

# The Social and Cultural Impact Factors in Tamil Advertisements

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**Abstract:**

Advertisements are marketing tools that function as persuasive communication tools as they provide information about products and services put up for sale. In this current study, the focus is only on captions in Tamil advertisements as there are only three Tamil dailies that cater to the minority Indian community in Malaysia. Tamil advertisements draw on certain considerations and it is the aim of this study to show the impact of social and cultural factors and the role they play in the construction of advertisements that range from milk powder to religious activities. It is found that advertisers use captions for a variety of reasons and show that advertisers include an interactive element when writing the advertisements. There is also the use of questions in headings that are similar to advertisements in medical leaflets (Shanmuganathan, 2006).

**Key terms:** advertisements, social, cultural factors, interactive element

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## 1.0 Introduction

Advertising is a form of mass communication and a powerful marketing tool. It is a component of the economic system and social institution. The American Marketing Association, Chicago, defines advertising as, “any, paid form of non-personal presentation of ideas, goods and services by an identified sponsor.” (Chunawala & Sethia, 2002, p. 4). Basically, an advertisement is an announcement to the public of a product, service or idea through a medium to which the public has access. The medium may be print such as newspapers, posters, banners, and hoardings; or electronic, such as radio, television, video, phone, and the internet.

An advertisement is a form of persuasive communication with the public, although communication appears to be unidirectional, i.e. from the advertiser to the general public. The members of the public are free to respond in their own way by either buying the product or trying out the services or choosing to ignore it. Either way, there is some form of response to the advertisement that is intended to persuade the target community to respond. Although the main aim of advertising is to draw the attention of the consumers to a particular product or service, it also seeks to create an awareness of the existence of the advertised products or service.

Today, advertisements show evidence of reliability and credibility as they seek to persuade the target consumers to try the products or services offered. In general, the study investigates the extent to which social and cultural factors constrain the way advertisements are produced. Learning how this persuasive discourse is established between advertisers and the target consumers, particularly in Tamil, makes this study significant for both research in the area of media communication and the advertising world in general.

## **2. 0 Literature Review**

Leiss, Kline and Jhally (1986) examine the structure and content of advertisements and their social and cultural impact, using both semiotics and content analysis. This study is based on Jhally's doctoral dissertation that looks at the analysis of television commercials sampled from sports programming targeted at males, and prime time programming targeted at females. Jhally's goal was to illuminate "the differentiated codes used by advertisers in their messages directed at male and female audiences" (1986, p. 176).

Our study reveals that advertisers utilize different codes and strategies to appeal to different audiences and genders. For example, "beauty"(treatments and attire), "family relations"(medicine and yoga) and "romance" are codes used to address female audiences while "ruggedness"(consuming liquor, smoking) and "fraternity" are primarily male advertising codes. Similarly, the current study aims to look at the strategies used by the Tamil advertisers in persuading different audiences and genders while being constrained by cultural beliefs and values.

Leiss and Kline (1975) in Harms and Kellner (2008) analyzed magazine advertisements for their use of "person", "product", "setting", and "text", where one of the important trends discerned involves the steady decline in the use of text or copy in advertisements and the increase in display<sup>1</sup> and illustrations. This finding concurs with the current study which shows the increased importance of images in contemporary South Indian cultures such as in Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam. Although images play a vital role in print advertisements, contemporary South Indian culture, particularly those of Tamil requires the advertisers to be sensitive yet persuasive to the values and beliefs held by the Tamil-readers in Malaysia by not limiting text in advertisements.

It is Leiss, Kline and Jhally's (1986) expanded category of "information" within advertising that includes not only the functional product information, but also the symbolic social information that is of significance to this current study. The products which are being advertised seem to be able to communicate information and mediate some kind of social relationship between advertiser and target consumers. The message for the customer is that they must buy the products in order to become trendy and successful like the social icons portrayed in the images (see example Appendix 1). At the same time, it also induces them to buy particular products or use certain services to reach their goals (see example Appendix 2).

Studies in the past have extensively investigated the language of advertisements using Halliday's theoretical framework (Pandya, 1977). Leech (1966), in his pioneering and comprehensive study on English in advertising, has analyzed in detail different aspects pertaining to grammar, vocabulary, discourse and rhyme and rhetoric of advertising with special reference to television. He has effectively related these aspects with the functional factors such as attention value, listenability/readability, memorability and selling power. On the other hand, Cook (2001) has elaborated on the language of contemporary advertising. According to him, words of advertisements are not viewed in isolation, but in complete interaction with numbers and pictures, other texts around them, and the people who make and experience them. Alazhiri (1989) studied the use of Tamil language in advertisements, while Kumar (1978) analyzed the linguistic and stylistic aspects of radio advertisements in an Indian context. Leiss, Kline and Jhally (1986) suggest that image plays a more important role than linguistic discourse but the current study suggests that both image and linguistic discourse complement each other as both contribute towards the final 'look' of the advertisement. In addition, the current study discusses how Tamil advertisements are constructed with constraints related to their social and cultural impact.

### **3.0 Forms and Types of Advertisements**

Although advertisements are widely and popularly covered in the radio-television media, newspapers are easily available and readers have time to ponder and scrutinize them at their leisure. Advertisements in newspapers are categorized into two types display and classified advertisements. Display advertisements contain graphic information beyond text such as pictures, location maps and it can appear on the same page with, or adjacent to, the general editorial content.

Classified advertising is usually textually-based and is confined to the type of item being sold, for example educational opportunities with a contact number for more information. It can also contain details such as the name of the contact, address to contact or visit, a detailed description of the product or products. In this study, the type of advertisements that are of concern are the display advertisements as there is more information to be gauged from the text and images and the underlying message that is conveyed by the writer of the advertisement to the target audience.

### **4.0 Social and Cultural Impact Factors**

Advertisements are written for the purpose of persuading the target consumer to consume the products or try the services offered. As such, the language of persuasion in advertisements is usually catchy and brief. However, copywriters almost always violate the rules and conventions of formal language in the name of creativity to capture the attention of the target consumers. On the other hand some advertisements focus on cultural sensitivity. We refer to culture here as a cover term for innumerable elements. It encompasses elements ranging from simple food habits, travel habits, clothes, belief, faith sentiments, and emotions. Cultural aspects of any text are not easily translatable but can be adequately interpreted via the media, particularly through newspaper advertisements which carry images and text.

Although there are various marketing tactics used by advertisers, certain advertisements are more frequently found in the media than others. The higher frequency of certain advertisements in the print media suggests the higher consumer market for such products or services. Advertisers use prior knowledge and experience to persuade the target consumers to buy or use the product or service. The advertisements generally seek to influence the Indian community to be aware and take note of important social issues necessary for a comfortable life such as the need for education, the need to be successful entrepreneurs in which the advertisers appear to be concerned about creating opportunities for the target consumers in Malaysia. On the other hand, there is also the down-side of the social factor that is optimized by advertisers to influence the Indian community, particularly in promoting the consumption of alcohol.

Although Malaysia is a small country, it is reported to be the tenth largest consumer of alcohol in the world where among the drinking population the Malaysian Indians are considered the heaviest drinkers (Asunta, Idris, and Hamid, 2009). According to their research, beer consumption in Malaysia is comparable to that of European countries known for their high consumption. According to Kallimuthu (1980), alcohol consumption among the Indian community dates back to the British rule (personal communication, March 27, 1980). Ramulu (personal communication, December 12, 2000) adds that when Indian labourers were brought in to work on the estates alcohol was the one means for distress at the estate clubs. Alcohol was introduced to estate staff and labourers as a form of 'de-stress medicine' after a hard day's work and the easy availability of cheap liquor made alcohol drinking a habit, with the consequence that today some Indians even proclaim that 'it is part of our (Indian)

culture. The advertisements for alcohol usually seem to target Malaysia's poor Indians who are portrayed as lorry drivers or labourers hard at work and who deserve to replenish their bodies in the evening with a bottle of beer.

As for the cultural impact factors, advertisements appeal to the spiritual and motivational needs of the Indian community such as seeking inner peace, charity as well as improving oneself by listening to motivational talks to be better entrepreneurs. Among these cultural elements, language and religious festivals seem to be greatly favoured in the advertisements. The religious or spiritual aspects are in reality linked to a wider agenda, for example the opportunity for travel where the consumers are persuaded to join a *yatra* (pilgrimage) and to perform obligatory religious practices to wash away sins or to seek forgiveness from God for their wrongdoings or seek blessings for the future and for the family. Therefore, Tamil advertisements have certain issues or priorities that they seek to highlight and the advertisers are drawn into the social and cultural net to ensure that information is disseminated. Thereafter, the onus is on the target consumers to respond or disregard the advertisement.

## 5.0 Methodology

This is a preliminary study that looks at the Tamil dailies in Malaysia, particularly ‘Tamil Nesan’, ‘Tamil Nanban’ and ‘Tamil Osai’. According to Shanmuganathan (2009), Tamil dailies, particularly Tamil Nesan, have a wider readership over the weekends with 120,000 readers compared to the weekdays with only 60,000 readership (personal communication, February 23, 2009). Fewer advertisements appear in the dailies on weekdays, and so it is the Sunday editions that provide the data for the present study. The advertisements range from commercial items of different products and services from the 2007 to 2008 Sunday editions. The data covered 57 commercial consumer advertisements where the breakdown is as follows:

Table 1: Types of Advertisement

Types of Advertisement	Codes	Total
<b>1. Social Impact Factors</b>		
Transportation – vehicles	VE1 – VE5	5
Private Educational Institutes	E1 – E5	5
Real Estate Loans	REA1–REA3	3
Liquor	L1 – L5	5
Textiles	T1 –T4	4
Medicine/Health	M1 – M10	10
Vacancies	VC1 – VC2	2
<b>2. Cultural Impact Factors</b>		
Motivational Courses	MC1 – MC8	8
Religion	R1 – R4	4
Services	S1 – S9	9
Travel – Yatra	Y1 – Y2	2

From Table 1 above it is clear that the majority of advertisements with a social focus were concerned with medicine and health followed by the sale of vehicles, liquor and private education services. In addition, advertisements that have cultural impact factors were mainly about religion and motivational courses which are

basically an appeal to spirituality.

## 6. 0 Findings and Discussion

The discussion highlights the presence of the social and cultural factors in the headings and captions as well as the complementary illustrations that make up display advertisements. Although the following features suggested by Chunawalla and Sethia's (1986, p.54) are important, the features of decorations, mascots, name plates or name blocks, price, product or service details warrants another paper of its own. All these features suggest the presence of either the social or cultural impact factors or their co-presence but the focus of the study will be delimited to the headings and captions as well as the illustrations. Below are some examples of the impact factors that are embedded in the Tamil advertisements of the current study.

### 6. 1 Headings and Captions

The heading is the title of an advertisement. The headings are short but catchy to attract the readers' attention. Captions on the other hand are often called sub-titles in advertisements and they stress the meaning of the heading. Sometimes the caption stresses the important parts of the text.

The headings and captions are the advertiser's most important tools, acting to coerce the reader or target the consumer to feel that the advertisement is specially written for him or her.

#### Advertisement 1: T2

Original:

*mahattaana vilai kurraipu* ← Heading

Direct Translation:

*Great price reduced*

Meaning :

**Great price reductions**

Original:

*kumaran silkin anbalipu* ← Caption

Direct Translation:

*Kumaran Silk's gift*

Meaning:

**Kumaran Silk's gift**

In the heading above, the advertiser seems to understand and know that spending money is the only concern among consumers when deciding on whether to buy or refrain from buying a particular product or services. Therefore, by highlighting in the heading that there are big discounts awaiting the consumers, the advertiser suggests that the target consumer should continue reading the advertisement. The headings therefore are

the first words that either persuade or dissuade the readers to take further appropriate action. As price is an important factor before a consumer opts to make a purchase, the advertiser in the advertisement above has used this knowledge to write a persuasive call to the target consumers. The adverb ‘great’ suggests that the target consumers would be able to enjoy big savings should they purchase the products from the company.

In the example above, ‘huge price reduction’ refers to the heading, while ‘Kumaran Silk’s gift’ forms the caption which gives additional information about the textile company. The caption introduces the place where target consumers could save more, i.e. at ‘Kumaran Silks’ that is offering the discount gift. ‘Kumaran Silks’ is a company that sells Indian clothing for men and women. In this advertisement, the advertiser is targeting the Indian community, in particular, about the huge price reductions being offered, which the advertiser claims are a ‘gift’ from the company. The company deals with silk clothing from saris to suits for men and women. Silk is auspicious for the Indian community and used for grand occasions or festivals. As silk is expensive and is hand-embroidered with silver and gold threads, the clothes are always costly.

This study uses the deductive approach to analyze and explain the headings of the advertisements collected from the three Malaysian Tamil newspapers. Headings of advertisements can be classified into the following sub-headings.

### 6. 1. 1 Captions that target particular consumers

Captions are constructed to attract the attention of particular groups of consumers as classified below:

Figure 2: Target Consumers

Consumer Product	Targets	Groups
Education	→	Students, school leavers
Liquor	→	Drinkers
Shavers	→	Men
Sweets, chocolates	→	Children, parents

Although the linguistic device alone suffices to indicate who the target consumers are, the images that complement the advertisement reinforce a particular gender or consumer type. For example:

#### Advertisement 2: M2

Original:

*thaimaarkale ! unkal kulantai Dumex paal unnavai perithum veerumbum*

Direct Translation:

*mothers! your child Dumex milk food very much like*

Meaning:

**Mothers! Your child will love Dumex milk very much**

In the advertisement above, babies are linked to females, the mothers, and the advertiser catches the attention of

mothers using the refined word for mother, 'thai' instead of the colloquial 'amma'. This use of 'thaimaarkale' (the plural form for mother) by the advertiser suggests the respect accorded mothers, although the English translation appears to take on the more direct form 'Mothers'. The remarkable difference in the way the word appears in one language from the other reifies the fact that the Tamil advertisements are influenced somewhat culturally and socially. In the second advertisement below, the subject is missing as the advertiser does not address the target consumer, but persuades the reader or target consumer to continue reading to find out what a bright future awaits him/her.

**Advertisement 3: E1**

Original :

*Mahsa Oli mayamma ethirkalathai noki*

Direct Translation:

*Mahsa bright future towards*

Meaning:

**Mahsa Towards a bright future ahead**

In the alcohol advertisement below, the advertiser intends to attract drinkers to try out this brand of whisky.

**Advertisement 4: L1**

Original :

*Orr unmaiyaana paravasa tirptiyaana whisky*

Direct Translation:

*one truthful exciting satisfying whisky*

Meaning:

**A truly exciting and satisfying whisky**

However, the advertisement for alcohol that is most interesting is the one by Danish Royal Stout where the caption states:

**Advertisement 5: L5**

Original :

*Ithu oongalukku appoluthum urchagatthai tarum*

Direct Translation:

*This you every time inspiration gives*

Meaning:

**This will inspire you every time.**

L5 (see Appendix 1) is a full-page advertisement for Royal Stout with Ginseng which has the image of a young, muscular man posing on his hands while his legs are stretched in Kung-fu style with three beer bottles balanced on his back. The image of the man strongly resembles a Chinese person, as it is obvious that the advertiser wants to associate Ginseng with the Chinese belief in the herbal medication. With the steadiness of the male model who possesses good balance and a strong body, the advertisement implies that if the target consumer consumes the beer then he too could get a well-endowed figure like the model and be as strong.

### 6. 1. 2 Headings which give Confidence to the Consumer

All advertisements focus on the consumers. The consumers who read newspapers regularly would have a good general knowledge of consumer products in the market. As a result, they are able to decide on what is best for them. In newspapers numerous companies compete with each other in advertising their products. In order to gain consumer confidence, it is common for advertisers to provide some form of product quality or a guarantee/warranty that persuades the consumer to believe that s/he is purchasing a genuine item or product. So for the readers/consumers, the heading in the advertisement of a product should give confidence to the consumer to read on further. For example the following advertisement is able to convince by instilling confidence in the buyer by saying that the buyer can occupy the house immediately and pay later. What's more, the buyers would also enjoy special offers. This shows that the advertiser him/herself is confident that the property would gain the confidence of the potential buyer and the advertiser shows that he trusts the buyer enough to allow him/her to occupy the property without having to make any payment. This offer (strategy) would generate enough interest among potential buyers to persuade them to make a booking for the property put up for sale.

#### Advertisement 6: REA1

Original :

*maaberum salukaikaludan katt'i mudikappatta veeduka'l*

Direct Translation:

great offers with built completed homes

Meaning:

**Completed homes with grand offers**

Original :

*ippoluthu kudiyeralam panam piraku seluttalam*

Direct Translation:

immediate move in money later pay

Meaning:

**You can move in now, and pay later**

In this advertisement, the consumer is persuaded to move in immediately, and the message is one that would seem to be genuine as the consumers are given the opportunity to live in the house and experience home-living



before payment is scheduled. This is a rare condition in property buying and selling and if the developers were willing to give such offers, this would also be very likely to win over the consumers' trust.

Similarly the heading of the following advertisement says success is guaranteed and it gives confidence and assurance for school leavers, especially girls, to attend tailoring courses that promise success in their life through a never-dying profession.

**Advertisement 7: E4**

Original :

*vettri nichiam*

Direct Translation:

*Success definite*

Meaning:

**Success is definite**

The following advertisement for cars invites the consumer to test the product and to make an informed decision before purchasing. This caption will persuade the consumers to read the text of the advertisement.

**Advertisement 8: VE1**

Original :

*sothanai ohttam maarrattai unarunkal*

Direct Translation:

*test run change feel*

Meaning:

**Go for a test run and feel the change**

The advertisement suggests the importance given to consumers as judges of the product the advertisers have to offer. It also suggests the confidence of the manufacturers of the car that their product is of high quality and assures the consumers that they will be equally thrilled to experience something new.

**6. 1. 3 Celebrity Influence**

Services are activities or benefits offered to consumers such as laundry services, hairdressing, beauty salons, and educational and training services.

The following advertisement about courses on hairdressing includes a picture of a well-known figure 'Maha' from India, who specializes in hairdressing and owns a beauty salon. Maha is seen in the advertisement (see Appendix 2) posing beside the famous Tamil movie actress Simran. This suggests that Maha is a make-up artiste for actors and actresses like the actress Simran. In this type of advertisement the consumers who know

about Maha and/or the fans of Simran may take part in the training.

**Advertisement 9: E5**

Original:

*Maha miindum Malaysia varukai! Alazhukalai cirappu payirci mugaam!*

Direct Translation:

*Maha again Malaysia arrival! Beauty art special training camp!*

Meaning:

**Maha comes to Malaysia again! Special art of beauty training camp!**

Similarly in textile advertisements, film heroines' photos are inserted in the advertisements to attract consumers.

**6. 1. 4 Assurance of Validity**

The assurance of validity is usually found in medicine or health products where the advertisers rely on medical specialists to vouch for the product safety, reliability and validity (Shanmuganathan, 2006). In the following advertisement, people with many kinds of diseases are treated without allopathic medicine and the advertisement claims that this is the first time in the world that such treatment has been offered to patients. Such headings may attract patients who are suffering from incurable illnesses and who are currently on allopathic medication.

The Indian community strongly believes in naturopathy, thus they advocate consuming certain food as treatment for particular diseases. Indians believe that the right kind of food is in itself medicine, so medication is not necessary as a cure. In other words, the food itself contains certain medicinal properties, and the advertiser is offering such services for the community.

**Advertisement 10: M6**

Original:

*marunthilla maruthuvam ulakileye muthal muraiyaaka*

Direct Translation:

*no medicine medication in the world first time.*

Meaning:

**For the first time in the world, treatment without medication**

In the following advertisement the services offered by a courier service company are depicted in the caption. They claim to provide a fast, safe service throughout the world. Traditionally, the Tamil society is used to conventional means of money transfer, e.g. bank transfers, drafts, money grams etc. Furthermore, as the Tamil population is dispersed the world over, there is an increasing need to send money home and 'Western Union' is a new concept

which promises speed, safety and reliability. Even the very use of the term ‘Western’ could signify honesty, integrity and progressiveness. The combination of ‘Western’ and ‘Union’ represents the notion that the company is based in the West which is known for its strong economy and maybe even quality services. As ‘Western Union’ is one of the first money transfer companies approved by the Government, it is more the brand name than the notion that it is a Western company that qualifies the advertisement.

**Advertisement 11: VE2**

Original:

*Viraiyu. Paathukaapu. Ulakalaayam athutan Western Union*

Direct Translation:

*Fast. Safe Worldwide that is Western Union*

Meaning:

**Fast and safe. That is Western Union worldwide.**

**6. 1. 5 Cultural and Spiritual Concerns**

The need to announce certain cultural and spiritual occasions is part and parcel of Tamil advertisements.

These advertisements are written like news ‘headlines’ with the purpose of persuading the Indian community to observe certain festivals, be they cultural or religious. Such advertisements are frequently found in Tamil dailies for several reasons. Firstly, Malaysians rely on the Tamil calendar month and the correct timings when performing religious practices, so that they synchronize with the Indian time in the Republic of India. Another reason for such advertisements is that the younger generation are working adults who are less inclined to spare their time for religious or cultural activities, thus prompting the ‘guardians’ of cultural bodies and religious groups to take on the role of disseminating information and to coerce the community to be involved in the event while reminding the older generation of the time and venue of the events.

**Advertisement 12: R1**

Original:

*Chitra paurnami peruvilazha*

Direct Translation:

*Chitrai full moon grand festival*

Meaning:

**A grand celebration of the full moon in the month of Chitrai**

In the advertisement above, the advertisement informs the consumers of a grand celebration that has been

planned to celebrate the full moon in the Tamil calendar month of *Chitrai*, in April/May. The full moon is a day of prayer for the Goddess Devi where the Indian community partakes in religious activities or offers prayers on a bright, moonlit night. On this auspicious day in South India some Indians observe fasting until the sighting of the full moon.

The reader/consumer must read the entire text to know about the details of the festival. The advertisement by a travel agency below highlights a religious pilgrimage. It is aimed at those pilgrims who want to fulfil their religious obligations. Again the details about the programme are contained in the full text of the advertisement.

**Advertisement 13: R2**

Original:

*Yaatraikalum payanangalum*

Direct Translation:

*Religious journeys travelling*

Meaning:

**Religious journeys and travel**

In sum, headings provide the impetus for consumers to take the next course of action, i.e. continue reading the rest of the text of the advertisement and then to decide on whether or not to try the product or services advertised.

**6. 2 The Interactive Element**

One of the notable features in the Tamil advertisements is the use of questions. The use of questions in this study can be divided into two main purposes: (a) as a rhetorical one and (b) to elicit information. Although the advertisements appear to be unidirectional, the advertiser seems to be having a dialogue with the reader/consumer, while the recipient reciprocates by mentally trying to answer the questions posed. Similar to Shanmuganathan's study (2006) of medical leaflets, the questions in the advertisements appear at the beginning as a heading. The advertisements below use this strategy.

In the advertisement below, the advertiser addresses consumers who are having difficulties in obtaining housing loans. After reading the heading, potential house buyers would read this advertisement for more clarification.

**Advertisement 14: REA3**

Original :

*Veetu kadanil piracinaikala?*

Direct Translation:

*house loan problems?*

Meaning:

**Having problems with housing loans?**

The advertiser appears to know the problems that the reader is facing and poses the question. Thereafter, the advertiser moves on to provide solutions to the reader's/consumer's problems. The current study concurs with Shanmuganathan's (2006) study where the strategy of using questions also shows that the questions raise some anxiety in the reader/consumer wanting to know how to solve his/her problem and is prompted to read the text further.

Advertisement 15 below also has a heading which poses a question to consumers who are interested in doing online business. Only those who are inclined towards this particular business are likely to read the advertisement in full. In this way, the advertiser is doing the readers/consumers a favour by highlighting through the headings at the beginning of the advertisements whether the text of the advertisement is of any concern to them. Therefore, if the advertisement asks whether a person needs a job, a consumer holding a stable job would not be interested in reading further unless s/he decides to apply for a part-time or a second job to supplement their income.

**Advertisement 15: REA3**

Original :

*Viyaabaram aarambika viruppama?*

Direct Translation:

*business start like*

Meaning:

**Are you interested to start a business?**

In the following advertisement the advertiser poses a question to the reader/consumer by asking 'who determines success?'

**Advertisement 16: REA3**

Original :

*Vettriyai nirmayam seivathu yaar?*

Direct Translation:

*success determines do who?*

Meaning:

**Who determines success?**

In the example above, the advertiser's query reflects the Tamil community's belief in destiny. The query 'who determines success' functions as a question that needs an answer from the reader/consumer. The advertiser appears to be asking a straightforward question and wants the reader/consumer to tell the advertiser who the person is that determines success. At the same time the advertiser appears to have the answers to his/her own question. The advertiser can help to create the successful destiny that awaits the reader/consumer.

In summary, headings and captions in advertisements should be conceptualized only after considering their social and cultural impact. The highest form of consumer culture is the commercialization of leisure time. Even holidays are regarded as a commodity, which is a new element to Indian culture, and this is seen in a few advertisements such as the *yatra* and training advertisements. As a result, Tamil advertisements are written to appeal to the social and cultural aspects of the Tamil community in Malaysia.

### **7.0 Summary and Conclusion**

The headings and captions of advertisements are multi-functional and are persuasive in nature. Although the text complements the headings, it is the headings that encourage or discourage the readers/consumers to proceed with the reading of the text. In this study, the social and cultural impact factors acted as constraints within which the advertiser is bound in creating appropriate headings and captions. The advertiser should be aware of the beliefs and practices of the target community so that the advertisements are appropriate and would prompt the reader/consumer to read further and find out what the advertiser has to offer. Therefore, headings and captions are the windows or the summary of the text of the advertisements, and as such the headings and captions are sufficient to inform the reader's/consumer's decision about whether to continue reading the advertisement or to ignore it as it was not important or of interest to the reader.

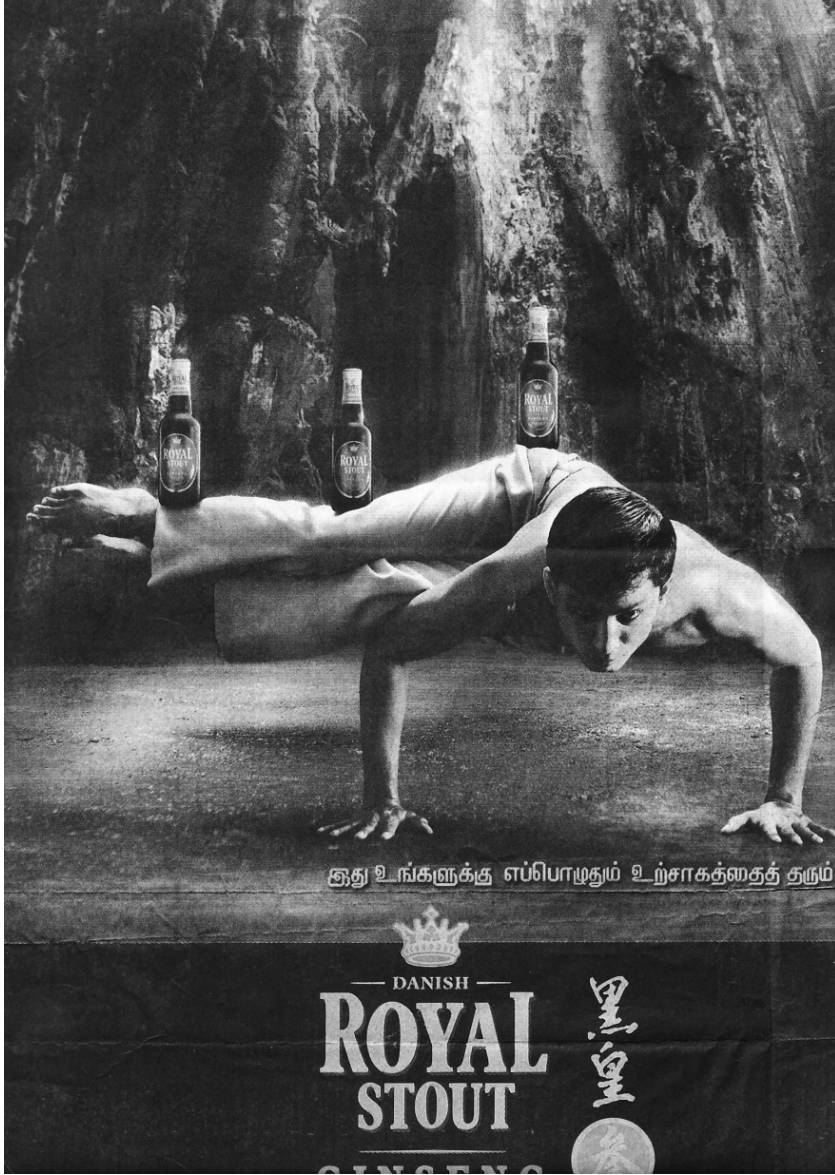
For instance an advertisement on *yatra* would interest the elderly or those who have made religious vows that require them to go on a pilgrimage. In this instance, the heading would encourage the reader to read and absorb the whole advertisement. Advertisements 2,3,4,5 and 6 highlight this strategy. Finally, Tamil advertisements differ from other advertisements in local dailies in that there are social and cultural issues that are to be highlighted and the advertisers seem to take on their social responsibility of informing the Indian community about what they need to do.

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APPENDIX 1

Danish Royal Stout : Source : Tamil Nanban (16 November 2008)





APPENDIX 2 : Maha Training Centre : Tamil Nesan (10 February 2008)

## மஹா மீண்டும் மலேசியா வருகை!



நடிகை சிம்ரனுடன் அழகுக்கலை நிபுணர் திருமதி மஹா

**மலேசியாவில் மஹாவின் 5 நாள் அழகுக்கலை சிறப்பு பயிற்சி முகாம்!**

இந்தியாவில் தமிழக அரசு அங்கீகாரத்துடன் பிரபலமாகத் திகழும் சன் மற்றும் ஜெயா டிவி புகழ் திருமதி மஹா அழகுக்கலையில் தேர்ச்சி பெற்ற தன் பயிற்சியாளர்களுடன் கோலாலம்பூர், ஜோகூர்பாரு நகரங்களில் அழகுக்கலை பயிற்சிகளை நடத்தி டிப்ளோமா சான்றிதழ்களை வழங்கவிருக்கிறார். நீங்களும் அழகுக்கலை நிபுணராகி கை நிறைய வருமானம் ஈட்டுவதற்கு ஓர் அரிய வாய்ப்பு. முன் பதிவு செய்பவர்களுக்கு தள்ளுபடி உண்டு.

**வாய்ப்பை நழுவ விடாதீர்கள்!**

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<p><b>தேதி: 28.5.2006 (ஞாயிறு)</b>                  @ Kuala Lumpur Indian Chamber Of Commerce                  116, 1st Floor, Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman,                  Opp. Globe Silk Store                  Time: 6.00 pm                  வகுப்பு: கோலாலம்பூரில் மே 31 - ஜூன் 4</p>	<p><b>தேதி: 5.6.2006 (செவ்வாய்)</b>                  @ Compact Hotel                  18, Jln. Wong Ah Fook, 80000 Johor                  Bahru, Beside City Centre                  Time: 6.00 pm                  வகுப்பு: ஜோகூரில் ஜூன் 7 - ஜூன் 11</p>
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**பயிற்சிக் கட்டணம்: RM1950**

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57