

# STUDY ON IMPACT OF EMOTIONAL ADVERTISING ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR FOR FMCG PRODUCTS

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**Abstract.** Over several years, advertisements have seen a drastic change in the way they are communicated to the target audience. From using billboards to newspapers, radio, television and now social media. From direct way of delivering information to now using different creative ways; advertisements have come a long way. What has remained common is the goal of every advertisement which is to inform, influence and remind customers of products. This paper aims to identify if emotional advertisements influence the consumer buying behavior for low involvement products i.e., Fast Moving Consumer Goods products; and a product category taken for the purpose of the study is soaps. Two soaps have been taken into account- Dove and Pears, both belong to the same parent company i.e. Hindustan Unilever. Primary data has been collected using online questionnaire sent across India via different social media platforms. The data analysis tool that was used for the study was SPSS. The results show that emotional advertisements do impact customers and their purchase intentions with respect to FMCG products. The study also shows that emotional advertisements create a liking bias in the minds of customers when it comes to soaps.

**Keywords:** Consumer buying behavior, emotional advertisements, liking bias, low involvement products, purchase intention.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Advertisement is the way how companies first introduce their products to customers. The basic purpose of an advertisement is to inform, influence and remind customers of the products. In olden days, companies only focused on traditional mainstream advertisement techniques, wherein only the basic information, features and purpose of the product was communicated. But with increase in competition, modern companies are finding new and new ways to stand out from their competitors. Today, marketers are using different promotional gimmicks to attract customer's attention and to maintain long term customer-relationship with them. There are different types of strategies how a company can formulate their ad structure. Apart from these, emphasizing on emotional dimension has always been considered a plus point, since emotions are something that is inevitable in human life. Different types of emotional appeal have different impact on different people. From using love to humor, happiness or sadness, excitement or just savvy; all these emotions have potential to grab the customer's attention. Studies have proved that FMCG companies like Hindustan Unilever, ITC etc. all adopt this trick.

FMCG products; and a product category taken for the purpose of the study is soaps. Two soaps have been taken into account- Dove and Pears, both belong to the same parent company i.e. Hindustan Unilever.

## 2. RESEARCH PROBLEM, OBJECTIVE AND HYPOTHESES

Today, customers are exposed to abundance of advertisements that makes their decision process slightly more challenging, especially when it comes to low involvement products i.e., FMCG products. Hence FMCG companies must take strategic decisions to formulate their advertisements in such a way that they stand out; and adopting emotional appeal in their advertisements would be a great way to do so. It could be an effective way of product differentiation and building strong customer relationships and eventually influencing their purchase decision.

Some major objectives of the research are:

- To identify the effect of emotional advertisements on consumer buying behavior for FMCG products.
- To determine the effectiveness of emotional advertisement in creating strong customer relationship.
- To determine if advertisements influence customers' preferences towards soaps.

Here the most three important research hypotheses are detailed together with alternative:

### 1. Emotional advertisements & brand attitude

H10: There is no impact of emotional advertisements on brand attitude.

H11: There is a significant impact of emotional advertisements on brand attitude.

### 2. Emotional advertisements & gw.r.t.ender

H20: There is no impact of emotional advertisements on consumer buying behavior for FMCG products w.r.t gender.

H21: There is a significant impact of emotional advertisements on consumer buying behavior for FMCG products w.r.t gender.

### 3. Emotional advertisements & consumers' preference

H30: There is no relationship between emotional advertisements and consumers' preference for Dove over Pears.

H31: There is a relationship between emotional advertisements and consumers' preference for Dove over Pears.

## 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies have been done in the past on how different types of advertisements can help marketers present their product more effectively to their audience. A good product with a bad advertisement won't work. The primary use of an advertisement is to inform and persuade customers about the product. Advertisements can assist customers in deciding which product or service to purchase. Advertisements are a

powerful form of communication that can effectively communicate a message to a specific target of customers. Moreover, advertisements have the ability to easily convince the customers for the product. Furthermore, ads must also be appealing for customers to engage in it. [1]

Modern marketers today use different strategies to increase their product engagement among their customers. One such strategy is celebrity appeal. Research [2] found out that celebrities are more effective at promoting highly socialized goods than the field experts themselves. While customers can identify the professionalism shown by the expert, celebrities add a little more attractiveness in making recommendations when it comes to advertisements.

With so much exposure to internet and mass media, it is obvious that several psychological impressions are bound to happen in customer's mind. When a customer is exposed to an advertisement, he is not just looking at the product but is also imprinting the brand associated with it in his mind subconsciously. This is called the brand image. It is not necessary to form a brand image; rather, it is shaped naturally. People generally have a positive outlook toward the brand image. A study also found out that teenagers in Gujranwala, Pakistan are much conscious about their social status, so they prefer branded products and advertisements affects their consumer buying behavior positively. [3]

### *3.1. Why Emotional Advertising?*

The primary goal of an advertiser is to reach out to potential customers and influence their perceptions, and purchasing behavior. They spend a lot of money to keep people interested in their products (markets). To succeed, they must first understand what are the reasons their potential customers act the way they do. Advertisements including emotional appeals motivate customers emotionally rather than the rational part. It is established through research by [4] that Emotional response have a strong association with the consumer buying behavior. Consumers buy products which they are emotionally attached to. And these attachments are generated through advertising in the form of audio, video, and text, which he or she finds appealing.

But nonetheless, it is an accepted truth that consumer behavior can sometimes be unpredictable. Different people react differently to the same things. Or advertisements in this case. And hence consumer responses towards advertisements or various marketing program cannot be the same. So, a lot of marketers try to aim for different emotional chords of their target customers to achieve maximum advertising effectiveness. The growing importance of customer emotions in purchasing decisions has prompted researchers to emphasize emotions as a purchase engine.

### *3.2. Does it really work?*

Since many centuries scientists have been trying to prove that everything happens for a scientific reason. At the end of the day, everything around us is science. Including our own body. Our psychological feelings happen for a reason. In advertising, brand recall is crucial. The success or failure of a brand is determined by brand recall at the point of purchase. When a customer views an advertisement, his brain immediately processes the information. The brain tends to have two functionally distinct ways of recognizing intelligence. This is done in two ways: a) by acquaintance;

and b) by explanation. The holistic and synthetic blend of sensory data from both the internal and external world is known as information through acquaintance based on emotional platform. The sequential and logical processing of information based on how the receiver assesses the world is known as knowledge by definition (reason). Consumers are motivated by rational appeals in ads because of facts and logical arguments, whereas emotional appeals use images and emotions to shape consumers' perceptions of the brand. It is observed that regardless of the type of emotional platform used to execute the promotional campaign, affective or emotional appeals seem to elicit a more optimistic and affective response than non-emotional appeals. [5]

Researchers [6] describes emotional advertising as a powerful promotional tool that draws in customers' attention and trigger their feelings, attitudes, and perceptions about a product or service. They also add that emotional advertising is simple to comprehend, engages people's interest, and cultivates strong brand memories. These memories remain in the back of a customer's mind, and when they are faced with a purchasing decision, these memories motivate them to make a final decision. Even emotional ads have the power to persuade customers to purchase a costly or unnecessary item.

Different types of commercials hit one's mind when customer thinks of emotions in advertising; advertisements that display moving and heart-touching images, cooing babies, or romping puppies come to mind. Typically, emotional responses to ads are thought to have the ability to bring tears or a smile to one's face. However, any advertisement elicits a sentimental response because almost anything we encounter in life elicits an automatic emotional response. As a result, it is possible to infer that emotion is more important than most advertisers know. Consumers who have a favorable impression of the advertisement are more likely to be interested in purchasing the item. [7]

### *3.3. Different Emotional Appeals*

Customer brand preferences, brand awareness, brand recall, and ultimately purchasing decision are all influenced by the type of emotion used in advertising. Advertisements are used by marketers to sell their products, and emotions in advertisements can build a positive or negative brand picture in the minds of customers. [8]

Even though rational appeals are important, it is also inferred that emotional and rational; both play a significant role for different product categories. As concluded by researchers, that both rational and emotional advertising appeals have a positive impact on advertising attitude and purchasing intent. Whereas emotional appeals have a greater impact on advertising attitude for low-involvement goods, objective or rational appeals have a greater impact on high-involvement products. [9]

### *3.4 Research gap*

FMCG as a sector, is full of competition and its market is huge. Thus, FMCG companies must take significant steps to position themselves in a way that they stand out by adopting emotional appeals in their advertisements. Most of the research above on emotional advertisement domain focused on general antecedents- i.e., previously existed things and its consequences. This study aims at directing research efforts in examining emotional advertisements effects and assessing

how effective they are in creating preference in the minds of the customers with respect to two soaps, i.e., Dove and Pears.

#### 4. BRIEF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A quantitative method was used to study the impact of emotional advertising on consumer buying behavior for FMCG Products [10], [11]. The responses were collected using questionnaire which was circulated online via different social media platforms. The sample size of respondents for the study was 173, but 160 responses were taken into account after removing the outliers. The objective was to collect as much genuine responses as possible and the identity of all the respondents has been kept confidential.

The responses were gathered using a questionnaire that was distributed over several social media channels online, and the data was analyzed using SPSS software. The tests conducted are linear regression analysis, cross tabs, and chi-square test.

#### 5. DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1 presents general favourable images of the research:

Category	Sub-category	Percentage
Gender	Females	51.4%
	Males	48.6%
Age Distribution	Below 18	12.1%
	18-30	54.9%
	31-40	12.1%
	41-50	6.9%
	Above 50	13.9%
Qualification	Diploma	10.9%
	Graduate	48.9%
	Post Graduate	32.8%
	PhD	2.3%
	Others	5.1%
Occupation	Student	44.3%
	Corporate Employee	32.2%
	Homemaker	9.2%
	Business Person	6.3%
	Others	8%

Source: Realised by authors

**Table no. 1** A synthesis of sample's demographic data

#### Reliability Test-

Cronbach's Alpha provides with a simple way to measure the reliability of estimates [12]. Its use assumes that it has multiple elements measuring the same underlying structure. As a rule of thumb, a Cronbach's alpha of 0.70 or higher is better.

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.744	2

Source: Realised by authors

**Table no. 2** reveals a higher Cronbach's Alpha value (0.744) which is above the limit equal to the prescribed value of 0.7. The conclusion offers validity status to research and thus the sample's data are reliable indeed, according to the above-mentioned standard thumb rule for checking the reliability of the information set collected by this online survey forms.

#### Hypothesis Tests-

##### A. Hypothesis 1:

*There is a significant impact of emotional advertisements on brand attitude.*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.594 <sup>a</sup>	.353	.348	.495

a. Predictors: (Constant), FMCG companies that focus on connecting and engaging people in their advertisements, give me a positive feeling about the brand.

Source: Realised by authors

The R value of 0.594, shown in **Table no. 3**, identifies simple and moderate correlation, indicating that the dependent and independent variables are positively correlated. The R square value (0.353) indicates how much of the total variation in the dependent variable (watching new and creative emotional advertisements to make a better brand) can be explained by the independent variable (FMCG companies that focus on connecting and engaging people in their advertisements offer positive feeling about the brand). In this case, more than 1/3 of general variation can be explained to a moderate extent.

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	21.072	1	21.072	86.021	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	38.703	158	.245		
	Total	59.775	159			

a. Dependent Variable: Watching new and creative emotional advertisements makes me like the brand better.

b. Predictors: (Constant), FMCG companies that focus on connecting and engaging people in their advertisements, give me a positive feeling about the brand.

Source: Realised by authors

The ANOVA **Table no. 4** shows how well the regression equation fits the data, or how well it predicts the dependent variable. This table indicates that the regression model predicts the dependent variable moderately well. The regression model is statistically significant since the significance value = 0.000 satisfies  $p < 0.05$ .

Thus, from above analysis, the null hypothesis is rejected, i.e., There is no impact of emotional advertisements on brand attitude. Therefore, this research can confirm that *there is a significant impact of emotional advertisements on brand attitude i.e., and accept the alternate hypothesis.*

**B. Hypothesis 2:**

*There is a significant impact of emotional advertisements on consumer buying behavior for FMCG products w.r.t gender.*

Gender * Would you buy any FMCG product, if its emotional ad intrigues you?					
Count					
		Would you buy any FMCG product, if its emotional ad intrigues you?			Total
		1 (Yes)	2 (Maybe)	3 (No)	
Gender	Female	39	44	1	84
	Male	18	52	6	76
Total		57	96	7	160

Source: Realised by authors

A number of 39 females from above **Table no. 5**, would definitely buy an FMCG product, if its emotional ad intrigues them, whereas 44 women maybe do the same. Whereas, 18 men would definitely buy an FMCG product, if its emotional ad intrigues them and 52 men maybe do the same.

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.604 <sup>a</sup>	2	.003
Likelihood Ratio	12.152	2	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	11.373	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	160		

a. 2 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.33.

Source: Realised by authors

*Chi-Square* statistic is 11.604, inside the **Table no. 6** and appears in the similar entitled column. The p-value appears in the same row in the “Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)” column which is 0.003, and thus the result becomes significant (the value is equal to or less than the designated alpha level which is taken to be 0.05). In this case, the p-value is smaller than the standard alpha value, so the research reject the null hypothesis which states that there is no impact of emotional advertisements on consumer buying behavior for FMCG products w.r.t gender. Therefore, this research can accept the alternate hypothesis which states *there is a significant impact of emotional advertisements on consumer buying behavior for FMCG products w.r.t gender.*

**C. Hypothesis 3:**

*There is a relationship between emotional advertisements and consumers’ preference for Dove over Pears.*

Do you remember any emotional advertisement related to Dove? * Do you think you have a liking bias towards Dove/Pears because of its emotional advertisement? Crosstabulation					
Count					
		Do you think you have a liking bias towards Dove/Pears because of its emotional advertisement?			Total
		1 (Yes)	2 (Maybe)	3 (No)	
Do you remember any emotional advertisement related to Dove?	1 (Yes)	41	68	40	149
	3 (No)	1	0	10	11
Total		42	68	50	160

Source: Realised by authors

Inside **Table no. 7**, 41 respondents remember emotional advertisement related to Dove and think they have a liking bias towards it because of its emotional advertisement. Whereas 68 respondents remember emotional advertisement related to Dove and think they might have a liking bias towards it because of its emotional advertisement and 40 respondents do not have a liking bias.

Do you remember any emotional advertisement related to Pears? * Do you think you have a liking bias towards Dove/Pears because of its emotional advertisement? Crosstabulation					
Count					
		Do you think you have a liking bias towards Dove/Pears because of its emotional advertisement?			Total
		1 (Yes)	2 (Maybe)	3 (No)	
Do you remember any emotional advertisement related to Pears?	1 (Yes)	23	39	35	97
	3 (No)	19	29	15	63
Total		42	68	50	160

Source: Realised by authors

Inside **Table no. 8**, 23 respondents remember emotional advertisements related to Pears and think they have a liking bias towards that soap because of its emotional advertisement, whereas 39 respondents who remember the ad, may not have a liking bias with 35 respondents not having bias at all. There are 19 respondents who do not remember any emotional advertisement related to Pears but have a liking bias towards a soap because of its emotional advertisement, 29 respondents may not have a liking bias and 15 do not remember any ad nor have a preference or bias towards the soap.

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	19.798 <sup>a</sup>	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	20.634	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	12.099	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	160		
a. 3 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.89.			

Source: Realised by authors

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.751 <sup>a</sup>	2	.253
Likelihood Ratio	2.805	2	.246
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.323	1	.127
N of Valid Cases	160		
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 16.54.			

Source: Realised by authors

The p value, asymptotic significance is 0.000 for **Table no. 9- Chi-Square Tests (Dove)**; whereas the p-value for **Table no. 10- Chi-Square Tests (Pears)** is 0.253. If p-value is less than 0.05, only then there's a relationship or association between two variables. From above, the p value being less than 0.05 (for Dove), the research can reject the null hypothesis which states there is no relationship between emotional advertisements and consumers' preference for Dove over Pears, and accept the alternate hypothesis that *there is a relationship between emotional advertisements and consumers' preference for Dove over Pears*.

## 6. KEY FINDINGS

The study was aimed to find out if emotional advertisements influence the purchase decisions for FMCG products; and a product category taken for the purpose of the study was soaps. Two soaps had been taken into account-Dove and Pears, both belong to the same parent company i.e. Hindustan Unilever. An illustrative literature review from various research papers and articles published by national and global organizations to collect preliminary information about the topic was done [13]. A questionnaire was circulated online among various groups of people of different age groups and professions to answer different questions related to the topic.

After the data analysis, it was found that:

- i) 95.4% of the respondents believe that advertisements are important and more than half of the total respondents believe that advertisements influence their purchase decisions;
- ii) 83.2% of the respondents think emotional advertisements help them remember the product and the brand associated with it better while 35.8% of the total respondents are into buying any FMCG product, if its emotional ad intrigues them and almost 60% of the remaining may consider buying

products based on how much the emotional advertisements have intrigued them;

iii) 90.7% of the respondents agree that FMCG companies that focus on connecting and engaging people in their advertisements, give them a positive feeling about the brand and almost 87% of the total respondents agree that watching new and creative emotional advertisements make them like the brand better; making way for strong customer relationships and enhancing favorable brand attitude in the minds of customers towards the brands;

iv) 96% of the respondents have voted for television advertisements as their source of awareness of different soaps, among other sources and 84.4% of the total respondents' main factor for selecting a soap is the brand among other factors like fragrance, lather, packaging, discounts & offers and others;

v) 93.1% of the respondents remember emotional advertisements related to Dove Soap while 62.4% of the total respondents remember emotional advertisements related to Pears Soap. 49.1% of the total respondents prefer Dove Soap over any other soap and 9.8% prefer Pears Soap;

vi) 76.9% of the respondents could recall advertisements related to Dove/Pears because of their unique emotional advertisements among other factors like social media posts appreciating them, hoardings, billboards, newspaper ads and others;

vii) 25.4% of the total respondents think they do have a liking bias towards their preferred soap because of its emotional advertisement while 42.8% may have a liking bias towards their preferred soap because of its emotional advertisement;

## 7. DISCUSSIONS

The findings help us show that although there are a lot of other ways to advertise or market your product, emotional advertisements do create an impact in consumers' minds; especially when it comes to FMCG products. Advertisements are becoming more and more popular with advancement of technology and social media. Everyone wants to be in the top of their games and customer engagement is a great way to do so. Hence from above we can assert that companies that create quality emotional advertisements are more likely to be remembered and liked by people and that can in turn convert them into their potential buyers. It was also found that respondents preferred Dove over Pears as their preferred soap and that was most likely because they could remember the emotional advertisement of Dove better than that of Pears and hence that created a liking bias in their minds towards that soap

## 8. SUGGESTIONS

Emotional advertisements usually focus on the psychological part, and it is important for companies to focus on other aspects as well. Future studies can maybe focus on other different aspects and appeals of advertising and can take into account a large number of sample sizes and from different geographical areas. It can also include some new parameters to give much in-depth knowledge and a broad perspective about the topic which can add a new dimension to the study. Behavioral studies can also be conducted related to changing information consumption of products due to advancement of social media and technology. Moreover,

there is always a scope to explore other advertising strategies used by companies to compete in market.

## 9. CONCLUSION

This study mainly focused on impact of emotional advertising on consumer buying behavior for FMCG products and their preference towards a soap because of it. The study was confined to Indian consumers of different age groups and professions. Almost 55% of the respondents belonged to the age group of 18-30 years. A majority of the total respondents were students and corporate employees. From the above findings, this research concludes emotional advertisements do impact consumer buying behavior for FMCG products. Companies that create quality emotional advertisements are more likely to be remembered and liked by people and that can in turn convert them into their potential buyers. Today, marketers are trying a lot of different strategies to create a difference, to engage more and more customers, and emotional advertisements indeed is a great way to do that.

Since FMCG is a huge sector, a product category taken for the study was soaps. The purpose was to identify if emotional advertisements create a liking bias towards soaps and two most popular soaps of a popular FMCG company was taken into consideration, i.e., comparison between preference for Dove or Pears based on their emotional advertisements; both belonging to the same parent company, HUL. It was found that people preferred Dove soap over Pears soap and they remembered the product well because of its emotional advertisement. This paper also concludes that people do have a liking bias towards Dove soap more because of their unique emotional advertisements.

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