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ダイレクトマーケティング広告の 社会的コミュニケーション構造説明への序説

金 春 愛

〈要旨〉

本稿はダイレクトマーケティング広告、インフォマーシャル (Infomercial) がアメリカ社会で成長してきていることを広告学者、送り手、世論を形成するマスメディアの捉え方に着目して、1980年代からの新聞・雑誌・テレビニュースの記事言説、商品会社、制作会社、ケーブル局とのインタービューを通じて、インフォマーシャルをめぐる社会的コミュニケーションの構造を紹介する序説的論文である。それぞれの認識及び態度はどのようなか、彼らの認識のズレがあるかどうかを具体化することによって、インフォマーシャルとアメリカ社会との構図が見えてくると思う。

インフォマーシャルは高度の商品情報提供力を持っている「パワフルな総合広告」として語られてきたが、マスメディアの言説では送り手の組織的な販売装置が存在し、常に違う形で展開していた。送り手の自信に満ちている言説、送り手同士の協力関係、新たな戦略が見えていた。一方、受け手のインフォマーシャルに対するネガティブな見方も見られ、社会現象を形成する一つのテキストとして評価されていた。インフォマーシャルは、

送り手の販売装置としての広告という意味もあるが、世論を作り、受け手に常に影響する社会的現象になつていて、インフォマーシャルを通じてなんらかの「生活の変化や欲望の解決」を求めるアメリカ人の姿が見えていた。

キーワード

インフォマーシャル、共存関係の販売装置、社会現象、生活の変化、欲望の解決

Introduction:

Americans are becoming more familiar with half-hour program-length commercials promoting a new miracle weight loss treatment starring a famous actor, women sitting together discussing the latest technology in hair removal or demonstrations from famous chefs showing the advantage of their cookware. Usually a direct response element is associated with infomercials (e.g., an toll-free telephone number) that interested viewers can call to order the item being advertised or to seek additional information. Infomercials are defined as long-form (i.e., typically 30 minutes), direct-response television programs that invite consumers to directly contact a marketer to buy a product or service, or procure information.

The advertising researchers have revealed the factor of industry development of infomercials, historically, and they have considered providing correct information for infomercial marketers. Therefore, they have pointed out the substantial strong points of an infomercial by marketing approaches, such as the effect of format strategy and the strength of demonstration. They only emphasize the unique and powerful effects and there are few researchers, who analyze it

sociologically.

This paper will introduce the effect of infomercial in America society comparing ad researchers' approaches to contents of mass media articles, which describe about infomercial marketers and public opinion. It notes that how Infomercials has been gaining power and growing in the American society through newspapers, magazines, and statements of television news from 1990 to 2002. Plus it will add several interviews which I did last year in the United States when describing infomercial makers' view about infomercial business. It is thought concretely that considering the relation between infomercials and America society as a new advertising form has meaning that ads is not only making the specific social and economical purpose but also is describing the way of people who are changed continuously.

Historical Background of Infomercials

Because infomercials began in the 1950s under a different name, infomercials are not a new phenomenon in the United States. They began in the 1950s when product 'Vitamix' were sold during what were simply called long-running commercials to fill up available air space. A company

spokesperson would demonstrate the product and then flash an address or phone number on the screen for viewers to respond. However, as time went on and the popularity of television grew, there was less and less airtime available. In fact, during the 1960s and 1970s, the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) outlawed long-running commercials. It took the birth of cable television and its tremendous growth to make airtime more abundant and affordable in 30-minute blocks. "The infomercial party really started to roll in 1984 when the FCC struck down a 1973 guideline banning program-length commercials (Gary 1990)."

After developing in the 1980s, infomercials have started to get a bad reputation among consumers due to providing "too good story" in the late 1990s. During the 1990s, infomercials changed significantly. The 1992 presidential candidate Ross Perot utilized 30-minute political infomercials to gain exposure among voters, with over 20 million viewers. Unlike the 1980s in the 1990s it became increasingly difficult to succeed in a market solely through infomercials, due to increasing cost of infomercial making, as well as significant increasing advertising rate. Companies have begun to utilize infomercials to increase brand awareness among consumers who later look for the product in retail stores.

Precedent Researches Involving Infomercials

Studies about infomercials by advertising researchers are mostly marketing-approach as a direct sale.

First, Balasubramanian(1994), Beltramini(1983), and Gail(1995-1996) are representative of studies which observe high amount of information. Infomercials incorporate desirable characteristics (and avoid less desirable characteristics) of advertising, thereby exemplifying a hybrid genre of marketing communications (Balasubramanian 1994). According to Balasubramanian(1994), an infomercial has objective information about the product, is a compound of marketing communication and it is close to purchase action more than general TV commercials.

Simply, the key differences between television ads and infomercials are the message's length and format. Typically, television ads last for a minute or less and are instantly recognized by audiences as a message with persuasive intent. In contrast, infomercials usually run 30 minutes and reflect a stronger resemblance to regular program content than ads.

Beltramini (1983) worked benchmark study to assess current attitudes of advertising professionals toward infomercials. Such an assessment is meant to yield important

insights based on the changes that have occurred in the interim and provide direction for the future utilization of infomercials. He performed the comparative study with television commercials for the infomercial on the length, the amount of information, cost, purpose, and the degree of participation. He revealed that the infomercial has exceeded television commercials in all aspects. According to him, infomercials are selling unique products not sold at the general retail stores, consumer's participation is much higher, and the amount of information is very high. Referring to the contents analysis of information on the television commercials of the famous Resnick and Stern (1977), Gail (1995) performed an infomercial information analysis. He proved that infomercial has six times information factors more than television commercial. According to Donthu and Gilliland (1996), they characterize, "the infomercial can now be considered an established form of advertising."

When researchers consider advertising efficiency, the amount of information becomes a big judgment standard. Consumers tend to search for more information for durable products, which often pose high performance and financial risks to consumers and are generally considered to be high involvement products (Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard 1995). The evidence on consumer attitudes toward advertising shows

that consumers prefer advertising that helps when doing decision making (Zanot 1984). Providing information that differentiates a brand from its competitions tends to increase commercial recall, comprehension, and persuasion (Stewart and Furse 1986; Stewart and Koslow 1989). A recent empirical study found that the informativeness is the single factor most strongly correlated with overall advertising value.

In sum, information of advertising influences importantly on consumers' response to the ads and the brand. It is said that the American viewers are increasingly sensitive to production values and so an infomercial is more economical to produce with the enhanced production values that viewers expect (Kelly 1999). It is, however, very common thing that there is much amount of information at the 30 minutes commercials. Thus, the reason why infomercials have acquired popularity is not only the amount of information.

Next, infomercials can persuade consumers, making a consumer be relaxed and measuring who a consumer is. Several researchers regard infomercials as very powerful comprehensive advertising method. According to Haley (1993), infomercials have potential to be the most powerful form of advertising because they combine the power of advertising, direct response and sales promotion. It is also much more akin to door-to-door selling and it is better than door-to-door selling

because infomercials catch the listener in the more relaxed situation (Haley 1993). Direct response advertising, sometimes referred to as direct marketing, has been defined as an interaction system of marketing that uses one or more advertising media to measure response and transaction at any location (Direct Marketing Association 1985). The organization of direct marketing, Direct Marketing Association (1985) says this measuring possibility. Since infomercials have a characteristic of direct sales, it can measure a consumer's reaction anywhere as an interchange action system of marketing. Stone (1997) says that direct marketing is selling for each individual and an infomercial can specify a consumer's name, address, purchase pattern (Stone 1997:2). At the interview with Katie William who is the founder of Williams Worldside, a DRTV agency, Katie also said that [television is the sufficient media which can make the data about a consumer (July 3, 2001)].

As mentioned above, the view of the advertising researchers about infomercials is only focusing on the high amount of information and the efficiency as a device of direct marketing. It is thought, however, that there is a sort of dream or desire to make their products hit successfully. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the intention of infomercial makers in more detail.

Article Analysis and Interview Process

First, the view of product companies is extracted out of several mass media articles. The view of infomercial making companies and cable network stations is grasped by the interview with each manager in July 2001. The view of public opinion about infomercials is collected through articles which describe infomercial consumers.

It will be shown clearly how media has been treating infomercials from article analysis. Analyzed articles are 6 articles of the "CNN New York," 11 articles of "New York Times," 10 articles of "USA Today," 23 articles of "Washington Post," 1 article of "Chicago Tribune," 2 articles of "New York Post," and 1 article of "Advertising Age." Total is 54 articles from 1990 to 2002. See Quotation Articles in back. This is referred to circulation of a typical United States daily (Japanese American Literature and Cultural-Studies Center editing 1997:138).

All articles contain a keyword, "infomercial" in newspapers, a news channel and an advertising journal. Even if an article includes the keyword, when contents are not actually related to an infomercial, those were removed from

the object for analysis. A sentence is divided per article and it was collected according to each contents. Among the classified articles, only the evaluation about an infomercial is observed. [] shows the extract of an article and [] shows what was obtained in the interview I did last year.

Mainly, analysis here is limited to discourse analysis. Because when considering the view of public opinion, Giddens (1991) states that "the matter told in articles of a newspaper or a magazine and media, reconstructs the phenomenon order to constant it, which they have described. At the same time people's belief and wish are included in the discourse. It is because there is correlation the actual phenomenon and discourse (Giddens 1991:39)."

The View of Infomercial Makers

First, there are 13 articles which describe dream and belief to success. The represent company of Direct marketing, [Ronco Inventions is sure that many people will buy new products that Ronco takes out, and emphasize the rate of product cancellation is less than 1 percent (CNN New York, September, 2000)] Also Nick Arthur of the marketing vice president of Asontv.com says that [The products are

temporary fashion, and they are not necessarily successful, though, the more they are successful, the more they will be successful. If it successes, people will repurchase the product, and will make repeaters enormously. This phenomenon happens much more in case of female goods, and the number of return is very low (CNN New York, September 1, 2000)]

Second, there were statements which emphasize profits at the retail stores. Jon Nokes who is the represent of Smart Mop, said that [once an infomercial hits, even if the company does not use an infomercial any more, consumers will come to the retail store. A real success of infomercials is to promote the result in a retail store (CNN New York, April 4, 2001).] Actually according to a staff of TV shopping company, [A retailer asks to advertise new product rather than compete with other infomercials (Advertising Age, January 25, and 1993).] Spiegel(1994) is also writing about the retail stores which have adopted infomercial format. According to him, the amount of product sold through an infomercial is less than 25 percent of total sales and 75 percent is sold at retail stores.

Third, Jon Nokes of Smart Mop says that [it doesn't matter how the product is good or not. If the public doesn't know about it and when you have a new product, you just need to educate consumers(CNN New York, April 4, 2001).] That means consumption is made and advertising makes a

new consumption desire (Narver 1971:306). "All of economical desire, hobby, and preferences are learned. An advertisement makes desire and the desire is realized as individual desire toward the product of an each company and then it is finally completed when a consumer purchases the product (Nihei 1996: 52)."

However, in the 2000s, makers advertised infomercials with a new technique. It has been hardly to success in an infomercial after the 1990s and competition became intense. When competition became intense, makers have tried new efforts. They emphasized the novelty which gets a consumer's attention. [An infomercial is very wonderful method for introducing new household accessories. Plus it needs to be advertised by new products and new format in the infomercial business (Washington Post, February 21, 2001).] Not only introducing new unique products, they also progressed extension of a market. For market extension and taking various tools, [makers should aim at the market of teens which has 9,500 million dollars now although the target have been focusing women in 30's and 40's for a long time. Therefore, they should make a thing like speedy and the television show of the newest type (USA Today, July 12, 1996). Jack Scherer, the founder of Response TV, says that infomercial producers should recognize that television is only

one of many tools and need to advance various tools (CNN New York, September 1, 2000).] According to a report of CNN, [Ronco already started website in 1998 and is raising the sales, getting 1,500 million dollars in a week. It has expanded link work with a website, television and radio station sites (CNN New York, September 1, 2000).]

Next, the view of infomercial making company, which leads infomercial industry, will be introduced. The following contents are from interviews with Concept Media July, 2001. Manager of Concept Media said that [...with over 20 years experience buying airtime, and your infomercial media costs will be as low as you can go. Remember your success is our success!]

It totally costs about 75,000 dollars to 200,000 dollars to make one infomercial and product companies pay royalty, 2 percent of the total sale amount to making company. Their activity resembles with general advertising agencies but this royalty system is completely different. When I questioned what is the advantage to begin infomercial business, they said that [television is definitely strong advertising media, and stimulates purchase. Once you broadcast it on television, sale amount at the Internet or a retail store will also increase. Huge demand is made by midnight sensation, you can know the advertising effect and an improvement is also quick and

easy.] They have been conducting televiewer survey and had an infomercial purchaser's information. According to them, infomercial business should be aimed at women and channel surfers who have a regular income.

According to an article of New York Times, companies which sell hit infomercial products on a website have increased. Therefore, infomercial makers have tried to invite dot COM advertising companies. [Tyee Euro RSCG is developing infomercials for the Internet clients. Infomercial making companies need to tie up with the .COM companies which need to get quick profits (New York Times, April 24, 2000).]

Next, how is the view of a cable station which broadcasts infomercials? Here, I introduce the view of Outdoor Channel. One of the channels Frederiksen Group, the Outdoor Channel is for hunting and fishing channel having 11.3 million subscribers. According to the manager,

[At first glance a channel devoted to hunting and fishing is unlikely place for an infomercial. But using Frederikse's method of seeking out appropriate infomercial programming and selling time that matches the channel's content, the Outdoor Channel has seen an increase in sales of over 109 percent since 1998. TV

infomercials and spots have the potential to generate phenomenal revenue for the stations that broadcast them. They can also be a programming headache. Infomercials can disrupt a station's flow of programming causing viewers to complain, and the station to lose viewers.]

Instead of having traditional advertising agencies handle their time, more and more stations have been turning to infomercial media companies. Their goal is to try to only fill airtime with infomercials programming as a content of the station they represent. The company has run its infomercials in a broad rotation of various times throughout the day-most often late at night, when infomercials typically air. "The broadcaster receives some percentage of the program's total sales in their local market. This money represents a substantial secondary revenue source, which has never been available to TV station owners (Direct Marketing 1992)."

Television and cable stations welcome infomercials because it allows them to fill time slots late at night or early in the morning with revenue making ventures. This money is "a secondary income" which is not considered in a general television station. Therefore, a cable station plans a selling strategy together with a product company.

The Frederiksen Group has been successful with its media sales division. Lee Frederiksen, the Frederiksen Group's chairman and CEO says,

[With hundreds of themed cable stations like the Outdoor Channel now available, and an endless amount of topic-specific web sites vying for viewer's attention, it is necessary to develop sales strategies that speak to a new educated viewer, someone who has a specific need. Our programming focus speaks to the needs of stations working to preserve their theme and the attention of their viewers.]

This means definite "cooperation relation" exists between a product company and a cable station. I was able to find the example of cooperation relation at an article of Advertising Age, "Cooperation of Juiceman Which Won a Great Success, and a Cable Station (Advertising Age, January 25, 1993)." Furthermore, such a joint relation was strengthened more when an infomercial making company owned a cable station. It means also when an infomercial company has a cable station, the channel based on infomercials appears. The throne of an infomercial, [Paxson started a new broadcasting station, and so he became to have a channel which can cover

57 percent of the United States (CNN New York, May 12, 1997).]

As mentioned above, infomercial marketers and senders, product companies (retail stores), infomercial making companies, and cable stations are in a cooperation relation. Their view about infomercial business was filled with confidence and they are cooperating when they consider how to increase viewers and what viewers want. The correlation between them is "coexistence and co-prosperity relation."

The view of infomercial senders cannot be explained only with the concept of theoretical researches. Because there is not only the power of an advertisement that infomercial itself has but also there are a certain "selling device" and "cooperation relationship" between infomercial senders. There is a pattern of the general structure of power and possession in the background of media (Curran 1993:21). This correlation is a big reason why infomercials were introduced and have been grown. On the other hand, next will consider about view of the public.

The Public Opinion

First, here will show social effects of infomercials referring

several articles.

【Holy Ginsu knife! After a decade or explosive growth, the infomercial business suddenly needs a Thighmaster. But the amount of air time infomercials bought fell around 20 percent in the second half of 1996... Until mid-1996, abdominal exercisers were that blockbuster. But bad reviews from fitness experts and patent infringement lawsuits crunched the abdominal machine craze and producers were left with a dearth of hot products(USA Today, May 11,1995).】

Lots of claims toward fitness products were caused. There were examples of statement about ineffective diet fitness products. I introduce consumer's experiences.

【Tully bought an abdominal exercise device after watching an infomercial, but discovered that it didn't work the way he expected it to. "It didn't work for me," he says. "It's designed to give you full back support when you do abdominal exercise, but I found that if your arms are strong enough, you could actually pull yourself up with your arms" rather than with the abdominal muscles (CNN New York, July 30, 1997).】

【Last year, the FTC charged Nordic Track with making unsubstantiated weight-loss claims for its cross-country ski machine. Its report read, in part, "the studies did not account for participants' dietary habits, and were based on consumers' own reports of their weights." Claims by Fitness Quest were questioned after it maintained that its Gut Buster would "significantly flatten the user's stomach, improve the user's waistline by strengthening or toning the stomach muscles and reduce fat," if used for just five minute a day. The company also neglected to note that the Gut Buster's coil spring, which is positioned between the legs during use, sometimes breaks under tension. Fitness experts advise anyone thinking about buying exercise equipment to try it first to see if it's sturdy and really something they're likely to use in the long run (CNN New York, July 30, 1997).】

【Many exercise researchers do not trust the effect of infomercial goods. Also American Council on Exercise is looking out about although exercise of the total body will be enough only in 6 minutes for one day. They say that there is almost no advantage of fitness and it may do damage to the shoulder or the waist (CNN New York, July 30, 1997).】

【The claims are increasing to the infomercial by a consumer or an advertising organization (New York Times, September 7, 1999).】

【Many prominent exercise researchers are skeptical of claims in infomercial from Time Works for \$600 device that supposedly increases aerobic fitness levels when used just four minutes, four times each week; infomercial cites results of an unpublished study conducted at Adelphi University (April 6, 1999, New York Times).】

Simultaneously, there were several articles about that social morals are disregarded. Articles about the disregarded commercialism moral appeared. Furthermore, the phenomenon connected with a crime of infomercial swindler occurred. As fraud cases and such accusation get into the news socially, articles which treat infomercials as what is needed to watch out, have increased. Those have warned that infomercials bother viewers do right decision.

【Alright, who's buying this stuff? Some of you must be sitting there on your sofas, blurry-eyed and nodding yes to late-night and mid-morning infomercials designed to erode your better judgment with too-good-to-be-true claims for bizarre products. Sure, these products whisper

promises of hope to our quiet desperations and secret vanities (omission) growing hair where there's none, losing pounds without exercising or dieting, improving memory that's forgetting, you've seen them (*Washington Post*, January 28, 1998).】

It is thought that a consumer's unconcern and negative view to an infomercial are influenced from such statements. The public opinion continuously has been sensitive about the collapse of moral.

On the other hand, articles which regard infomercials as a social phenomenon more neutrally were found. First, there were articles about an investment for body according to the articles. Lately, the boom of fitness in the United States is from the popularity of kick boxing video, infomercial Billy Blanks' Tae-Bo which became a big hit.

There is also an article which suggests improving health itself not to take a special ingredient. There are articles which have described more concretely the relation between diet and exercise boom.

【...But now, health experts warn, the nation's passion for avoiding physical activity has spiraled out of control. The push-button, drive-through, remote-control mentality

has resulted in a sedentary, overweight society where... (Washington Post, November 9, 1999).]

【Men obsess about “washboard abs.” Women worry about shapely breasts and thighs. And now that both sexes engage in the equal opportunity pastime of bun watching, everyone--it seems--wants a better bottom line. Working your butt off has been a top trend in exercise videos and equipment sold through “infomercials” over the past decade, according to the American Council on Exercise (ACE), a nonprofit “workout watchdog” organization based in San Diego (Washington Post, November 9, 1999).]

【If you haven’t heard about “core+ fitness, core training or (inevitably) core fitness training, you soon will. It’s on late-night infomercials, where products like the Body Bouncer and Crunchinator promise to enhance your core body strength--and tone your torso. It’s showing up in the gym, in the form of those big colored rubber balls and those new metal towers of cables and metal arms that nobody quite seems to know what to do with yet. It’s in the workout videos (Washington Post, November 7, 2000)]

【Watch enough late-night TV commercials and you’ll soon come to the conclusion that firm, toned abs are as

important to Americans as second-chance auto financing and the George Foreman Grill. The fascination with six-pack abs has spawned an oversupply of infomercial-hyped abdominal exercise gizmos, as well as instructional videotapes and magazine covers sporting teasers such as “Get Summer Abs and Lose Flab in Six Weeks (Washington Post, June 19, 2001).”]

It can be said that “investment to the body” was increased in the society as diet fitness products have been sold through infomercials. Jean Baudrillard stated the relation of “commodities and body” as following sentence.

The style, which determines people and body, determines social relation between people and things in every culture. ..Body is not denied and is not eliminated, rather, an investment to the body is made in economical meaning intentionally and materialism is carried out in mental meaning (Baudrillard 1980:187-8).

In addition, there were articles describing that it is difficult to distinct information and an advertisement socially. Follow is an example of articles which point out “ambiguity of a program and an advertisement.” The fact is interesting that

an infomercial is treated not only as an advertisement but also as one program unit.

Finally, infomercials have been used as a propaganda at the presidential election campaign. It appeared that an infomercial is estimated very effective and affirmative political campaign.

As mentioned above, the viewpoint of public opinion differs from the view of the senders of infomercials. The public regards infomercials as one social phenomenon and the social phenomenon mainly has been related with health and beauty industry. The Americans' concern about body was also written and it is interesting that the infomercial is treated not only as an advertisement but also as one program. Next will show articles about consumers' view more in detail.

Before understanding consumer's opinion toward infomercials, I was able to find articles of infomercial consumer surveys conducted by several survey organizations. According to the report called "Who Watches Infomercials?" of USA Today, there were many people who are not so much interested in infomercials although marketers emphasize the advertising effect of 30 minutes and consumers are almost women of the 20's and the 30's. A survey of 2000 AfterMarket Co. Survey of Response Magazine also gave similar information.

According to the chairman of Popular Culture Association, Thompson, purchaser of infomercial products tends to like a kind of newness, which changes their life. Thompson studied infomercial consumers dividing the group, which likes infomercial products and the group, which actually buys it. The group, which likes infomercial, likes the trick and mechanism of infomercials, and they think that the product is a promise to solve their problems and change their life as a new idea.

["Thompson, who also is president of the Popular Culture Association, an academic organization, divides the infomercial customer base into two camps: those who really like this stuff and those who buy it to show how hip they are." "They like gimmicks and gizmos," Thompson said. "They see these things as the constant promise in America that a new idea can change their lives (CNN New York, September 1, 2000)."]

Next, there were articles, which describe consumer's voice. They still buy infomercial products although there is a big risk.

[She bought Dermal-Tone Facial Exerciser but she

felt very fearing to use it suddenly. Because she became anxious whether it will truly rejuvenate her face and carry out safety (Washington Post, September 4, 2001).]

[I feel so ashamed. Last night, I was innocently watching a quality movie on TV, "Bikini Biker Babes From the Beyond" (I thought I was on PBS, but in hindsight, I guess I wasn't), when an infomercial came on. I should have looked away, but it was too late. The next thing I knew, the phone was in my hand, and I was ordering kitchen cookware. God help me. I bought the Ronco Showtime Rotisserie & BBQ. What a piece of hardware! (Washington Post, December 19, 1999)]

Although they know the risk of infomercial products, they purchase them. I was able to find an article which explains the reason. Nick Arthur, the marketing vice president of Asontv.com stated like follows at the interview of CNN.

["The expectations of the customers are realistic," he said. "They know these products are not miracles. They get what they pay for. It's almost like a gift to themselves (CNN New York, September 1, 2000)."]

Consumer survey cannot find exactly the consumer's view

toward infomercials. The consumers who appeared in mass media articles wanted "a certain change in their life", and asked for a certain solutions through the purchasing act.

Integrative Discussion and Conclusion

In brief, recent articles about infomercials have described cooperation between infomercial marketers and companies which are filled with a confidence and new strategy. Plus, infomercial was evaluated as one text which forms a social phenomenon and consumer's negative opinions about infomercials. Finally, they have written who buys infomercial product and the reason why consumers purchase infomercial products. Infomercials are not only advertisement as selling equipment for marketers, also the social phenomenon making public opinion and always influencing to the public. Both view is drawn in various forms and have a gap.

In this paper, I have attempted to demonstrate the social communication structure involving infomercials. In theoretical researches, infomercials have been evaluated that it is very powerful to offer product information as a comprehensive advertisement. However, the mass media articles from the 1990s to the 2000s have pointed out that not

only it is an advertisement having sufficient efficiency in a market, but also there is a maker's systematic selling equipment which develops always the different forms. The high amount of information inside infomercial is made up systematically, and the structure of infomercial messages is composed to target each individual life. In other word, infomercial is "the plotted information in our life (Nihei 1996: 32)."

On the other hand, as an independent program, infomercials were regarded as one social phenomenon, and it was accepted not only as an advertisement but also as a sufficient mean for political propaganda. A warning, however, about the lack of commercial moral also appeared. Plus, the figure of consumers who want a certain change of life and solution of a desire through an infomercial existed. There is a gap between the tendency appeared in article analysis, and studies conducted by researchers. That is because theoretical researchers tend to catch only whether infomercial has efficiency in the market. For example, how much it offers information, how it influences to the purchase act and which class is looking at and purchasing the infomercial product. Although we cannot overlook the aspect of marketing when thinking of an infomercial, it also has been related to a communication between the public and society. In other word,

it includes the intention of infomercial makers and is related to consumer's opinion. The form of infomercial will be changed from these both sides.

It still needs to analyze much more articles as for future study and since it says, "the sense of values which appeared in the mass media is not necessarily an index with a perfect attitude (Lipset 1972: 14)", direct observation of consumers will be needed. Finally, I regard that to solve the relation between "the manipulated messages," and "change of life and solution of desire," it is necessary to inquire contents analysis of infomercials.

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Introduction of the Social Communication Structure Surrounding Infomercials with Article Analysis of Mass Media and Interview

KIM Chunai

Now infomercials are exported and broadcasted in Asia and Europe as well as the United States. Given this growth, it is important to understand about how and why infomercials have been developed, focusing on the aspect of industry and cultural background. This paper clarifies that how infomercials have affected at America society comparing ads researchers' approaches to contents of mass media articles which describe about infomercial marketers and public opinion. It notes that how infomercials have been gaining power and growing in the American society as well and considers about the newspapers, magazines, and statements of television news from 1990 to 2002. Also the interviews what I did last year in the United States will be added when explaining infomercial makers'(retail stores, infomercial companies and cable stations)view about infomercial business.

Ads researchers tend to describe infomercials as most "powerful advertisement and direct sales device." However, in the analysis of the mass media articles, the public did not always evaluate it as a positive thing. Infomercial companies have had strong confidence about starting infomercial business according to interviews with them and several articles. There is also a sort of correlation among retail stores, infomercial companies and cable stations. On one hand, infomercials have been recognized as one of social phenomenon which has been concerned with America people who care seriously about their body image. There were not only infomercial consumer surveys, but also American people who desire "a change of life" and "a solution of something" through infomercial product. Infomercials have become a social phenomenon that makes consume passion and influences consume society as the effective sales device

Key Words

Infomercial, Sales Device, Social Phenomenon, Changing Life, Solution of Desire