: It shows a simple, humble lifestyle; a lady, like everybody, needs a good sleep.

Efforts by the moderator to prod for more explanation were not successful; the participants looked confused. The discussion shifted to the characters in the advertisement, where two participants said one of the characters (the one who uses Always) exuded confidence and she seemed to enjoy using the product.

R6: The lady [the user of Always] really enjoys the use of the product because of product efficiency.

R4: The lady is confident about the product because the beddings are white. It shows that the lady has trust in the products and it gives her confidence to do everything.

Most of the participants found the display of the advertisement repulsive. One participant gave his views and others seemed to agree with him although no one else openly commented on it.

R6: I think it [sanitary pads] is something more personal and then it comes at the prime time, when everybody is there. So I think it should be something private and personal [not for public TV display].

R2: Culture should be respected; it [the advertisement] should be exclusively for the ladies.

Some participants however found the advertisement convincing enough to make them buy the product. Although the participants were all men those who spoke said they could buy the product for other people (women close to them).

R6: It is persuasive. Looking at what it does, it brings a level of hygiene; you can buy it as a gift to someone.

R5: I believe I can buy it for someone but depending on how the person will receive it, may be your sister.

It can be concluded that although some participants said they were convinced by the message of the advertisement and that they could buy the product for women, many found the advertisement irrelevant in their lives.

#### **4.3.1.7 Abstain (suicide)**

Although participants said they understood the message in the advertisement each of those who contributed gave it their own interpretations.

R5: They are comparing pre-marital sex and the guy jumping from a roof. I think he is behaving like Batman. You know guys think that they can't get hurt.

R7: The advert shows the risk of teenage sex. That means that you can't rely on protection such as CD [condoms]; it is only abstinence that is a 100 percent effective.

One participant identified the lifestyle of youths who had been brought up in the culture of movies. Another participant said it was a lifestyle of reckless living.

R6: I think they are trying to show us a real life situation like the way we see in the movies; like the Batman.

R3: I think it is trying to portray a lazy uncaring, a don't-care lifestyle, where he [the character in the advertisement] thinks that he can do things and get away with them.

Other participants described the character in the advertisement as a simple-minded man who had had false confidence from watching movies. One of the participants called the character "imaginative."

R5: He is gullible. Probably he has watched movies and has been fooled that since movie stars can do it I can also do it. He probably has watched too much Batman movies and wants to copy.

R8: This guy is so imaginative, he imagines that if I use trust [condoms] I can fly like an angel; when he flies he falls.

One participant (R1) found the narrative in the advertisement difficult to understand:

R1: First of all he engages in teenage sex; then the consequences. Then he is wearing Batman costumes; but in the movie if you wear the Batman suit you don't fall. In this advertisement, he is committing suicide while wearing Batman costumes. I don't understand.

Another participant (R7) said the advertisement was repulsive because he found it contradictory.

R7: The message in this advert is that it is contradicting. With the three common ways of preventing the HIV, that is, use of condoms, being faithful to your partner, and then it [the advert] tells us only to abstain. Now, it puts the audience in a dilemma.

Other participants found the use of the cartoon character contradictory and therefore repulsive.

R5: This ad is repulsive; it doesn't tell us how a superhero [used in the character] really is. He is nervous because the guy does not have judgment and cannot really relate it [Batman].

R8: Using that man with a Batman costumes is a wrong idea.

One participant said children would find the advertisement entertaining because of the use of the cartoon superhero, Batman. Some participants found the advertisement persuasive because of the way the creators of the advertisement were equating teenage sex with jumping from a roof top with a false illusion of protection.

In general the participants created an impression that the message was useful to other people but not themselves.

It can be concluded from these discussions that the message in the advertisement was abstract but the cartoon character Batman was easily recognised by many participants.

This implies that the advertisement's message is memorable to the youth but it cannot sell the behaviour change message intended.

#### **4.3.1.8 Love Bila Regrets**

Although participants watched the *Love Bila Regrets* advertisement keenly they did not look enthusiastic when asked to discuss the message. One participant said the advertisement was clear, explaining that it showed the consequences of unprotected sex.

He was supported by another participant:



R8: The message is quite clear because they are trying to say that sex without Trust [condoms] is regrettable, may be you can get pregnant.

Although the characters in the advertisement represented all ages, participants said the advertisement showed lifestyles of young people.

R4: It portrays a teenager's lifestyle, it shows only young people.

Commenting on the characters in the advertisement one participant (R5) said the characters in the advertisement were people living in denial.

R5: Most of the characters are in denial, meaning they are trying to deny that it really happened.

R6: They are really regretting what they did and the consequences they have to go through.

The storyline in this advertisement was found to be repulsive by the participants.. They argued that the advertisement did not tell the viewers what was going on.

R8: It [the advertisement] doesn't exactly show what they are really telling us because you don't know what happened but only the denial bit.

R5: The guy who says "Yes" in the end; we are not sure if he will say "No" later.

When the moderator asked whether any of the participants found anything useful, entertaining or educative in the advertisement, there was no response. Some participants could be seen shaking their heads, an indication that they did not find anything likable in the advertisement.

When asked if watching the advertisement persuaded them to buy or use condoms there were mixed reactions. Some said they would be persuaded while others said they would not.

R8: There is no choice but to use Trust because of the consequences.

R5: I don't think that I can be persuaded to buy a Trust condom at all because you never know if they can backfire later.

R6: It [the Trust condom advertisement] does not attain its objective of telling people that it's protective. You can buy another brand; it does not compare itself with others.

From the discussions of this advertisement it was evident from the body language of the participants that the advertisement was talking about issues familiar to them but they did not want to discuss them. It can therefore be concluded that the message in this advertisement is likely to reach the youth in the urban setting effectfully.

#### **4.3.1.9 Drink Drive**

There were participants who found the message in the advertisement clear and those who said they did not find it clear.

R2: The message is clear because they are saying don't drink and drive.

R4: It is not clear; they are not showing us where the friends are taking the keys and taking the drunk person home.

R1: I think the message is very clear. First of all it's talking about the safe practices. It actually shows the friends who call a taxi and take the key from the friend to drive him home.

One participant saw a "fancy" lifestyle being portrayed in the advertisement while another one said he saw a lifestyle of people having fun responsibly. One participants said the characters in the advertisement were happy people who were enjoying after a busy day. Another participant said the men in the advertisement looked social and responsible because they had come to drink after work.

One participant found the advertisement repulsive because it encouraged overdrinking, while another said the storyline was not realistic because "people can get drunk

anywhere” [other than a bar]. A third respondent found the advertisement repulsive because, according to him, it was biased to only people with cars.

R6: It may encourage other guys to drink beyond a point of recognising themselves, because you know somebody will be responsible for you. Somebody may be drunk and not be able to take care of themselves.

R8: It doesn't necessarily mean you have to go to the bar to get a drink; you can drink at home.

R7: They [the advertisement's creators] only take care of those who have cars, because other people who are not having cars can also get drunk.

Some participants, however, found the advertisement informative. One respondent said the advertisement educated people on how to avoid drink driving.

Another respondent (R6) said the advertisement was informative to people who want to overindulge in drinking:

R6: After work you can enjoy, yourself, which is always good, and have somebody to take care of you if you know you can mess around.

When the discussion shifted to how persuasive the advertisement was, only one (R8) responded, saying it would not persuade people to avoid drink driving.

R8: ... it is not showing us the consequences of drinking and driving.

It was clear from the discussion the the participants felt that the message in the advertisement was not intended for them.

After watching all the advertisement the participants were given a chance to give general commenets on the advertisements they had watched just before the discussion and all television advertisements in Kenya in general. The participants gave different perspectives on television advertisements. Most of the views tended to suggest that all advertisements had messages but some messages were not clear to many viewers.

R1: Every advert has its importance. They need to make the messages a reality so as to appeal to the viewers.

Others said said claims by advertisers were not true most of the time. Two participants' views (R2 and R5) summarised most of the contributions given by participants.

R2: Generally I believe that all adverts in Kenya are entertaining; they are fun. But most of them do not focus on the product itself; they focus more on the entertainment part of it.

R5: All advertisements contains a bit of fiction in them. They may not necessarily be true. [It] always works for advertisements like Aromat [a contemporary advertisement of rice]. When something is not ok, just say everything will be ok like Aromat.

It can be concluded that the youth in the city of nairobi do attend to television advertisements and they are ready and able to discuss these advertisements when asked.

Through discussions of these advertisements the youth are able to reaveal their self indetities.

#### **4.3.2 Urban Setting Female Participant Focus Group Discussions**

Most of the urban setting female participants identified themselves as university of Nairobi students, indicating their years of study and their degree programmes. One participant described herself as “fun-loving,” while another one described herself as “a confident individual” who liked to speak her mind. Another participant described herself as “ambitious” and “happy” as well as “shy when dealing with strangers.” One participant said she loved reading in a quiet place. Other participants who spoke did not say anything about themselves apart from their being university students and the courses they were pursuing. It can be concluded that these participants wanted to be identified as University of Nairobi students more than anything else.

When discussing the traits of an ideal young woman, all the participants had something to say. Three participants said an ideal young woman should have self-respect and be hard

working. Others said she should be wise, sociable, decent, a go-getter and goal oriented. Three participants' views (R7, R1 and R5) seemed to capture the essence of what the rest of the participants said.

R7: For an ideal chick; a good sense of fashion. Be sociable to everyone. Fit in different groups.

R1: An ideal young woman has to be a go-getter. Work for what she wants. Respect for herself and others.

R5: Responsible decent and wise in the way she is doing her things.

From the contributions it can be concluded that the urban setting women participants see an ideal young woman as one who is smart, outgoing, ambitious and with high self-esteem. The women focus group was shown the nine sampled television advertisements (Table 4.7 ) before the moderator led the discussions.

#### **4.3.2.1 Faiba**

Some participants said they understood the message in the *Faiba* advertisement while others said the message was abstract. Some said it was clear while others said it was not. One participant said the advertisement showed the modern way of communication, which, she said, was superior to traditional ways like using smoke. Another participant said the message was clear because it was comparing the communication efficiency of someone using Faiba and another who was not using it. Those who found the message unclear, however, said the advertisement was not directly linked to the service being advertised. One participant (R3) could not tell what 'Faiba' was in the first place. This was echoed by R1:

R1: Someone does not even know what 'Faiba' is; for instance, if the commercial was to be watched on silent mode. For starters, I don't even know what Faiba is. The message comes in towards the end.

This was countered by another participant (R8), who explained the strengths of the product being advertised.

R8: To me I think the advert is clear. They are saying that using *Faiba* is faster if you compare it with something like Orange( another broadband provider). For example, when you want to Skype it's clear. It may not be clear to some people who do not know about skyping.

Participants discussed the lifestyles being portrayed in the advertisement where there were various views. One Participant (R1) said it was a lifestyle of the digital era, "where we don't have to write letters" depicted. She explained that the main character was in the office and the wife was at home, where she owned a computer. The participant concluded, "This is a very digital family." Another participant (R8) identified a lifestyle where people use Skype for "face to face" communication instead of taking pictures to send to loved ones. Another participant (R9) saw a lifestyle of a happy marriage, where the man called home and yet he was with the wife in the morning and he indicated that he would see her in the evening.

On commenting about the characters in the advertisement one participant (R1) said the use of animated character was creative:

R1: We are talking of creativity where we don't have to use human beings; this is someone's art. We are tired of seeing human beings [there was laughter from the rest before she clarified that she did not mean human beings in real life). She however explained that the characters did not portray everyday life

R1: First, they do not even live in our normal society. Talk of a man leaving the house in the morning and calling the wife during the day, eeeh ... that's an awkward thing.... [laughter from the rest]. Are they still in the dating phase or are they married. These guys are married!!!Those are lies. They should talk about daily occurrences like ...hey your

account has issues; I am going to work on it... an emergency... You don't just call at  
eeh I will call you...noo. [more laughter from the rest].

For another participant (R7), the characters brought out the negative stereotype about women, which she felt was deceptive.

R7: Something else they are trying to portray, like the man is the one who wakes up in the morning and going to work but the wife is going to be at home. But in the current society it's not about the men going to work and the women being at home so I think that advert.....[laughter from the rest].

These sentiments were shared by another participant (R2), who felt that the advertisement was trying to portray the man as the provider, and by extension, all men as providers for women. She however added that the gesture of calling home portrayed the man as an admirable modern husband.

Some participants found the advertisement repulsive. One of them said the way the advertisement was trying to portray work as stressful was repulsive. For R1 the accent was repulsive:

R1: So they are trying to bring out some type of accent...is that thing 'Faiba' or 'Faimba.' The way he talks; I hate it. If you want to speak English speak English. If it's Kiswahili...there is no way I will talk to you in English, and you respond in Kiswahili or another language. That's offensive, yeah...

R7: Yes the man has a very bad accent and the wife is somehow fluent and .....yet she is the one at home.

One participant said she was repulsed by the way the main character treated his colleague:

R5: I think the advert is looking down on this other guy *mwenye*... the one who is not using Faiba because he is like ... 'Monday mood swings huku, then, is that your wife calling' ... its like he is looking down on his colleague.

However, some participants found the advertisement entertaining. For one participant the use of the accent, which was influenced by vernacular was what made the advertisement humorous and therefore popular with the audience. She said if the advertisement used ordinary language many viewers would not remember it.

Although the participants were divided on whether the advertisement was appealing none of them saw it as convincing enough to make people subscribe to the Faiba service. Those who contributed attributed their positions to the message, which they said was abstract.

R1: The advert leaves you with more questions than answers. It will make you curious, coz I want to know what this Faiba is.

R9: Okay, the advert is really entertaining and humorous, but I'll be thinking what is this Faiba thing? The way they have portrayed... I am a student; I go to class everyday so there's no way I am going to *beba* [carry] my laptop *alafu niende nikaskype* to class *niende nikaskype na mum* [then I go and Skyppe to the class, I Skyppe to mom]. You see I will be curious but I don't think I will be...yeah...

It was clear from the discussion on the *Faiba* advertisement that the participant did not like its narrative and its characters. It can therefore be concluded that female youths in the urban setting may not be the target audience of the advertisement.

#### **4.3.2.2 Niko na Safaricom**

While discussing the *Niko na Safaricom* advertisement most of the participants did not find the message clear. For each of the contributors the advertisement was either too vague or abstract. Three of the participants (R1, R2 and R4) captured what every respondent said:



R1: I think the message here is not clear, because they are not specific on what Safaricom offers.

R2: I think that the message didn't come across well because in the song, what they are advocating is unity as a country but not a Safaricom product; because they say '*niko na Safaricom*' (I have safaricom) only at the end.

R4: I think this advertisement is not addressed to us as Safaricom customers because if they say '*niko na Safaricom, nina uwezo*,' [ I have Safaricom, I have the capacity] it seems they are advertising the company itself and not the customers. The company has '*uwezo*' not the customers who are in it.

On the lifestyles portrayed in the advertisement, two participants who contributed said the advertisement was promoting tourism, by showing the various attractive features of the country and African culture through the dress code of the choir members.

Commenting about the characters in the advertisement, one participant said that they were happy people as shown in their faces when they are singing. Another participant said they were people who liked their job (of singing) and they were capable of working together in harmony.

When the participants were given a chance to discuss what they found repulsive in the advertisement two participants, who made contributions, said the message in the advertisement was abstract and scenic features shown in the advertisement were unreachable to many Safaricom customers.

R8: The major content of the message to the people or the Safaricom customer is not clear. Actually, if you see it from another perspective the slope, the adventures; the people are not saying what the company is advertising exactly.

R6: It shows the geographical nature of Kenya; you may admire but most of the population as we know it is poor. You can just see... but your own satisfaction of going to see those places can never be achieved.

However, two participants said they found the advertisement entertaining.

R3: It is entertaining because of the geographical features that so many people can admire and the nature of the song that is actually flowing.

R5: First, the music is very relaxing and what you see in the video, you just feel at peace.

Participants however said the message in the advertisement could not persuade them to buy the Safaricom service. Two of them stood out:

R1: Personally, I don't think it can persuade me to buy Safaricom because I do not know the nature of products it has. Is it a telecommunication company? After watching that I don't know whether I could go for Safaricom or for tourism to see these places.

R4: The language is just for certain people. If you are from Latin America and you are coming to Kenya, you won't go for Safaricom because you don't know what it is talking about.

It was clear that although the participants enjoyed watching the advertisement they did not find it an appropriate tool to market Safaricom services.

#### **4.3.2.3 Guinness be the Boss**

Three city women participants, who discussed the *Guinness be the Boss* advertisement said they did not find the message clear. One participant (R9) said the message could be clear if one was a football fan but if one was not he or she would not make a connection between Guinness and football. These sentiments were echoed by participant R1, who could not see the connection between suits and football:

R1: At first, I thought people are going for an interview fully dressed; how is football related to interviews? I wanted to see people dressed in shorts, sneakers. Then I ask myself, who is Guinness in that advert? Then towards the end they are telling us something about online whatever...I don't even know what that is...am totally confused. Participant R2 said she had seen the advertisement many times but she had never known what it was meant to promote.

On the lifestyle the advertisement was promoting some participants did not seem to understand the issue. Those who contributed only explained that the advertisement was showing what went on in football coaching, especially the behaviour of managers.

There was no response when the participants were asked to comment on the characters on the advertisement. On what they found to be repulsive in the advertisement various participants found a number of things repulsive.

One respondent (R8) said she was repulsed by the fact that the advertisement was entertaining and attractive to children only to find at the end that it was advertising beer. This, she argued, would encourage children to take Guinness. Participant R7 said it was irritating that if you wanted to be a boss you had to behave in a violent manner. To her the concept of boss is associated with gentle individuals. For R2 one character's behaviour in the advertisement was irritating to her:

R2: That guy who walks in late after the manager. I think that's not what an advert should portray. It should encourage people to be time keepers and especially if you are going for something serious such as an interview. You should get there before time.

One participant (R6) saw racism in the whole advertisement:

R6: Okay; me I would say because they put the manager who is going to teach the Africans is White, it's a little bit of racial there. It's like taking us back to where we were

in 1963 [the year Kenya gained Independence from Britain]. So I think it was really unfair. The manager should have been a Black man.

However one participant (R9) found the advertisement entertaining because of the humour employed:

R9: I think the way they brought out how those people were being taught how to react was humorous because you can relate; you can see you can feel, *yaani* [I mean] if you are a football fan you can feel those emotions.

The participants who contributed were unanimous that the message in the advertisement could not persuade them to buy or take Guinness beer. Among the reasons they gave was that the behaviour of the characters in the advertisement gave the product a negative image while another participant said Guinness, as a product being advertised, was not shown until the end, which, she said, made it hard for someone to connect what was going on with the beer brand. According to another participant the advertisement should have shown people drinking Guinness. Another participant said that the way the advertisement was made excluded women so she would not buy it:

R7: I don't think that I will be tempted to do Guinness because in that advertisement there is no lady there. They are all men so it's like it's a men thing.

From the arguments in the discussion on this advertisement it was clear that most participants did not understand the message in the advertisement. Since no participant found the message persuasive enough to make them like the Guinness beer, it can be concluded that this advertisement is not appropriate for urban sitting women youth consumers.

#### 4.3.2.4 Dettol Cool

When participants were asked to discuss the message on the *Dettol Cool*

advertisement all the participants who contributed said they found the message clear. They said the advertisement was promoting Dettol Cool soap and that they could see how it was used.

A successful family lifestyle was being depicted in the advertisement according to the participants. One participant said it showed a modern family lifestyle, where children were free with their parents.

Commenting on the character on the advertisement one participant said the mother was caring and the father patient because of the way they were treating the son. Michael, the son, was portrayed as a normal young person who was playful. One participant (R9) found the behaviour of the son irritating:

R9: The part Michael comes from playing basketball and he is really, really sweaty; *alafu anacollapse kwa kiti, anaachilia ball* [he collapses into the sofa, dropping the ball in the process]; in whose house? Yeah, that put me off. If I find my kid like that... aiii.

Other participants, however, found the advertisement useful and entertaining. One participant said she liked the way "Michael comes from playing tired; he washes with Dettol Cool and he really looks rejuvenated." Another participant (R1) showed excitement as she said what she liked about the advertisement:

R1: I love the shower bit; I love to watch people shower [all bursts into laughter as she dramatises]. She was supported by R2 who also looked excited:

R2: I think its also entertaining it doesn't have humour or anything but its just entertaining you will keep watching it especially when Michael comes jumps from the stairs and he is like yeeeeeeeeeha. It's just funny; it's interesting.

Two of the participants said they were persuaded to buy the soap after watching the advertisement. One participant said the way Michael's looks were changed after washing with Dettol Cool soap could inspire someone to buy the soap.

R1: Look at Michael from the beginning and look at him at the end those are two totally different people. Yeah; if you want to look like Michael at the end you have to use Dettol. She was supported by R6, who said she actually went to the shop and bought the soap the first time she watched the advertisement:

R6: I was persuaded the first time I watched it. I was so persuaded to buy the soap that I went to buy it. It's [the advertisement] really effective; they brought out their message very well.

From the discussions it was clear that most of the participants liked the advertisement's storyline and characters. It can be concluded that this advertisement is likely to be received positively by urban setting women consumers.

#### **4.3.2.5 Barclays the Ultimate Account**

Some of the participants said that the message about the *Barclays Ultimate Account* advertisement was clear while others said it was not. Those who said it was clear explained that it was easy for anybody to understand what the advertisement was saying. For instance R6 said:

R6: ... it's pretty informative so *hata ule mtu hajasoma* [even an illiterate person], can know what the heck they are talking about.

However, another participant (R1) disagreed with her that the message was clear:

R1: No, its not. You are talking about the Visa Card, yeah; you are supposed to give me a scenario where you need that money so urgently then Barclays offers the solution...

The lifestyle being portayed in the advertisement, according to the participants who contributed, was that of a digital generation, where people don't have to carry money for

various shopping needs. They either use credit cards or go online for financial transactions.

One participant (R9), while commenting about the character in the advertisement, said the man is proud and looks down upon his viewers. This seemed to be the view held by most of the other participants.

R9: He has some element of pride [resounding 'yes' from the rest]. Ati 'look at me, now look at yourself,' he is very proud. One participant (R1) found the character eloquent but not handsome enough for her liking.

R1: He is very eloquent; from the beginning you listen to him you will get his point. Other than that, they should have gotten a handsome man appealing to the eye.

This last statement seemed to be her personal opinion not shared by others as the rest laughed sarcastically.

One participant (R9) found the man's way of addressing the viewers most irritating

R9: The way the man is saying 'look at me, now look at...,' it's like he is telling you, if you don't have an account with Barclays, by the way, you are nothing.

Two participants, however, found the advertisement educative about Barclays bank's products. One participant said she would go for the services advertised while another said she was not persuaded, arguing that there was nothing unique about Barclays Bank in the advertisement. Every bank gives out a Visa card, she argued.

Although some of the participants said they found the advertisement irritating most of them seemed to like the advertisement. It can be concluded that this advertisement is likely to receive positive reception among the urban setting young women consumers.

#### **4.3.2.6 Always**

On the Always advertisement, all the participants who contributed said they found the message clear. On the lifestyles being depicted two participants said an affluent lifestyle was depicted, where every member of the family had their own bedroom. Commenting on the characters in the advertisement one participant said they were ordinary young women. The others nodded in agreement but they did not elaborate. No participant found anything repulsive about the advertisement.

On what was likable, one participant said the song in the advertisement was entertaining and she said that she found herself singing along when it was shown just before the discussion as the lyrics were also written on the screen.

Two participants said after watching the advertisement they were persuaded to buy the product because of the way the advertisement had messages that were touching to most women.

Although all the participants in this discussion were women this advertisement, which was promoting sanitary pads, did not elicit much debate. From the body language of the participants the issues in the advertisement were familiar. It can therefore be concluded that this advertisement is relevant for urban setting women youth consumers.

#### **4.3.2.7 Abstain (suicide)**

When discussing the message in the *Abstain (suicide)* advertisement, two participants said they did not understand the message. Both of them said it was talking more of suicide than teenage sex:

R1: They should have shown the consequences of teenage sex; they are encouraging suicide.

R2: Their message is too hidden; yet the society needs to open up, especially for those who cannot relate this to sex. There is a conflict of ideas in this Batman suicide.



On the lifestyle depicted in the advertisement, one participant said the advertisement showed ordinary average-income lifestyle while another participant saw youth recklessness being depicted. Commenting on the character in the advertisement one participant said the man brought out the costume of Batman very well. Participants found this advertisement repulsive, with one saying it could be copied by children, while the other two saw the acting as not convincing:

R8: It is dangerous for children as they can copy it.

R7: We do not get to see where the man goes after the fall; we only hear sounds.

R5: He falls down in a fake manner.

No participant found anything useful, entertaining or educative in the advertisement. The participants did not find it appealing enough to convince viewers to change behaviour as advocated by the advertisement. One participant said she did not think teenage sex is as dangerous as jumping from a roof top. Another participant said young people watch a lot of pornography and therefore they are not likely to equate sex with suicide. Other participants felt that the creators of the advert were underating the psychology the present-day youth.

R9: The whole setting is all wrong. They are not communicating the real consequences.

R2: Many years ago the commercial would have been effective because they used fear to communicate. The society today has no fear, people are more knowledgeable and they will get away with teenage sex.

It was clear that participants did not understand the message in this advertisement and its narrative was not appealing to them either. This advertisement is not appropriate for youth women consumers in the urban setting.

#### 4.3.2.8 Love Bila Regrets

One participant said the message in the advertisement was not clear because it did not say what was triggering the regrets expressed by the characters, while two others found the message clear.

R1: This ad is not clear. There is no explanation of what is triggering the no! no!

R6: It is clear by the way the people are reacting. The reactions are kind of what happens in real life.

R9: It's clear; at the end the couple is relaxed and happy with a "YES!"

While commenting about the advertisement's lifestyle, one participant said the the lifestyle depicted in the advertisement was reckless sexual practices. Another participant said the characters in the advertisement were ordinary people reacting to bad news. On what they found repulsive or attractive, there were a number of reactions. One participant found showing couples in bed to be in bad taste. This was supported by another participant, who said the creators of the advertisement should have avoided the bed scene and show people walking together holding hands.

One participant said the advertisement should have emphasized abstinence instead of protection. One participant did not like the way the regretting people were shown compared with happy ones:

R9: All the angry guys are as individuals and not two as the couple saying 'yes.'

One participant found the advertisement attention-grabbing because of the curiosity created by the 'no! no! no!' Participants did not however find the advertisement persuasive. One participant (R3) gave her views and the others nodded in agreement although no other participant commented:

R3: It is not persuasive. Individuals keep saying no! no! and later two are together. We do not see where someone is sick or pregnant.

Although some participants were not willing to discuss this advertisement, the participants' body language suggested that they had a lot of interest in the advertisement but they chose not to discuss it extensively. It can be concluded that this is a relevant advertisement for urban setting women youths.

#### **4.3.2.9 Drink Drive**

Participants who commented said they found the message in the *Dring Drive* advertisement clear, saying it called for responsible drinking. On the lifestyle being portrayed one participant said it showed "partying," while another one said it was a lifestyle of socialising of all sorts of people, including strangers. On the characters in the advertisement one participant said it showed dishonest people, arguing that it was not realistic for one person to sit and wait as others drink. One participant found the advertisement repulsive because most of the people in the bar were men, creating an impression that women were not supposed to go to a bar. One participant, however, found the advertisement appealing, saying that the bar setting was convincing.

On whether after watching the advertisement participants were persuaded to practise what was being advertised, one participant found the information unrealistic while another one said she found it a good idea that a group can have a designated driver who remains sober.

The women participants were then asked to give their general comments of the advertisements they had seen and others on Kenyan television. One participant said television advertisement created a good competition, giving consumers a wide choice. She gave an example of detergents, which advertised heavily. Another participant said some advertisements were humorous and entertaining, while others were boring. Another participant said she found advertisements informative but most of them were not good for children. This view was supported by another participant, who said television

stations should change the times they show advertisements by segmenting them according to the age of audiences like they did with movies. She added that advertisements took too much airtime.

This last view was shared by another participant (R5), who said:

R5: They are annoying because they are disruptive. When watching favourite programmes they take more time than the programmes themselves. Others like *M-Pesa* [a mobile money transfer service] are, however, educative.

It can be concluded that young women in the urban setting do watch television advertisements and they are ready to discuss them. After discussing the various advertisement, the contributions these young women gave brought out their self identities.

#### **4.3.3 Rural Setting Male Focus Group Participants**

Most men participants in the rural setting of Kajiado described themselves as students of Maasai Technical Institute. Some identified the courses they were pursuing. They also identified themselves with their hobbies, which included football, basketball, athletics, reading novels, politics, movies and travelling. Some described themselves variously as “social,” “fun-loving” and “patriotic.” One participant declared that he hated drinking and that he was saved. In general the participants attached multiple identities to themselves. For example, this is how one participant (R7) described himself:

R7: I am a student of Maasai Technical Institute, taking Construction Studies. I am a fan of politics, not a football fan. I am a gospel preacher and I like eating a lot.

When the participants were asked to describe the attributes of an ideal young man most of them gave attributes that hinged on moral behaviour and hard work. Participant R8, who was the first to respond seemed to set the pace for other respondents when he said:

R8: He should be simple, committed, hardworking, aggressive and should not do drugs.

Most of the participants who spoke used the words “God-fearing” and “hardworking.” Most of the speakers also seemed to take cue from the previous speaker. One participant, R7, also came close to summarising all what the others described as attributes of an ideal young man:

R7: He should be humble, respectful, and also should make his own decisions; respect others an God-fearing. He should look for people who have done well for inspiration on how to live,; he must keep on pressing to his goals.

From the responses about their self-identities and attributes of an ideal young man, it was evident that the participants wanted to project a morally upright image of themselves.

The participants were shown the nine sampled television advertisements (Table 4.8) and the moderator led the discussions on each advertisement.

**Table 4.8: Television advertisements discussed by the rural men and women focus group discussions.**

<b>Category A</b>	<b>Category B</b>	<b>Category C</b>
1. Safaricom Sambaza 2. Faiba 3. Disney Blue Band	1. Wacha Mpango wa Kando 2. Dettol Skin Care 3. Contraceptives (watoto kama siafu)	1. Love Bila Regrets 2. Guinness Football Coach 3. Abstain (suicide)

#### **4.3.3.1 Safaricom Sambaza**

All the participants who contributed said they found the Safaricom Samabaza advertisement clear and easy to understand. They explained that it was showing viewers how they could share Safaricom bundles from their mobile phones. On the lifestyles

being portrayed in the advertisement those participants who commented said modern lifestyles dominated by technology was portrayed.

Some participants found the advertisement repulsive, giving different reasons. One participant (R1) said he found the girl's behaviour exploitative to the man who shared his bundles with her.

R1: ... a lady *anaeka mtu fikira zingine ... dem unachart na yeye ndio usambaze bundles* [women disorient men...this woman is talking to the man so that he can share his bundles with her].

Another participant said that he found it repulsive that men had to share their bundles with women. One participant (R8), however, found the advertisement attractive.

R8: It's fun, interesting. The boasting guy takes a photo and then fails to upload and then the other tries to upload.

On whether after viewing the advertisement they were persuaded to join Safaricom network, some participants said they were, while others said they were not persuaded.

One participant said the way the advertisement demonstrated how to share bundles was convincing and interesting. Another participant said the advertisement showed that sharing bundles was easier than many people thought.

One participant, who said he was convinced to join the Safaricom service, said he liked the aspect where a man won the favour of the girl:

R1: Many now know that if you get bundles you can connect with many chicks [girls]. It gives you the ability to connect with a lot chicks, *ama* [or]? Guys especially the young people.

One of the participants (R5), who said he was not persuaded to embrace the Safaricom service, saw it as promoting theft of bundles:

R5: ...shows us how to be thieves. When sambaza [another Safaricom service of sharing airtime credit] came people knew how one could steal credit from their friends. Now through sambaza bundles, people will steal from their friends.

#### **4.3.3.2 Faiba**

Two participants who commented about the clarity of *Faiba* advertisement said they found it easy to understand, saying it showed how to take advantage of Faiba broadband to communicate by video. One participant said both characters in the advertisement behaved like family men because of the implication that their wives were calling. Commenting on the lifestyles being promoted in the advertisement one participant said the mode of dressing and the way one of the men's wife was calling denoted "ancient" lifestyle. There was also a suggestion that one of the men lived in town while his colleague lived in the rural setting, citing the mode of communication. One participant saw the lifestyle of married men, from the way the two men were behaving. For another participant he saw an African lifestyle in the advertisement, citing their mode of dress:

One participant (R5) found the advertisement repulsive because of how one of the characters was relating to his colleague:

R5: One dude [man] is like insulting the other one. He is boasting that he is talking to his wife in a computer and the other wife is just calling the hubby.

However, some of the participants saw the advertisement as educative and interesting because of the video-calling concept. Those who commented supported the views of R4:

R4: Even though you are far from your family you can get a message.

Some participants found the advertisement persuasive enough to convince viewers to embrace Faiba. One participant said he found the idea of getting in touch with family from far-flung distances through video calling convincing. He was supported by another participant (R3), who found the advertisement attractive to both urban and rural people:

R3: People in the *shags* [rural areas] will be a lured to use this Faiba and those in the town may be a lured to use Faiba so I think it encourages people.

#### **4.3.3.3 Disney Blue Band**

Whereas some participants found the message in the *Disney Blue Band* advertisement clear others did not. Those who said the message was not clear said there was confusion from the many images that were shown in the advertisement. One of them said he was not sure whether they were advertising Blue Band or a school bus. This was supported by another participant (R8), who explained the confusion:

R8: First of all whether the message is targeting children is not clear. The language used may not be understood by kids; the screaming is also too much.

Those who said the message was clear, however, said the advertisement was targeting school children consumers. R2's comment seemed to capture the views of those saying that the message on the advertisement was clear:

R2: Its clear; they are trying to show us that it's Blue Band they are advertising. The more you buy the more you increase your chances of winning the many gifts like a school bus and bicycles. So the lady is trying to tell the children to buy more.

He was supported by another participant (R5) who said:

R5: It's a promotion and it's like the promotion is ending so that's why the lady is asking you to tell your children to hurry up.

Commenting on the characters in the advertisement one participant said the the people shown in the advertisement were in a school setting. Another participant said the use of a comedian as one of the characters made the advertisement popular:

R5: First of all they have used Teacher Wanjiku who is a comedian and most of the family members are lured to the ad because they are using a celebrity so that everybody can understand.



On whether the advertisement could convince people to buy Blue band, one participant said the use of Teacher Wanjiku, the comedian, would make him buy Blue Band. Another one said the gifts promised in the advertisement were a major attraction for him to buy Blue Band. One participant, however, said it was not convincing for him because most of the characters shown in the advertisement were small children, who were not his class of people.

#### **4.3.3.4 Wacha Mpango wa Kando**

Only one participant said he found the message in the *Wacha Mpango wa Kando* advertisement clear. He said he found the message clear because of the simple language used. He was the only participant to talk about the message.

On the characters in the advertisement one participant said the men who were talking were married men. Another participant said the characters lived affluently in an urban area. One participant, while supporting the others that the characters were married men, found the men philanderous, saying they were discussing their mistresses and how to avoid sexually-transmitted diseases. Another participant, however, found one of the men characters faithful in his marriage and the other unfaithful.

One participant found the way married men were discussing their extramarital affairs repulsive. Another participant found the whole advertisement repulsive, saying he was not married to understand why the men who looked older than him were discussing their sexual exploits.

Another participant (R7) found the contradictory messages in the advertisement repulsive:

R7: These people... if you look at the advert, it's like they are contradicting themselves because they are saying use condoms and also, *wacha mpango wa kando* [stop extramarital affairs]. Which is which?

#### **4.3.3.5 Dettol Skin Care**

While discussing *Dettol Skin Care* advertisement the men participants in the rural setting only responded to two aspects: the lifestyles portrayed by the advertisement and its persuasiveness. One participant saw affluent lifestyle while the other two said the advertisement was displaying how beautiful young women live. On whether the advertisement was convincing one participant said that he found the advertisement persuasive, adding that it was likely to convince young women to buy the cream because the soap claimed that it would kill germs that cause skin rashes.

He was supported by another participant (R5), who said:

R5: It's convincing. Everybody loves to be healthy and this cream is associated with the Kenya Medical Associations hence makes many want it. Many ladies are worried about their pimples.

#### **4.3.3.6 Contraceptives (watoto kama siafu)**

In the *Contraceptives(watoto kama siafu)* advertisement, participants said the characters portrayed in the advertisement were salon women discussing family planning. Another participants saw the characters as slum dwellers, who came from poor backgrounds and were themselves not rich. They were engaged in small businesses to make ends meet. One participant (R5) expressed his disdain for salon women.

R5: They live in a ghetto kind of lifestyle; you see. Salon women are gossipers.

One participant said he found the advertisement convincing because of the use of a medical expert.

R1: ... many people, mostly from the rural areas fear family planning but if they find somebody from the medical profession to advice them they will go for it.

Another participant (R3) found the advertisement not convincing for the audiences he was familiar with:

R3: I think it doesn't convince people because it seems it's like it directly targets people in urban areas and those in rural are not represented.

#### **4.3.3.7 Love Bila Regrets**

Some participants found the message in *Love Bila Regrets* advertisement clear while others found it difficult to understand. One participant said the message was clear and that it was specifically targeted at people old enough to engage in sexual activities. He added that the message was targeting teenagers and older people but small children were deliberately locked out of the meaning of the message. This was supported by another participant (R8), who explained in detail:

R8:... and is very much specific to the point because, first and foremost, this advert with the no! no!! no!! and the small caption of 'Love Bila Regrets.' That thing can be interpreted very well by the mature people but for the kids, they won't know, so it's a good advert.

Those who found the message unclear said the advertisement did not say what had just happened to the characters saying 'no,' 'no.' This was captured by R7:

R7: The message is not clear; mostly you see somebody is regretting and at the end of the day you only see someone saying yes!yes! You can't even see what is being advertised.

This view was supported by another participant, who said:

R4: To me it's not clear, why are those ones celebrating .

The lifestyle being promoted in this advertisement, according to the participants who contributed, was how young college people engage in unprotected sex with abandon and come to regret later. One participant said these were young people who lived in college hostels and they didn't care to use condoms when they had sex. Some participants found the advertisement interesting because of the drama and suspense employed in its creation. One participant captured this sentiment and there was support from others:

R5: It [the advertisement] keeps somebody there. It's addictive at first, Zi! Zi!! Zi!!! You are kept on the screen; at the end it's when you know what it is.

However, one participant said he found the advertisement repulsive:

R1: For me it's irritating. You see a regretful advert which encourages young people to engage in sex, which is against the Biblical teaching.

Two participants said the advertisement convinced them to use condoms when having sex:

R5: It convinces someone use a condom, because it starts with Zi! zi!! zi!! So you are eager to know what is happening and then you are convinced not to regret later.

One participant said the advertisement did not convince him to use condoms because it did not indicate that condoms were fully protective:

R3: It shows that a condom may not be a 100 percent protective.

#### **4.3.3.8 Guinness Football Coach**

While commenting about the clarity of the message in the *Guinness Football Coach* advertisement, two participants said the message was clear. One participant explained his perspective and the other supported him by nodding their heads:

R5: A *Mzungu* [White man] is like going around the country searching for footballers not knowing his driver is the footballer he was searching for.

Another participant, while saying the message was clear, saw it as a promotion of Guinness:

R1: ... if you want to be great, the way they put it, if you drink this beer, you will definitely become great. So *juu ya kutaka hiyo greatness* [because you are after that greatness] you will go for it.

Other participants said they found the advertisement interesting. They said the way the football scout was searching for talent only to learn that his driver was the greatest talent

was a major attraction of the advertisement. One participant said the way the driver was showing his prowess for football made the advertisement interesting. One participant found the advert educative, arguing that it shows that if you take Guinness beer it will not affect your sports skills but enhance them:

R4: The man played well; it shows that if you just take Guinness it will not deny you from playing football.

Two participants said the message in the advertisement was convincing for them to take Guinness beer. One of them (R4) said the use of the white character was a major selling point for the beer:

R4: I think it is encouraging. According to African culture if you see a *Mzungu* doing something we will be encouraged to do it.

This view was supported by another participant (R5), who said:

R5: ... because *Mzungu* says at the end, 'there's a drop of greatness in every man,' so some of us who have not experienced this are told to go and buy it and discover that greatness in you.

#### **4.3.3.9 Abstain (suicide)**

Four participants who responded to the *Abstain (suicide)* advertisement said they found the message easy to understand. One of them said this was a man who had had unprotected sex and after realising that he could be infected with HIV he opted to commit suicide. The participant was supported by another participant who echoed the same sentiments:

R1: It shows someone *mwenye ameshindwa ku abstain* [who has failed to abstain] after having sex; may be he gets HIV. After getting, he thinks of killing himself, yah. This shows us the regrets of not abstaining.

Another participant saw the character as a movie enthusiast who was fooled by what he had seen in movies and practised them with dire consequences:

R5: First, the guy seems to have watched too much movies. He thinks he is a Batman; he has the costume of Batman he thinks he can fly like Batman and he goes and lands on a car. He should be in ICU or dead. The advert is telling you to say no to sex; he is dumb.

This view was supported by another participant, who said:

R8: He is trying to be like Batman, don't be as stupid as this man. Don't do unprotected sex as this man who is stupid; don't be stupid like him.

Although there was an anchoring write-up on the screen emphasizing teenage sex, none of the participants who said the message was clear mentioned teenage sex. They instead saw unprotected sex.

Some participants found the advertisement interesting while others did not. One participant said the way the character was jumping from a roof top could convince a child to try it. This, he said, made the advertisement repulsive. Others found the advert interesting:

R5: Its interesting it's a comic kinder from the costumes, the gumboots and the coat he wears cheats him that he can fly and then he lands on a car then *anashangaa* [he's horrified].

R4 : When you see the advert you just laugh.

One participant found the advertisement repulsive because of its short duration:

R8: It does not convince me because of one thing; it's so fast. First, I just saw part of it and then it was gone.

Participants said the advertisement about teenage sex was not likely to convince young people to avoid teenage sex. One participant said it was only good as simple

entertainment. One participant said many viewers were likely to miss the advertisement's message because the storyline was not clear.

The rural setting's male participants were asked to give general comments on the advertisements they had just seen and others on Kenyan television. One participant said most advertisements on television were too complicated and suggested that creators should come up with straightforward messages. Another participant suggested that advertisement creators should use Kiswahili since it was simple enough for everybody to understand. At the same time another participant said he found advertisements "cool" but suggested that "they should advertise at appropriate time," meaning that some advertisements should not be aired during prime time because of their sexual content. Another participants said he saw advertisements as simply informative:

R2: I think the adverts are interesting; in general they are educative, trying to make people take care of themselves.

One participant said advertisements were educative for young men interested in relationships with the opposite sex:

R1: They [young men] see adverts as tempting. Things like showing women mostly with men are a must watch. The following day is a must have for them; ladies are men's weaknesses.

#### **4.3.4 Rural Setting Female Focus Group Participants**

When the rural setting women participants were asked to describe themselves most of them identified themselves as "a student" with some giving the name of their college, while others gave both the institution's name and the courses they were taking. Most of them indicated their hobbies. Among the hobbies mentioned were travelling, watching movies and television; swimming and listening to music. Others responses included

singing, “socialising,” making friends, going out with friends, and reading novels. Each of the participants who contributed gave herself multiple identities. For example, this how one respondent described herself:

R5: I am Secretarial student. I like watching movies, music, mostly gospel music, and the latest one. During my leisure time I get time to look for the latest music online.

Most of the participants described an ideal young woman as an individual who was learned and commanded respect from the society. One participant felt that good education, more than anything else, defined an ideal young woman:

R5: I think education is the key word here. Because, as a lady, when you are educated you feel very comfortable; people will respect you in a manner that you don't expect. You can feel comfortable presenting yourself anywhere if you are learned. Presenting yourself to your family and community.

One participant said an ideal young woman should be friendly to people while another one said the ideal young woman should be “decent” and respectable. Two participants who seemed to take cue from this said the mode of dressing defined a decent and respectable young woman:

R3: Mode of dressing is vital. Well, if you look at a chick; the way she dresses should not be funny. She should be officially dressed...

R5: Dressing that doesn't show parts of the body whether it's official or not; and does not affect other people, especially men.

The participants were shown the nine sampled television advertisements (Table 2) and the moderator led the discussions. The first advertisement to be shown was *Safaricom Sambaza* and the moderator posed the question: “Do you think the message being promoted about the product is clear?”



#### 4.3.4.1 Safaricom Sambaza

Two participants said that the message in the *Safaricom Sambaza* advertisement was clear. When the moderator prodded them to explain what was being advertised, one of them said a young man was talking about the internet. Commenting about lifestyles portrayed in the advertisement one participant said youth life style while another one said it was a lifestyle of rich young people.

One participant saw a display of contrasting lifestyles:

R7: I think there are two lifestyles here; coz the other dude is trying to potray ghettoish lifestyle and the other one is from high class. For the chick, it's like they are trying to tune her. When that ghetto dude tries to upload a photo and *iliisha, huyu mwingine* since he is a guy from up market lifestyle, *alimange kumsambazia* bundles [The two men, one from the ghetto and the other from an affluent neighbourhood are trying to seduce the girl. The man from a ghetto background ran out of bundles and the man from a rich background managed to share bundles with the girl].

Other participants found the language used in the advertisement repulsive. Two participants found the mode of dressing and behaviour of the characters in the advertisement distasteful:

R2: The guy used is ugly because of the bad dressing.

R1: The way they are holding each other; I don't like it.

Other participants however found the advertisement educative and entertaining. One participant said it was educating people on how they can share internet bundles on their mobile phones. Another participant said the part where the man is swaggering across the screen was entertaining. Two participants said the advertisement was persuasive enough to make them subscribe to Safaricom bundles:

R1: ... because I can go to FaceBook using the bundles.

R7: I think it's good because we are in the 21 century. At least chicks nowadays tend to roll with guys who are rich so that they can have a better lifestyle.

#### 4.3.4.2 Faiba

None of the participants found the message in the *Faiba* advertisement clear. One participant explained that the advertisement had failed to explain what Faiba was. Three participants found the advertisement repulsive, citing the use of animation, the behaviour of the men in the office and the language used by the characters in the advertisement.

R7: The animated characters are ugly; they are not good looking. They should have used good-looking cartoons.

R1: Instead of doing work, this man is talking to his wife from the office.

R7: The language of the guy is horrible. He has Kamba [a Kenyan tribe] accent, which is not convenient in the office. Also the advert is not colourful; not attractive.

Two participants, however, when talking about lessons learnt from the advertisement, said the advertisement was useful. They said it was good because a man can talk to his family easily even when he is far away. One participant found the advertisement entertaining:

R1: They are using funny language, *Kama nakupenda Kama pelemende* [like I love you like a sweet].

On whether after watching the advertisement they were persuaded to buy Faiba there was no response. After prodding, one participant said it did not, explaining that the advertisement neither explained how the service was used nor told the viewers where to find the service.

R1: ...because I don't know where to find them; also they are not showing us how to use them.

#### **4.3.4.3 Disney Blue Band**

When discussing the *Disney Blue Band* advertisement four participants said they had seen the advertisement while three others said they had never seen it. One participant said the advertisement was about the benefits of Blue Band while another one said she could see that it was Blue Band that was being advertised but she could not explain what it was about. Another participant explained:

R7: If you get a chance to buy a BB [Blue Band margarine] you can win a ticket to Disneyland.

Commenting on what she found repulsive about the advertisement one participant found it too wordy:

R1: I think they are not going straight to the point. They are talking too much instead of going straight to the point if it is a promotion.

Other participants however found the advertisement interesting:

R3: It's funny; the way the lady talks.

R1: The kids seem to be enjoying themselves; some are dancing and clapping.

R7: They have used a popular comedian named Teacher Wanjiku; the kids love her so much.

Commenting on whether the advertisement could convince her to buy Blue Band one participant said it was convincing because of the Disneyland trip promotion.

#### **4.3.4.4 Wacha Mpango wa Kando**

Some of the participants said they understood the *Wacha Mpango wa Kando* advertisement's message. Those who contributed said the lifestyles portrayed in the advertisement were of married men who were involved in extramarital affairs. One participant said she found the advertisement repulsive because the characters who were speaking were only men. This was supported by another participant, who saw the men characters in the advertisement as a bad influence to other men:

R1: They are influencing others to have *mpango wa kando* [extramarital affairs] because you can use a condom.

The only participant who commented about the persuasiveness of the advertisement said the message in the advertisement was not convincing.

#### **4.3.4.5 Dettol Skin Care**

All the participants who commented said the message on the *Dettol Skin Care* advertisement was clear. They said the characters in the advertisement looked friendly and happy. Two participants, who spoke about the persuasiveness of the message said the message could convince them to buy the Dettol product. One of them justified her view by saying she saw the effect of the product in the advertisement:

R1: The lady had something and after using Dettol she was smooth.

Overall this advertisement did not elicit much discussion from the rural setting women participants.

#### **4.3.4.6 Contraceptives (watoto kama siafu)**

Participants who commented on the *Contraceptives (watoto kama siafu)* advertisement said the message on the use of contraceptives was clear. One of them said women were being advised to ignore people talking negatively about family planning methods and get the right information from medical experts. Talking about the characters in the advertisement one participant said one of the women took pride in saying things that could hurt others. Although one participant said she found the advertisement educative on the facts about family planning, most of the participants looked uncomfortable discussing the advertisement compared with the others before. This advertisement also did not generate much discussion.

#### **4.3.4.7 Love Bila Regrets**

The participants who contributed the *Love Bila Regrets* advertisement said they understood its message. One participant seemed to capture the mood of others from the way they nodded their heads after she said:

R1: I think those who did not use condoms are saying no, but these ones are saying yes because they used a condom.

The participants who commented on lifestyles saw the lifestyle of youths who were not afraid of engaging in unprotected sex. One participant found the advertisement repulsive, saying it was likely to influence children negatively when it was shown on television:

R4: I think it is not good because if children watch this ad, it is going to influence them.

Two participants, however, found the advertisement to be educative on safe sex. One of them explained:

R1: It's interesting because the ones who have used condoms are happy and the ones who did not use are regretting.

On whether the advertisement was convincing enough to make people embrace protected sex, two participants said yes it was:

R7: Yes, if you really have to indulge yourself in sex you must use a condom.

R1: It persuades people that if you must, use a condom.

#### **4.3.4.8 Guinness Football Coach**

Two participants said they found the message in the *Guinness Football Coach* advertisement to be clear. One of them said the advertisement was promoting Guinness beer while another one said the advertisement suggested that people should go for a drink of Guinness after finishing the day's work. The participants did, however, not say anything about the characters in the advertisement. One participant found the advertisement repulsive, saying it was deceptive:

R4: I think it's a drug they are advertising, which lies; that if you use it, you will have more energy.

However one participant found the advertisement interesting:

R2: The guy playing the ball is very interesting.

Other participants found the advertisement persuasive while others did not. Two participants gave reasons why they found the advertisement persuasive.

R1: You can see the guy playing with ball up and down; he is successful, and you know he takes Guinness.

R3: There is no stress when you take Guinness.

One participant differed with them:

R4: No, no. Most of the people who are taking Guinness seem to be only rich people

#### **4.3.4.9 Abstain (suicide)**

Three participants said they found the message in the *Abstain (suicide)* advertisement clear. When they were asked what was happening in the advertisement they gave their views:

R3: Someone is trying to commit suicide.

R4: The guy is a teenager and he is likely to have been divorced.

R1: He seems to be stressed; look at the way he holds his head.

None of the participants who spoke commented about the caption on the screen that equated teenage sex with suicide. One participant said she found the advertisement repulsive because the message was abstract:

R7: I don't see why that guy is committing suicide. They should have just communicated directly.

Another participant disagreed with her saying:

R4: It's educative. Somebody should not take action of committing suicide.

One participant found the advertisement persuasive saying, it discouraged the youth from teenage sex:

R7: It's a good one. There is no need of engaging in unprotected sex and regret later.

When participants were asked to give general comments on the advertisements they had just seen and others on Kenyan television some of them gave their views. One of them said television advertisements were generally educative while another one said she found television advertisements entertaining. One participant said advertisements helped her grow psychologically. When prodded she explained that she learnt how many people behaved by watching television advertisements. She was supported by another one, who said:

R7: Adverts relate also to some of the things we encounter in our daily activities.

In general these views given by the rural town women participants indicated that they had watched television advertisements before. It also indicated that they were able and willing to engage with advertisements and make meanings that ressonated with their self-identities.

#### **4.4 How the Kenyan Youth Define their Self-Identities from Consumption of Television Advertisements**

This section presents the findings obtained from the 120 respondents to whom a questionnaire was administered. Sixty respondents were from the urban setting while the other 60 were from a rural setting. The urban respondents were drawn from the Technical University of Kenya, while the rural setting respondents were drawn from Mount Kenya University's Thika campus. Both categories of respondents were young men and women studying at university level. The responses from the self-administered questionnaires were coded and analyzed using the computer software Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). A descriptive analysis was carried out to explain the field findings on

how the Kenyan youth define their self-identities from consumption of television advertisements.

#### **4.5.1 Urban Setting Findings**

Out of the 60 respondents surveyed in the urban setting, 40 percent were men and 60 percent women, indicating that most of the urban respondents were women. This is shown in table 4.9.

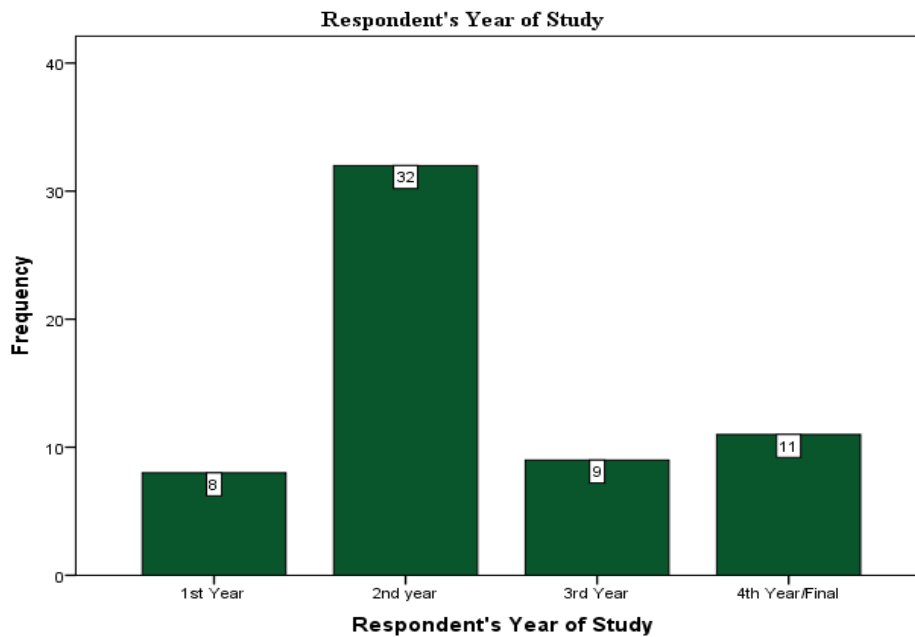
**Table 4.9: Distribution of gender among urban setting respondents.**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

The percentage distribution for the year of study of the respondents in the urban setting showed that majority of them were in their second year, representing 53.3 percent of those surveyed. This was followed by fourth years, with 18.3 percent, third year with 15 percent and first year, with 13.3 percent of those surveyed. This is summarized in figure 4.19.



**Figure 4.19: Distribution of respondents' year of study**



Out of the 60 city respondents surveyed 55 percent indicated that they were Protestants, 23.3 percent were Catholic, 18.3 percent were Muslim and 3.3 percent were from other faiths. As illustrated in table 4.10 majority of those surveyed were Christians.

**Table 4.10: Distributions among urban setting respondents**

Faith	Frequency	Percentage
Muslim	11	18.3
Catholic	14	23.3
Protestant	33	55.0
Others	2	3.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 4.5.1.1 Self-Identity and Consumption of Television Advertisements

For both the urban and rural setting youth the researcher wanted to test how the youth perceived themselves, their interaction with television advertisements and what their perceptions of television advertisements were. The researcher also wanted to test the youth respondents about television advertisements promoting various categories of products and services, notably beer, condoms and mobile telephone services.

Out of the 60 respondents among the urban setting youth 95 percent reported that they did not hate their looks while five percent reported that they hated their looks. This indicates that very few respondents had low self-esteem.

Of the urban youth surveyed 95 percent described themselves as ambitious while five percent construed themselves as not ambitious. This shows that majority of the youth in the urban setting were ambitious. The implication here is that most youth in the urban setting want to achieve greater things in life. The survey findings indicated that majority of the urban respondents (96.7 percent) believed in God while only, 3.3 percent indicated that they did not belief in God. Majority of the urban respondents indicated that they hated some people’s mode of dress and talk. As table 4.11 shows 68.3 percent indicated hating the way some people dressed while 31.7 percent seemed not to have a problem with the way people dressed and spoke.

**Table 4.11: Distribution of gender among urban setting respondents.**

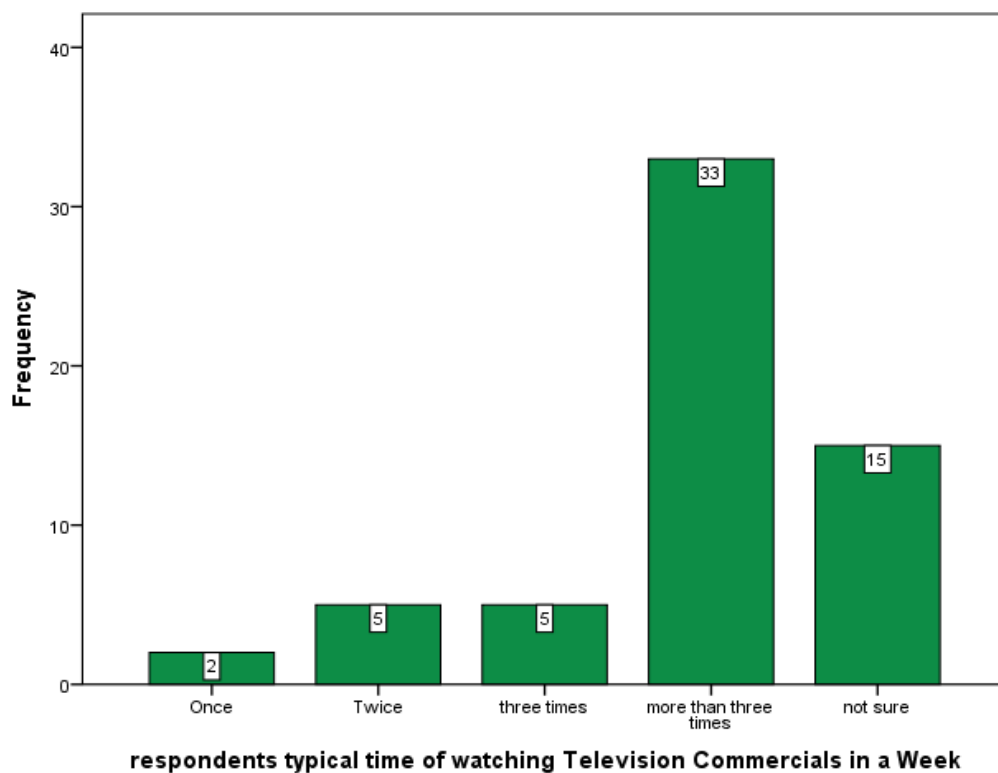
	Frequency	Percentage
True	41	68.3
Not True	19	31.7
Total	60	100.0

**4.5.1.2 The Youth and Television Viewing**

When asked to indicate if they learned from watching television or not 78.3 percent of the respondents indicated that they learned many things from watching television while 21.7 percent indicated that they did not learn many things from watching television. This indicates that television is a significant source of information among the urban setting

youth. On the frequency of watching television advertisements most of the respondents indicated that they watched television advertisements more than three times a week. As figure 4.20 shows 55 percent of the respondents watched television advertisements more than three times in a week, while 25 percent indicated that they were not sure of the times they watched. Those who watched television two times and three times were 8.3 percent each and three percent said they watched once a week. This indicates that most of the urban setting youth consume television advertisements.

**Figure 4.20: Distribution of the number of times respondents watched television advertisements per week**



#### 4.5.1.3 The Youth and Condom Advertising on Television

When the respondents were asked to indicate their position on whether they found condom advertisements on television disgusting, promoting immorality, being educative or being entertaining, there were different responses although a majority of them tended to disagree with the notion that condom advertisements were disgusting. As table 4.12 shows, 30 percent of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that the television advertisements on condoms were disgusting. Twenty percent indicated that they strongly

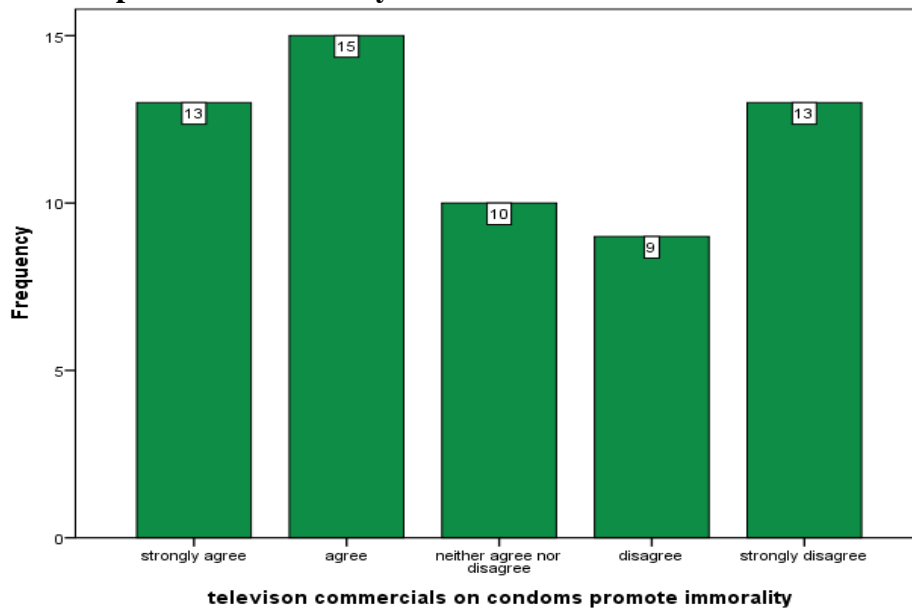
agreed, 16.7 percent indicated that they agreed while 20 percent indicated that they strongly agreed.

**Table 4.12: Distributions among urban setting respondents**

	Frequency	Percentage
strongly agree	12	20.0
Agree	10	16.7
Neither agree nor disagree	8	13.3
Disagree	18	30.0
Strongly disagree	12	20.0
Total	60	100.0

On the question of whether condom advertising on television promoted immorality the respondents were divided in almost half in their responses although a slight majority tended to suggest that condom advertisements promoted immorality. As Figure 4.21 shows 25 percent indicated that they agreed that condom advertising promoted immorality. Among the respondents 21.7 percent indicated that they strongly agreed, 16.7 percent indicated that neither agreed nor disagreed, 21.7 percent indicated that they strongly disagreed while 15 percent indicated that they disagreed.

**Figure 4.21: Distribution of responses on whether television advertisements on condoms promote immorality.**



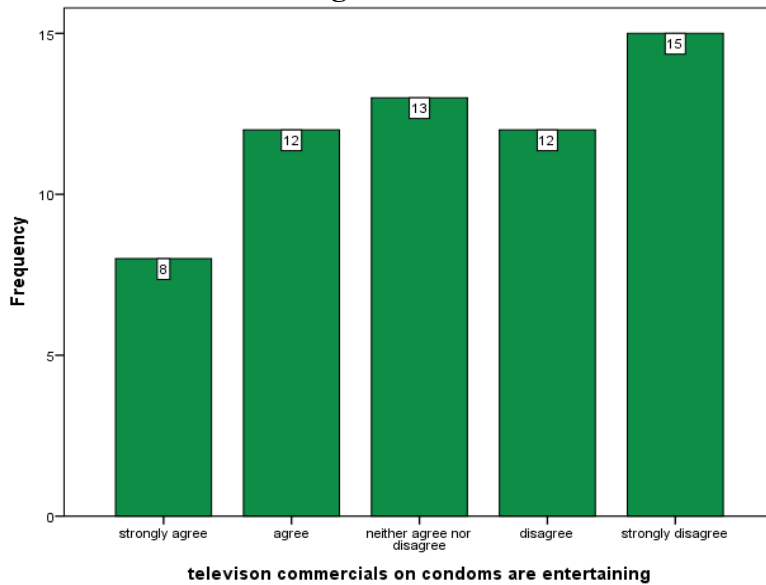
Most of the respondents did not find condom advertisements on television educational. As table 4.13 shows, 25 percent indicated that they strongly disagreed that television advertisement on condoms was educational while 21.7 percent of the respondents indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed. Twenty percent of the respondents said they agreed while 13.3 percent said they strongly agreed that condom advertisements on television were educational.

**Table 4.13: Distribution of responses on whether television advertisements on condoms are educational.**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	8	13.3
Agree	12	20.0
Neither agree nor disagree	13	21.7
Disagree	12	20.0
Strongly disagree	15	25.0
Total	60	100.0

Majority of the respondents surveyed indicated that they did not find condom advertising on television entertaining. As figure 4.22 shows 15 out of the 60 respondents from the urban setting strongly disagreed that condoms were entertaining. Thirteen of them neither agreed nor disagreed, 24 of the respondents equally shared with agreement and disagreement, while eight of the respondents said they strongly agreed.

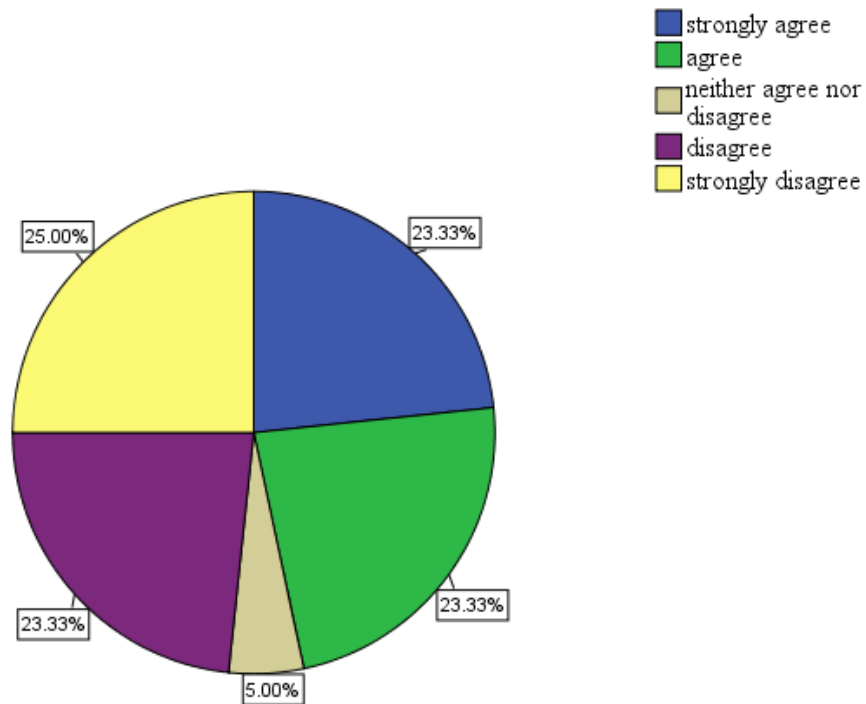
**Figure 4.22: Distribution of responses on whether Television advertisements on Condoms are entertaining.**



#### 4.5.1.4 The Youth and Beer Advertising on Television

When respondents were asked if they found beer advertisements on television unrealistic, majority of them indicated that they found them unrealistic. As figure 4.23, shows 25 percent said they strongly disagreed that television advertisements on beer were unrealistic while 23.3 percent of the respondents said they strongly agreed; 23.3 percent said they agreed and another 23.3 percent said they disagreed. Only five percent of the respondents indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

**Figure 4.23: Distribution of responses on whether television advertisements that advertise beer are unrealistic.**



Majority of the respondents said that beer advertising on television promotes alcohol abuse. As table 4.14 shows 26.7 percent of respondents indicated that they agreed that television advertisements on beer promotes alcohol abuse. Twenty percent of the respondents said they strongly agreed while another 20 percent said they strongly disagreed that beer advertisements on television promoted alcohol abuse. Of all the respondents 16.7 percent said they disagreed while another 16.7 percent indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed that beer advertisement on television promotes alcohol abuse.

**Table 4.14: Distribution of responses on whether television advertisements that advertise beer promotes alcohol abuse.**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	12	20.0
Agree	16	26.7
Neither agree nor disagree	10	16.7
Disagree	10	16.7
Strongly disagree	12	20.0
Total	60	100.0

Most of the respondents surveyed indicated that beer advertisements on television were educational. As table 4.15 shows, 36.7 percent of the respondents said they agreed that advertisements on beer were educational. Of the respondents 18.3 percent said they strongly disagreed while 16.7 percent said they strongly agreed. Fifteen percent said they disagreed while 13.3 percent said they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement that beer advertisements on television were educational.

**Table 4.15: Distribution of responses on whether television advertisements that advertise beer are educational.**

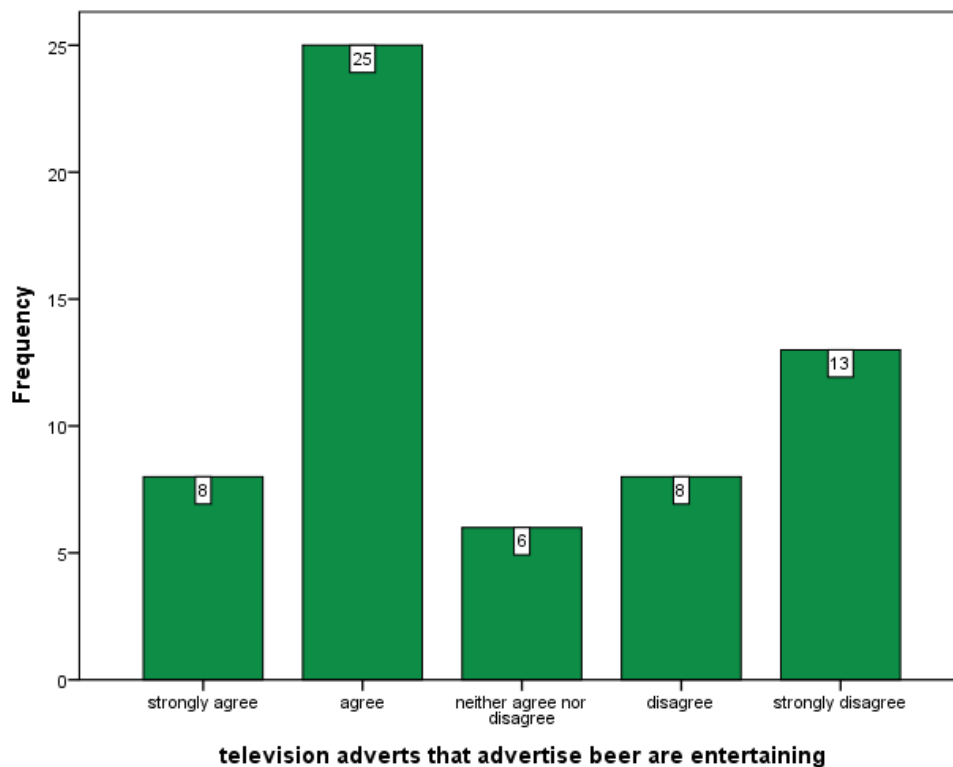
	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	10	16.7
Agree	22	36.7
Neither agree nor disagree	8	13.3
Disagree	9	15.0
Strongly disagree	11	18.3
Total	60	100.0

On the entertainment value of beer television advertisements majority of the respondents indicated that they found the advertisements entertaining. As figure 4.24 shows 41.7 percent of the respondents indicated that they agreed that beer television advertisements were entertaining. Another 21.7 percent said they strongly disagreed, 13.3 percent said



they disagreed, while 13.3 percent said they strongly agreed. Ten percent of the respondents indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed that beer television advertisements were entertaining.

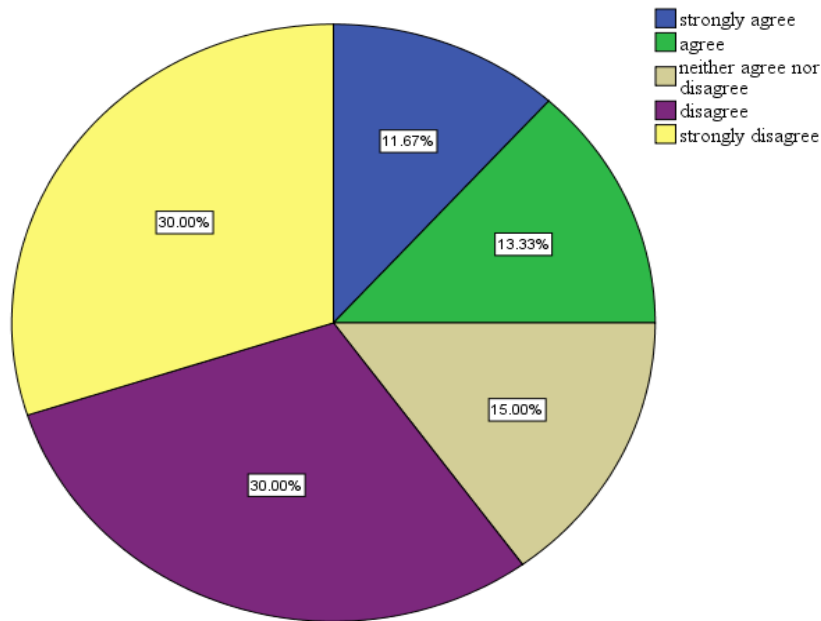
**Figure 4.24: Distribution of responses indicating whether television advertisements of beer are entertaining.**



#### **4.5.1.5 The Youth and Safaricom Services Advertising on Television**

When the respondents were asked if they found television advertisements of Safaricom mobile telephone network services unrealistic majority of them indicated that they disagreed with the statement. As figure 4.25 shows, 30 percent said they disagreed while another 30 percent said they strongly disagreed. Fifteen percent said they neither agreed nor disagreed while 13.3 percent said they agreed. Another 11.7 percent of the participants said they strongly agreed that Safaricom services advertisements on television were unrealistic.

**Figure 4.25: Distribution of responses on whether television advertisements of Safaricom are unrealistic.**



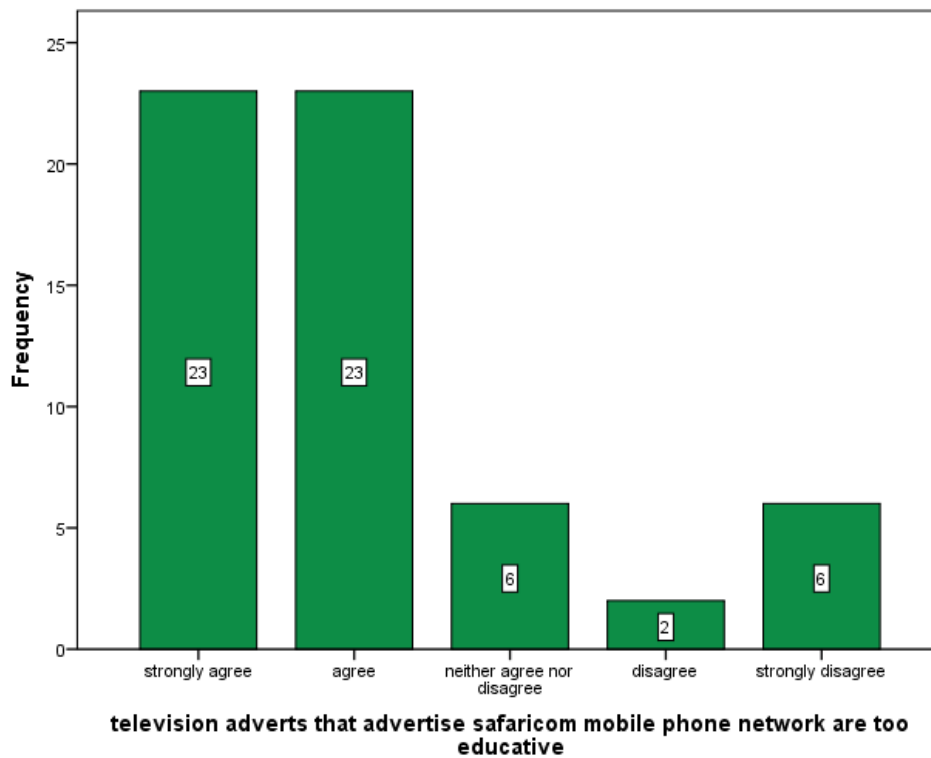
Respondents were asked to indicate whether they found Safaricom advertisements too long and a majority of them indicated that they did not find the advertisements too long. As indicated on Table 4.16, 31.7 percent of the respondents indicated that they disagreed that Safaricom advertisements were too long. Another 23.3 percent of the respondents said they neither agreed nor disagreed; 20 percent indicated that they agreed while 13.3 percent indicated that they strongly agreed and 11.7 percent of the respondents indicated that they strongly disagreed that television advertisements of Safaricom were too long.

**Table 4.16: Distribution of responses on whether television advertisements on Safaricom are too long.**

	Frequency	Percentage
strongly agree	8	13.3
Agree	12	20.0
neither agree nor disagree	14	23.3
Disagree	19	31.7
strongly disagree	7	11.7
Total	60	100.0

Majority of the respondents said they found safaricom advertisements educative. Responding to the question whether they found Safaricom advertisements entertaining 76.7 percent said they strongly agreed while another 76.7 percent said they agreed (Figure 4.26 ). Ten percent said they neither agreed nor disagreed while 8.3 percent said they strongly disagreed and five percent said they disagreed that television advertisements on Safaricom were educative.

**Figure 4.26: Distribution of responses on whether Safaricom television advertisements are educative**



Majority of those surveyed indicated that that they found Safaricom advertisements entertaining (Table 4.17). Of all the respondents 48.3 percent said they agreed with the statement that Safaricom advertisements were entertaining while 28.3 percent said they strongly agreed. Another 8.3 percent indicated that they strongly disagreed while five percent said they disagreed. Ten percent of the respondents indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed that Safaricom advertisements are entertaining.

**Table 4.17: Distribution of responses on whether Safaricom advertisements are entertaining.**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	17	28.3
Agree	29	48.3
Neither agree nor disagree	6	10.0
Disagree	3	5.0
Strongly disagree	5	8.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### 4.5.1.6 Perception of How Television Advertisements Depict the Youth

As Table 4.18 shows, respondents indicated that the Kenyan youths are mostly depicted as fun-loving with 39 out of the 60 respondents supporting this view. Nine respondents said television advertisements depicted Kenyan youth as contented with life.

**Table 4.18 Distribution of the respondents' view on the youth and television advertisements**

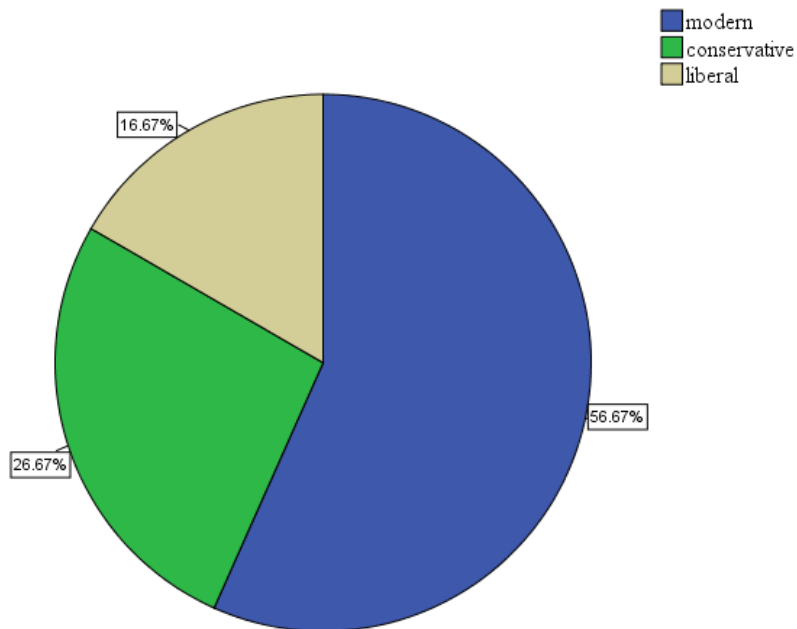
No.	Television advertisements and the Kenyan youth	No. of respondents
1	Television advertisements depict Kenyan youth as contented with life	9
2	Television advertisements depict Kenyan youth as irresponsible	16
3	Television advertisements depict Kenyan youth as hard working	21
4	Television advertisements depict Kenyan youth as independent	21
5	Television advertisements depict Kenyan youth as disrespectful to elders	13
6	Television advertisements depict Kenyan youth as slaves of Western culture	13
7	Television advertisements depict Kenyan youth as fun loving	39
8	Television advertisements depict Kenyan youth as extravagant	21

#### 4.5.1.7 How the Rural setting Youth Describe Themselves

From figure 4.27 it shows that 56.7 percent of the respondents regarded themselves as modern, 26.7 percent regarded themselves as conservative while 16.7 percent of the

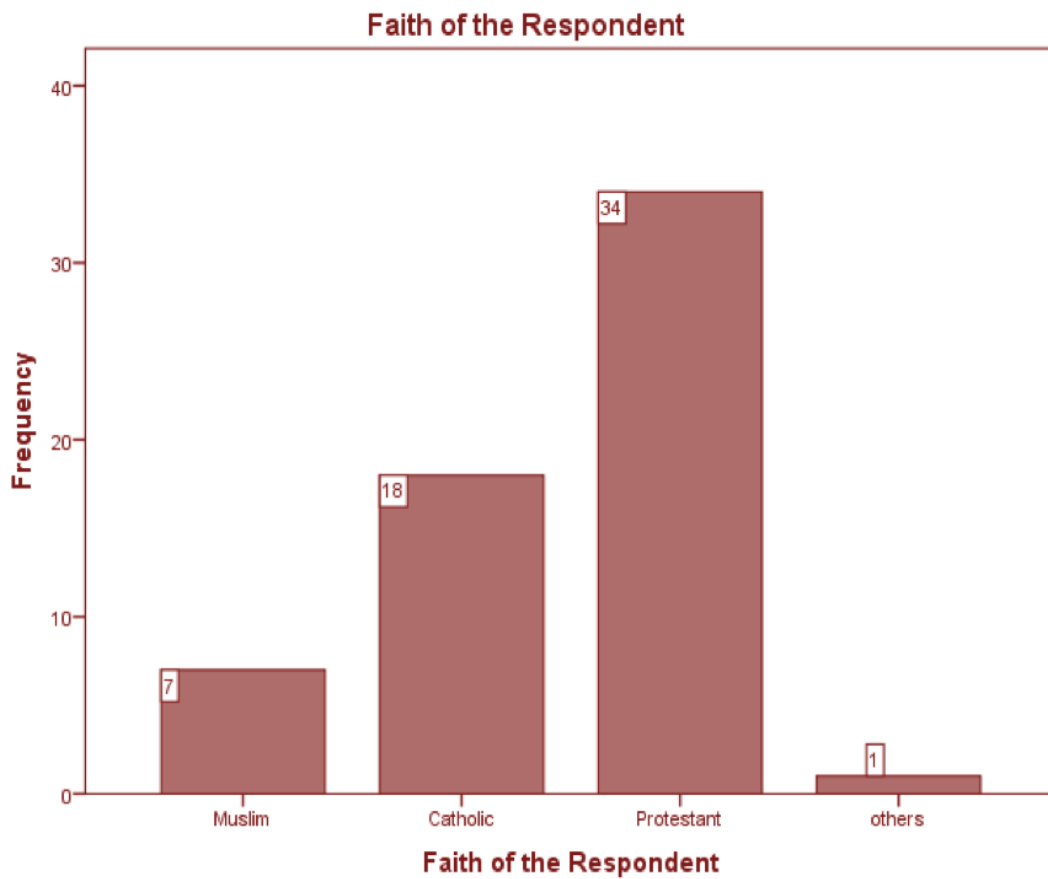
respondents were liberal. It can be noted that none of the respondents indicated being traditional.

**Figure 4.27: Distribution of responses on how the rural youth describe themselves.**



Out of the 60 respondents surveyed in the rural setting 58.3 percent were female and 41.7 were male. As shown on figure 4.28, of the 60 respondents surveyed 34 said they were Protestants, 18 Catholic, seven Muslim and one from other faiths. This indicates that a majority of respondents from the rural setting were of the Protestant faith.

**Figure 4.28: Distribution of faith of rural respondents**



Out of the 60 rural respondents, 93.3 percent indicated that they were ambitious and 6.67 percent said they were not ambitious. This shows that majority of the youth in the rural setting believed that they were ambitious. Fifty-nine of the respondents said they believed in God while only one said he did not. When the respondents were asked to comment about the way other people talk and dress 80 percent said they had no problem with the way other people talked and dressed while 20 percent said they were uncomfortable with the way some people spoke and dressed.

#### **4.5.2.1 Self Identity and Consumption of Television Advertisements**

Majority of the youth surveyed in the rural setting reported that they learnt many things from watching television. As shown on table 4.19, 88.3 percent of the respondents said they learnt many things from watching television while 11.7 percent said they did not

learn many things from television. This indicates that television is a significant source of information in the rural setting.

**Table 4.19: Distribution of learning from watching television**

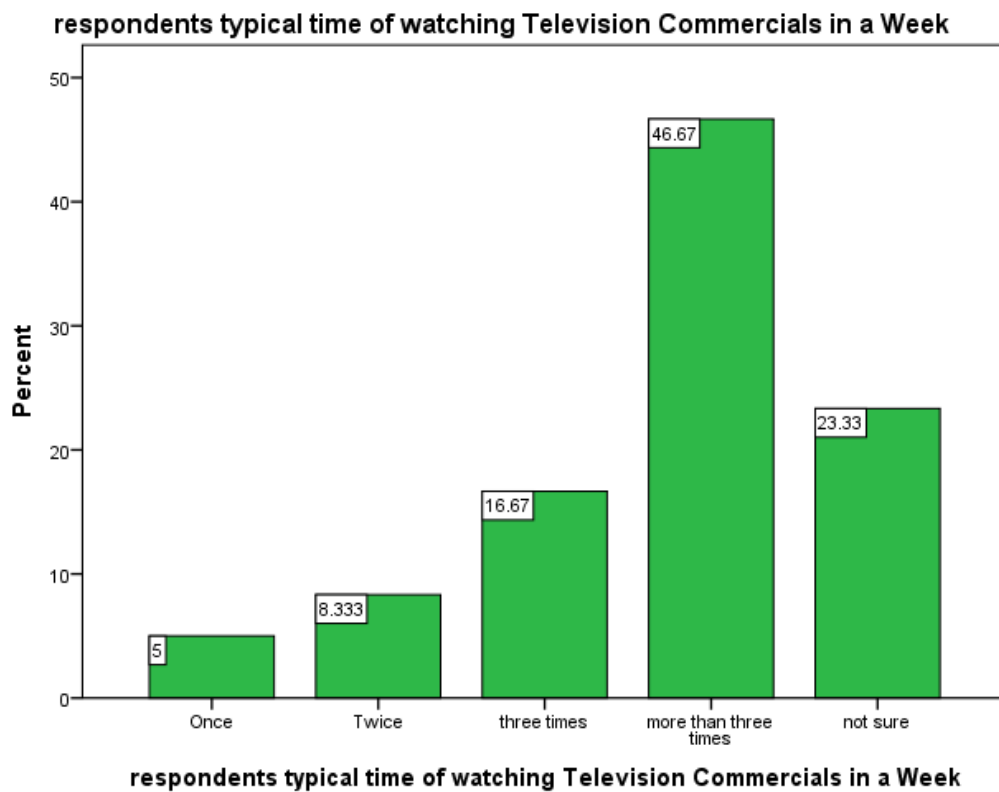
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
True	53	88.3
Not True	7	11.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Out of the 60 respondents from the rural setting under the present study it was observed that 96.7 percent did not hate the way they looked while 3.3 percent said they hated their looks. This indicates that most respondents had high self-esteem.

#### **4.5.2.2 The Youth and Television Viewing**

Majority of the youth surveyed in the rural setting indicated that that they had regular interaction with television advertisements. As shown in figure 4.29, 46.67 percent of the respondents indicated that they watched television advertisements more than three times a week. Another 23.33 percent said they were not sure how many times they watched television advertisements in a week, while 8.33 percent indicated that they watched television advertisements twice a week, while 8.33 percent indicated that they watched television twice a week. Five percent indicated that they watched once a week while 16.3 percent said that they watched three times a week. This implies that majority of the respondents were consumers of television advertisements.

**Figure 4.29: Distribution of the times respondents watch television advertisements**

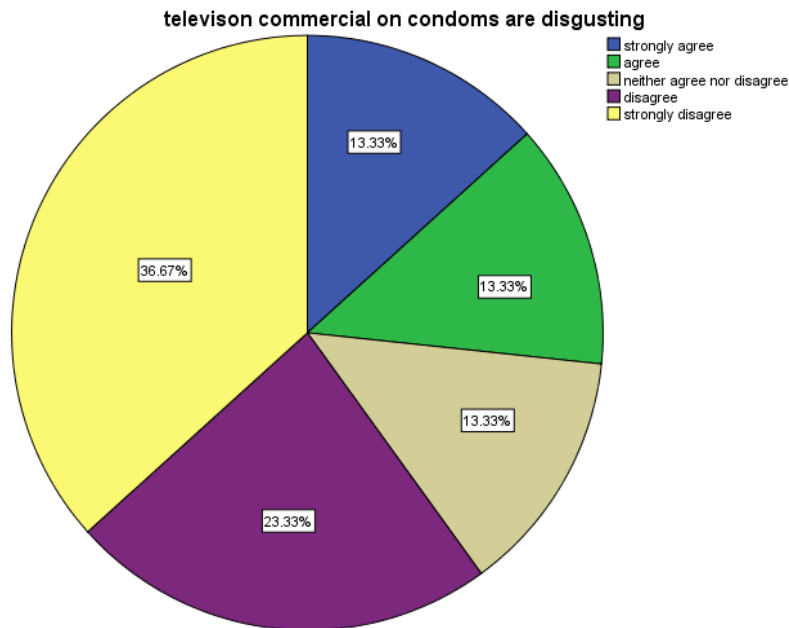


#### 4.5.2.3 The Youth and Condom Advertising on Television

On whether the respondents found television advertising of condoms disgusting a majority of them indicated that they did not find them disgusting. As shown in figure 4.30 that 13.3 percent of the respondents indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed that television advertisements of condoms were disgusting. Another 13.3 percent said that they agreed that the advertisements were disgusting. Another 36.6 percent said they strongly disagreed and 36.67 percent said that they strongly agreed that condom advertisements were disgusting. At the same time 23.3 percent said they agreed with the statement that condom advertisements were disgusting.

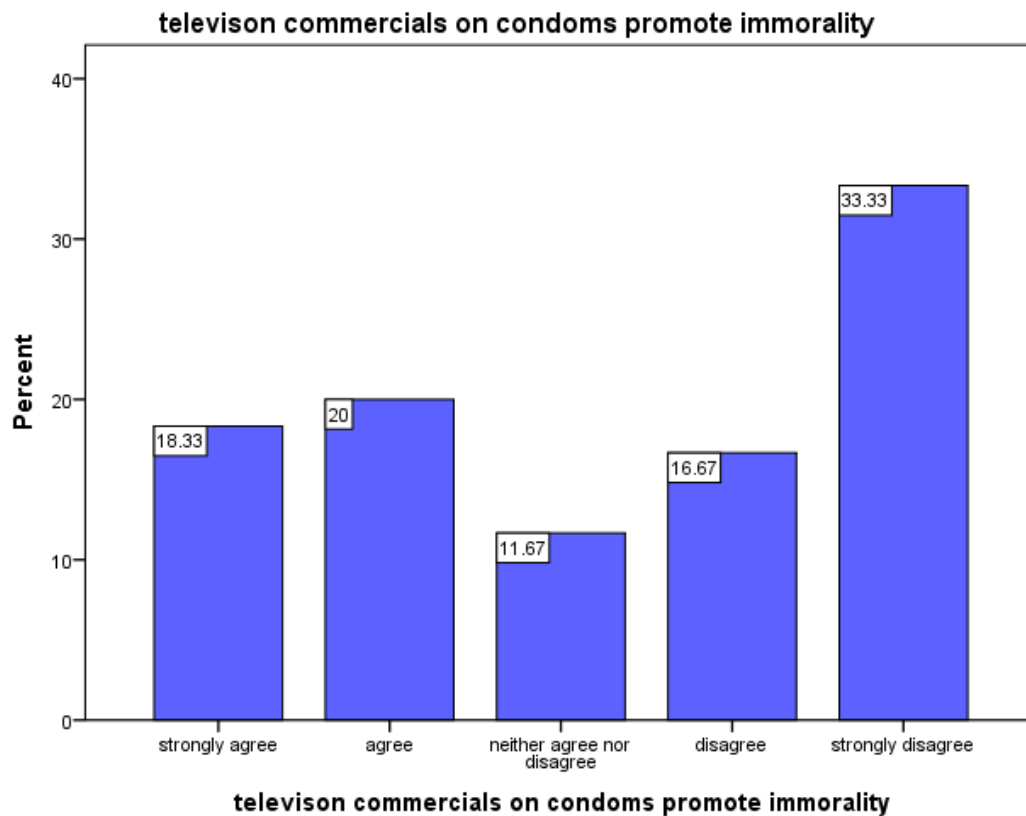


**Figure 4.30: Distribution of television advertisements of condoms are disgusting**



On whether the respondents found advertisements on condoms promoting immorality there were various responses but majority of them indicated that they did not believe that condoms promoted immorality. As shown in figure 4.31, 20 percent said they agreed that condom advertisements promoted immorality, 18.3 percent said they strongly agreed while 11.67 percent said they neither agreed nor disagreed. Another 33.3 percent indicated that they strongly disagreed and 16.67 percent said they disagreed.

**Figure 4.31: Distribution of responses on whether condom advertisements on television promote immorality.**



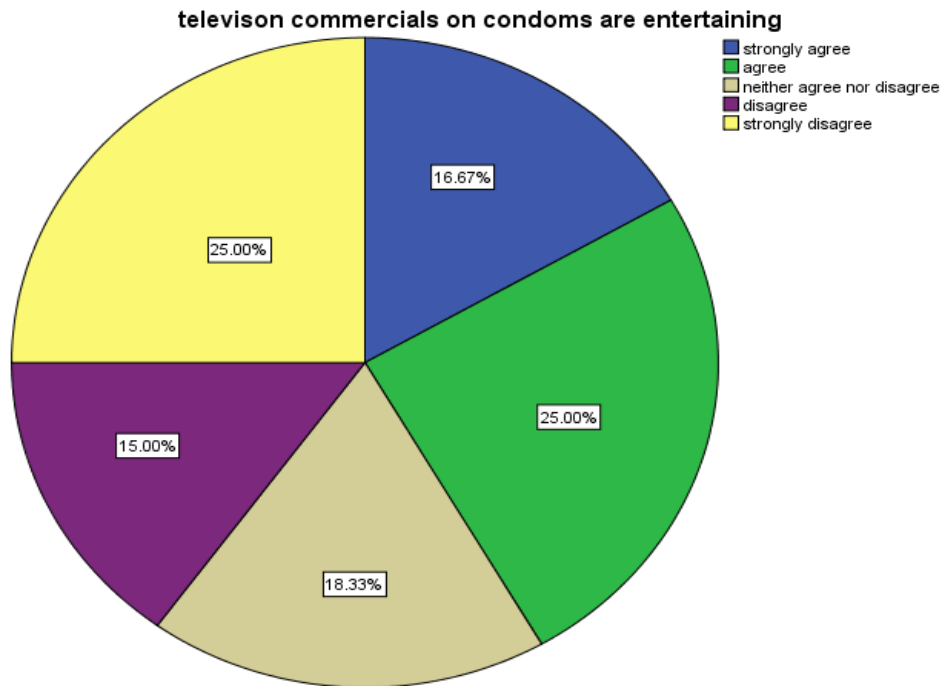
Most of the respondents from the rural setting said they believed that television advertisements of condoms were educational. As shown in table 4.20, 25 percent of the respondents said they agreed that television advertisements on condoms were educational. Another 6.7 percent indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed while 25 percent said they agreed and 11.7 percent said they strongly agreed that condom advertisements on television were educational.

**Table 4.20: Distribution of responses on whether condom television advertisements are educative**

	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	32	53.3
Agree	15	25.0
Neither agree nor disagree	4	6.7
Disagree	2	3.3
Strongly disagree	7	11.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

When the respondents were asked whether they found condom advertisements on television entertaining the percentage of those who disagreed was almost the same as those who agreed with the statement. However, there are those who indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. As indicated in Figure 4.32, 25 percent of the respondents from the rural setting said they strongly disagreed and another 25 percent indicated that they agreed that condom advertisements were entertaining. Another 18.33 percent said they neither agreed nor disagreed while 16.67 percent of the respondents indicated that they agreed that condom advertisements were entertaining.

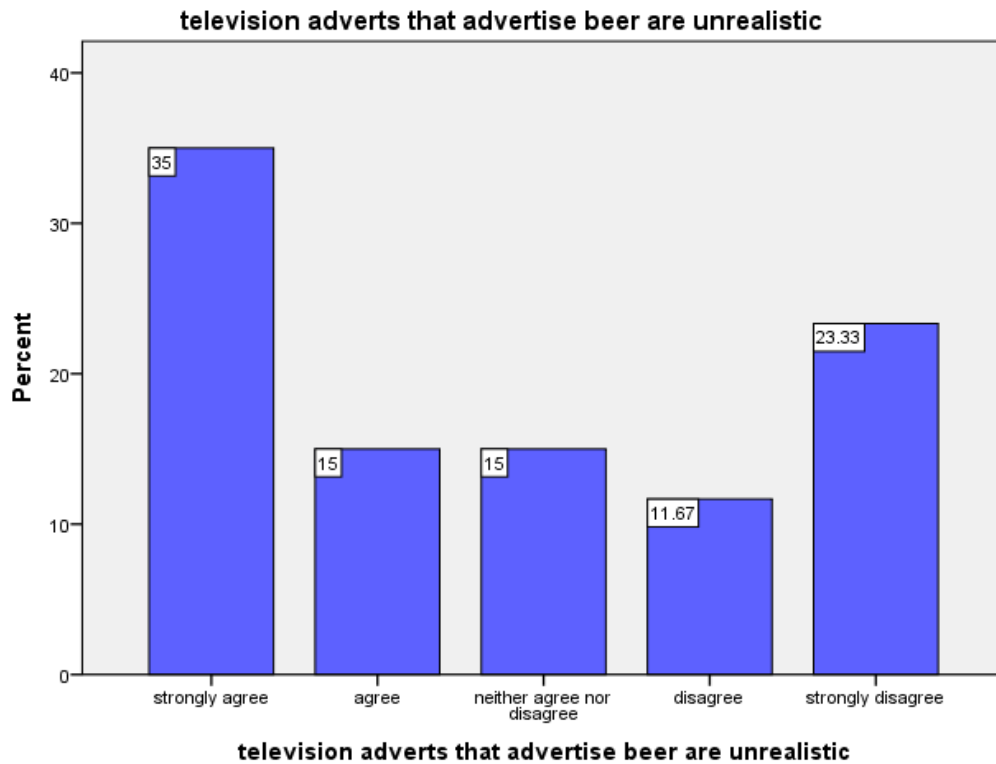
**Figure 4.32: Distribution of responses on whether condom television advertisements are entertaining.**



#### **4.5.2.4 The Youth and Beer Advertising on Television**

On television advertising of beer most of the youth surveyed in the rural setting indicated that they believed that most advertisements of beer were unrealistic. As shown in Figure 4.33, 35 percent of the respondents indicated that they strongly agreed that beer television advertisements were unrealistic and 23.33 percent said they strongly disagreed. A tie of 15 percent each of the respondents said they agreed and another 15 percent said they neither agreed nor disagreed that television advertisements of beer were unrealistic.

**Figure 4.33: Distribution of responses on whether beer television advertisements are unrealistic.**



A majority of respondents indicated that they believed that beer advertisements on television promoted alcohol abuse. As shown in Table 4.21, 35.5 percent rural respondents strongly agreed that beer advertisements on television promoted alcohol abuse, 25 percent strongly disagreed, 16.5 agreed, 15 percent neither agreed nor disagreed while 8.3 percent disagreed. This indicates that rural youth were divided on the correlation between advertisement and alcohol abuse.

**Table 4.21: Distribution of Television advertsiments that advertise beer promote alcohol abuse.**

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	21	35.0
Agree	10	16.7
Neither agree nor disagree	9	15.0
Disagree	5	8.3
Strongly disagree	15	25.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Most respondents, however, indicated that they found beer television advertisements educative. As shown on table 4.22, 31.7 percent of the respondents said they strongly disagreed that beer advertisements on television were educative while 23.3 percent said they strongly agreed. Another 21.7 percent indicated that they agreed; 15 percent said they neither agreed nor disagreed while 8.3 percent said they disagreed with the statement that advertisements on beer were educative.

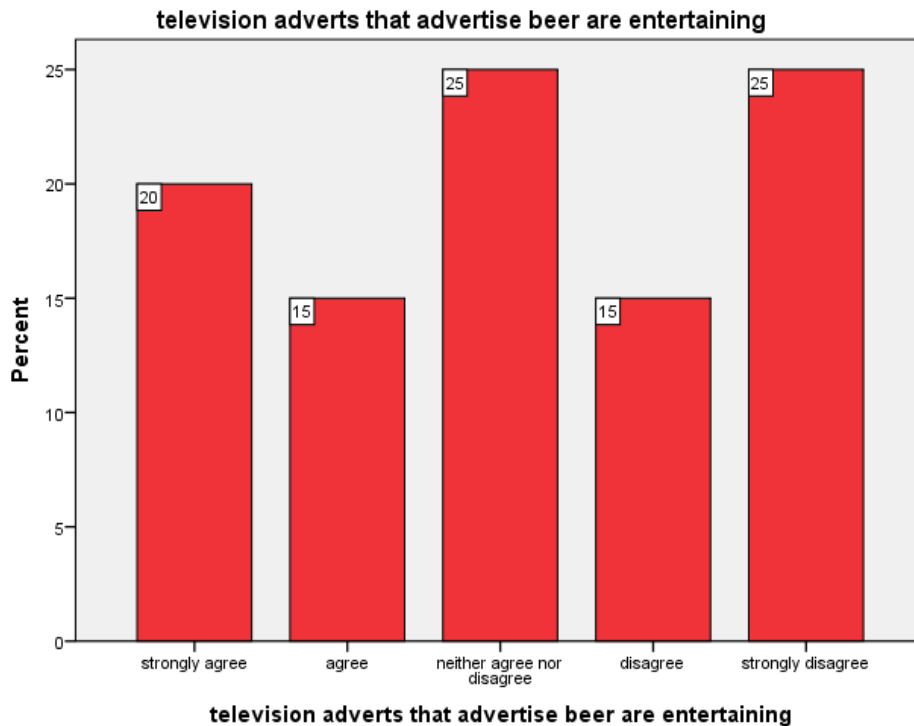
**Table 4.22: Distribution of responses on whether beer television advertisements are educative.**

	Frequency	Percent
strongly agree	14	23.3
Agree	13	21.7
neither agree nor disagree	9	15.0
Disagree	5	8.3
strongly disagree	19	31.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Majority of the respondents did not find beer television advertisements entertaining. As shown in figure 4.34, 25 percent of the respondents said they strongly disagreed that television advertisements on beer were educative while 25 percent said they neither

agreed nor disagreed. Twenty percent of the respondents indicated that they strongly agreed while respondents that agreed and those who disagreed shared 15 percent each.

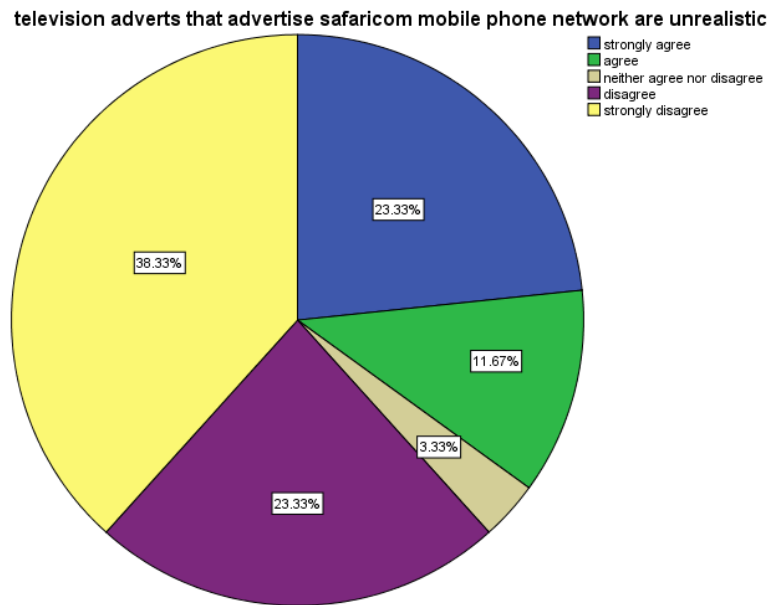
**Figure 4.34: Distribution of responses on whether beer television advertisements are entertaining**



**4.5.2.5 The Youth and Safaricom Services Advertising on Television**

The rural setting respondents were asked to comment about Safaricom mobile telephone network television advertisements and most of them indicated that they did not find Safaricom advertisements unrealistic. As indicated on figure 4.35, 38.33 percent of the respondents said they strongly disagreed that Safaricom television advertisements were unrealistic. Another 23.33 percent said they strongly agreed and the same percentage said they disagreed while 11.67 per indicated that they agreed and 3.33 percent said they neither agreed nor disagreed that Safaricom television advertisements were unrealistic.

**Figure 4.35: Distribution of responses on whether Safaricom television are unrealistic.**



On the statement implying that Safaricom television advertisements are too long, most of the rural setting respondents seemed to agree that Safaricom advertisements on television were long. As shown in table 4.23, 26.7 percent of the respondents said they agreed that the advertisements were too long, 21.7 percent of the respondents strongly agreed, 20 percent of the respondents said they strongly disagreed, 18.3 percent said they disagreed while 13.3 percent of the respondents indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed. This shows a mixed reaction on how respondents from the rural setting take Safaricom advertisements.

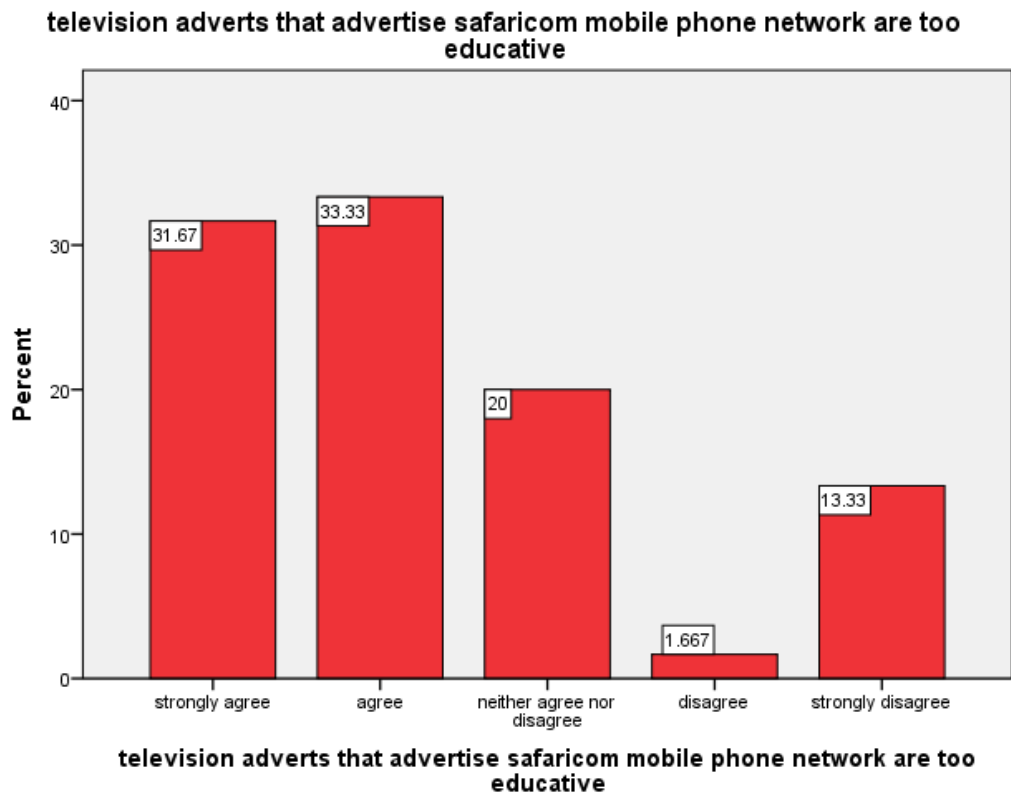


**Table 4.23: Distribution of responses on whether Safaricom television advertisements are too long.**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	13	21.7
Agree	16	26.7
Neither agree nor disagree	8	13.3
Disagree	11	18.3
Strongly disagree	12	20.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

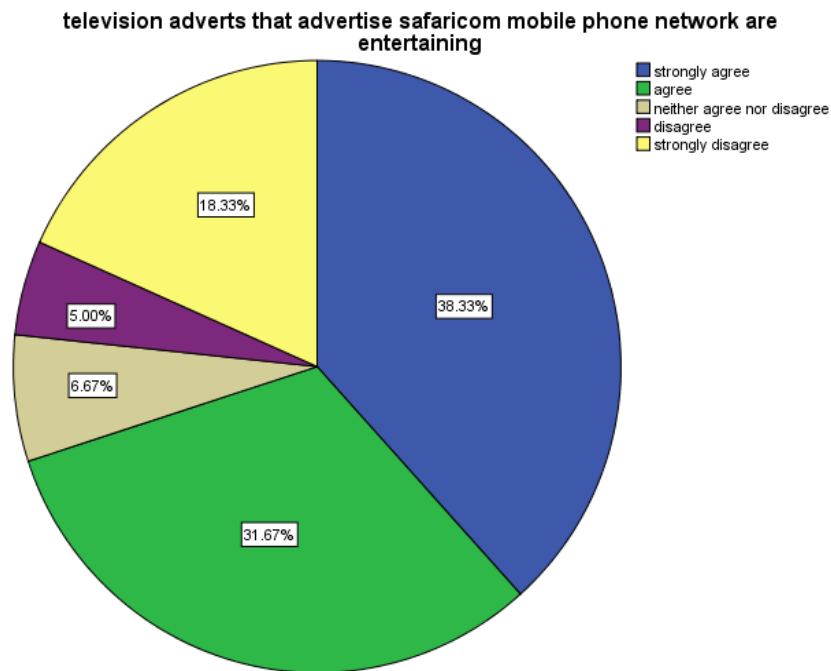
On the statement that Safaricom advertisements are educational most respondents in the rural setting agreed that they were. As indicated in Figure 4.36, 33 percent of the respondents said they agreed that Safaricom television advertisements were educational while 31.67 percent said they strongly agreed. However, 20 percent indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed while 13.33 percent said they strongly disagreed with the statement.

**Figure 4.36: Distribution of responses on whether Safaricom television advertisements are educative**



Responding to the statement that Safaricom advertisements on television are entertaining majority of the respondents supported the statement. As shown in Figure 4.37, 38.33 percent of the respondents said they strongly agreed while 31.67 percent said they agreed. However, 18.33 percent said they strongly disagreed, 6.67 percent said they neither agreed nor disagreed and five percent said they disagreed that television advertisements of Safaricom mobile telephone network were entertaining.

**Figure 4.37: Distribution of responses on whether television Advertisements of Safaricom are entertaining.**



#### 4.5.2.6 Youth's Perception of How Television Advertisements Depict Them

When respondents were asked to indicate support for statements that reflect the relationship between the Kenyan youth and television advertising the responses were varied. Thirty-nine respondents said television advertisements depicted the Kenyan youths as fun-loving. A number of them said advertisements depicted the youth as extravagant, independent, hardworking and irresponsible (Table 4.24). However, only nine respondents said they were depicted as being contented with life.

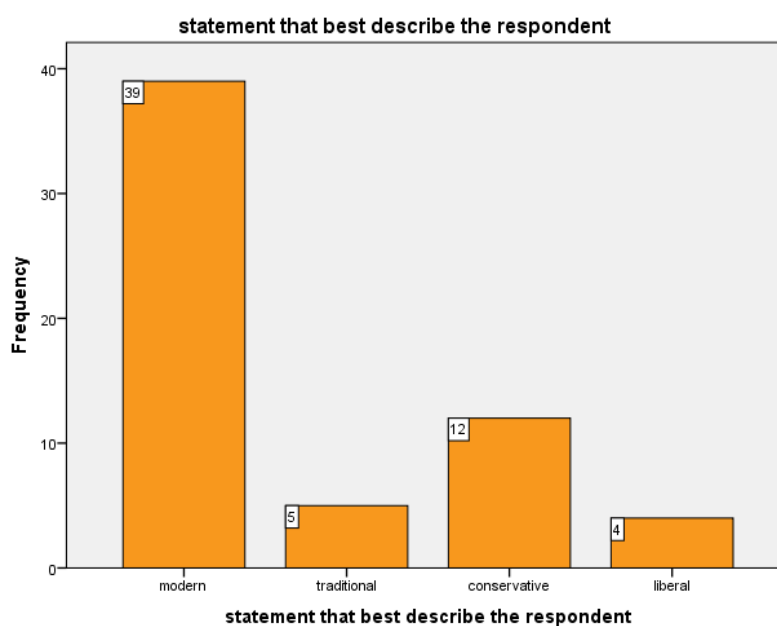
**Table 4.24: Distribution of responses on how the youth view their depiction on television advertisements.**

No.	How television advertisements and the Kenyan Youth	No. of respondents
1	Television advertisements depict Kenyan youth as contented with life	9
2	Television advertisements depict Kenyan youth as irresponsible	16
3	Television advertisements depict Kenyan youth as hard working	21
4	Television advertisements depict Kenyan youth as independent	21
5	Television advertisements depict Kenyan youth as disrespectful to elders	13
6	Television advertisements depict Kenyan youth as slaves of western culture	13
7	Television advertisements depict Kenyan youth as fun loving	39
8	Television advertisements depict Kenyan youth as extravagant	21

**4.5.2.7 How the Rural Setting Kenyan Youth Perceive Themselves**

When the respondents were asked to pick statements that best described them there were various responses. However, majority of them (39 out of 60) described themselves as modern. A small number described themselves variously as traditional, conservative and liberal (Figure 4.38).

**Figure 4.5.38: How the rural setting youth describe themselves.**



## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSIONS

### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the semiotic analysis and focus group discussions (FGDs) of the sampled television advertisements. In here the social implications of the hidden meanings in the advertisements and the readings (viewing) of the advertisements, by the focus group participants, is discussed as an important pointer to how the youth construct their self-identities from watching television advertisements. To start with, a summary of all the sampled advertisements is given followed by conclusions drawn from how the rural and the urban judges ranked the sampled television advertisements for this study.

This is followed by justification of the use of semiotic analysis as a method of understanding hidden meanings in television advertisements. Each of the 15 advertisements is then discussed individually. The ideological or hidden meanings are discussed followed by the findings of the focus group discussions. As part of the conclusion the views of a creator of television advertisements, as a key informant, are discussed as an attempt to draw the relationship between the meanings encoded in television advertisements and the meanings created by consumers' readings to construct their self-identities.

### 5.1 The Analysed Advertisements

The 15 television advertisements analysed in the present study are: *Faiba*, *Nikon na Safaricom*, *Safaricom Sambaza*, *Guinness Football Coach*, *Guinness (be the boss)*, *Barclays Ultimate Account*, *Dettol Cool*, *Dettol Skin Care*, *Always*, *Abstain (suicide)*, *Love Bila Regrets*, *Drink Drive*, *Blue Band Disney*, *Contraceptives (watoto kama siafu)* and *Wacha Mpango wa Kando*

## 5.2 Urban - Rural Divide and Youth Consumption of Television Advertisements

There is a distinct difference between Kenyan rural and urban setting youth in terms of media exposure and cognitive predisposition. Creators of television advertisements take cognizance of this and create advertisements with these differences in mind.

According to Edward Muthusi, the creator of television advertisements at ScanAd, who spoke to this researcher as a key informant, when a client approaches the advertising agency with a product, service or campaign he or she is asked to fill a 'marketing communication brief' form. Among the things the agency wants to know from the client in the brief is the target audience details. The details of the target audience include both the demographic and psychographic characteristics. The creative has to understand the mind-set, habits, and lifestyles of the target audience. He or she has to know their likes/dislikes and what their personality is likely to be. The client has to provide target audience research if it is available. The aim of this analysis is to create a narrative that resonates with the youth. If it is a mini drama to be created in the advertisement, the characters must dress, talk and behave in such a way that the youth will see themselves in the advertisement. Advertisements targeting rural youth are created differently from those targeting urban youth so that the messages can resonate with the tastes and lifestyles of these demographics.

Based on this explanation it can be argued that the urban youth view television advertisements differently from their rural counterparts. Given that the judges, who were themselves youths, were picked as a representative sample of the two demographics their selection of television advertisements reflect urban and rural preferences. Their rankings confirm the advertising creative's explanation on how the industry segments its youth audiences.

As shown in table 5.1 the television advertisements ranked as the top three by the urban setting youth are different from those ranked by the rural setting youth. As indicated in

the table only one advertisement, *Faiba*, was selected by both the urban and rural setting judges as one of the top three in category A.

**Table 5.1 Top three advertisements as ranked by urban and rural judges**

	Category A	Category B	Category C
<b>Top three advertisements in urban ranking</b>	1. <i>Faiba</i> 2. <i>Nikon na Safaricom</i> 3. <i>Guinness be the Boss</i>	1. <i>Dettol Cool</i> 2. <i>Barclays Ultimate Account</i> 3. <i>Always</i>	1. <i>Abstain (suicide)</i> 2. <i>Love Bila Regrets</i> 3. <i>Drink Drive</i>
<b>Top three advertisements in rural ranking</b>	1. <i>Safaricom Sambaza</i> 2. <i>Faiba</i> 3. <i>Disney Blue Band</i>	1. <i>Wacha Mpango wa Kando</i> 2. <i>Dettol Skin Care</i> 3. <i>Contraceptives (watoto kama siafu)</i>	1. <i>Love Bila Regrets</i> 2. <i>Guinness Football Coach</i> 3. <i>Abstain (suicide)</i>

In category B each of the two groups selected different advertisements as the top three suited for youth audiences. However, in category C two advertisements were commonly picked among the two groups of judges. These are the Trust condoms advertisement, *Love Bila Regrets*, and the anti teenage-sex campaign, *Abstain (suicide)*.

From Table 5.1 a number of conclusions can be drawn from the selections of the urban and rural judges.

1. In category A the urban judges picked *Faiba*, *Niko na Safaricom* and *Guinness be the Boss*. The rural judges selected *Safaricom Sambaza*, *Faiba* and *Disney Blue Band*. It can be noted that the judges from the two localities had different preferences for television advertisements best suited for youth audiences. Even *Faiba* that was selected by the two groups in the top three, it was be noted, was ranked first in the urban setting but dropped to position two in the rural setting and was replaced by *Safaricom Sammaza* in the top position. Given that the advertising industry picks the trends and lifestyles familiar with their prospective audiences to create advertisements (Williamson 1978, Fowles 1996, Leiss, Kleine, and Jhally 1990) the

urban youth found the *Faiba* advertisement resonating with their lifestyles than all the others. For instance, they could have found the use of video calling service, which had been popularized by Skype, appealing in the advertisement. The rural youth, on the other hand find the advertisement appealing because of the use of animated characters, which creates a sense of humour from the simple drama antics of the main character. This aspect of humour and simple drama was confirmed when the rural judges chose the *Disney Blue Band*, whose main character was a Kenyan television stand-up comedian, Teacher Wanjiku.

2. The advertisement that the rural judges selected as the first in category A was *Safaricom Sambaza*, which was promoting the Safaricom mobile telephone service of sharing internet bundles. The fact that the advertisement was talking about a mobile telephone and the internet must have made it appealing to this group that was embracing emerging technology, which could be sounding commonplace for the urban youth. This can be attributed to Rogers' (2003) Diffusion of Innovations Theory, where the rural youth could be late adapters of internet and mobile telephony. On the other hand the urban youth selected *Niko na Safaricom* and *Guinness be the Boss* as the second and third in rank, respectively. The urban youth were likely to have found the picturesque landscape in the advertisement romantically appealing, given that they always saw many buildings and other infrastructure, which were always blamed for urban congestion. The rural youth, on the contrary, may not have found them appealing. The snow-capped mountains, meandering rivers, and tea plantations may have been beautiful but the rural youth had seen them so many times that, to them, these scenic features had lost their lustre. Sociologist George Homans has an explanation to this in his Exchange Theory. According to Homans (1958) social behaviour is governed by rewards in exchange of good deeds and punishment for bad deeds. If an individual is rewarded too often the deed for which he or she is



rewarded loses value to him or her. The same applies when an individual is exposed to a good thing for too long it leads to satiation; a saturation of that thing's goodness, which makes it lose value.

*Guinness be the Boss* is an advertisement whose aim was to promote the dark alcoholic drink. It appealed to the urban judges and failed to appeal to the rural setting ones. The rituals of football coaches and taking commuter transport to work or college are common features among the urban youth, who regularly watch international football matches on television and take *matatus* (commuter mini buses) to college. It was noted that the problem the rural youth had with the advertisement was not with Guinness the drink but the symbols used to communicate the message, which were too abstract for them. In fact, in category C, they selected another Guinness advertisement, *Guinness Football Coach*, which used rural characters and landscapes that were familiar to them.

3. In category B the urban and the rural judges selected totally different advertisements as the best three suited for youth audiences. This showed a clear divide between the world of the urban youth and that of their rural counterparts. The urban judges chose *Dettol Cool*, *Barclays Ultimate Account*, and *Always*. All these advertisements promote affluent lifestyles, where individuals led or sought to lead comfortable lives. In contrast, the advertisements chosen by the rural youth were *Wacha Mpango wa Kando*, *Dettol Skin Care* and *Contraceptives (watoto kama siafu)*. Two of the three advertisements made use of Kiswahili, the national language, and all the three emphasized functionality of the products advertised, where the products or services being advertised were meant to solve practical problems. It was noted that two advertisements were promoting one manufacturer's products. One appealed to the rural youth (*Dettol Skin Care*) while the other (*Dettol Cool*) appealed to the urban youth. From a cultural perspective the rural people knew that beauty products are meant for women who might have a problem with their facial looks but the urban youth were

attracted by messages about products that promised good life like Michael's (the main character) in the *Dettol Cool* advertisement.

Whereas the urban youth found the *Always* advertisement, with its sentimental song, appealing the rural youth came from a background, where matters of women's hygiene, especially sanitary pads, were not discussed in public. An advertisement like *Wacha Mpango wa Kando* was likely to appeal to the rural youth than the urban youth because of the uniqueness of the habit. Rural people would find a married man having a string of mistresses shocking and therefore a subject of debate than their urban counterparts. Urban youth are exposed to movies, television programmes and news items that imply that having an extramarital affair is a normal thing. Even the creators of this advertisement used Kiswahili, which was commonly spoken in the rural setting. The *Contraceptives (watoto kama siafu)* advertisement was picked by the rural judges but left out by the urban ones. Family planning may not have been a problem the urban youth would give a second thought. The urban youth were exposed to have enough information that every family had the number of children they wanted to have. An advertisement giving this information was therefore not likely to appeal to the urban youth like their rural counterparts, where problems like poverty and lack of school fees were blamed on lack of family planning information.

4. In category C two advertisements, *Abstain (suicide)* and *Love Bila Regrets* were picked as among the best three by both the urban and rural judges. The implication here is that some aspects attractive to the youth cut across all youth, irrespective of their locales. Both advertisements carried messages of sexual activities among the youth and, given that sex is a topic popular with all youth these advertisements were likely to appeal to urban and rural youth. The third and the second in ranking among the urban and rural judges, respectively, was the only difference in category C.

The *Drink Drive* advertisement was found to be appealing to the urban judges but not those from the rural setting. Whereas the urban youth would find driving to a bar to have a drink a normal thing the youth in the rural setting were not likely to see the relationship between drinking and driving. They may not have understood why one cannot access one's local bar

on foot. *Guinness the Football Coach* appealed to the rural judges most probably because the setting of the advertisement was rural or the outskirts of an urban area and the characters dress modestly like most rural people. Although football is a game usually associated with urban youth the Kenyan urban youth associate football with glamour. Their idea of football is what they see on television from the European leading clubs like Manchester United, FC Milan or Real Madrid. The kind of football shown in *Guinness the Football Coach* was therefore likely to look boring and alien to them.

The youth have, been described by advertising executives as an unpredictable audience (Muthusi's interview). The Kenyan youth could be suffering from an identity crisis, which Erickson attributes to lack mainstream adult role models (Boerree 2006). This has been supported by Nzioka (2009) and Ocharo (2011). While Nzioka (2009) blames the waning of responsibility of father figures for the youth's lack of proper mentorship, Ocharo (2011) blames urbanization and modern lifestyles that have taken away the role of grandparents from mentoring young people on African values and social skills. Giddens (1991) posits that in late modernity an individual is faced with so many challenges that it is difficult to give an individual a single character trait. In what he calls the "tribulations of the self" Giddens argues (1994):

*Characterising individuals' phenomenal worlds are difficult, certainly in the abstract. Every person reacts selectively to the diverse sources of direct and mediated experience...one thing we can say with certainty is that in very few instances does the phenomenal world any longer correspond to the habitual setting through which an individual physically moves (pp 187-8).*

This is evident from the way the rural and urban youth selected advertisements as favourites without showing a clear-cut trend. For instance, advertisements from the same product were chosen differently by different categories of the youth, from rural and from the urban setting. For example in category A, there were three different advertisements of Safaricom telephone network but only two of them were ranked as the top three, one for the urban and the other for the rural setting. The other product being advertised was

Guinness i.e. *Guinness be the boss* in category A and *Guinness Football Coach* in category C. The *Guinness be the boss* in category A was ranked among the top three by the urban judges while the rural judges did not find it appealing. Instead, the rural youth find *Guinness Football Coach* appealing while the urban youth did not find it appealing. *Dettol Cool* and *Dettol Skin Care* in category B were products from the same manufacturer but the urban judges ranked *Dettol Cool* in the top three while the rural judges selected *Dettol Skin Care*.

### **5.3 Justification of Semiotics Analysis**

Creators of advertisements develop their messages, which target specific audiences, whom they map out through audience segmentation (Leiss, Kline and Jhally 2011). Advertising, like any form of social communication, is circulation of shared meanings. This is captured by Wood (2004, p. 9), who defines communication as "...a systemic process in which individuals interact with and through symbols to create and interpret meanings." The originators of this form of communication therefore design advertisements with particular audiences, who share the worldview of characters of the narratives created in this "symbol domains" (Fowles 1996, xii), in mind. In other words, they strive to create advertisements whose meanings resonate with the meanings circulating within the cultural environment of the target audience (Goffman 1979, Gripsrud 2006 Eco 1979). Since advertisements are aimed at selling goods, services and values to specific potential consumers the creators of these advertisements employ various communication strategies that use words and symbols that are common in the everyday discourses of the people targeted (Turow 2011).

In the process the advertisers end up not only selling goods and services but also lifestyles and dominant ideologies (Williamson 1978). Semiotic analysis is therefore employed as a way of understanding the meanings the advertisers want to circulate.

Semiotic analysis also brings out the hidden (ideological) meanings that are circulating within this discourse. This is to ensure that messages in the advertisement fit into the audience's everyday discourse. This supports Giddens (1991) argument that

*...appropriation of mediated information follows pre-established habits and obeys the principle of avoidance of cognitive dissonance. This is to say, the plethora of available information is reduced via routinized attitudes, which exclude, or reinterpret, potentially disturbing knowledge (p. 188).*

Semiotics, whose origin is linguistics and literary criticism, was first applied in analysing advertisements by French critic Roland Barthes (Berger 2000). Williamson (1978) employed semiotics to analyse print advertisements while Goffman (1979) used it to analyse newspaper and magazine advertising photographs. Jhally (1990) semiotically analysed television advertisements for his PhD dissertation, which was later published as a book (Harms and Kellner 1991).

The present study took this approach *inter alia* to analyse Kenyan television advertisements. The analysis, whose main objective was to decode the ideological or mythical meanings embedded in the advertisements did not attempt to analyse all the semiotic aspects of the sampled advertisements because of time and resource constraints. This analysis focused on three aspects of the advertisements: The signification aspects, that is, the main signifiers and what they signified in the advertisements; the social codes employed to create meanings, and the hidden meanings that came out through the ideological or mythical codes inherent in the advertisements. First, the advertisements' story lines were outlined as a way of putting the arguments in perspective. These synopses were the syntagms (narratives) that were created by series of paradigms (scenes/episodes) to give the advertisements' denotations (Berger, 2000). Advertisements can only make sense among the consumers if both the creators of the advertisements and

the target audience share certain social codes in order to share meanings. This is how Fiske (1996) defines a ‘code’:

*A code is a rule-governed system of signs, whose rules and conventions are shared amongst members of a culture, and which is used to generate and circulate meanings in and for that culture (p.221).*

Advertisers also employ certain technical codes like camera work and lighting to deliver various meanings (Fiske, 1996). Jhally (1987) talks of the social “codes,” of advertising, where he defines a ‘code’ as:

*...the concept that unifies the different elements of the process of meaning construction... A code is a store of experience upon which both the advertiser and the audience draw in their participation in the construction of commodity meaning (p.140).*

Williamson (1978) posits that advertisers draw from discourses familiar to their target audiences, which she calls “a referent system” (p. 26). In the process certain mythical or ideological meanings come out, in most cases without the intention of the creators of the advertisements. These are the meanings this researcher was interested in.

#### **5.4 Implications of the Hidden Meanings in Television Advertisements (Semiotic Analysis)**

This section discusses the implications of the hidden meanings in the nine television advertisements that were semiotically analysed. The section points out the social interpretations of the various codes employed by the creators of the advertisements to sell the goods and services and how Kenyan consumers are expected to use their shared codes to appreciate the advertisements. From a semiotic analysis it is evident that these advertisements were replete with hidden ideological or hidden meanings that helped promote the tenets of consumer capitalism, which are promoted by patriarchy (Jhally 1987, Laughty 2010). The section also analyses the different readings the youth participants of this study gave the various advertisements and confirms Hall’s (1996) model of Encoding Decoding, consumers of television advertisements give various

readings, which sometimes may not agree with what the creators of the advertisements preferred.

#### **5.4.1 Niko na Safaricom**

This advertisement uses video clips showing picturesque features of various parts of the country. A choir sings a sentimental Kiswahili song that exalts national unity and the hard working culture of Kenyans (see translation Appendix V). This, the advertisement implies, is enhanced by the use of the Safaricom mobile telephone network. The *Niko na Safaricom* advertisement is meant to advertise the Safaricom mobile telephone network by showing Kenya as a beautiful country, whose citizens are unified by the company's network, irrespective of their geographical locality. The white gowns and plain trousers and shirts worn by both men and women also connote gender equality and, by extension, equality among all Kenyans from different geographical locations.

However, there are ideological or mythical codes in this advertisement that give it different meanings. One ideology employed in this advertisement is to project Kenya as a patriarchal capitalist society. It is a common myth in Kenya, projected by the mass media, that women are expected to appear beautiful in whatever they do; their skills don't matter. In this advertisement the faces of the women singers are emphasized (tight close-ups) but for men their physical strengths are projected. It is not enough that women in this choir have good voices; there are close-ups of their made-up faces. There is no single facial close up of any man in the choir. Feminists would find this emphasis of the women singers' beauty a projection of what Laura Mulvey (1975, quoted in Laughty 2010, p.102) calls "the male gaze." This theory that was developed out of studies on Hollywood movies, where female characters in the movies were positioned for the satisfaction of the 'visual pleasure' of the audience, presumed to be predominantly male. According to Laughty (2010), while commenting on Mulvey's analysis of Hollywood movies:

*Female spectators are excluded from this male-oriented perspective on visual pleasure. Moreover, this visual pleasure is a heterosexual male pleasure that is both narrow-minded and divisive because it constructs a voyeuristic position for the assumed male spectator akin to 'playing peeping Tom' (p. 103).*

From this argument the women in this advertisement, unlike their male counterparts, connote "to-be-looked-at-ness" (Laughty 2010, p. 103.)

There is also a connotation that the many beautiful types of scenery shown in this advertisement can only be approached by air, not by public means or on foot. There are no roads indicated or ordinary people in their common mode of transport like walking, *matatus* and *boda bodas* (public transport vans and motor bikes). This hegemonic code is reinforced by the fact that the inhabitants of the 'beautiful' places shown in the advertisement are absent. This further reinforces the fact that Kenya is seen as a wasteland of animals only good for safari (wildlife tourism), which echoes the name of the company being advertised. There is a racial stereotype undertone here because many Kenyans do not know their country as a land of safari; only good as a tourist destination, where White people come to watch animals in their natural habitats. It is apt to speculate that the inhabitants of the various geographical locations, romantically depicted as attractive tourist destinations, are not meant to be consumers of this advertisement. This is because the creators of the advertisement have painted a deceptive picture of some of the localities. Suguta valley in the Rift Valley, for instance, which is depicted as a beautiful locality is known by its inhabitants for its perennial bloody clashes between pastoralist communities because of cattle rustling. Although it is a semi-desert area it has no sand dunes as depicted in the advertisement. The foot of mount Long'onot that is idyllically projected in the advertisement was home to hundreds of shanties; housing villagers, who had been displaced in the fighting that followed the 2007 disputed



presidential elections. These homeless people were still camped there when the advertisement was shot. There is no way the camera crew would have missed the tents and polythene shelters that were the main landmark next to the volcanic mountain.

#### **5.4.1.1 Implications of the Advertisement's Viewing by the Youth**

The *Niko na Safaricom* advertisement was presented to the youth, who were asked to view it and discuss its meanings. What emerged was that the urban setting male participants found it appealing as a piece of entertainment but none of them found it to be a persuasive tool to convince them to embrace the Safaricom service. In his Encoding/Decoding model Hall (1996) talks of three ways of reading media texts (where reading means viewing and making sense of media texts): preferred reading, negotiated reading, and oppositional reading. In the case of his advertisement most readings were negotiated. In other words, the participants agreed with part of the message and disagreed with another part. For instance, one participant said he liked the song but he was not sure what was being advertised:

*I just like the sentimental touch of the song and everything; but at the end of the song am just left with a question mark; what are they.....it's like I have just seen something pass through my TV. It's like am watching a normal programme everyday and I don't get anything from it (R6).*

From the findings of the discussions it was clear that most participants liked the Safaricom song but failed to appreciate the bigger picture of advertising Safaricom as a service. This way the participants used the message in the advertisement to project their self identities as lovers of music and other light entertainment because, as Real (1996, p. 12) puts it, “our personal identity and consciousness today are constructed in interaction with media....” Inclusion of music in the advertisement is deliberate. Popular music has been identified by Wakimani (1999) to be playing a crucial role in the daily lives of

young people. It helps them deal with boredom and loneliness. Popular music also helps young people to socialize with peers and the opposite sex. According to Wakimani,

*The heavy beat of the music, the sometimes sexual lyrics and aggressive tone of much of the popular music evoke sentiments that resonate with the emotional character of many young people, and in that way gives them a lot of cultural material with which to identify and a resource to put to use for personal and interpersonal goals. (p. 274)*

This explains the reason why most television advertisements employ music as part of their narrative when targeting young audiences. It is clear from these findings that the consumers of this advertisement took away what resonated with their self-identities and ignored what was not useful to them; what Clapper calls selective retention (Tan 1980).

One male participant from the urban setting (R2), who gave the advertisement the preferred reading, projected himself as a highly learned person, who could interpret advertisements intelligently:

*...For someone who is educated you will be able to link the different places that are there and see there is good network coverage. But for someone who is not knowledgeable, it may pass for just entertainment...*

Women from the urban setting gave the advertisement three reading positions. There were those that gave it the preferred reading, meaning that they saw the advertisement as promoting various beautiful parts of the country where the Safaricom network was available. There were those who found the advertisement abstract and there were those who found the choir and the geographical features attractive but could not understand the message of advertising Safaricom as a mobile telephone network. One participant (R4), who gave the advertisement a subversive reading said:

*I think this advertisement is not addressed to us as Safaricom customers because if they say 'niko na Safaricom, nina uwezo,' [I have Safaricom, I have the capacity] it seems they are advertising the company itself and not the customers. The company has 'uwezo' [capacity] not the customers who are in it.*

The self-identity projected by this reading was that this woman was a confident individual who knew her way around television advertisements. Whether giving it a preferred, oppositional or subversive interpretation all the women participants in the

urban setting found the advertisement entertaining. The youth have been found to watch television mostly for entertainment. Nyanoti (2007), in a study of high school students in Nairobi found that most youths watch television for its entertainment programmes. In the present study it was evident that the *Nikon na Safaricom* advertisement was entertaining from the way the focus group participants were singing along with the choir in the advertisement. Like their male counterparts they chose what to take away from the advertisement and what to ignore. This confirms Nava and Nava's (1996) belief that the youth have the highest analytical skills when they consume advertisements. After conducting empirical research on youth consumption of advertisements the authors concluded:

*Indeed as emerges clearly from our research, no other age group [other than the youth] is considered as discriminating, cynical and resistant to the 'hard sell.' Furthermore, no other group is as astute at decoding the complex messages, cross-references and visual jokes of current advertising... (p. 768).*

This advertisement was not discussed by the rural setting youth because the judges in the rural set up did not select it as being suitable for the youth.

#### **5.4.2 Faiba**

This is an animated cartoon advertisement that uses men in an office setup to advertise Jamii Telecom's broadband service, Faiba. The narrative in the advertisement is meant prove how easy it is to make a video call using Faiba broadband. The ideological or mythical codes that the *Faiba* advertisement communicates includes patriarchy, class discrimination, consumer capitalism, and narcissism. These ideologies are created by the capitalist patriarchal system for exploitative purposes but are taken by society as normal and common sense (Hall 2003). These are the "go-without say" everyday practices that have been stripped of their historical foundations (Barthes 1957) to be seen as normal practices. In the *Faiba* advertisement the man has come to work but the woman has remained at home to groom herself and take care of 'his' son, "my boy junior." The man

is depicted as techno-savvy but the wife expresses her naivety when she is excited that the husband can see her on his computer screen. The wife of the man identified as ‘boss’ is projected as a troublesome woman, whose call makes the man panic. This reinforces the negative stereotype that wives cannot call the office except to nag the husband or during an emergency. There is a common myth among Kenyan urban men that if a wife calls the husband in the office, it must be an emergency, hence the panic of the man in this advertisement.

This advertisement also exploits gender stereotypes, where women are projected as mothers, wives and nurturers, who make ‘hardworking men’ complete and happy (Joyrich 1996).

This confirms what Harris and Sanborn (2014) say about media depictions of women:

*Women in the media are still disproportionately seen as home makers and mothers, with their business and professional, and community roles downplayed or not represented at all.... Women are not seen making important decisions or engaging in important activities as often as men (p. 79).*

Women have to groom themselves and look beautiful but men can turn up in the office in Early-Man clothes as long as they are the breadwinners (Nandy 2004). As long as they can work they don’t have to be good in any language or talk with any courtesy. In contrast, women have to apply make-up and speak with courtesy. The ideology of racism is implied by the dressing, behaviour and language of the characters in the advertisement. The men are dressed in caveman attire, which in popular Western literature, is taken to be African attire. The way the man is struggling to speak English, which is not his language depicts African inferiority. The man’s close-up shot emphasizes his teeth, which is also, according to Eurocentric literature, characteristic of an African (Hall 1997, Said 2003). Talking through video call is expensive and yet this advertisement projects it as what everybody should do through a broadband-selling corporation. The traditional means of

sending messages like beating the drum is projected as primitive. This is a consumer capitalism ideology, where the system has brainwashed everybody to embrace money-costing lifestyles. According to Schor (2003) this is promoting “the new consumerism,” which she describes as

*...an upscaling of lifestyle norms; the pervasiveness of conspicuous, status goods and of competition for acquiring them; and the growing disconnect between consumer desires and incomes (p. 185).*

This advertisement captures viewers’ attention by employing intertextuality (Fiske 1996). The skeleton in the middleground reminds viewers of the *Jurassic Park* animated movie that was once popular in Kenyan television. This is reinforced by the fact that this advertisement is animated. This advertisement therefore ultimately supports the dominant ideology in the capitalist society; those who control commerce and power (Griffin 2009). In other words this advertisement is inviting viewers to the larger world of media entertainment since this is the plane on which advertisement runs (Fowles 1996). It can be noted from this advertisement that the man has not used the expensive service to call home to address an emergency or discuss important matters but to greet his wife and joke about work. This is a common narrative in the advertising world where people are dazzled by the good life promised by the advertising industry to forget the real problems facing them. Jhally (2009, p. 419) explains why:

*When your reality is an empty stomach and empty shelves, no wonder the marketplace appears as the panacea for your problems. When your reality is hunger and despair it should not be surprising that the seductive images of desire and abundance emanating from advertising system should be so influential in thinking about social and economic policy.*

#### **5.4.2.1 Implications of the Advertisement’s Viewing by the Youth**

In the focus group discussions the male participants in the urban setting interpreted the advertisement as showing the contrast between traditional and modern lifestyles, including marriage. They identified themselves with the man who could speak with his

wife on video call while they found the man who was not using video call to be uncaring, as one participant put it:

*I believe that guy is caring; he would like to know what is happening with his family (R8).*

The men in this set up found the advertisement appealing because of the use of animated characters and the dramatization of the storyline. Many of the participants could however not connect the drama in the narrative with the product being advertised. This implies a negotiated reading of the advertisement, where they selected to retain the use of animation and drama but ignored the message of selling the broadband from Jamii Telecom. The men in the urban setting projected themselves as lovers of information and communication technology.

Men in the rural setting identified the advertisement as promoting family values and expressed their admiration for technology. They were however repulsed by the traditional behaviour and dress code of the men in the advertisement, which one participant described as ancient. It was however clear from the discussions that most participants did not find the advertisement's narrative relevant to their set up. One participant (R5) however came out as a hater of proud people.

*One dude is like insulting the other. He is boasting that he is talking to his wife in a computer and the other wife is just calling the hubby.*

Women participants in the urban setting also gave different interpretations of the advertisement, which brought out their self-identities. There were preferred, negotiated, and oppositional readings of the advertisement, where like with the men in the urban setting, the drama in the narrative was understood but not the Faiba product. They appreciated the use of animation and many of them were conversant with video calling. Although women in this setup came out as individuals who loved modern lifestyle, where

technology enhances happy marriages, one participant found the narrative of a married man calling home to greet his wife absurd:

*First, they do not even live in our normal society. Talk of a man leaving the house in the morning and calling the wife during the day, eeeeh ... that's an awkward thing.... Are they still in the dating phase or are they married. These guys are married...Those are lies. They should talk about daily occurrences like ....hey your account has issues; I am going to work on it... an emergency... You don't just call ati eeeh I will call you...noo.. (R1).*

Her view about marriage is that couples have no time for romance; that should be left to people still in courtship. This brought out the self-identity of a single woman, who feels that marriage is the end of romance. Another participant (R7) identified herself as a feminist when she saw the narrative in the advertisement as patriarchal:

*...like the man is the one who wakes up in the morning and going to work but the wife is going to be at home. But in the current society it's not about the men going to work and the women being at home...*

The use of language, where the character speaking uses English and Kiswahili with vernacular influence was off-putting to most participants, who found the main character repulsive.

Women in the rural setting had a different reading of the advertisement from their urban counterparts. Although some indicated that it was good for a man to be in touch with his family, the idea of a man calling his wife at home was seen as a waste of time:

*Instead of doing work, this man is talking to his wife from the office (R1).*

Although some participants found the advertisement's use of language entertaining, one participant (R7) could not hide her tribal intolerance:

*The language of the guy is horrible. He has a Kamba [tribal] accent, which is not convenient in the office...*

This shows that rural female participants identified themselves as conservative, lovers of family values and individuals who come from a society that harbours tribal sentiments,

unlike their urban counterparts. This is an indication that according to the discourses circulating in their environment people are identified by their tribal backgrounds, which is not a common thing in the urban setting.

#### **5.4.3 Safaricom Sambaza**

The *Safaricom Sambaza* advertisement promotes a Safaricom telephone network service of sharing internet bundles. Two men and a girl are used in the advertisement to demonstrate that a young man with internet bundles, and the skill to share them, can win the affection of a girl from another man in spite of the other man's great masculine qualities. The advertisement creates a patriarchal hegemonic meaning, where women are portrayed as dependent on men. When the first man swaggers across the screen the girl can't resist his masculine looks; she takes his photograph. When she cannot download the photograph another man comes to her rescue and she switches her admiration to the second man. There is no indication that either of the men is her friend since this is a public bus stop. The girl is portrayed as naïve to the simple technology of sharing internet bundles and yet she has a smart phone, with which she is able to take a sharp photograph. This is an ideological connotation depicting women as subordinate to men (Goffman 1979). This advertisement that is meant to sell a mobile phone service goes beyond the simple message delivery mechanism of telling people that there is a new product in the market. Instead it uses the dominant themes in advertising imagery to make the advertising attractive to youth consumers. According to Fowles (1996, p. 149), "The imagery should usually be congenial, as its meanings are often intended to glide over onto the product." Among the themes in advertising imagery, according to Fowles, is to use people who are engaged in leisure time activities, use of youthful characters and use of gender stereotypes. Fowles (1996) explains why the advertisers use these framings:

*The imagery depicts young people because youth is the stage most given over to the formation of self-identity. It shows leisure activities because those are the*



*hours devoted to the self. It is gender ridden because gender lies at the core of self-identity (p.157).*

This is part of the ideology of advertising that depicts advertisements as mirrors of society when, in fact, this imagery is of “idealized human beings” (Fowles 1996, p. 156). Despite the fact that the physique of the man swaggering across the screen is rare the advertising industry has created a myth that this is the ideal of a handsome young man who attracts every girl.

#### **5.4.3.1 Implications of the Advertisement’s Viewing by the Youth**

When this advertisement was discussed by the rural men (it was not sampled for the urban focus group discussion) the men gave it various reading positions that projected their self-identities as men who loved modern information and communication technology. They also came out as men who saw girls as materialistic. This is how one participant interpreted the advertisement:

*...a lady anaeka mtu fikira nyingine.. dem anachart na yeye ndio asambaze bundles [the girl was sexually tempting the man. The girl sweet-talked him into sharing his bundles] (R1).*

For another participant, sharing of bundles is a big opportunity for young men to win girls. Another participant still found the service of sharing bundles to be a chance for girls to exploit young men. Another participant (R5), who gave the advertisement a subversive reading saw the service totally negatively:

*...shows us how to be thieves. When Sambasa [another Safaricom service of sharing airtime] came people knew how one could steal credit from their friends. Now through sambaza bundles, people will steal bundles from their friends.*

This kind of subversive interpretation confirms what Fowles (1996, p. 161) calls “the powerful interpretive role” of advertisements by consumers. When the women in the rural setting discussed the advertisement they also gave it different readings that brought out their self-identities. One participant saw this advertisement as displaying a lifestyle of the rich. From her explanation and body language she identified herself as not rich and

that she detested the rich. Another participant expressed her attitude towards people from poor neighbourhoods as well as her own perception of a handsome man. Although the heavily-built man is projected in common modern discourse as the ideal for a handsome man, she saw him as a man from the “ghetto.”

*... the other dude is trying to portray ghettoish lifestyle and the other one is from high class. For the chick, it's like they are trying to tune her. When that ghetto dude tries to upload a photo and iliisha, huyu mwingine, since he is a guy from up market lifestyle, alimanager kumsambazia bundles [The two men, one from the ghetto and the other from an affluent neighbourhood are trying to seduce the girl. The man from a ghetto background ran out of bundles and the man from a rich background managed to share bundles with the girl]. (R7)*

One female participant from the rural setting (R1) identified herself as person who hated public display of affection:

*...the way they are holding their hands; I don't like it.*

#### **5.4.4 Guinness the Boss**

The *Guinness the boss* advertisement is promoting Guinness beer through a television competition. It shows a White man training African young men how to become football managers by mimicking how football coaches behave during matches. In the end viewers are urged to join the Guinness competition and win prizes. The dark colours of Guinness are employed to convey the meaning to Kenyan viewers, where Guinness is the only alcoholic drink that is dark in colour, that the drink is what is ultimately being advertised. There are however ideological or mythic meanings inherent in this advertisement. It might look common sense, for instance, that a White man driving a Mercedes Benz has come to audition young men in an African country so that they can train as football managers. However, this narrative has a Eurocentric connotation. This narrative is natural because it has been stripped of its historical perspective. It implies that Europeans brought football to Africa during colonialism; they are the ones who can train football managers well. This is the perspective of the postcolonial theorists, who argue that the Western media not only export their media products to other parts of the world but also

set standards for states that were once colonised, where they project people from these ex-colonies as lesser beings (Laughty, 2010) or what Bristor, Lee, and Hunt (1995, p. 50) call “an ideology of White superiority.” There is also a connotation of capitalistic conspicuous consumption (Griskevicius et. al (2007). The trainer drives alone in a Mercedes Benz car as the young man, who is so poor that he plays an old-school Walkman, instead of an iPod or smartphone, is left to wait for a *matatu* (public transport minibus). There is also a connotation of patriarchy. Guinness is a drink taken by men and women but the narrative in the advertisement projects it as a men-only drink sold in a man’s world.

#### **5.4.4.1 Implications of the Advertisement’s Viewing by the Youth**

When this advertisement was discussed by the male participants in the urban setting focus group discussion, the men gave it various readings that projected their various self-identities. One of the self identity traits that came out of this discussion was that these men were fun loving, admired beer drinking and they were football fans. This was captured by one participant who described the advertisement and other participants agreed with him.

*It’s just promoting enjoyment, yah; where you take alcohol... you can shout as you want, like when you are watching football (R7).*

Another participant (R8) came out as a disciplined man, who feared to be caught in the wrong, when he said:

*It’s messed up; with this guy coming late to an interview. It means that he is going to be kicked out.*

However another participant (R1) found the latecomer character repulsive for a different reason:

*The guy who comes late is listening to a cassette player and we are in a digital world; he should be using something like iPods.*

This projected this participant as an individual, who was aware of the latest music technology and hated old technology; a self-identity trait that seemed to be shared by

other participants who agreed with him. When the urban set up women discussed the advertisement they gave it various interpretations, which fitted Hall's (1996) preferred and oppositional readings. These projected the women's self-identities as women who supported family values. For instance one participant did not like the advertisement because, as she explained, this was a beer advertising that was deceptively presented as entertainment. She said the advertisement was likely to lure children into taking alcohol. Some of the participants projected themselves as individuals who did not understand football culture as they could not understand the demonstrations of how football managers behave during a match. Others, however, came out as people who understood and appreciated football. This was captured by one participant, who emotionally explained the advertisement:

*I think the way they brought out how those people were being taught how to react was humorous because you can relate; you can see... you can feel.. yaani [I mean..] if you are a football fan you can feel those emotions(R9).*

This was a negotiated reading of the advertisement since she enjoyed the storyline but she could not see the connection with the beer being advertised. Oppositional reading of the advertisement included seeing it from a racial perspective:

*...because the manager who is going to teach the Africans is White, it is a little bit racial there. It is like taking us to where we were in 1963 [the year Kenya attained independence from Britain]. So I think it was really unfair. The manager should have been a Black man (R6).*

Another participant gave the advertisement an oppositional reading projecting a feminist self-identity:

*I don't think I will be tempted to do Guinness because in that advert there is no lady there. They are all men; so it's like a men thing (R7).*

This advertisement was not discussed by the rural participants because the rural setting judges did not select it as ideal for youth audience.

#### **5.4.5 Guinness Football Coach**

The *Guinness Football Coach* is an advertisement promoting Guinness beer. In the advertisement a White football scout drives through low-class neighbourhood in Africa

looking for football talent. When he is about to give up he realises that a mundanely-dressed young man he had hired to drive him around is a great footballer. The conclusion in the narrative, anchored by the voice-over, is that “there is a drop of greatness in every man.” In the end this great footballer is shown enjoying a Guinness drink with friends, suggesting that the beer makes ordinary-looking men great. The ideological codes in this advertisement help reinforce patriarchy, racism, the stereotypes of poverty in Africa, and Western benevolence. This is an advertisement of a beer that is taken by both men and women but the advertisement is only talking about men with lines like “give a man half a chance and he takes it” and “there is a drop of greatness in every man.” This might sound obvious but bars and football stadia are often populated with both men and women. Harris and Sanborn (2014, P. 85) capture the myth about beer and drinking in this advertisement when they posit:

*Beer is seen as a reward for a job well done (particularly after physical activity) and is a common marker for the end of a workday, such as stopping for a drink with friends after work. ...the bar, ... is always clean, smokeless, and full of polite and non-intoxicated, upper middle-class people. Also no one ever seems to pay for a drink, either in cash or consequences.*

The poor state of football pitches in this advertisement reinforces the stereotype of poverty in Africa, where every infrastructure is believed to be run down. There is a nuance of racism when the advertisement suggests that it can only take a White man to discover good talent. The fact that this football scout is travelling the world looking for a talented footballer, whom he would probably airlift to Europe, reinforces the stereotype of Western benevolence, where a White man comes to rescue people with no opportunities in their land. The bar scene, where crowds are enjoying drinking with abandon, hints at another stereotype of African overindulgence (Jordan and Weedon 1995).

#### 5.4.5.1 Implications of the Advertisement's Viewing by the Youth

When the advertisement was discussed by the rural setting men, they gave it various readings that brought out their self-identities. There are those who gave the preferred reading, connecting greatness to drinking Guinness beer. They came out as ambitious men seeking greatness and if it was the beer that brought out that greatness they were ready to take it. This is how one participant (R5) put it:

*... because the Mzungu [White man] says at the end, 'there is a drop of greatness in every man,' some of us who have not experienced this are encouraged to go and buy it to discover that greatness in you.*

Whereas these sentiments seem to support the advertisement's message this man projected an identity of incompetency in social skills. He seemed to desire greatness but did not know where to get it until a White man told him in a beer advertisement. There are participants who projected self-identities of football fans. There were racial nuances suggested by the use of the word *Mzungu* [Kiswahili for White man] by many participants.

Some of the women in the rural setup gave it the preferred reading while others gave it oppositional reading. One participant (R1), who gave it the preferred reading, said:

*You can see the guy playing with the ball up and down, he is successful, and you know he takes Guinness.*

This was contradicted by another participant (R4), who saw deception in the advertisement:

*I think it's a drug they are advertising, which lies; that if you use it, you will have more energy.*

The suggestion that people should go for a drink of Guinness after finishing the day's work seemed to capture the myth circulated by beer advertisers that taking beer in the evening is a good way of rewarding oneself after working hard the whole day. Although this was not said in the advertisement participants seemed to believe that the men were drinking *baaada ya Kazi* (after the day's work), which is a parody for Tusker (Kenya's leading beer brand) advertisement. From these discussions it was clear that the men and

women from the rural setting were not well versed with the culture of beer drinking. They identified themselves, from their discussions, as people naïve about beer drinking and the world of advertisement. The advertisement was not discussed by the men and women in the urban setting because the judges in the urban setting did not select it as ideal for the youth in this setting.

#### **5.4.6 Drink Drive**

*Drink Drive* is an advertisement discouraging drink driving. Three men are shown going into a bar where they meet other people enjoying their drinks. The voice-over is heard talking about how there should be a designated driver among friends going to drink in a bar and people from various tables showing their car keys demonstrate this. Two women walk out and when one man offers to help them one of the women shows him a car key.

There are mythical or ideological meanings suggested by the *Drink Drive* advertisement. The connotation that you need a car to enjoy your favourite beer sounds natural but it is not the case; capitalism has made this look natural. As Barthes (1957) suggests capitalism has homogenised personal practices, like beer drinking in this case. There is misogyny connoted when the three men volunteer to take the women home before the women repulse them. The connotation here is that a man who approach any woman in a public place and pretends to be of help to her wants sexual favours in return. The suggested myth is that women are not supposed to be in a bar unaccompanied by men. Going into a bar in the evening to drink looks natural in this advertisement but this is a myth promoted by consumer capitalism. This myth tends to suggest that people, especially men, must end their day in a bar when it is known that in the evening most Kenyans go home to join their families, given that there are many people in the population who do not take alcohol.

#### 5.4.6.1 Implications of the Advertisement's Viewing by the Youth

When this advertisement was discussed among urban setting men it was given various reading positions, which enabled the researcher understand the personal identities of the participants. Although all the participants understood the message in the advertisement most of them gave the advertisement a subversive reading (Ruddock 2003), where they identified with the bar scene but not with the bigger picture of avoiding drink driving. They read the after-work meaning in the advertisement. One participant (R6) saw the advertisement's message as counterproductive:

*It may encourage other guys to drink beyond a point of recognising themselves because you know somebody will be responsible for you. Somebody may be drunk and not be able to take care of themselves.*

One participant saw the advertisement as an inspiration for his future drinking exploits because there will be someone to take him home if he got drunk. The personal identities that came out of this discussions included that these were young men who admired drinking but they had either not started drinking or they did not have enough money to enjoy good drinking. Some detested the idea that one had to have a car in order to go to a bar to enjoy one's favourite drink.

Women in the urban setting projected their self-identities as people who were familiar with drinking in the bar but some of them gave the advertisement the oppositional reading. One participant argued that it was not realistic for someone to sit in a bar as his or her friends enjoy drinking beer, although, according to her, it was a good idea. Some of them however said the bar setting was convincing, implying that they were people who had been to bars. This advertisement was not discussed by rural setup men and women because the rural judges did not select it as ideal for youth in this setup.



#### **5.4.7 Dettol Cool**

This advertisement is promoting an antiseptic soap, Dettol Cool. A haggard-looking young man comes home and turns down his parents' offer of going out together, saying he is too tired to accompany them. But when the mother hands him a Dettol Cool piece of soap he showers using the soap and changes ready to go out with the parents. He is depicted as radiant and totally transformed after using the soap being advertised.

The connotation in this advertisement brings out the ideological codes that carry with them hidden meanings. Although Michael is a young man, no longer a baby, the mother is portrayed as a nurturer, who is ready to take care of Michael. It looks natural that a mother has to take care of her son, however old, but historically women in the patriarchal society have been condemned to be home keepers and nurturers. This advertisement, at mythic or ideological level, reinforces this stereotype (Leiss, Kleine and Jhally 1987).

##### **5.4.7.1 Implications of the Advertisement's Viewing by the Youth**

When the men in the urban setting discussed this advertisement they gave it various reading positions, which brought out their self-identities. Some found the message about the Dettol Cool soap convincing to the extent that they would buy the product while some found it unconvincing. One participant came out as an individual who loved family values when he expressed his liking for the main character Michael and his family. Most participants expressed themselves as admirers of the game of basketball, which was associated with the main character, Michael. One participant (R5), however, saw the advertisement as a ploy to give the negative stereotypes of boys.

*This is stereotypical; they show boys being playful, coming home sweaty and they don't want to shower. It shows that boys don't want to shower and it's their mom who forces them to do this.*

In general the participants in this group projected different self-identity traits, which showed that they were conversant with television advertisements. They were also critical analysts; people who respected family values, and lovers of the game of basketball.

Most of the women in the urban setting gave the advertisement the preferred reading position, expressing their admiration to both the storyline and the main character, Michael. However, one participant (R9) found the storyline repulsive:

*Michael comes from playing basketball, and he is really, really sweaty, alafu anakolapse kwa kiti, annachilia ball[then he collapses into the sofa, dropping the ball]). In whose house... if I find my kid like that...aiii.*

This brought out the self-identity of this participant as a perfectionist, who loved tidiness.

Another self-identity traits that came out of the discussion with women in the urban setting is that they were young women who had romantic affection for young men, from the way they discussed Michael the main character. They also came out as women who loved family values. The advertisement was not discussed by men and women from the rural setting because the rural judges did not select it as among those suitable for youth audiences in this setup.

#### **5.4.8 Dettol Skin Care**

The *Dettol Skincare* is an advertisement promoting Dettol Skincare body cream. In the advertisement a young woman is shown advising her friend to use the cream so that her face can look attractive. This is after the friend notices that her facial skin is so rough that it is visible on the photographs she has just printed out. When the woman being advised is next seen on screen she is happy and says that she now has “the face to face the world,” courtesy of Dettol Skin Care cream. When she meets the friend, who is this time accompanied by a man, they are both happy and the man acknowledges her good looks.

The hidden meanings in the *Dettol Skin Care* advertisement include a patriarchal myth of gender stereotype, where women are portrayed as if they can only be successful if they have a good looking face (Killbourne 1996). One of the women in the advertisement says, “now I have the face to face the world.” The implication here is that she has been avoiding the world because of fear of exposing her bad-looking face. This advertisement confirms what American author EB White says about advertising:

*Advertisers are interpreters of our dreams — Joseph interpreting for Pharaoh. Like the movies, they infect the routine futility of our days with purposeful adventure. Their weapons are our weakness: fear, ambition, illness, pride, selfishness, desire, and ignorance. And these weapons must be kept as bright as a sword (quoted in Danesi 2004, p. 255).*

There is also a connotation that the first woman has a boyfriend, owing to her good looks. The connotation here is that good looks created by products sold in the market, like Dettol Skin Care, can qualify a woman to earn a man’s love. This is a patriarchal myth.

#### **5.4.8.1 Implications of the Advertisement’s Viewing by the Youth**

This advertisement was selected by the rural judges and it was therefore discussed by the rural setting focus group discussions only. Although some of the men in the rural setting focus group discussion gave the advertisement the preferred reading, by pointing out the relationship between the use of Dettol Skin Care and a good looking face, many of them showed little interest in the advertisement. This way they projected self-identities of individuals who had no time for women’s beauty products. Some were however convinced that whatever product Dettol Skin Care was, it must have been good because it was endorsed by the Kenya Medical Association.

The women in the rural setting gave the advertisement the preferred reading, saying the product was capable of correcting the woman’s facial defect. However, like their male

counterparts, they were not enthusiastic about discussing the advertisement. This projected them as shy individuals who were uncomfortable about discussing their beauty and beauty products.

#### **5.4.9 Always**

The *Always* advertisement is meant to promote Always sanitary pads. Two women are shown in the advertisement; one who uses Always and the other who uses tissue paper during her menstrual flow. There is also a demonstration where a liquid is poured into two materials, Always and tissue paper. It is indicated that Always absorbs the liquid and remains dry while the tissue paper becomes messy. A voice-over advises women to avoid alternatives like tissue paper and use Always for trouble-free nights during their menstruation. The *Always* advertisement is embedded with the ideology of consumer capitalism since the economics of buying the Always sanitary pads is not mentioned. Only its functions and superiority to alternatives used by the masses, like tissue paper. There is also a connotation of conspicuous consumption. The woman with a troubled night sleeps in many expensive types of bedding, even when there is a risk of staining them. The woman using tissue paper has been made by this advertisement to look primitive. This woman could be broke and looking for a convenient alternative. This is an ideological code of class discrimination. There is also an ideological code suggesting that all women, especially during their menstrual days, only need to buy Always sanitary pads and all their unhappiness will end. This is a common narrative in the advertising industry.

As Danesi (2004, p. 257) puts it:

*With a handful of hedonistic themes – happiness, youth, success, status, luxury, fashion, and beauty – the general message of the advertising subtext is that solutions to human problems can be found in buying and consuming.*

Media critics find graphic displays of sanitary pads in television advertisements (like the *Always* one) an invasion of women's privacy (Christians et al. 2005).

#### **5.4.9.1 Implications of the Advertisement's Viewing by the Youth**

The *Always* advertisement was selected by the urban judges and was therefore discussed by only the men and women of the urban setting. While discussing this advertisement some of the men's self-identities came out, indicating that these were young men who had nothing to do with some women products like sanitary pads. Their patriarchal side also came out when one participant (R2) said that it was against culture to show such advertisements to general television viewers:

*Culture should be respected. It [the Always advertisement] should be exclusively for ladies.*

This portrayed the participant as an individual, who frowned at what women must naturally go through every month. Women participants in the urban setting found this advertising resonating with their self-identities and they gave it the preferred reading. One participant found it fun to watch, saying she always found herself singing the song along whenever the advertisement appeared on television. These women projected self-identities of individuals who should be seen as uniquely women and issues affecting them addressed.

#### **5.4.10 Love Bila Regrets**

*Love Bila Regrets* is an advertisement promoting Trust condoms. It shows men and women of various ages cursing, with the word 'No' variously in English and Kiswahili together with urban slang, an indication that they are regretting about something they have just done. At the end a couple is seen in bed and the man blissfully says, "Yes." A packet of Trust condoms appears on the screen as the voice-over talks about the joy of using Trust condoms.

There is an ideological meaning in this advertisement suggesting that majority of people engaged in unprotected sex are either young people or students. The two young women

shown at the staircase, with one expressing regrets, are carrying back packs. This is a code that suggests college or university students. The mythical or ideological meaning here is that university students engage in risky sex, only to regret later.

#### **5.4.10.1 Implications of the Advertisement's Viewing by the Youth**

When men in the urban setting discussed this advertisement most of them identified with the storyline. Although characters in the advertisement represent people of all ages the urban men only saw it as an advertisement talking about young people. Although one participant (R5) said he never trusted condoms as guarantees for safe sex, saying, "...you never know if they can backfire..." the self-identities that came out of this discussion included that these were young men who did engage in sexual activities with most of them using condoms.

The men in the rural setting gave this advertisement various reading positions. Some gave it the preferred reading; others negotiated reading and others the oppositional reading. For some this advertisement was accurate, with one participant saying it was talking about young college people living in a hostel. One participant found the message abstract, while another one saw the advertisement as irrelevant, saying it only targeted people in urban areas. Another (R1) participant gave the advertisement a subversive reading, terming it ungodly:

*...you see a regretful advert, which encourages young people to engage in sex; which is against Biblical teaching.*

In general the self-identity traits that came out of this discussion were those of individuals who engaged in premarital sex; individuals who embraced rural culture and saw condom

advertisement as an urban phenomenon; and religious individuals who were against premarital sex.

Some urban setting women found the advertisement resonating with their self-identities as they expressed their fear of unprotected sex. Although some participants said they did not find the advertisement's message clear it was evident that all the participants knew the use of condoms and the consequences of unprotected sex. The predominant self-identity trait that came out of this discussion was that these were individuals who engaged in premarital sex and they occasionally used condoms.

All the rural setting women said they understood the message in the advertisement and the protective value of condoms. However, it was not clear whether they themselves had used condoms. Instead they used vague statements like:

*...if you really have to indulge yourself in sex, you must use a condom (7).*

One participant was however categorical that the advertisement was bad because it was likely to influence children negatively when shown on television. The self-identity trait that came out here was that these were individuals who were not free to discuss premarital sex and the use of condoms, which, they implied, were associated with immoral people.

#### **5.4.11 Wacha Mpango wa Kando**

*Wacha Mpango wa Kando*, is an advertisement promoting the virtue of avoiding sexually-transmitted disease infection in marriage. A man is shown advising his friend to leave his mistress and be faithful to his wife, saying that most mistresses have many sex partners. He gives his own example, where his former mistress has been lying to him that he was her only man only to discover that she had other men on the side. He advises his

friend that if he cannot help having mistresses he should use condoms to protect his family from disease infection.

The hidden meaning in the *Wacha Mpango wa Kando* advertisement is ideologically brought out in the narrative. This advertisement brings out the patriarchal ideology, where women are supposed to be seen but not to be heard. The men are talking about women in their lives but even the woman present in the advertisement is not allowed to say anything. As the men talk about their extra-marital exploits it comes out that the mistresses these married men have associated with are unfaithful — that they lie to them that they are the only ones, only to learn that they have other men on the side. To the man giving advice to his friend it is the mistresses who are promiscuous, hence the cause of the spread of AIDS, not the men themselves, who have mistresses and yet they are married.

#### **5.4.11.1 Implications of the Advertisement's Viewing by the Youth**

This advertisement was discussed in the rural setting, where one male participant expressed his hatred for adultery discussed in the narrative. Another one found it a good lesson to safeguard his future marriage. One participant (R7) found the message abstract, saying it was addressing married people and that he was not yet married. Another participant found contradictions in the message:

*These people... if you look at the advert, it is like they are contradicting themselves, because, they are saying use condoms and also wacha mpango wa kando [stop extra marital affairs].*

The general self-identity trait that came out of this discussion is that these were rural men who did not like discussing sex activities, especially extramarital affairs.

The women participants in the rural setting found it uncomfortable to discuss this advertisement. One participant however projected feminist self-identity, when she said



she found the advertisement repulsive because only men were shown in the narrative and yet the advertisement was talking about men and women. Another participant projected suspicion for men's moral strength when she said the advertisement's message was bad because it was likely to negatively influence men viewers.

#### **5.4.12 Contraceptives (watoto kama siafu)**

The *Contraceptives (Watoto kama siafu)* advertisement is meant to promote modern family planning methods. Women in a poor neighbourhood are shown discussing family planning. When one of them expresses her apprehension for family planning, saying the modern methods can make a woman barren; a medical expert comes on screen to explain that the fear that modern family planning methods can cause barrenness is unfounded.

The ideological meaning in this advertisement is gender stereotype, where women are projected as taking lowly jobs like hair dressing, tailoring and nursing. A patriarchal myth is also projected when women are presented as gossips, who talk ignorantly about subjects they ought to learn from experts before they start advising their friends. *Watoto wanafuatana kama siafu* (children trailing each other like safari ants) is an ideological code held by some people in Western societies that Africans are fond of having too many children. This is a myth created by this advertisement.

##### **5.4.12.1 Implications of the Advertisement's Viewing by the Youth**

While discussing this advertisement, some men in the rural setting gave it a preferred reading while others found the subject abstract. One participant felt the advertisement was irrelevant, saying it targeted people in the urban areas. Another participant expressed his disdain for people residing in slum areas when he said the women were engaged in gossip because they were from slum areas. This projected his self-identity as a snobbish

man, who had low opinion of women, especially those from poor neighbourhoods. Most of the men in this discussion were not comfortable discussing family planning methods, which came out as a patriarchal stance, prevalent in the rural areas.

Women in the rural setting found the advertisement educative but, like their male counterparts, most of them were not willing to discuss family planning. It can be concluded that both men and women from the rural setting are not comfortable to discuss matter of sexuality, including family planning. The advertisement was not discussed by urban setup men and women because the judges in this setting did not select it as ideal for the youth audiences.

#### **5.4.13 Disney Blue Band**

*Disney Blue Band* advertisement is aimed at promoting Blue Band margarine. Teacher Wanjiku, a Kenyan television comedian, uses her sense of humour to urge school children to collect as many Blue Band coupons (which come with the margarine) as possible to give them a chance to visit Disneyland amusement centre in the United States of America, besides winning many prizes like PlayStations. The English and Kiswahili, spoken with heavy vernacular interference in the *Disney Blue Band* advertisement connotes a negative stereotype of teachers. Another stereotype connoted here is that all teachers tend to be women; they talk too much, sometimes not making sense, and they overdress. This advertisement shows school children with different uniforms, meaning that they are from different schools. All the teachers are female. There is a connotation that teaching is a lowly profession only taken up by women, who are not meant for higher (male-dominated) professions. This is a patriarchal myth.

#### **5.4.13.1 Implications of the Advertisement's Viewing by the Youth**

When the rural men discussed this advertisement the self-identity trait that came out was that these were comedy fans and that they liked watching television for entertainment, a common practice among the youth (Nyanoti 2007). One participant said the use of comedian Teacher Wanjiku would make him buy Blue Band margarine. Although some of the participants projected themselves as fun-loving people they could not explain the relationship between Teacher Wanjiku, the school set up, and Blue Band margarine.

Women participants in the rural setting could not connect the teacher, school set up, and Blue Band. They however projected identities of people who loved children and family values. It can be concluded that these women identified themselves as aspiring mothers who intended to have children to nurture. The urban judges did not select this advertisement so it was not discussed by the urban setting participants.

#### **5.4.14 Abstain (suicide)**

*Abstain (suicide)* is an advertisement aimed at discouraging teenagers from engaging in sex. In the advertisement a young man is shown dressed in the costume of the daredevil comic book character, Batman. The young man jumps from an apartment block rooftop and a groan is heard before a voice-over warns against teenage sex, which is equated with jumping from a rooftop with the false confidence of the Batman costume. The connotations in the *Abstain (suicide)* advertisement bring out the hidden meanings it conveys to its viewers. The young man denoted here as committing suicide in the name of proving heroic feats is from a poor neighbourhood. The connotation here is that people from poor neighbourhoods are reckless with their lives and therefore the ones who engage in (risky) teenage sex. This may look like natural or common sense but Marxist critics would see it as a way of frowning at poverty. Another ideological myth here is class discrimination. There is a dominant narrative in the capitalist society that project the

youth as a reckless lot that is always ready to court death at the slightest excuse. Marzzarella (2003, p. 233) attributes this to "...media campaigns against young people."

#### **5.4.14.1 Implications of the Advertisement's Viewing by the Youth**

When this advertisement was discussed among the urban setting men it was clear that the storyline was abstract to most participants. However, most of them easily recognised the attire worn by comic book superhero, Batman. This part of the storyline brought out the self-identities of the participants as movie and comic book lovers. Some participants saw the character in the advertisement as foolish while another one said the advertisement would only be entertaining to children because of the use of the cartoon character, Batman. Another participant (R1) gave the advertisement a subversive reading by challenging the relevance of using Batman:

*First of all he engages in teenage sex; then the consequences. Then, he is wearing Batman costume. In the movie if you wear a Batman suit you don't fall. In this ad he is committing suicide while wearing Batman costume. I don't understand.*

Some men in the rural setting gave it the preferred reading by equating teenage sex to committing suicide. The costume of Batman also featured prominently, implying that the participants were fans of comic books and cartoon movies. One participant, who gave it the subversive reading, said the advertisement was only good as simple entertainment but it was not likely to convince young men to avoid teenage sex.

Women participants in the urban setting gave this advertisement the subversive reading, terming it simple entertainment using Batman costume. One participant said the creators of the advertisement should have clearly shown the consequences of teenage sex instead of simply "encouraging suicide" (R1). Another participant said the advertisement was likely to be copied by children, who would be tempted to jump from high places while

dressed like television superheroes. Another participant (R2) saw the fear appeal message in the advertisement as simplistic:

*Many years ago this commercial would have been effective because they used fear to communicate. The society today has no fear; people are more knowledgeable and they will get away with teenage sex.*

Women in this discussion projected their self-identities as knowledgeable people, who could competently analyse television advertisements with high level of media literacy.

Women participants in the rural setting read the advertisement's message as that of a young man committing suicide after engaging in teenage sex. Another participant thought the young man was committing suicide because his lover had left him. Although the participants saw the advertisement as conveying a message of the consequences of teenage sex they did not read the writings on the screen, anchoring the message as doing a foolish daring action. While discussing this advertisement the rural women came out as individuals of low media literacy.

#### **5.4.15 Barclays Ultimate Account**

*Barclays Ultimate Account* is an advertisement promoting a Barclays Bank of Kenya account. A man demonstrates how he has been able to enjoy a good life, including visiting a game reserve or park, courtesy of the bank account. The character appeals to the viewers of the advertisement to open such an account and they will enjoy the good life. Ideologically the *Barclays Ultimate Account* advertisement promotes consumer capitalism, i.e. the idea of spending money extravagantly to promote the capitalist profit-mania system. The advertisement talks about the various ways of depositing and spending money without mentioning how this money is generated. There is also an aspect of conspicuous consumption in this advertisement. The character in the advertisement is

displaying good grooming, his house and how he spends money; and even challenges the viewers whether they have the same good life. Another mythical meaning in this advertisement is promotion of Western values. It looks common sense that the man is enjoying the efficiency of the Barclays account to go for game viewing but this has Eurocentric undertones. Kenya, from the colonial history, is known as the land of wildlife safaris and these safaris were synonymous with White people. There are several home-grown ways of how Kenyans spend their disposable income and tourism doesn't rank highly. The way the character in this advertisement behaves and addresses the audience promotes narcissistic tendencies. This is how Abercrombie and Longhurst (2003, p. 88) describe narcissistic behaviour:

*The notion of a narcissistic society embodies the idea that people act as if they are being looked at, as if they are the centre of the attention of a real or imagined audience.*

This advertisement also promotes what Bignell (2002) calls the ideology of advertising when he posits:

*Ads endow products with a certain social significance so that they can function in our real social world as indexical signs connoting the buyer's good taste, trendiness, or some other ideological valued quality (p. 36).*

Although it might not be easy for many Kenyan television viewers to access and utilize the Barclays Ultimate Account the advertisement creates an impression that this is a service for all, regardless of their level of income or social status. Advertising critics see this as an exploitative ploy by the consumer capitalist system. As Leiss, Kleine and Jhally (1987, p. 31) put it:

*...advertising plays a more straightforward role in transmitting an ideology that perpetuates the status quo and its exploitative social relations, through the presentation of a world view that encourages the audience to interpret reality in ways that work to the benefit of those who already possess economic power.*

#### **5.4.15.1 Implications of the Advertisement's Viewing by the Youth**

When men in the urban setting discussed this advertisement they gave it both the preferred and oppositional readings. Some participants liked the character in the advertisement and his lifestyle. They saw themselves in the character and his good taste. However, other participants found the man proud and his lifestyle unattainable. Two self-identity traits were projected here: ambitious young men looking forward to affluent living when they get employed, and pessimistic young men who cannot dream about affluent living.

Some women in the urban setting liked the advertisement and its message of good life while others found the character in the advertisement too proud for their liking. At the same time they found the message misleading. According to one participant, there was nothing unique about claims by the advertisement about a Visa card, saying every other bank had a card and all the services being advertised. This brought out a self-identity of high media literacy.

#### **5.5 Conclusion**

The above discussions agree with the creators of television advertisements to the extent that advertisers try to understand who the youth audiences are before they create messages targeting them. According to Edward Muthusi, a creative at ScanAd, Kenya's leading advertising agency, in an interview with this researcher, creatives try to understand their audiences before designing advertisements targeting them. According to Muthusi the youth as an audience are not easy to define, and therefore create messages targeting them.

As a way of triangulating data on the youth and television advertising in Kenya, this researcher had sought the views of Muthusi as a key informant. Creative artists, simply known in the advertising industry as “creatives,” are the people who come up with advertising concepts to be placed on media outlets. This researcher wanted to know (a) how the creatives identify and define the “youth” target audiences (b) how television advertisements targeting the youth are generated and (c) how effective, the creatives think, they have been in capturing and convincing the youth audiences.

#### **5.5.1 Defining the Youth**

According to Muthusi when a client approaches the agency with a product, service or campaign he or she is asked to fill a ‘marketing communication brief’ form. Among the things the agency always wants to know from the client in the brief is the target audience. The details of the target audience include both the demographic and psychographic information about the target audience. The creative has to understand the mind-set, habits, and lifestyles of the target audience. He or she has to know their likes/dislikes and what their personality is likely to be. The client has to provide target audience research if it is available.

The creative said it was hard to give the youth in Kenya a single definition. He, however, said the youth tended to “hang out together” and that they liked “sharing.” They also like talking to friends. He said when a client approached him with a product or campaign targeting the youth he had to think of the best way to capture the youth’s attention. To do this he had to find out where most youth hang out, the type of media they were most exposed to, and how they dressed and talk. He has to look for words and expressions that were then trending among the youth in their everyday discourse and the



lifestyles most youth took to be “cool” at the time. In this analysis urban youth were dealt with separately from their rural counterparts.

### **5.5.2 Creating a Television Advertisement Targeting the Youth**

The aim of the analysis on the youth is to create a narrative that resonates with the youth. If it is a mini drama to be created in the advertisement, the characters must dress, talk and behave in such a way that the youth will see themselves in the advertisement. Creating a 30-second advertisement is a complex exercise that involves scrip writers, actors, camerawork, costumes, and directors, according to the creative. It is like shooting a mini Hollywood movie that is compressed to tell the whole storyline in 30 to 60 seconds. According to Muthusi the mini drama must be entertaining, original and with an element of “the unexpected,” in order to appeal to youth audiences.

### **5.5.3 Effectiveness of Television Advertisement Targeting the Youth**

According to Muthusi some television advertisements fail while others succeed. This also applies to television advertisements targeting the youth. However, according to Muthusi, market research indicates that television is not the best platform for youth audiences because the contemporary youth are “radio people,” who are always tuning in to radio stations using their personalised media (the mobile phone) to listen to music. He added that the youth in Kenya are increasingly becoming unstable as an “audience.” He said it is hard to pin down the youth as a group in a particular medium or site to design an advertisement for that particular medium. When this researcher asked him about the youth at university and college his reply was: “This is an interesting group.” He said it was not clear what medium was most appropriate to place an advertisement targeting university or college youth. He said there were pilot projects, where the advertisers were

taking advertising campaigns to university campuses. Here they were sure of reaching students “on the ground.” The campaigns they call “360 campaigns,” involve music concerts and road shows on college grounds. According to Muthusi the youth form a large segment of advertising audiences but the creatives have to keep on innovating in order to capture the fluid youth identity.

From this creative’s views it can be concluded that the Kenyan youth have multiple identities and hence the reason why they give television advertisements different interpretations.

## CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### **6.0 Introduction**

This section outlines the conclusions this researcher has made from the present study after discussing the findings. The main object of this study was to investigate television advertisements as a media text and how the youth in Kenya interact with them as they construct their self-identities. The study was guided by three main objectives and conclusions made in this section are outlined along these objectives. The objectives were: (a) To deconstruct the ideological/mythical meanings embedded in Kenya's television advertisements (b) To investigate how the Kenyan youth perceive themselves; how they define their self-identities. (c) To analyse how young consumers decode meanings from what is encoded into television advertisements for their self-identity formation.

The section ends by proposing recommendations for further research in the field of television advertisements and audiences from a media cultural studies perspective and how the findings in the present research can be utilised to inform policy on advertising and society.

### **6.1 Hidden meanings in Kenyan television advertisements**

Advertising has been defined by Turow (2010, p. 593) as “ the activity of explicitly paying for media space or time in order to direct favourable attention to certain goods or services.” This is what the advertising industry in Kenya sets out to do when designing television advertisements for the youth, the project of this study. However, the relationship between advertising and its consumers is a complex interaction. From the 1920s advertising messages that were previously meant to alert consumers of availability of goods or services had to change format due to unprecedented economic growth and

competition within the industry; and expansion of the mass media (Baran 2012, Turow 2010). According to Fowles (1996):

*It was during this time that the simple advertising was eclipsed by compound advertising. The centrifugal forces of the production/consumption economy pushed the advertising imperative beyond the role of notification and the product effects, and into the realm of personal meanings. Textual descriptions, hyperbolic or not, gradually surrendered costly space to the pictorial communication that might penetrate deeply into the minds. (pp.41-42).*

When television was introduced as a mass medium after World War II the motion picture replaced the pictorial communication, which was to be perfected over the years as audiences and media consumption grew in complexity.

Semiotic analysis of television advertisements in Kenya indicates that creators of television advertisements use various social and technical codes to create meanings that resonate with everyday discourse of the target audiences. However, in the process they intentionally create hidden meanings in the television advertisements. These are meanings that reinforce status quo in terms of social inequalities created by the capitalist patriarchal society.

Among the hidden meaning in Kenyan television advertisements are negative gender stereotypes, class discrimination, racism, negation of African cultures and values; consumer capitalism, and conspicuous consumption.

From a casual observation these meanings look either harmless or obvious in the everyday discourse of the Kenyan society. However, when advertisements are semiotically analysed it can be concluded that advertising in general, and television advertising in particular, can be blamed for social inequalities in the Kenyan society.

Whereas it is not easy to measure the impact of negative messages of television advertisement, the art of making inequality look common sense is retrogressive in itself. A television advertisement that uses everyday discourse that resonates with the target audience but is laden with nuances of exploitation promotes hegemony, where consumers of these advertisements participate in their own exploitation. This is an impediment to social change and emancipation of the socially disadvantaged. Women in Kenya, for instance, have for generations been condemned to roles like bearing and nurturing children, as well as taking care of their husbands at the expense of career and other personal achievements. At the same time women in Kenya have had to go an extra mile to achieve what men can. Besides excelling in academics and skill experience they have to have good looks in order to be considered for high profile jobs. This claim may look far-fetched but when a television advertisement promoting a mobile telephone company emphasizes the beauty of the female characters or when a woman says that “now I have the face to face the world” and no woman sees an aspect of female exploitation in this, then the women television viewers who appreciate these advertisements as common sense are participating in their own exploitation by the capitalist patriarchal system. In semiotic analysis of media texts like television advertisements there are two levels of understanding meanings. These are the denotation (the obvious meanings) and the connotation (the implied meanings). French critic Roland Barthes gave a third meaning, which he called *ideological meaning of signs or myths*, according to Rayner, Wall and Kruger (2004) who explain the role of mythic meanings:

*Because these ideological or mythic meanings can appear to be so natural, it is sometimes difficult to stand back and identify them (p.78).*

It is the work of ideology that makes advertisements with negative hidden meanings look natural. Marxist thinker Louise Althusser used the concept “ideological state apparatuses” (Rayner, Wall and Kruger 2004 p. 84) to describe the institutions that are

used to reproduce ideology to suit a certain social and economic view. To Althusser social institutions like the media and schooling help to reproduce the capitalist status quo.

According to Stevenson (2002):

*Althusser's reflections on ideology sought to explain how Western capitalist societies reproduce dominant institutional relationships. The requirements of the economic system for labour power are satisfied outside the dominant mode of production, mainly in ideological state apparatuses such as the education system, family and the media (p. 150).*

Althusser also introduced what he called “interpellation” or “hailing.” This is a practice where media texts like television advertisements hail viewers to see their point of view as natural. This way the audience participate in their own Exploitation by the dominant system.

According to Rayner, Wall and Kruger 2004, although there have been improvements over the years the adverting industry still represents women negatively:

*If we look at many of today's advertisements aimed at women, we can see that they often show women as positive, active and independent... Yet often when we look more closely at the adverts, they are still selling the same ideas that women are to be judged by their appearance and that they must look 'good' in particular ways” (p. 85).*

Television advertisements in Kenya tend to reproduce consumer capitalism where the good life of goods and services is shown without showing the cost implications. Advertisements project the users of expensive goods and services as the ideal while at the same time representing people using less costly ones as primitive. For instance making video calling as the ideal way of a man communicating to his wife from the office, even when there is no much to say, is a way of promoting the habit of spending money just to look good. The implication here is that those who cannot afford will either feel depressed or they will be tempted to look for unorthodox means of getting money to buy these goods or services.

The youth in Kenyan television advertisements, as well as people from poor neighbourhoods, have been projected as reckless people always ready to gamble with their lives. An advertisement meant to caution young people against teenage sex that uses a young man from a poor neighbourhood to demonstrate how suicidal it can be to engage in teenage sex creates negative connotations of the urban poor.

Kenyans are always proud of their heritage and cherish national values. As citizens of an ex-colony of Western powers many Kenyans are products of Western values like education; and religious and cultural practices. This does not however mean that Kenyans have to continue embracing Western values at the expenses of their African heritage. The advertising industry that operates on the plane of globalisation tend to push this agenda, intentionally or unintentionally. The conclusion from the present study is that television advertisements in Kenya tend to promote Western values at the expense of Kenyan values. For instance a television advertisement sponsored by a bank urges Kenyan to spend their savings on tourism and yet many Kenyans have different home-grown ways to spending their disposable incomes.

## **6.2 How Young People in Kenya Perceive Themselves**

The Kenyan youth understand themselves and are able to define themselves when asked. They are able to affirm their positive attributes in relation to those around them or what Sedikides and Gregg (2003) call “self –enhancement”. The authors describe self-enhancement as:

*The drive to affirm the self, that is to convince ourselves, and any significant others in the vicinity, that we are intrinsically meritorious persons: worthwhile, attractive, competent, lovable, and moral (p.94).*

Social psychologists believe that human beings are always preoccupied with self-promotion and projecting their positive images and defending or covering their human flaws whenever they have a chance. In other words they would like to project themselves as good, admirable citizens, whom everybody should associate with.

The Kenyan college-level youth define themselves as “a unique individual in terms of interpersonal or intragroup differentiations” (Simon and Trotschel 2008, p. 105). They describe themselves as sociable, religious, fun loving and participants or non-participants of contemporary issues like politics and popular televised sports like football. In this self-description they describe themselves in relation to others or as members of a group. For instance, when a young man describes himself as a lover of politics and a hater of football it means that as a member of a particular group or institution he is expected to be *in* or *outside* politics or sports, or indeed any other hobby or activity other members in that group are involved in. Simon and Trotschel (2008) call this “self-categorization,” which they describe as “the formation of cognitive groupings of oneself and other people as the same in contrast to some other class of people” (p.106).

From their self-definitions it can be concluded that the Kenyan youth learn traits, habits and practices from social and cultural interactions within their societies. For instance Kenya is a country known for its political consciousness and widespread religious beliefs and practices. It is therefore common to hear a young person in college or university describing himself or herself as a “born again Christian” or an “aspiring politician.” Kenyan youth also come out as avid consumers of mass media, especially television. The youth describe themselves as football and movie fans. In Kenya, Both of these pastimes are not enjoyed in movie theatres or stadia but on television. The European Football tournaments have a large following in Kenya owing to television screenings. Movie



theatres on the other hand are either too expensive for most Kenyan youth or far too few for many youths to access. This makes television the popular site for movie watching.

The Kenyan youth describe themselves as college or university students pursuing particular professional or academic disciplines. This sets them apart from ordinary members of society; they are either the elite of society or they are about to occupy this position. The above self-definitions and self-categorizations are predisposition that the Kenyan youth deploy in their interactions with television advertisements. In the process their self-identities are shaped. This is how Simon and Trotschel (2008) put it:

*Social psychologists conceptualize self and identity as a social psychological mediator – a variable process that takes shape during social interaction and then guide subsequent interaction (p. 110).*

Creators of television advertisements are aware of this and therefore create advertisements that tend to capture the self identities of the target audiences. Although the advertising industry engages some of the best brains in social psychology to provide demographic and psychographic segmentation of the target audiences (Baran 2012) creatives i.e. the people who design advertisement concepts at the advertising agencies no longer rely on scientific data to design television advertisements. Fowles (1996) points out that creatives usually find audience survey data too complex to use to come up with catchy concepts:

*Scientific data ... are notoriously poor informants on efforts at human communication. The nuances, styles, and fluctuating symbolic codes of successful communication cannot be prescribed or even implied by data collectors (p. 80).*

In Kenya, advertising agencies are aware of this and when they want to design an advertisement for a product or service they do not commission researches or insist on audience scientific research reports. They only give clients a form to fill in the key information about demographic and psychographic details of the target audience. This

was confirmed by Edward Muthusi, a creative at ScanAd, Kenya's leading advertising agency, who spoke to this researcher. Before designing an advertisement targeting the youth a client is required to fill a form indicating the details that will enable the creative conceptualize who the targeted youth is. Muthusi, however, said it is hard to give a Kenyan youth a single definition. He said after analysing the client's needs he works with a set of variables that enables him capture this demographic. The creative said urban youth are dealt with differently from the rural youth.

From the findings of the present study the Kenyan youth's interaction with television advertisements confirms Hall's (1996) model of Encoding and decoding. The youth either agrees with the preferred reading of the advertisement i.e. the message intended by the advertising creative, or opposes the message altogether. The youth can also negotiate the meaning. This means they accept part of the message and reject the other part. From the findings of the present study it is clear that there is a dichotomy between television advertisements that appeal to urban youth and those that appeal to rural youth. There are still those that appeal to both rural and urban youth. For instance advertisements with messages of sex, including those advertising condoms, family planning and sanitary pads are not appealing to rural youth compared to their urban counterparts. Rural youth appreciate advertisements projecting messages of family values, women's role as subordinate to men compared to urban youth. Whereas urban youth appreciate advertisements with messages of affluence, romance and the beauty of nature the rural youth do not find them appealing. Youth from both settings appreciate advertisements with messages of information and communication technology (ICT), especially the internet and mobile telephony. It can also be concluded from the present study that the way the rural male youths perceive the world of advertising is different from the way

their female counterparts view advertising. This is in contrast with urban youth where men and women tend to perceive messages in advertisements in almost the same way.

From the findings of the present study it can be concluded that the youth read advertisements and create different meaning from what the advertising industry intended. Instead of reading the preferred meanings the youth apply what de Certeau (1984) calls “cultural poaching” to make their own meanings. As Fiske (1989) puts it they turn an otherwise serious text created by the capitalist system into a popular text open to their own interpretations as the youth (a socially subordinate group). According to Fiske (1989):

*These popular forces transform the cultural commodity into a cultural resource, pluralise the meanings and pleasures it offers, evade or resist its disciplinary efforts, fracture its homogeneity and coherence, raid or poach upon its terrain (p. 28).*

This is evidence from the findings of the present study. The advertising industry spends large budgets to create a single television advertisement (Jhally 1990) to pass a specific message to viewers. The aim is to make the viewer see the advertisement in terms of that specific message to make the viewer buy the product or service or change perception or behaviour. As Fiske (1989, p.29) puts it: “Advertising tries to control the cultural meanings of commodities by mapping them as tightly as possible onto the workings of the financial economy.” The Kenyan youth however read advertisements just as entertainment. A television advertisement like *Nikon na Safaricom*, for instance, is aimed at promoting the Safaricom mobile telephone service but the youth fail to see the relevance of the telephone service. Instead they appreciate the “sentimental song” and the beauty of “mother nature.” The advertisement Abstain (suicide) that is aimed at showing the serious dangers of teenage sex is subverted and the youth can only see a dejected youth who wants to commit suicide probably because of being dropped by a girlfriend. The message of abstaining from teenage sex is further vilified when the youth dismiss the

fear appeal technique employed by the advertisement designer as simplistic and outmoded. They believe that the youth can get away with teenage sex, hence it can not be equated with suicide.

The findings of the present study suggest that the youth's consumption of television advertisements is more than what the advertising industry is passing as persuasive messages to television viewers. It is a negotiation between the two parties; a kind of struggle for meaning usually experienced in popular culture consumption. This is how Fiske (1989) summarises it:

*All popular culture is a process of struggle, a struggle over the meaning of social experience, of one's personhood and its relations to the social order and of the texts and commodities of that order (p. 28).*

Whether the advertising text creators or youth consumers of this text win was not the object of this study. What the present study is concerned with is how the youth make meanings and how these meanings contribute to their self-identity construction. This leads to the third objective of the study and the conclusions that have been made from its findings.

### **6.3 The Relationship Between Television Advertising Consumption and Youth Self-identity**

When the Kenya youth are asked, they are able to define their self-identities. This is how they would like to be perceived by those around them. However, when they interact with a media text like television advertisements their consumption brings out their self-identities and they come out as individuals with multiple, often contradicting, self-identities. These contradictions are what Giddens (1991, p.187) calls "various distinctive tensions and difficulties on the level of the self, characterises the world in the late modernity.

According to Giddens (1991) an individual in the late modernity is faced with four major dilemmas which stand in the way when she or he tries to “preserve a coherent narrative of self-identity” (p.187). These dilemmas are (a). Unification versus fragmentation. This is where an individual is faced with the dilemma of following the tenets of a unified world or those of local contexts. In Kenya the youth, especially those in the rural setting are faced with challenges of identifying themselves in the context of Kenya as a nation or their tribes. When a young man from the Maasai background views a television advertisement where the character is talking with a heavy Kamba (tribe) accent he is faced with the dilemma of seeing the advertisement as a Kenyan or as a Maasai. There is also the rural urban dichotomy as Giddens (191) puts it:

*...an individual has as many selves as there are divergent contexts of interaction...like the contrast between the rural and urban (p188).*

(b). Powerlessness versus appropriation. Individuals in their local contexts feel that they can appropriate local phenomena to construct their self identities but with the advent of globalization the individual feels powerless when faced with abstract artifacts. This is the dilemma the Kenyan youth face when trying to appropriate meanings created by television advertisements. For instance many Kenyan youth have not been to Disneyland. They can only fantasize about it from the images they have consumed from the movie world, another globalization phenomenon.

(c) Authority versus uncertainty. In late modernity, according to Giddens (1991, p. 189) “there are no determinant authorities. There exist plenty of claimants to authority – far more than was true of pre-modern cultures.” The youth in Kenya face similar dilemma; they do not know whether authority comes from parents, religion, the media and many other “claimants.” There are television advertisements that use models who appear appealing to the youth but their actual authority is not known by these youth while there

are advertisements that make claims and attribute them to the Kenya Medical Association (a grouping of medical experts)

(d). Personalised versus commodified experience. When a Kenya youth consume television advertisements, some of them look so appealing that they are left wondering whether to construct his or her self-identity from personal experience or the make-belief experience of the advertising industry, whose aim is to sell the service or commodity.

According Giddens (1991):

*Modernity opens up the project of the self, but under conditions strongly influenced by standardising effects of common capitalism ...Capitalism commodifies in various senses... (p. 189).*

From the consumption of television advertisements the Kenya youth construct various self identities that reflect the dynamics of the world of late modernity where, as Giddens (1991) argues, the project of the self is influenced by mediated experience. He posits:

*...in very few instances does the phenomenal world any longer correspond to the habitual settings through which an individual physically moves. Localities are thoroughly penetrated by distanced influences... All individuals actively, although by no means always in a conscious way, selectively incorporate many elements of mediated experience into their day-to-day conduct (p187).*

The youth in Kenya therefore appropriate meanings in television advertisements and combine them with their personal experiences gained from their cultural environments, to build their self identities.

For instance the rural youth, of this study both men and women, project themselves as individuals who admire the institution of marriage and the rearing of children. This contrasts with the urban youth who feel that marriage not only denies them the fun of enjoying romance with their spouses but also it belongs to a different class of people. The profession of teaching appeals to the rural youth but not the urban youth while both the urban and rural youth are lovers of modern technology. The relationship between men and women (in marriage) is perceived differently between the urban and the rural youth.

This can be attributed to both their personal/environmental experiences and their levels of exposure to the mass media, especially television.

#### **6.4 Recommendations**

The findings of the present study are important because of their contribution to the body of knowledge in media cultural studies in general and media text and audience research in particular. The findings can also be used to inform policy about television advertising and youth audiences. Although the study is not exhaustive in investigating television advertising in Kenya and youth consumers the findings form an important point of departure in the sociology of communication scholarship. This researcher therefore makes the following recommendations:

1. There should be further research on television advertisements and youth consumers to investigate the impact of the various ideologies embedded in the advertisements.
2. More studies on the youth and advertising should be conducted to find out whether the Kenyan youth can better be understood through their interaction with the advertising industry.
3. Television advertisements make many claims, some of which are at variance with national cohesion and social change. Large-scale investigations should be conducted to verify this.
4. Media Cultural Studies in general and semiotics in particular, should be mainstreamed in the Sociology Department of sociology and social work at the University of Nairobi in order to strengthen the study of mass communication from a sociological perspective.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix I: Focus Group Discussion Question Guide**

#### **Section A**

1. How can you best describe yourself?
2. According to you, what are the qualities that make an ideal young man/woman?

#### **Section B (To be asked after viewing the commercials)**

1. Do you think the message about the product being promoted is clear? Explain.
2. Briefly explain what lifestyle this commercial seems to be promoting.
3. Briefly comment about the characters in the commercial?
4. What do you find most repulsive about the commercial.
5. Do you find any useful/entertaining/educative information about this commercial?  
Explain.
6. Does Watching this commercial persuade you to buy the product/service?  
Explain.
7. As a consumer of television programmes, what can you comment about this and other commercial appearing on Kenyan television?

## Appendix II: Youth Survey questionnaire

*My name is Joseph Nyanoti, PhD student at the University of Nairobi's Department of Sociology. I am conducting a research on the youth's self-identity and television commercials for my thesis. I would appreciate if you answer the questions below as honestly as possible. The information you give here will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be utilised for academic purposes only.*

*Use a tick to indicate your response in the box provided.*

### Personal information

3. What is your sex?

- Male
- Female

4. What is your year of study?

- 1<sup>st</sup> year
- 2<sup>nd</sup> year
- 3<sup>rd</sup> year
- 4<sup>th</sup> year

5. What is your faith?

- Muslim
- Catholic
- SDA
- Protestant

Any other (specify)-----

### Television, personal identity and commercials

6. Read the following statements about yourself and in the brackets state whether they are true or not true. You can select more than one.

- I am an ambitious young man/lady (True  Not true  )
- I am a strong believer in God (True  Not true  )
- I hate the way some people dress and talk (True  Not true  )
- I learn many things from watching television (True  Not true  )
- I hate the way I look (True  Not true  )

7. In a typical week how many times do you watch television commercials?

- Once  Twice  Three times  More than three times

8. Below are four statements about television commercials that advertise condoms.

Using a tick, indicate whether you 1. Strongly agree (SA), 2. Agree (A) 3. Neither agree nor disagree (N) 4 disagree (D) or 5.Strongly disagree (SD)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
They are disgusting	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
They promote immorality	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
They are educative	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
The're entertaining		[1]	[2]	[3]	[4] [5]

9. Below are four statements about television commercials that advertise beer. Using a tick indicate whether you 1. Strongly agree (SA), 2. Agree (A) 3. Neither agree nor disagree (N) 4 disagree (D) or 5.Strongly disagree (SD)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
They are unrealistic	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
They promote alcohol abuse	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
They are educative	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
The're entertaining		[1]	[2]	[3]	[4] [5]

10. Below are four statements about television commercials that advertise Safaricom mobile phone network. Using a tick indicate whether you 1. Strongly agree (SA),



2. Agree (A) 3. Neither agree nor disagree (N) 4 disagree (D) or 5.Strongly disagree (SD)

	SA	A	N	D	SD
They are unrealistic	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
They are too long	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
They are educative	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
The're entertaining	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]

11. Read the statements below and circle the ones, in your view, are true about the youth and television commercials. You can circle more than one statement.

1. Television commercials depict Kenyan youth as contented with life
2. Television commercials depict Kenyan youth as irresponsible
3. Television commercials depict Kenyan youth as hard working
4. Television commercials depict Kenyan youth as independent
5. Television commercials depict Kenyan youth as disrespectful to elders
6. Television commercials depict Kenyan youth as slaves of Western culture
7. Television commercials depict Kenyan youth as fun loving
8. Television commercials depict Kenyan youth as extravagant

12. Which of these statements best describe you?

- Modern
- Traditional
- Conservative
- Liberal

13. In one sentence, what can you say about television advertising and Kenyan university students?

*Thank you very much for your time.*

### **Appendix III: Key Informant Interview Guide for Creators of Television Advertisements**

*My name is Joseph Nyanoti, PhD student at the University of Nairobi's Department of sociology. I am conducting a research on the youth's self-identity and television commercials for my thesis. I would appreciate if you spare a few minutes of your time to discuss with me the questions below. The information you give here will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be utilized for academic purposes only.*

1. How do you identify and define the youth?
2. How are television advertisements targeting the youth generated?
3. How effective, in your view, have you, as creatives, been successful in capturing and convincing the youth audiences?

Thank you for your time

**Appendix IV: Questionnaire for ranking television advertisements**

My name is Joseph Nyanoti. I am a PhD student at the University of Nairobi, studying how the youth interact with television advertising. Please watch the recorded commercials from each category and give me your feedback in the short questionnaire below. All your views will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used for academic purposes only.

**Personal information**

Please circle where appropriate

1. Where do you live?

-----

2. What is your field of study?

-----

3. What is your year of study?

First Year    Second Year       Third Year       Fourth/Final Year

**Ranking of television commercials**

Please rank the commercials, using the table below, by indicating the most appropriate one for youth television viewers, the second and the third.

**Category A:**

Ranking    Description of the commercial

1

2

3

Briefly explain why you ranked them like this

---

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---

---

**Category B:**

Ranking    Description of the commercial

1

2

3

Briefly explain why you ranked them like this

---

---

---

---

**Category C:**

Ranking    Description of the commercial

1

2

3

---

Briefly explain why you ranked them like this

---

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Thank you for your time.

## **Appendix VI: ‘Niko na Safaricom Song’ Translation**

I enjoy our brotherliness and sense of family

I celebrate, our hard working culture

Let us all work together

Let us work together, shoulder to shoulder

Let us struggle to help each other

I have what it takes

To develop myself

I have this power

I will work hard

I have success

I will sacrifice, I have a blessing

In the work I do

I have what it takes...I have Safaricom

I have....