



Value-Expressive Advertising on Women with regard to their actual self-concept, intention and brand recall

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to study the relationship between and the impact of value expressive advertising appeals on the self concept of women. Advertising effectiveness is conceptualized as: brand recall, congruency with the brand identity and the self concept and purchase intentions. In our research a study of the actual self image will be performed to gauge the congruency with the value expressive advertising appeals and its implication on brand recall, the congruency with the cues present in the advertisements and the women's intention to buy.

Keywords : Advertising effectiveness, brand recall, congruency.

1. INTRODUCTION

This topic is worth considering because while similar topics have been covered internationally, little research is available on this topic in Pakistan. Although this research considers only perfumes, its applications are broad and the results may be extrapolated to other product categories especially those whose markets are mature or in the process of maturing. Furthermore value-expressive appeals in advertising are gaining popularity over the tried and tested functional and affective appeals and therefore this research seeks to validate their effectiveness. Hence, this study aims to form a relationship between self-concept / value-expressive appeals congruency and the purchase intention.

One of the procedures for evaluating specific advertisements is conducting a recall test, i.e., estimating the percentage of people claiming to have seen an ad who can (unaided) recall the ad and its contents and another procedure for evaluating the motivational impact in particular of an ad is by gauging intention to buy: potential buyers are asked to identify the likelihood they will buy a brand. Hence, the effectiveness of value advertising appeals

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will be gauged by testing these two parameters, i.e. intention to buy and brand recall.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

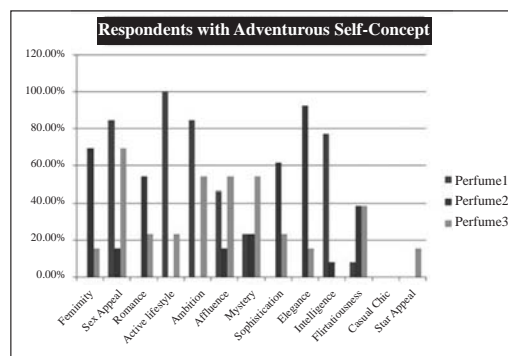
Brands can possess personality traits identical to human's and represent attitudinal and lifestyle characteristics which provide self-expressive (symbolic) benefits for the customers who are associated with them. This particular facet of brands is an important driver of consumer preference, choice and purchase between different products offering the same functional utility Hogg, Cox and Keeling (2000).

There is evidence to suggest analyses using psychological segmentation based on variables such as self-concept can be valuable in understanding the dynamics of the advertising effects. Additionally, the effects of self-image and brand-image congruity has been extensively explored in academic consumer research literature and results copy research systems typically include an in-depth analysis of the advertising performance have generally shown that self-image/brand image congruity can moderate consumer preferences (Mehta, 1999). The greater the congruence between the product image and the audience's actual self-image, the greater the likelihood of persuasion. Self-congruity is defined as the match between the product's value-expressive attributes (product-user image) and the audience's self-concept (Johar and Sirgy 1991; Aaker, Jennifer (1999); Chang, Chingching (2002) & EFam and Waller (2004)). An actual self-image is an image an individual has of him or herself. Self-image/product-image congruity theory is used in the evaluation process: product cues that evoke certain images (e.g., prestige) are viewed as activating similar beliefs about the self (e.g., high status), which prompts a comparison process to determine whether the product and self-image are congruent. Self-concept is significant and relevant to the study of consumer behavior as many purchases made by consumers are directly influenced by the image individuals have of themselves. From a marketing perspective, the study of self-concept is of particular relevance because the image that individuals associate with themselves frequently dictates specific purchase patterns. Consumers may buy a product because, among other factors, they feel that the product enhances their own self-image. Similarly, consumers may decide not to buy a product if they feel that this action is not consistent with their own perception of themselves.

According to Peter and Donnelly (2005), one of the procedures for evaluating specific advertisements is conducting a recall test, i.e., estimating the percentage of people claiming to have seen an ad who can (unaided) recall the ad and its contents.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

H1. When women are required to identify value-expressive cues in the advertisements they were shown, cues consistent with their actual self-concept are preferred to those with cues consistent with actual self-concept.



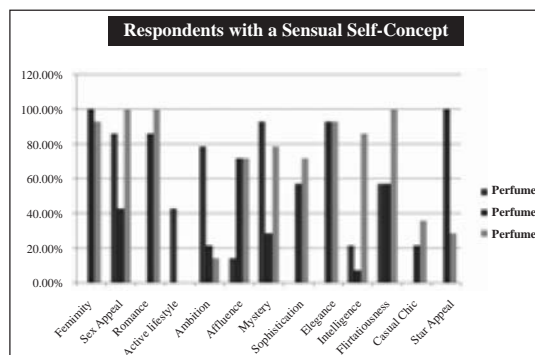
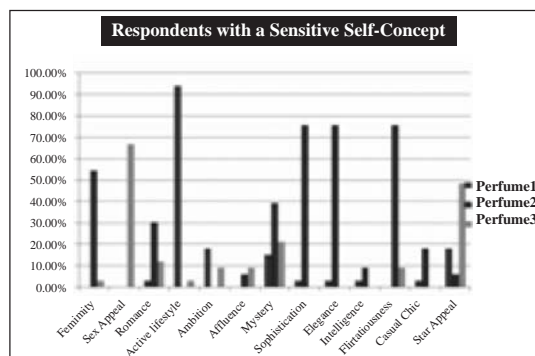
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H2. Value-expressive appeals congruent with women's actual self-concept produce stronger buying intentions for the perfume advertised than actual self-concept-incongruent ads.

H3. Value-expressive appeals congruent with women's actual self-concept produce better recall of advertised perfume brands than actual self-concept-incongruent ads.

4. FINDINGS

Out of 60 respondents, more than 55% (33 respondents) claimed that they were sensitive, while adventurous and sensual were relatively the same number with the adventurous category comprising of 13 respondents, while sensual comprised of 14 respondents. Identifying Cues Consistent with their Self-Concept:

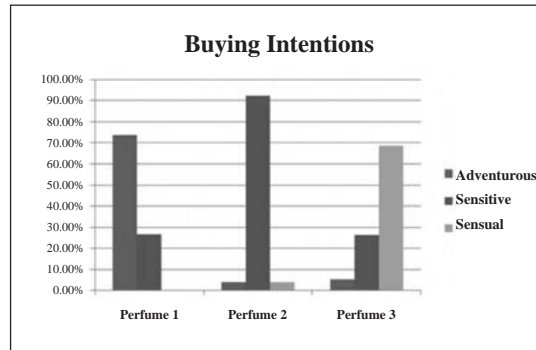


- Cues were identified irrespective of the self-concept of the respondents.
- On the whole the SUG respondents identified more cues than the other two groups (40.81%).
- The AG respondents did identify the adventurous cues the most.
- The SG respondents did not identify the sensitive cues the most.
- The SUG respondents identified the sensual cues the most.

Buying Intentions Consistent with the Self-Concept

The response with regards to the buying intention for any one of the perfume brands that the respondents had been shown clearly results with the respondents of the three groups choosing those perfume brands which had been consistent with their self-concept.

73.3% of the AG respondents intended to purchase Perfume 1, which was shown in AD



1 – with the adventurous cues. 92.3% of the SG respondents opted to purchase Perfume 2 shown in AD 2 with the sensitive cues, whereas, 68% of the SUG respondents intended to purchase Perfume 3 shown in AD 3 with the sensual cues. Perfume 2 which was shown in AD 2 with the sensitive cues, was clearly a choice for the SG respondents, whereas both the other groups, AG and SUG, did not opt for it.

Brand Recall Consistent with the Self-Concept

5. PERFUME BRAND NAME RECALL

Brand Recall was the highest for those brands whose advertisements showed cues which were consistent with the self-concept of the viewers. On the whole, SUG respondents remembered the other two perfume brands not consistent with their self-concept more than the other 2 groups.

6. CUES RECALL

All three cue sets showed a lower recall, except for Active Lifestyle cue in the Adventurous Cue Set – AD 1 showed a 100% recall amongst AG respondents. For some of the cues the more respondents remembered the cue (Sex Appeal in AD 1, Elegance in AD 2, and Sex Appeal in AD 3) to be part of the advertisement then when they initially identified the cues in Study A. All the groups showed a stronger recall for the cues consistent with their self-concept.

7. CONCLUSION

H1: When women are required to identify value-expressive cues in the advertisements they are shown, they pick cues consistent with their actual self-concept.

	AG	SG	SUG	
Active Lifestyle	13	31	6	Ad1
Femininity	9	18	14	Ad2
Flirtatiousness	5	25	8	
Sophistication	8	25	8	
Sex Appeal	9	22	14	Ad3

H1 is rejected because as can be seen from the table, women picked value-expressive cues in the advertisements shown to them irrespective of their actual self-concept. In Ad1, the

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'Adventurous' Ad: The Active Lifestyle cue would have been picked by Adventurous women primarily, if the hypothesis were in fact true. While 100% of the Adventurous women picked up on Active Lifestyle, 94% of the Sensitive women also picked up on it. In Ad2, the 'Sensitive' Ad: For Femininity, 75% of the Adventurous women and 100% of the Sensual women picked up on it, and even though it is predominantly a 'sensitive' cue, only 54% of the Sensitive women identified it in the second ad. In Ad3, the 'Sensual' Ad:

Name Recall				
	P1	P2	P3	Total
AG	10 ^{7.48}	1 ^{5.85}	2 ^{3.03}	13
SG	7 ^{10.45}	23 ^{14.85}	3 ^{7.7}	33
SUG	2 ^{4.43}	3 ^{6.3}	9 ^{3.27}	14
Total	19	27	14	60

Sex Appeal, supposedly a 'Sensual' cue, was identified by all women with a sensual self-concept, but also by 75% of the Adventurous women and 67% of the Sensitive women.

Buying Intention				
	P1	P2	P3	Total
AG	11	1	1	13
SG	5	24	5	33
SUG	0	1	13	14
Total	15	26	19	60

Hence, keeping in view the above results, we can conclude that the self-concept of women is not a determinant of the cues which women identify in ads and women will pick up on cues regardless of congruence or incongruence with self-concept.

H2o: There is no association between women's actual self-concept and buying intentions for perfumes.

Using Chi-square test & observing p-value, we conclude that there is an association between women's actual self-concept and buying intentions for pezrfumes.

H3o: There is no association between women's actual self-concept and brand recall for perfumes.

Using the Chi-square test and observing the p-value, we conclude that there is an association between women's actual self-concept and brand recall of perfumes.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study only considers women's actual self-concept and not their ideal self-concept and a comparative study between the two concepts. There were some cues which the respondents had not identified initially but actually remembered and asked to recall without any aid. This leaves a grey area as to what is the reason behind this occurrence. Could this be because of Sigmund Freud's ID concept? Or because of any other measure. Some of the cues such as Sex Appeal in AD 1 and AD 3 had been ignored by some of the respondents who later remembered them in Study 2. This leaves room for testing the effect of subliminal advertising even though when the appeal is actually quite prominent in the advertisement and yet the

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respondents fail to identify it but later recall it. The theory of selective identification and retention has been brought out through this theory due to the fact that some of the respondents even though did not identify certain cues, they retained them in their memory.

9. LIMITATIONS

The study is based on a random sample of 60 women between the age group of 18 – 35. Due to a time and cost constraint, a larger sample could not have been studied. Due to this constraint this study could not consider many variables, such as comparative analysis of genders, as would be needed to give the research a broader application. Only three broad categories had been used to test the hypothesis which was adventurous, sensitive and sensual. Due to a mobility constraint, the study was restricted to respondents from Karachi living in Clifton, DHA, KDA and Gulshan.

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