

A Study of fear and emotional appeal in advertisement

Dibyasini Merli¹, Rupali Malla², Ayush Rath³, Latika Kashyap⁴ and Nishtha Sharma⁵

¹Student, Faculty of Commerce and Management, Kalinga University, Raipur

Email:merlidibya05@gmail.com

²Student, Faculty of Commerce and Management, Kalinga University, Raipur

Email: rupali13bhilai@gmail.com

³Student, Faculty of Commerce and Management, Kalinga University, Raipur

Email:ayushrath86@gmail.com

⁴Student, Faculty of Commerce and Management, Kalinga University, Raipur

Email: latikakashyap246@gmail.com

⁵Assistant Professor, Faculty of Commerce and Management, Kalinga University, Raipur

Email: nishtha.sharma@kalingauniversity.ac.in

Abstract: There have been several research done on the topic of advertising and emotion. However, these researchers have only researched the impact of emotions in commercials by looking at valence and individual emotions; they haven't looked at which of these has the most impact on consumers. The purpose of this study is to determine whether certain emotions, as opposed to just good and negative ones, have a greater impact on consumers. The researchers will focus on four feelings: elation, terror, anxiety, and repentance. It will be contrasted to a valence framework, in which only positive and negative emotions are allowed, regardless of which emotions are really present in the adverts. Advertising looking to leverage emotional appeals in your ads, choose an emotion that resonates best with your target audience. More study is needed to determine how various emotional appeals influence customer behaviour. Marketers will have an easier time using the most successful emotion appeals for their product commercials if all emotion appeals that may be employed in advertisements are evaluated.

Keywords: Behaviour, Advertisement, Emotion, Fear

INTRODUCTION

In the world of advertising, marketers constantly strive to capture the attention and influence the behavior of consumers. One of the most effective techniques used in advertising campaigns is the strategic deployment of fear and emotional appeal. By tapping into our deepest emotions and exploiting our fears, advertisers can create powerful and persuasive messages that leave a lasting impact on our minds. In this article, we will delve into the realm of fear and emotional appeal in advertising and explore how they can be harnessed to engage and persuade consumers.

It has always been difficult for advertising managers to reach their target audience in the most effective manner, and this difficulty has only increased with the development of new technologies, the rise of a more competitive business environment, and the spread of globalization (Vikram et al., 2021). On top of that, with all the innovations and because of the proliferation of information channels, contemporary advertising may take many forms, from generic print ads to hyper-specific promotions in social media, all of which highlight and need the use of efficient advertising correspondence (Pratap et al., 2023). The use of direct mail for advertising is essential. Indeed, advertising is the very definition of written communication.

The purpose of this structure is to examine the prevalence of optimistic and pessimistic sentiments in marketing campaigns. It is only able to tell the difference between emotions of the same valence, and not between two opposite valences. The second kind of framework compares ads based on their targeting of particular emotions. The good feelings of pride and joy, and the bad emotions of dread and guilt, will be highlighted. These feelings were selected because pleasure and fear tend to originate as a result of the

activities of other people or things, whereas pride and guilt come as a result of one's own conduct. In order to build the valence framework, we will choose two positive and two negative emotions and examine their influence on one another. Additionally, the unique framework may be formed by comparing the impacts of two distinct positive and negative emotions.

CONCEPT OF ADVERTISING

Previously, advertisements were not given the same level of attention as they get now. Promotion is becoming an integral part of the modern advertising ecosystem. Advertising is expensive, yet companies still consider it a worthwhile investment since it is the best way to reach new consumers. The Latin word for "promote" implies "to draw attention to something in particular." This exposure is being paid for. The definition of "advertise" in the Oxford English Dictionary is "to make widely or openly known, to depict freely in order to expand business." The basic goal of advertising, which is often financed by a corporation or a person, is to convey information, encourage attitudes, and instigate actions that are advantageous to the sponsors.

DEFINITIONS SPECIFIC EMOTIONS

To ensure that everyone has the same understanding while discussing these feelings, I will now define fear, guilt, pleasure, and pride. To begin with, dread; many academics use various language to describe the emotion. Anxiety, like fear, is a negative emotional state, although in this case the danger is not immediate but rather anticipated, according to one description (Ledoux, 2012). The physical manifestations of fear are universal, but the emotional response to dread might vary from person to person (Fritscher, 2014), hence caution should be used when using this description. According to Lerner and Keltner (2001), dread arises when one feels helpless and confused about an impending threat. According to the Handbook of Emotions (Lewis et al., 2008), fear connotes the dread of imminent tragedy and the powerful impulse to protect oneself, mainly by fleeing the circumstance. The study will use the Handbook of Emotions's definition. When a person is scared, for example because they observe a dangerous situation, their breathing and pulse rate speed up, their palms start sweating, their face becomes red, they get goose bumps, and they choose between a fight or flight reaction. In response to danger, the body will either initiate flight or fight responses (Kalin, 1997). Oishi et al. (2013) describe happiness as "a state of well-being characterised by relative permanence, by dominantly agreeable emotion ranging in value from mere contentment to deep and intense joy in living," and by a natural desire for its continuance.

PSYCHOLOGY OF FEAR

Fear is a primal and instinctual emotion that has been hardwired into our brains as a survival mechanism. Advertisers recognize the potency of fear and utilize it to capture attention, create a sense of urgency, and motivate action. By presenting potential threats or highlighting the consequences of inaction, fear-based advertisements aim to persuade consumers to make desired choices. For instance, a car safety advertisement may depict a horrifying accident scene to instill fear and emphasize the importance of wearing seatbelts.

EMOTIONAL APPEAL: CONNECTING ON A DEEPER LEVEL

Emotional appeal in advertising is a powerful tool that seeks to evoke specific emotions, such as joy, sadness, anger, or nostalgia. By connecting with consumers on an emotional level, advertisers can forge a deeper bond and establish brand loyalty. Emotional appeals often tap into universal human experiences, making the advertisements relatable and memorable. Advertisements featuring heartwarming stories, touching moments, or humorous situations resonate with viewers, leaving a lasting impression. These emotions are then associated with the product or brand, shaping consumer attitudes and behaviors.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

While fear and emotional appeal can be highly effective in advertising, ethical concerns must be taken into account. Manipulating consumers' emotions and exploiting their fears without providing genuine value can be seen as deceptive and unethical. Advertisers must strike a balance between creating a compelling narrative and maintaining integrity. Messages that mislead or exaggerate potential dangers solely for profit undermine consumer trust and can have negative long-term effects on brands.

CULTIVATING POSITIVE EMOTIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Advertisers can also use emotional appeal to cultivate positive associations with their products or services. By evoking emotions such as joy, happiness, or excitement, advertisers create positive experiences that consumers can attribute to the brand. This approach focuses on the benefits and positive outcomes of using a particular product, rather than emphasizing the negative consequences of not doing so. For example, a soft drink commercial might portray a group of friends having a great time, associating the product with fun and friendship.

THE LASTING IMPACT

Fear and emotional appeal have the ability to leave a lasting impact on consumers, resulting in increased brand awareness, memorability, and ultimately, purchase decisions. When executed thoughtfully and responsibly, these techniques can effectively engage consumers, elicit emotional responses, and influence behavior. However, advertisers should be mindful of the potential for unintended consequences and strive to use fear and emotional appeal in a responsible manner.

EMOTIONAL AND FEAR APPEALS IN ENVIRONMENTAL ADVERTISING

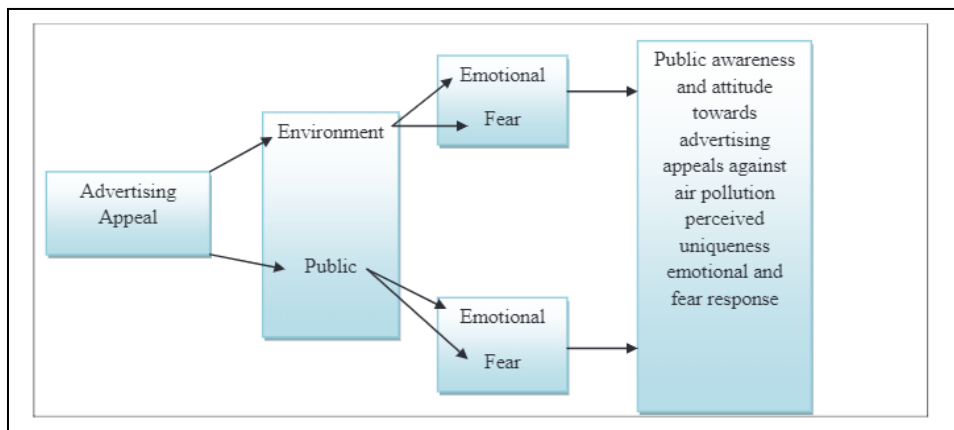


Figure 1: Effects of Advertising Appeal on the Evaluation of Social Advertising

Source: Kunal et al. (2017)

There is also theoretical difficulty in establishing a connection between emotional arousal, attitude development, and behavioural conformity; only uncertain ties have been formed between attitudes and intent, and some still confusing results relate to intent and subsequent conduct (Chandon, Morwitz, & Reinartz, 2004). Despite the obstacles, social advertising strategies often use emotional appeals in an effort to sway public compliance. In order to get people's attention, social advertising often uses negative emotional appeals (Bennett, 1998). The comparative efficacy of negative and positive emotional appeals has also been the subject of extensive study (Block & Keller, 1995; Frazer et al., 2002). Dillard and Peck (2000) found that positive and negative ad responses, as well as changes in attitude and emotion, affected the success of public service announcements.

INCREASED ADVERTISER’S ATTENTION TOWARDS THIS FORM OF ADVERTISING

There has been a rise in the usage of social messages and causes as part of brand advertising in India. As was previously said, an increasing number of organisations are engaging in CSR initiatives, and this, in turn, explains the growing popularity of social appeal marketing and other forms of direct marketing. This kind of marketing has gained more attention from upper management since it is seen as a useful theoretical instrument for enhancing the company's public and internal profiles and reaping the cultural rewards of doing so. Many people in India don't know the difference between cause-related advertising, cause brand alliance, and cause checking, for example, since social cause marketing is still in its infancy (Kotler et al., 2012). Fifteen authors have used the term "showcasing and corporate social obligation" to characterise the various CSR initiatives undertaken by American businesses, classifying them into two inarguable categories: public relations-focused CSR and CSR that expresses corporate qualities and

goals. They also categorised "advertising driven corporate social endeavours" as "cause progression," "cause-related advancement," and "corporate social advancement."

CONCLUSION

Fear and emotional appeal play a significant role in advertising by tapping into our deepest emotions and fears. By skillfully leveraging these techniques, advertisers can create memorable and persuasive campaigns that resonate with consumers. However, ethical considerations must always guide the use of fear and emotional appeal to ensure that they are employed responsibly and in a way that enhances rather than manipulates the consumer experience. Ultimately, a balance must be struck between capturing attention, engaging emotions, and maintaining consumer trust to create impactful and effective advertising campaigns. To sum up, the mutually beneficial nature of advertising's social appeal predicts a wide and successful reach for this kind of public relations in India. If done correctly, this strategy has the potential to enhance profits to the point where new habits are adopted to promote cultural acceptance and elevate the reputation of the business as a whole. Given today's cutthroat business climate and companies' need to make positive contributions to society, advertising's inherent social appeal makes it the best form of promotion available. This evaluation research adds to the existing body of information and highlights gaps that need to be filled in order to provide a solid basis for using this method.

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