Impact of Emotional Appeals on Youth Purchasing Behavior: Evidence from Pakistan

Muhammad Nauman Abbasi, PhD
Institute of Management Sciences, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan
abbasimna@bzu.edu.pk

Muhammad Ramzan Sheikh, PhD
Lecturer, Department of Economics
Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan
ramzan@bzu.edu.pk

Rashid Saeed
Lecturer, Department of Business Administration,
Bahauddin Zakariya University,
Bahadur Sub Campus Layyah
rashid.saeed61@yahoo.com

Muhammad Imdadullah
PhD Student, University of Utara, Malaysia

Abstract
This study investigates the impact of emotional appeal(s) on the purchasing behavior of Pakistani consumers especially youth age ranging between sixteen to forty years. Additionally, this study probe the differential impact of various emotional appeals, including, happiness, humour, fear, play on words, ridicule or mockery on consumer purchase behavior. General survey guided by structured questionnaire through connivance sampling has been administered across a valuable sample of 400 consumers. Data was collected from the users of telecommunication industry of Pakistan. Overall results reveal that emotional appeals effectively influence purchasing behavior of Pakistani youth. Among various emotional appeals, humour generates greatest impact on purchase behavior followed by happiness and play on words. Amazingly, the findings disclose fear or threat and ridicule as least persuasive in shaping the needs and wants of the consumers. The outcomes of this study suggest meaningful managerial implications, wherein, it is suggested that in present wave of terrorism, unrest in the country, political instability and tight economic condition, Pakistani youngsters believe humor, fun, joke and funny appeals are source of relieve for them. Moreover, youth consider emotional appeals especially humor as source of amusement and marketing mechanism having strong influence on their purchasing behavior.

Keywords: Emotional Appeals, Purchasing Behavior, Pakistani Youth, Telecommunication.
I. Introduction

Now-a-days, marketers are not confined to get into the customer’s pockets rather they are trying hard to get into customer’s mind. In this competitive era, it is extremely important for marketers to probe the needs and wants of their customers and even senses their feelings. A step ahead of it, the post-modern marketers is engaged in shaping the needs and wants of their customers. They use various integrated marketing communication (IMC) techniques to deliver their message and to convince customers for their offerings. Among communication modes, advertisement is the most common and frequently used medium for disseminating message to ultimate customers. This medium considered being the most effective in creating awareness, interest, desires and to compel customers for the final purchase. It is therefore advertisement becomes an integral part of marketing strategy of every firm today.

The matter is that how we perceive an advertisement? Usually people perceive advertisement into two ways, one is logical and other is emotional. That’s why most of the advertisements are classified into these two categories, i.e. thinking (logical) ads and feeling (emotional) ads (Hongxia et al., 2014). This emotional/rational framework has been extensively studied over the years since the first proposition hypothesized by Copeland (1924) who stated that people buy products either because of rational or emotional appeals. In marketing literature, one can find sufficient literature (for example, Grove et al, 1995; Puto & Wells, 1984; Woochang & Franke, 1999; Zinkhan et al., 1992), where authors have argued and empirically justified the wroth of rational appeals in shaping the behavior of targeted customers. Similarly, a bunch of literature also presents empirical evidences in favor of emotional appeals, where it is contended that emotional appeals can effectively shape the needs and wants of the customers and can effectively influence their purchasing behavior (for example, Holbrook & Batra, 1987; Kotler & Keller, 2008; Mattila, 1999; Taute et al., 2011).

Despite of this controversy, which is based on variations in circumstances of each research and the cultural perspectives of the country of research, still, emotional appeals in advertising campaigns remained the preference of many marketers in last two decades (Barnabas et al. 2013; Bulbul and Menon, 2010; Chandy et al. 2001; Hongxia et al., 2014; Lwin and Phau, 2013; Main et al. 2004; Williams, 2012). For example, in one of the most recent studies researchers have empirically observed that emotional appeals within promoting campaigns as more practical and fruitful than non-emotional appeals (Tian et al., 2004). In emotional appeals, a relationship between a brand and a consumer is established on an affective connection which usually treated as a strong relationship and the base of a long-term consumer loyalty (Bulbul & Menon, 2010). Thus emotional advertisement(s) considered having an enormous positive effect on client attitudes (Williams, 2012).

Regardless of continue efforts to probe the impact of emotional appeals on consumer purchase behavior. Still, the existing literature is disjointed and fragmented, resulting in a lack of understanding relating to which emotional appeals e.g. happiness, humour, fear, play on words and ridicule has stronger impact on consumer behavior and which emotional appeal assist marketers to generate desired results. It is therefore, this study was initiated to probe the impact of emotional appeals especially on youth purchasing behavior. The data was collected from youth, while, telecom sector was purposefully selected based on the fact that this sector has allocated significant budget for
promotion campaigns. It is believed that the outcomes of this research will add valuable insights to both academicians and practitioners.

II. Literature Review

The term ‘emotion’ is considered as subjective, conscious experience characterized primarily by psycho physiological expressions, biological reactions, and mental state. Emotions can be positive as well as negative. People usually demonstrate their emotions through their feelings, moods and affections. It is widely accepted in marketing that emotions arouse the buying intentions (Tian et al., 2004) and the emotional content in well-executed commercials always boosts recall (Roozen & Claeys, 2009b). That’s why marketers rely on emotional appeals with strong contentment to get their prospects excited, scared, or thrilled.

In literature, it is argued that when stimulation is enforced, one usually asses the matter based on information, that then affects his/her mental state, and afterwards the behavior generated (in response) represents one’s logical state of mind (Bagozzi et al. 2002; Blackwell et al., 2005). On the other hand, when, the stimulation induce feeling, it incites people to feel friendly and likeable, that afterwards ends up in the behavior that represent one’s emotional state of mind (Main et al. 2004). In marketing context, Kotler and Armstrong (1994, p.468) stated “emotional appeals attempt to stir up either negative or positive emotions that can motivate purchase. These include fear, guilt and shame appeals that get people to do things they should or stop doing things they shouldn’t …… communicators also use positive emotional appeals such as love, humor, pride and joy to motivate people to buy”. Emotions are ever presented thought as they influence informatics, mediate responses to persuasive appeals, and live the results of promoting stimuli (Tian et al. 2004).

There is another school of thought that typically treats emotions as more influential on important decisions and considers it at higher level than reason (Bulbul & Menon, 2010), they are known as feelings. Feelings defined as a "mental state of readiness that arises from cognitive appraisals of events or thoughts, includes a phenomenological tone, usually expressed physically, among physiological processes, and should lead to specific actions to affirm or address the emotions" (Tian et al. 2004). Feeling ads, concentrate on the emotions and consumers experience in using the advertised product. The appeal to emotion uses emotions as the basis of an argument's position without factual evidence that logically supports the major ideas endorsed by the people in reaction of an advertisement. In recent years, the emotional appeals got more importance because marketers believe young people, their habits, interests and attitudes will guide the country and the world for decades to come. Interestingly, a person will become less emotional with increasing age. That’s why the emotional appeals are often effective for the youth while rational appeals work well for products directed towards the elder generation (Ambujakshan, 2012).

Advertising appeals aim to influence the manner consumers read themselves and convince with the way buying for a product will helpful for them. Aaker and Stayman, (1992), explored that emotions can significantly construct both subjective and affective impression of intangible attributes of both products and services. In services context, Lwin and Phau (2013) found that emotional appeals provoked more favorable attitudes especially towards websites and boutique hotels. In similar tune, Mortimer, (2008),
preached that marketers can confidently use emotional appeals both for utilitarian and experiential services. It is therefore, advertisers use emotional appeal without any hesitation where there is negligible difference between multiple product brands and its offerings and amazingly it effectively works as well (Ambujakshan, 2012). Researchers and marketing practitioners alike are trying hard to increase the positive effect of emotions in consumers’ judgments and hence use emotional appeals in their advertisements to increase the effectiveness of their ads (Roozen & Claeys, 2009a).

For many people, the pursuit and accomplishment of happiness is one of the most essential quests in life (Rudd et al., 2014). Happiness is defined as “a state of well-being and contentment and a pleasurable or satisfying experience” (Mogilner et al., 2012). Happiness is a mental or emotional state of well-being characterized by positive or pleasant emotions ranging from contentment to intense joy. Happiness can also be stated as when everything is falling into its proper place. Nothing seems wrong and everything feels great, and you know that you just couldn’t ask for anything more. Psychologists, economists, and sociologists have made tremendous strides in determining best measures of happiness, why happiness is important and different possible ways to increase happiness (Mogilner et al., 2012). In marketing, marketers know their consumers want happiness through their offerings and services and hence they are struggling hard to appeal to consumers’ pursuit of happiness. It is therefore, happiness becomes an essential part in the advertisements today.

Second, most frequently used emotional appeal is humor. The humor appeal strategy used in different commercials drastically attracts people towards offerings presented in those respective commercials. According to Fang (2011), humor is one of the most frequently used techniques in modern advertising. Krishnan and Chakravarti (2003) have observed that irrespective of the medium 10% to 30% of all advertisements use humor appeals. While, Fang (2011) stated that approximately one out of five television commercials contain humor appeals. Humor can be an excellent tool to catch the viewer’s attention and help in achieving instant recall, which can work well for the sale of the product (Ambujakshan, 2012). Today, it is a proven fact that commercials having humor appeals draw more attention and induce greater liking than advertisements having other appeals.

Fear is another mode of emotion. Fear is an efficient tool to change the attitude of the people towards a product. According to Williams (2012), fear appeal demonstrates the risk of using or avoiding a specific product, service, or idea. It means, if you don’t “buy”, a product then a dire (negative) consequence can occur. Fear appeals accept a threat to associate individual’s well-being that motivates action, e.g., increasing control over a scenario or preventing associate unwanted outcome. An appeal to fear may be a story during which someone tries to make support for a concept by presenting victimization, deception or by providing information regarding possible injustice in the market. Fear is a critical issue that may have unbelievable influence on people behavior, for example, a statement like, “if you still drink, you may die early as your father did”, leave long lasting impression on human mind. The same is evident from previous researches, where it is observed that realistic fear can generate decent positive effect in advertisements and promotion campaigns (Ferguson and Phau, 2013; Lee and Ferguson, 2002; Schmitt and Blass, 2008).
Playing with ‘Words’ is another magnificent weapon marketers use to hit the needs of the person. In 2005, Laviosa stated that Wordplay (or pun) may be a joke that depends for its positive effect on playing with totally different levels of language, i.e. phonological, graph-logical, morphological, lexical, syntactic, and textual. In marketing, advertisers create effective use of catchy phrases with emotional content to convey the message and such appeals not only facilitate product/service recognition rather help in generating strong recalls. This recent trend of creating unique ‘Words’ and/or ‘Phrases’ have gained fabulous attention by youngsters and hence considered as fashionable practice in advertisement today. This is because of the fact that we have been gifted with powerful tendency to grasp ‘Words’ or even ‘Phrases’. In an advertisement, even a few words of appreciation can do wonders and at the same time, a few words can hurt in a way more than obtaining cuffed within the face (Reining, 2012). It is therefore, marketers use this approach very carefully to attract potential customers.

Finally, appeal to ridicule (generally called an appeal to mockery or the horse laugh), is an informal myth which presents an opponent's argument as illogical, ridiculous, or in any humors way (Kaid and Johnston, 1991). Appeal to ridicule is often found to form an opponent and their product the object of a joke. For example, following criticism during the 2008 United States general elections that Barack Obama's policies were "socialist", Obama responded by saying "Next they'll be calling me a communist because I shared my toys in kindergarten" (Kaid and Johnston, 1991), pushing the "socialist" label to its extreme and presenting a flippant response to the argument, rejecting it as unworthy of serious consideration. This is a symbolic methodology that mocks associate opponent's argument or stance, attempting to inspire an emotional reaction (making it a sort of appeal to emotion) within the audience and to focus on any counter-intuitive aspects of that argument, creating it seem foolish and contrary to sense (Deliya et al., 2012).

III. Methodology

As discussed in literature review, efforts have been made to probe the impact of emotional appeals on consumer purchase behavior. This knowledge gap invites the attention of researchers to probe and understand the differential impact of various emotional appeals on purchase behavior. The same has been addressed in this study with following objectives in mind;

i. **Probe the impact of emotional appeal(s) on the purchasing behaviour of Pakistani consumers especially youth (age ranging between sixteen to forty years).**

ii. **Probe either all emotional appeals e.g. happiness, humour, fear, play on words, ridicule or mockery generate equal impact on consumer purchase behaviour or any (specific) emotional appeal has stronger impact than others.**

iii. **Isn't marketing or advertising campaigns that contain emotional appeal(s) can easily gain attention of the viewers and help them effectively in shaping their needs & wants for the said product/service?**

General survey guided by well structured questionnaire through convenience sampling has been administered across a valuable sample of 400 respondents (age ranging between sixteen to forty years). Out of 400, 252 (i.e. 63%) were male, while, 148
(i.e. 37%) were females. Moreover, data reflect that 192 (i.e. 48%) were graduates or above, while, 208 (i.e. 52%) were undergraduates.

In literature, it is argued that emotional appeals mostly effective youth, hence, youth (age ranging between sixteen to forty years) was selected as the target population of this study. Furthermore, it was important to select an industry for data collection that must have two characteristics. Firstly, firms in the industry must be targeting youth and secondly, firms prefer emotional appeal in their advertisement or marketing campaigns. After careful analysis of twenty different manufacturing and service industries on above stated criteria, Pakistan Telecommunication Industry was finally selected to attain the objectives of this study.

Since 2004, Telecommunication Industry of Pakistan has observed highest growth rate as compared to any other sector of the economy. There are five major players in Pakistan telecom industry which include, Mobilink, Warid, Zong, Telenor and Ufone (a product of PTCL). With a major contribution of Rs 438/- billion coming from the five cellular mobile operators (CMOs), telecom sector’s revenues increased to Rs 445.7/- billion at the end of June 2013, up 9% from Rs 409/- billion in FY 2012. The sector’s revenues increased by a third, 33.5% to be exact, during the last five years when compared with Rs 333.8/- billion the industry had grossed in FY 2009. According to Adcom (Private) limited (2013) firms in telecom sector are consistently using emotional appeals in their advertisement & marketing campaigns (www.adcompk.com). In accordance, the users of telecom sector were chosen as respondent of this study. Before data collection, it was verbally confirmed from each respondent that he/she, at present, is the user of telecom services. Once confirmed, each respondent was requested to fill the questionnaire in light of recently launched telecom ads.

Based on an extensive literature review, a well-structured questionnaire was developed. Questionnaire contains different parameters (independent variables), each aiming to measure the impact of emotional appeal(s) on purchasing behavior (dependent variable). The parameters used are mostly grounded in literature (Ambujakshan, 2012; Ferguson and Phau, 2013; Kaid and Johnston, 1991; Krishnan & Chakravarti, 2003; Mogilner et al., 2012; Reining, 2012; Tian et al. 2004). Reliability of the instrument was checked through Cronbach’s alpha. High value i.e. 0.79 confirmed the reliability of the instrument. After oral consent, each respondent was briefed about the nature of the study and was requested to fill the questionnaire on 5 – point Likert scale, with anchors ranging from 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree and 5 = Strongly agree. Descriptive analysis (mean & standard deviation) is used to describe the impact of emotional appeals on the purchasing behavior of the youth, while, correlations and regression analyses were performed to explore relationship between dependent and independent variables.

IV. Findings

Keeping in view the main objective of this study i.e. to probe the impact of emotional appeal(s) on youth purchasing behavior, descriptive (mean & standard deviation), along with regression and correlation analysis were performed. Table – 1 present mean score & standard deviation of the main variables. Averages and standard deviations (represented by “m” & “s” respectively) describe how emotional appeals affect purchasing behavior of the youth. Respondents agreed (m=3.57; s=0.975) that emotional appeal(s) can effectively shape their needs & wants. This interesting outcome
is in line with many international studies, wherein, marketers aggressively use emotional appeals to attract new customers. Interestingly, high mean values (m=3.95; s=0.976) indicates that emotional appeals (in general) deliver mental satisfaction to viewers as compared to logical or rational appeals. Similarly, the impact of emotional appeals is not limited to mental satisfaction of the viewers rather high mean scores (m=3.49; s=0.156 & m=3.47; s=0.136) disclose that emotional appeals generate purchasing desires and can effectively influence viewers’ purchasing decisions.

Outcomes (m=3.58; s=0.986) also reflect that once consumer buy any product/service as a result of emotional appeal, it boost his/her sense of accomplishment. In fact, in present scenario, the stiff competition in this industry has compelled every firm to become highly customized in their services. The present strategies including customization, differentiation and 24/7 services have boosted customers’ satisfaction and sense of accomplishment. Today, every company wants their customers to be excited with their offerings and hence they are frequently using emotional appeals in their advertisement and marketing campaigns. It is also worth noting that respondents have denied (m=1.75; s=0.199) this controversial fact that emotional appeal(s) are irritating/vulgar and hence should be ignored or avoided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>Mean Score (m)</th>
<th>Standard Deviation (d)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional appeal(s) used in advertisements and/or marketing campaigns are effective in shaping the needs &amp; wants of the people?</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>0.975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching an emotional appeal in advertisement and/or marketing campaign provide me mental satisfaction?</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>0.976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional appeal(s) used in any advertisement and/or marketing campaign motivate me to buy the same product/service?</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>0.156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isn’t an emotional appeal used in advertisement or marketing campaign generates (immediate) purchasing desires?</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>0.136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional appeal used in advertisement and/or marketing campaign is irritating / vulgar and hence should be avoided?</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>0.199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional appeal use in advertisement and/or marketing campaign promotes feeling of accomplishment?</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>0.986</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To attain the second objective of this study, i.e. either all emotional appeals including, happiness, humor, fear, word play, ridicule, are equally important or any specific emotional appeal can generate stronger impact on consumer purchasing behavior. The aggregated average mean values for each emotional appeal were computed. Four parameters were used to compute aggregated average mean value for fear and ridicules, while, five parameters were used to compute aggregated average mean values for happiness, humor and play on words. Aggregated results reflect that among different emotional appeals, e.g. happiness (m=3.66, d=0.57), humour (m=4.00, d=0.56), fear or threat (m=3.14, d=0.58), play on wards (m=3.55, d=0.67) and mockery or ridicule (m=2.89, d=0.80), humor appeals generate stronger impact on consumer purchase behavior followed by appeals containing happy moments. The outcomes of aggregated mean analysis reveal strong managerial implications. For marketers, it is worth noting
that among various emotional appeals, humor appeals can generate stronger impact on youth purchasing behavior. These outcomes suggest effectiveness of humor appeals in generating positive attitude of the viewers towards advertised product/service.

Finally, it is observed that in Pakistan marketers are effectively using happy moments, jolly statements, and catchy phrases in their advertisement and marketing campaigns, which in turn have helped companies in shaping the needs & wants of their customers especially young customers. Whereas, youngsters have denied fear and ridicules as effective emotional appeals. Results also disclose that respondents believe that among different emotional appeals only humor and happiness are effectively influencing their purchasing decision. While, viewers think that fear and ridicule doesn’t influence their purchasing behavior. Interestingly, respondent agreed that all emotional appeals are easy to recall, however, humor appeals have high recall value. These results suggest that presenting jokes, jolly statements and fun in marketing commercial are getting popularity (appealing) in Pakistani culture.

In addition to probe the impact of emotional appeals on youth purchasing behavior, we further performed correlation analyses to discover the potential drivers (humor or happiness, fear, play on words, mockery) that trigger youth purchasing behavior towards advertised products/services (see Table 3). Our analyses show that only three emotional appeals i.e. humor, happiness, and play on words appear to be highly correlated (P<0.01) with each other and youth purchasing behavior. Interestingly, our analyses show that viewers those who watch emotional appeals, normally get convinced with the features of the product/services as portray in advertisements. These findings substantiate the results of many international studies, wherein, it is concluded that emotional appeals strongly influence purchasing behavior of the consumers as compared to logical or rational appeals.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORRELATIONS BETWEEN VARIABLES</th>
<th>Youth Purchasing Behavior</th>
<th>Appeal to Happiness</th>
<th>Appeal to Humor</th>
<th>Appeal to Fear</th>
<th>Play On Words</th>
<th>Appeal to Mockery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth Purchasing Behavior</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal to Happiness</td>
<td>.357&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal to Humor</td>
<td>.373&quot;</td>
<td>.271&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal to Fear</td>
<td>.240&quot;</td>
<td>.184&quot;</td>
<td>.110</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play on Words</td>
<td>.215&quot;</td>
<td>.312&quot;</td>
<td>.345&quot;</td>
<td>.089</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal to Mockery</td>
<td>.180&quot;</td>
<td>.138</td>
<td>.060</td>
<td>.208&quot;</td>
<td>.137</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Table 4: Regression Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Un-Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>1.212</td>
<td>.253</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal to Happiness</td>
<td>.188</td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>.235</td>
<td>3.462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal to Humor</td>
<td>.234</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.282</td>
<td>4.159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play On Words</td>
<td>.111</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.144</td>
<td>2.230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal to Fear</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal to Mockery</td>
<td>.055</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>1.520</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Behavior of the Youth

Our analyses further suggest significant relationship between recall of emotional appeals and purchasing behavior. It means the customers those who can easily recall any advertisement or its message will make (purchase) decision in its favor. Results also reflect significant relation (P<0.01) between watching (viewing) an advertisement containing emotional appeal and youth purchasing behavior. These results substantiate the outcomes of descriptive analyses. It is suggested that marketers may use any of the emotional appeal or combination of different emotional appeals in their advertisement or marketing campaigns to attain desired results. This strategy will generate fruitful results for both marketers.

Finally, regression analysis was performed to probe the impact of emotional appeals (independent variables) on the purchasing behavior (dependent variable). Regression analysis reflects that humour appeal (r = 0.234) generate the most positive impact on the attitude of the youth as compared to other emotional appeals. Happiness (r = 0.188) declared the second most effective emotional appeal, followed by play onwards (r = 0.111). Table – 4 present regression values between variables. Regression values show the change in dependent variable due to change in independent variables. The values in column B present the regression coefficients of the independent variables (happiness, humour, fear, play on words and mockery). The coefficient values show that which variable has what amount of positive effect on the dependent variable (Behavior). The “Constant” is not considered as an independent variable but its coefficient is counted in the regression equation to estimate the output.

V. Discussion & Conclusion

As successful strategy to motivate people to buy a product, effective advertisement always remained the first choice that pops up in a marketer’s mind. It is because of the fact that over the years, marketers use advertisement as competitive weapon to attract new customers and to retain the existing ones. Moreover, heavy reliance on
advertisement is also due to the fact that advertisement along with other marketing tactics has proven successful in attaining desired financial targets. Advertisers’ use various appeals including emotional, rational and logical to convey their message and to attain desired marketing objectives. Interestingly, number of researchers (for example, Barnabas et al. 2013; Bulbul and Menon, 2010; Chandy et al. 2001; Hongxia et al., 2014; Lwin and Phau, 2013; Main et al. 2004; Williams, 2000) have concluded that an advertisement containing emotional appeals/contents are more effective in gaining customers’ attention as compared to rational and logical appeals. The results of this study also substantiate the findings of these international studies. Additionally, this study adds further details in context of consumer behavior by determining the impact of various emotional appeals on consumer purchase behavior especially purchasing behavior of the young customers in Pakistan.

The outcomes of this study suggest happiness, humour, and play on words as significant emotional appeals for convincing viewers to buy advertised products/services. Among emotional appeals, humor appeals declared the most effective in shaping the needs and wants of the people followed by happiness and play on words. In today’s tense and frustrated environment, presenting funny ads and conveying your message in light and jolly manner is getting popularity and mental acceptance by viewers in Pakistan. These results add cultural perspectives in existing series of literature. Wherein, researchers (for example, Albers-Miller and Stafford, 1999) disclosed that use of rational and emotional appeals differ across both product type and country. Moreover, they suggest that culture plays vital role in the use of appeals in that respective country. In the similar manner, this research suggests humor appeals as effective tool to generate desired purchasing behavior.

These results have strengthened this fundamental believe that emotional appeal(s) can effectively influence purchasing behavior of the viewers. The outcome of this study is in line with the results of many international studies, for example, Tian et al. (2004) and Roozen and Claey (2009a), wherein, it is suggested that emotional appeals effectively influence the (purchasing) behavior of the youth. Similarly, the results of this study disclose that Pakistani youth is more inclined towards emotional appeals as compared to rational or logical appeals. This inclination is not limited to just watching and enjoying an advertisement for the sake of entertainment rather current ads (containing emotional appeals) also provoke purchasing desires. Interestingly, viewers feel sense of accomplishment when they buy the same product/service as a result of emotional appeal. These results endorse the existing findings and suggest policy makers to rely more on emotional appeals as compared to other appeals.

Furthermore, among other emotional appeals, happiness and play on words (catchy phrases) were also declared useful. However, youth deny giving considerable importance to fear and ridicule appeals. At present, respondents believe fear or threat and ridicule have least persuasiveness with regard to shaping the needs and wants of the consumers. These findings show that happiness and ‘interesting or catchy phrases’ are gaining valuable consideration by youngsters. Currently, companies are heavily relying on memorable slogans, jingles, jargons and songs, which at present, gaining popularity among young generation. In general, results reveal that people do not act rationally when advertisers provoke their emotions or address their feelings rather it is then their act fall within sense of attachment or accomplishment that’s finally end up in happy purchases.
The existing literature suggests that ‘emotional message’ is a useful marketing technique and can create effective consumer response, while considered dangers as well, if wrongly executed. It is extremely important that viewers must understand the real essence of the message presented in the emotional appeal. Otherwise, presenting fun will be observed just as a source of entertainment and may not create effective impact on purchase behavior. The base is to focus on the area of interest. Managers should focus on both target customers and their area of interest. Understanding the area of interest will help managers to select the most relevant emotional appeal. It is suggested that proper research must be conducted to probe what kind of emotional appeal(s) may be used which suits the taste and nature of the target customers. Moreover, different emotional appeals have been suggested for different segments, for example, fear appeals work well to attract ex-customers, while, happiness and appeal to ridicule/mockery can effectively be used to attract new and potential customers. It is therefore, marketers must remain careful in selection and execution of emotional appeals.

This study adds valuable insights regarding impact of emotional appeals on youth purchasing behavior and differential impact of various emotional appeals on youth buying behavior in Pakistan. The outcomes of this study suggest meaningful managerial implications, wherein, it is suggested that in present wave of terrorism, unrest in the country, political instability and tight economic condition, Pakistani youngsters believe humor, fun, joke and funny appeals are source of relieve for them. Moreover, youth consider emotional appeals especially humor as source of amusement and marketing mechanism having strong influence on their purchasing behavior. However, this research may consider the first attempt and hence leave many grounds for further explorations. The results of this study can be generalized, if the scope of research extends to more industries & sectors. Similarly, a more systematic sampling could also add to the validity of findings. Finally, impact of emotional appeals on personality, markets, channel members, are among the key areas for future investigation.

References


