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## Advertising Appeals and Consumer's Buying Intention: The Role of Emotional and Rational Appeals

### Abstract

*Advertising appeals play an important role in the effectiveness of advertising to attract or grasp consumer buying intention. This study is based on the differential effect of advertising appeals on consumer's buying intentions. The results of the study show that advertising appeals have strong impact on consumer's buying intention. All the hypothesis of the study was positive and significant. The results of this study are helpful in decision making for the corporate sector to develop and effectively use the ideas of advertising appeals for the promotion of a particular brand.*

**Key Words:** Advertising Appeals (AA), Emotional advertising appeals (EAA), Rational Advertising Appeals (RAA) Consumer's Buying Intention (CBI).

### Introduction

In this study, it has been tried to know the role of identifying the “Impact of Emotional and Rational Advertising Appeals on Consumer's Buying Behavior” in the Pakistan scenario. Many reasons pursue the consumer attention and response to the different advertising appeals, and many diverse approaches presented by the researchers about the effectiveness of advertising appeals towards the consumer's response. Some of the distinct approaches presented by the researchers regarding advertising effectiveness are giving below.

This is very difficult for advertisers and companies' management to decide the appropriate advertising appeals and message contents in advertising for promoting a particular product or service. The advertising agencies and companies need to equip with the concept of use and implementation of suitable advertising appeal for advertising and it needs to be very clear to the practitioners and professionals; that, either the advertisement appeals should consist of emotionality or rationality? Some researchers argued that emotional appeal has a strong impact on consumer's attention than rational appeal because the emotional appeal has a dramatic theme of persuasion to capture the consumer's interest. Although, rational appeal message consisted of the complete information about the products or services features, attributes, quality, and price that contribute to increasing the effectiveness of rational advertising appeal towards consumer's buying behavior (Kumar 2013).

Advertising is a core ingredient and promotion is a significant part of our social and corporate society both from marketers and customers' perspective. Companies are using different techniques and adopting numerous approaches in advertising appeals to place their offers in the mind of the target audience. The modern advertisers are sensibly using different integrated marketing communication (IMC) tools, such as electronic media (Television, Cable, and Radio), print media (Newspaper, magazines, and brochures), outdoor advertising (Billboards, and Banners), internet, and promotion mix elements (George & Belch, 2003). In the past, the marketers did not have an appropriate approach to advertise their products or services to the customers in target markets. Due to improvement in the advertising industry, the production or creation of products/services is rapidly increasing, because advanced Techniques and tools of promotion/advertising have equipped the promoters to create

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sufficient demand for the products/services for the targeted customers. To approaching such demands, the advertisers particularly adopted two techniques; (i) hard-sell approach, which persuades customers to buy the product/service by creating a rational motivation toward that particular brand, (ii) soft-sell approach, which grasp consumer emotions for a product/service after building a good image of the brand. These two techniques are known as “the art and science of advertising” (Wells, 1998). Therefore, the emotionality and rationality both appeals are required to be checked in the context where both prevail in the society. Thus, the study is conducted in this context which is more relevant and practical.

## **Literature Review**

The operational definition of marketing is “the four elements of the product, price, place, and the promotion that organizations used to attract the customer towards their goods or services. that a firm blend to produce the response it wants in the target market”. It is specifically controlled and tactfully managed by the marketers for the placement of their offering (Product, services) in the mind of targeted customers in the different market segments.

If one defines the advertising appeal, then it can be defined as the way an advertiser intends to appeal an individual's intention. This appeal is made to persuade the buying intention of the consumer. Advertising appeal is also termed as to speak about the needs, wants preferences, and interests of the targeted audience ([Kemp, 2012](#); Lee, & Johnson, 1999; Plisse, 2000). In a broader sense, the advertising appeal indicates the different elements related to the product (goods or services) through a variety of ways that communicate the benefits related to customer choice and interest ([Kotler, 1991](#)).

The dominating and most influential theme of the advertisement helps consumers to make a purchase decision and remember that particular advertisement of the brand. Mueller, (1987) suggested that the attractive theme of the advertisement message is very important for a successful advertisement. He further said that a successful message appeal is the one that appeals to consumer's needs, wants, goals, and self-interest. As per Kotler and Armstrong's views (2001), Emotional messages arouse both positive (love, humor, pride, and joy) and negative (fear, guilt, and shame) that furthermore generate intention or purchase behavior.

According to Kotler and Armstrong (1991) definition “the emotional advertising appeal is an attempt to stir up either negative or positive emotions that can motivate purchase. These include fear, guilt, surprise, and shame appeals that get people to do the thing they should or stop doing things they shouldn't. Communicators also use positive emotional appeals such as love, humor, pride, hope, and joy.”

Fear is one of the appeals which activate human behavior. It contains the perception of harm, threat, danger, loss, or refusal ([Shaver, et al., 1987](#)). Unlike Happy appeals, it produces stress, strain, and anxiety in the mind of the consumer. In the words of [Rogers \(1975\)](#), fear appeal describes the unfavorable consequences and it may result from failure to adopt the communicator's recommendations”. Hence, fear appeals are categorized as negative allurements (Lucas & Benson, 1930). Fear appeals contain those messages that aim to create fear, abhorrent picture, and disgusting scene. It may present unfamiliar circumstances or situations that make the audience feared and vulnerable (Shaver et al., 1987).

In the views of Lazarus (1991) happiness is a positive feeling often related to joy. These feelings of happiness start with favorable consequences for self or one's social status (Shaver et al., 1987). So, happy appeals are considered positive messages, and these appeals are indicated by characters with smiling or laughing faces or images and depictions of pleasant and happy sceneries (Shaver et al., 1987).

According to [Miller & Stafford \(1999\)](#), define rational advertising message appeal is an approach that stimulates a consumer to make a reasonable and balanced decision under serious consideration practice about a particular brand. Kotler (1991) proposed that rational advertising appeal focused on the rational perception that stimulates consumers by explaining the product benefits and features that

can satisfy customer needs. The customer strives for benefits from the product and service; so rational appeal emphasizes the provision of such benefits to the customer with rationality.

[Hsu \(1990\)](#) described that purchase intention consists of consumer particular transactional behavior which shows making a general estimation for a product and emotional response that shows their attitude towards an object. When the advertisement has the potential to hold a positive feeling in the consumer mind for a particular product and service, the consumer intention will be strong. [Blackwell et al \(2001\)](#), define consumer behavior is the study of activities in which the products and services may possess, use, consume, and finally disposed of by the consumers.

The most important creative strategy of an advertiser's decision is to critically think about the areas of an advertisement which include source, message, and of course channel for the development of an influential advertisement. The present study focuses on the message and specifically on different aspects of appeals used in the advertisement. These advertising appeals generally include rational or logical appeal that makes the customer or consumer able to look and prefer the factual reason for purchasing a particular brand. In this appeal, the consumer's rational and reasoning sense is persuaded for the purchase of a specific commodity. While on the other hand, emotional appeal is commonly used to persuade the consumer's emotionality. This sort of appeal is exercised to energize the targeted audience's emotions and to compel them to buy a particular commodity. As for as question that which one of the abovementioned appeals is more effective is concerned, it is still disputed and undecided, but it is generally thought that amalgamating both the appeals in one ad would develop a smarter and progressive advertisement. Meanwhile, some other commonly used types of appeals are such as humor, fear, and comparative advertising ([Belch, & Belch, 2003](#))

Philip Kotler and Gray Armstrong define the term marketing as "the process by which companies create value for customers and building strong customer relationships to return capture value from customers in return". According to the above definition; (i) the first part of this definition explains that the marketing is a consistent and step by step process in which the marketers carry out all marketing activities in rational and logical manners from its execution to a conclusion. (ii) The second part of the definition represents that the companies create value in market offerings (products, services, events, ideas, places, and peoples) for their customers and something that must have the superior value which has the ability to satisfied the customer's needs and wants. (iii) The third part of the definition expresses the strong relationship and spiritual bonding of customers with a particular brand based on a higher level of satisfaction derived from any particular product/service after use or consumption. This is understood, that the relationship between company and consumer extremely based on the superior value of brands and the level of customer satisfaction. (iv) the last portion of this definition enlightens that the companies and marketers also want something in return as a reward from consumers against creation and delivering superior value, that is spiritual bonding and customer loyalty with brands of a particular company or organization (Philip Kotler, Gray Armstrong).

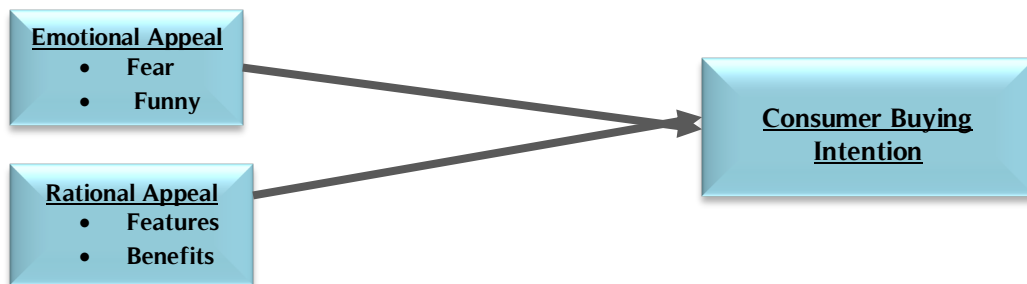
Long-Yi Lin (2011) suggested that advertising appeals have strong positive impact on consumer's buying intentions. It is further concluded that there is a differential effect of both appeals (emotional and rational) on the consumer buying intention, but rational advertising appeal is more influential to consumer's buying intention than emotional appeal. Based on such literature review following are the hypotheses of this research:

**H:** Emotional advertising appeal has a significant influence on consumer buying intentions.

**H:** Rational advertisement appeal has a significant influence on consumer buying intentions.

**H:** There is a differential effect of emotional advertising appeal and rational advertising appeal on consumer's buying intentions.

## Theoretical framework



## Methodology

Academic research, at any level, is a systemic process of finding out the answers to the researcher's questions. Two main research methodologies are often used in academic research; firstly, the quantitative research which is commonly based on statistics and mathematical calculations. Secondly, qualitative research sees the world as a unit that is active and ever-changing with time. The Present Study is quantitative.

Research design is defined as “the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure” (Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). The present research is (experimental research) design to follow.

This research study was causal. In sense of causal study; it has been intended to investigate the causal effect of independent (cause) and the dependent variable (effect). For gathering data from the large population the survey method is a more reliable method used most commonly in social science.

**Table 1.** Scales and Items

Variables	Author	Items
Emotional Advertising Appeal	Abelson et al. (1982)	10
Rational Advertising Appeal	Batra and Stephens D. (1987)	10
Consumer's Buying Intention	Dr. D. Prasanna Kumar & K. et al. (2013).	05

Two Television commercials (Ufone and Mobilink) have been elected; first for emotional, and second for rational appeal from the same industry. Students (Participants) have been properly being seated in the hall. Television Commercialshave has been played on multimedia before the viewers. After viewing the commercials, the questionnaires have been distributed among the respondents. They have been asked to fill the questionnaire with complete information and their perception of advertisements. After the completion, the questionnaire has been recollected from each respondent.

Students from selected universities have been invited through invitation letters on the specified date for the participation. It has been proposed to select two Television commercials of two telecommunication companies (Ufone, and Mobilink) from Pakistan; comprising the contents of emotional and rational appeals for data collection. The advertising commercials of these companies have been selected based on emotional and rational advertising appeals.

## Results and Analysis

The study was quantitative in nature and statistical software SPSS was used to analyze the data. Study setting for this research was field study in which the participant's (Students) have been contacted in their natural environment to collect data through questionnaires. The students of different levels in the universities were the unit of analysis for this study. Students of all public and private universities of Peshawar have been selected as the population for this study. Peshawar is a big city of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). Four universities of Peshawar city; two from the public, and two from the private

sector have been selected through convenience sampling on the bases of accessibility. The entire universities of Peshawar were much difficult to collect the data within a limited time frame and resources. The sample size of 240 students has been selected, 60 from each university as a participant for the research study. The sample size for this study was 240 students from four universities of Peshawar. The analysis was done by applying regression statistical tool.

The Cronbach's alpha statistics was used to measure the reliability of instrument of the different variable included in this research study and results were mentioned in table 2:

**Table 2.** Reliability results

S.no	Name of Variables	Alpha value
1.	Emotional Advertising Appeal	.783
2.	Rational Advertising Appeal	.813
3.	Consumer's BuyingIntention	.687

The significant level of Cronbach's value is 0.60. The value is accepted when equal to or greater than 0.60. Any alpha value greater than 0.60 for any variable is assumed the instrument is reliable. It indicates that the instrument is reliable for data collection.

**H:** Emotional advertising appeal has a significant influence on consumer buying intentions.

**Table 3.** Anova

	Sum of Square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	6.551	1	6.551	169.807	0.00
Residual	121.227	237	.512		
Total	127.778	238			

*Predictor: EAA, Dependent: CPI*

The model fit is tested using F statistics. The standard value for F statistics is 4. If F Value is equal to or greater than 4, it means that model is fitted to the data. The second predictor is P-value which should be less than 0.05. The results of the present study show that F value is and P-value both are according to the standard and accepted as shown in table 3. Therefore, the model of the research study is significant and accepted.

**Table 4.** Coefficient

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B		B		
Constant	1.309			7.788	.000
EAA	0.703		.621	13.679	.000

*Predictor: EAA, Dependent: CPI*

The results of the coefficient table show the strength and direction of variables and their associations in the model. The P-value for each association must be less than 0.05 which is significant in table 4. The Beta value for the emotional advertising appeal is 0.621 which shows that one unit change in emotional advertising appeal will make change 0.621 unit changes in consumer buying intention. The t-value should be greater than 2 and in the accepted range. It shows that the effect of emotional appeal on consumer buying intention is significant therefore the H<sub>1</sub> is accepted.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Rational Advertisement Appeal Has A Significant Influence on Consumer Buying Intentions.

**Table 5.** Anova

	Sum of Square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	41.436	1	41.436	99.908	0.00

Residual	98.71	238	.415
Total	140.147	239	

Predictor: RAA, Dependent: CPI

The model fit is tested using F statistics. The standard value for F statistics is 4. If F Value is equal to or greater than 4 then it shows that model rational advertising appeal on consumer buying intention is fit to the data. The second predictor is P-value which should be less than 0.05. The results of the present study show that F value and P-value both are according to the standard and accepted as shown in table 5. Therefore, the results of this study show that model rational advertising appeal on consumer buying intention of the research study is significant.

**Table 6.** Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	B		
Constant	1.123		5.047	.000
RAA	.603	.544	9.995	.000

Predictor: RAA, Dependent: CPI

The results of the coefficient table show the strength and direction of variables and their associations in the model. The P-value for each association must be less than 0.05 which is significant in table 6. The Beta value for the rational advertising appeal is 0.544 which shows that one unit change in rational advertising appeal will make change 0.621 unit changes in consumer buying intention. The t-value should be greater than 2 and in the accepted range. It shows that the influence of rational appeal on consumer buying intention is significant therefore, H<sub>1</sub> is accepted.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a Differential Effect of Emotional Advertising Appeal and Rational Advertising Appeal Upon the Consumer Buying Intentions.

**Table 7.** Anova

	Sum of Square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	29.696	2	14.848	35.79	0.00
Residual	97.686	235	.416		
Total	127.382	237			

Predictor: EAA, RAA, Dependent: CPI

Multiple regression tool is applied to check the model fitting of both emotional and rational advertising appeal on consumer buying intention. The model fit is tested using F statistics. The standard value for F statistics is 4. If F Value is equal to or greater than 4 then it shows that model emotional and rational advertising appeal on consumer buying intention is fit to the data. The second predictor is P-value which should be less than 0.05. The results of the present study show that F value and P-value both are according to the standard and accepted as shown in table 4.6. Therefore, based on the results of table 7, that emotional and rational appeal on consumer buying intention of the research study is significant.

**Table 8.** Coefficient

	Un- Coefficients	St-Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	B		
Constant	.593		1.445	.150
EAA	.757	.476	8.263	.000
RAA	.249	.238	2.658	.041

Predictor: EAA, RAA, Dependent: CPI

The results of the coefficient table show the strength and direction of variables and their associations in the model. The P-value for each association must be less than 0.05 which is significant in table 8. The Beta value for the emotional appeal is 0.476 which shows that one unit change in the emotional appeal will make a 0.476 unit change in consumer buying intention. The t-value must be greater than 2. The t value for emotional appeals is 8.263 which is significant and accepted. Similarly, the P-value of emotional appeal is 0.00 less than 0.05 which is significant and accepted. The Standardized beta value of the rational appeal is 0.238, which represents that there will be 0.238 units change in the consumer's buying intention due to 1 unit change in rational advertising appeal. The t-value of rational appeal is 2.658; which is more than 2. It shows that rational appeal is significant. The P-value for rational appeal is 0.041 which is less than 0.05, which shows a significant level. All the indicators significantly predict the effect of both emotional advertising appeal and rational appeal on consumer buying intention but the emotional appeal is a stronger predictor of consumer buying intention as compare to rational appeal. The statistical results show emotional appeal more effective than rational appeal in the advertisement of products. Thus the Hypothesis H<sub>1</sub> is accepted and proved.

## **Conclusion**

This research study is conducted to know the influence of advertising appeals (emotional advertising appeal, and rational advertising appeal) on the consumer's buying intention. The students of the public and private sector universities of Peshawar city were the populations, and the sample size of 240 students of the management sciences department has been selected through simple random sampling for this study. The demographics e.g. gender age and education of the respondents were included. The data was collected through a structured questionnaire that consisted of 25 items, 10 items for emotional advertising appeal, 10 for rational advertising appeal, and 5 items for consumer's buying intention respectively. Likert scale was used to measure the response of the respondents. The five-point Likert scale has been used for the items in the questionnaire

Both appeals had a significant effect on the consumer's buying intention. The advertisers and marketers should use both the appeals in the advertisement for their brand. The results of this study suggested that emotional advertising appeal is more influential than rational advertising appeal. Overall the results suggest that emotional advertising appeals are more effective to influence consumer buying intention as compare to rational advertising appeal.

## **Future Research Directions**

In this study, there were some limitations. This study can be expended by including more related variables, dimensions e.g. appeals; which were not the part of this research study. The fore coming researcher can be conducted in different cultures and regions to know the contextual novelty.

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