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Joaddan K.



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 **Joaddan K.**
University of Douala



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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study was to assess the role of emotional appeals in international advertising campaigns in Cameroon.

Methodology: This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

Findings: Research on the role of emotional appeals in international advertising campaigns in Cameroon indicates that emotions play a significant role in influencing consumer behavior and brand perception. Emotional appeals, such as humor, nostalgia, and empathy, have been found to effectively capture consumers' attention and evoke positive attitudes toward advertised products or services. However, cultural nuances and socio-economic factors must be considered when crafting emotional appeals for international advertising in Cameroon. While certain emotions may

resonate universally, others may vary in effectiveness depending on cultural values and preferences. Therefore, successful international advertising campaigns in Cameroon require a careful balance of emotional appeals that align with local cultural norms and resonate with the target audience's emotions, ultimately leading to increased brand engagement and purchase intent.

Implications to Theory, Practice and Policy: Cultural dimensions' theory, elaboration likelihood model and cross-cultural consumer behavior framework may be used to anchor future studies on assessing the role of emotional appeals in international advertising campaigns in Cameroon. Marketers should prioritize crafting emotionally resonant narratives that are tailored to specific cultural nuances while maintaining a cohesive brand message. Policymakers should advocate for policies that promote cultural sensitivity and inclusivity in international advertising practices.

Keywords: *Emotional Appeals, International Advertising, Campaigns*

INTRODUCTION

Emotional appeals are persuasive strategies that aim to elicit an emotional response from the audience, such as fear, joy, anger, or pity. In international advertising campaigns, emotional appeals can be used to overcome cultural barriers, create a positive brand image, and influence consumer behavior. However, emotional appeals also pose some challenges for international advertisers, such as the need to adapt to different emotional norms, values, and expectations of the target market. In Cameroon, a country with diverse ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups, emotional appeals can be an effective way to reach a large and heterogeneous audience, but they also require careful research and testing to avoid offending or alienating potential customers.

In developed economies like the United States, brand attitude, purchase intention, and brand loyalty are deeply intertwined with consumer behavior. For instance, a study by Johnson et al. (2019) found that in the US, consumers tend to develop positive brand attitudes when they perceive a brand as aligning with their values and lifestyle. This positive attitude often translates into a higher purchase intention, with consumers being more likely to choose products from brands they have favorable attitudes towards. Additionally, in developed economies, brand loyalty is often fostered through consistent positive experiences with the brand over time. For example, in the US, companies like Apple have built strong brand loyalty through their innovative products, quality customer service, and seamless user experience, leading to repeat purchases and advocacy among consumers.

Similarly, in developed economies such as Japan, brand attitude, purchase intention, and brand loyalty play crucial roles in consumer decision-making. Research by Tanaka and Suzuki (2018) highlights that in Japan, consumers place high value on trust and reliability when forming brand attitudes. This trust is often built through consistent product quality and reliability over time. Consequently, Japanese consumers exhibit strong purchase intentions towards brands they perceive as trustworthy. Moreover, in Japan, brand loyalty is cultivated through long-term relationships between brands and consumers, with companies like Toyota exemplifying this through their emphasis on quality, durability, and customer satisfaction, leading to generations of loyal customers.

In developing economies, such as those found in Sub-Saharan Africa, consumer response to brands is also influenced by various factors. However, the dynamics may differ due to unique socio-economic contexts. For example, in a study by Ezeuduji and Lin (2020), it was found that in Sub-Saharan African countries like Nigeria, brand attitudes are often shaped by perceptions of prestige and social status. Consumers may exhibit high purchase intention towards brands that are associated with affluence or social recognition. Moreover, brand loyalty in these economies may be influenced by factors such as price sensitivity and availability of alternatives. Companies operating in these regions often employ strategies like competitive pricing and localized marketing to foster brand loyalty among consumers.

In developing economies like those in Sub-Saharan Africa, consumer response to brands is characterized by a unique set of challenges and opportunities. For instance, research by Mensah et al. (2018) emphasizes that in countries such as Ghana, brand attitudes are often influenced by factors such as cultural perceptions and societal norms. Consumers may develop favorable attitudes towards brands that resonate with their cultural values or offer products tailored to their specific needs. This alignment between brand values and cultural identity can significantly impact

purchase intentions, with consumers more likely to support brands that reflect their cultural identity. Moreover, in developing economies, brand loyalty may be shaped by factors such as trust in the brand's ability to deliver consistent quality despite economic uncertainties. Companies operating in these regions often focus on building trust through transparent communication and reliable product offerings to foster long-term loyalty among consumers.

Similarly, in countries like India, consumer response to brands is influenced by a complex interplay of socio-economic factors. Research by Kapoor and Lamba (2018) highlights that in India, consumers often exhibit brand loyalty when brands are perceived as socially responsible and actively contribute to community development initiatives. This sense of social responsibility resonates strongly with Indian consumers, who prioritize ethical business practices and corporate citizenship. Consequently, brands that engage in socially responsible activities may experience higher levels of loyalty and support from consumers. Additionally, in developing economies like India, where access to information and competition among brands are increasing rapidly, companies need to continuously innovate and adapt their strategies to meet evolving consumer preferences and expectations.

In developing economies, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, consumer response to brands is further influenced by factors such as economic instability, infrastructure limitations, and varying levels of access to information. Research by Akinfaderin-Agarau and Oluwaseyi (2019) suggests that in countries like Nigeria, where economic conditions can be volatile, consumers often prioritize affordability and value for money when making purchasing decisions. Consequently, brands that offer quality products at competitive prices may garner higher purchase intentions and loyalty from consumers. Moreover, in regions with limited access to traditional marketing channels, companies often rely on innovative approaches such as mobile marketing and community-based initiatives to engage with consumers and build brand awareness and loyalty.

Similarly, in countries like Kenya, consumer response to brands is influenced by the growing influence of digital technologies and shifting demographics. Research by Kimani and Njoroge (2020) highlights that Kenyan consumers, particularly the younger generation, are increasingly turning to social media and online platforms for product information and recommendations. Brands that effectively leverage digital channels to connect with consumers and offer personalized experiences may enjoy higher levels of brand loyalty and advocacy. Moreover, in developing economies like Kenya, where urbanization and economic growth are driving changes in consumer behavior, companies need to adapt their branding strategies to cater to the evolving needs and preferences of a diverse and dynamic consumer base.

In other developing economies such as Brazil, consumer response to brands is influenced by a combination of cultural factors, socio-economic conditions, and market dynamics. Research by Rocha and Campanário (2020) suggests that in Brazil, where cultural diversity is prevalent, brands often need to adapt their messaging and positioning strategies to resonate with different regional preferences and cultural nuances. This cultural sensitivity can impact brand attitudes, with consumers more likely to favor brands that demonstrate an understanding of and respect for local customs and traditions. Moreover, in Brazil's competitive market environment, brands that invest in building strong emotional connections with consumers through storytelling and experiential marketing initiatives may achieve higher levels of loyalty and advocacy.

In China, another prominent developing economy, consumer response to brands is shaped by rapid urbanization, increasing disposable incomes, and changing lifestyle preferences. Research by Li and Li (2021) highlights that in China, where e-commerce platforms and digital technologies are widely adopted, consumers exhibit a strong preference for brands that offer convenience, value, and a seamless online shopping experience. This digital-first approach to brand engagement has led to the rise of digital-native brands and influencer marketing strategies, which play a significant role in shaping brand attitudes and purchase intentions among Chinese consumers. Additionally, in China's dynamic market landscape, where consumer trends evolve rapidly, brands need to stay agile and responsive to emerging preferences and market shifts to maintain relevance and foster long-term loyalty among consumers.

In Russia, a developing economy with unique socio-cultural characteristics, consumer response to brands is influenced by historical factors, cultural traditions, and evolving market dynamics. Research by Vorobyev and Titova (2019) suggests that in Russia, where trust in institutions can be low, consumers often rely on brand reputation and word-of-mouth recommendations when forming brand attitudes and making purchasing decisions. Consequently, brands that prioritize transparency, integrity, and reliability in their operations may gain higher levels of trust and loyalty from Russian consumers. Moreover, in Russia's diverse and geographically vast market, brands may need to tailor their marketing strategies to effectively reach different demographic segments and regional markets, taking into account factors such as language preferences, cultural sensitivities, and consumer behaviors.

In Mexico, another emerging economy with a rich cultural heritage, consumer response to brands is influenced by a combination of tradition, family influence, and globalization. Research by Hernández-Ortega et al. (2020) highlights that in Mexico, where family plays a central role in society, brands often evoke strong emotional connections and nostalgia, particularly those associated with heritage and tradition. Brands that effectively tap into cultural symbols and storytelling elements may resonate deeply with Mexican consumers, leading to positive brand attitudes and increased purchase intentions. Additionally, in Mexico's rapidly urbanizing landscape, brands that leverage digital technologies and omnichannel marketing strategies to engage with consumers across online and offline touchpoints may gain a competitive advantage in building brand loyalty and driving long-term growth.

Emotional appeals, encompassing happiness, fear, sadness, and anger, serve as influential components of advertising and marketing strategies, impacting consumer responses such as brand attitude, purchase intention, and brand loyalty. Happiness appeals, as demonstrated by recent research (Smith & Fischer, 2019), have been shown to positively influence brand attitudes by associating joy and positivity with the advertised product or service. This emotional connection often leads to increased purchase intentions as consumers are more inclined to choose products that evoke positive emotions. Moreover, happiness appeals contribute to building long-term brand loyalty by fostering positive brand associations and memorable experiences.

Conversely, fear appeals, examined in contemporary studies (Chang & Thorson, 2021), can evoke a sense of urgency or necessity, prompting consumers to take action to alleviate their anxieties. While fear appeals may lead to immediate purchase intentions, their effectiveness in building brand loyalty may be limited if not carefully executed, as excessive fear can deter consumers. Sadness appeals, as explored by recent scholars (Li et al., 2020), leverage emotions of empathy and compassion, which can positively influence brand attitudes and foster deeper connections with

socially responsible brands. However, the impact on purchase intentions may vary depending on the alignment between the cause and the advertised product or service. Finally, anger appeals, scrutinized in contemporary literature (Lee & Lim, 2018), can incite action but also carry the risk of consumer backlash if perceived as manipulative or insensitive. While anger appeals may lead to short-term increases in purchase intentions, their long-term impact on brand loyalty may be undermined by negative associations.

Problem Statement

While the use of emotional appeals in advertising is well-established, there remains a gap in understanding their role and effectiveness in international advertising campaigns. As companies increasingly expand their operations globally, it is crucial to investigate how emotional appeals translate across cultural boundaries and diverse consumer demographics. Recent studies (Smith & Fischer, 2019; Chang & Thorson, 2021) have explored the impact of emotional appeals such as happiness, fear, sadness, and anger on consumer responses within specific cultural contexts. However, there is a lack of comprehensive research examining how these emotional appeals function in international advertising campaigns, where cultural differences, societal norms, and communication styles vary significantly.

Existing literature suggests that cultural factors play a significant role in shaping consumers' emotional responses to advertising messages (Li et al., 2020; Lee & Lim, 2018). However, there is limited empirical evidence on the specific strategies and tactics that multinational companies employ to adapt emotional appeals in their international advertising campaigns. Moreover, with the rapid globalization of markets and the increasing prevalence of digital media, there is a need to explore how emerging technologies and platforms influence the effectiveness of emotional appeals in cross-cultural contexts. Addressing these research gaps is essential for developing a deeper understanding of the role of emotional appeals in international advertising campaigns and informing strategic decision-making for global marketers.

Theoretical Framework

Cultural Dimensions Theory

Originated by Geert Hofstede, Cultural Dimensions Theory explores how cultural differences influence individuals' values, behaviors, and perceptions. This theory suggests that cultural dimensions such as individualism vs. collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance shape people's responses to advertising messages. Understanding these cultural nuances is crucial for international advertisers to effectively utilize emotional appeals across diverse cultural contexts (Hofstede, 2018).

Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)

Developed by Petty and Cacioppo, the Elaboration Likelihood Model proposes that individuals process persuasive messages through two routes: central (high elaboration) and peripheral (low elaboration). In the context of international advertising campaigns, this model helps researchers understand how consumers from different cultural backgrounds engage with emotional appeals based on their motivation and ability to process information. By considering the level of involvement and cultural factors, advertisers can strategically design emotional appeals that resonate with diverse audiences (Petty & Cacioppo, 2020).

Cross-Cultural Consumer Behavior Framework

Originating from the work of Shavitt and Han, this framework emphasizes the influence of cultural factors on consumer behavior across different countries. It examines how cultural values, norms, and communication styles shape consumers' responses to marketing stimuli, including emotional appeals. By applying this framework, researchers can identify cultural variations in emotional responses to advertising messages and develop culturally adaptive strategies for international advertising campaigns (Shavitt & Han, 2018).

Empirical Review

Smith et al (2017) conducted a comprehensive investigation into the nuanced impact of emotional appeals in international advertising campaigns. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach encompassing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, the study aimed to unravel the intricate interplay between emotional messaging and consumer behavior across diverse cultural landscapes. The qualitative component involved in-depth focus group discussions, providing rich insights into the emotional responses evoked by various advertising stimuli. Complementing this qualitative analysis, the quantitative phase employed large-scale surveys to quantify the extent of emotional resonance and its subsequent influence on brand perception and purchase intent. Findings from this multifaceted study illuminated the profound significance of emotional appeals in transcending cultural barriers and fostering consumer engagement on a global scale. Recommendations stemming from this research underscored the imperative for marketers to craft emotionally resonant narratives that strike a chord with consumers' underlying emotions while remaining cognizant of cultural sensitivities to maximize advertising effectiveness in international markets.

Chen et al (2018) embarked on a longitudinal journey spanning five years to chart the evolutionary trajectory of emotional appeals within the realm of international advertising, particularly within the dynamic landscape of digital platforms. Employing a sophisticated blend of advanced analytics, data mining techniques, and longitudinal surveys, the study sought to elucidate the shifting paradigms of consumer engagement and brand interaction in response to emotionally-driven advertising content across diverse digital mediums. Through meticulous analysis of vast datasets encompassing varied demographic segments and geographic regions, researchers discerned emergent trends and patterns indicative of the growing efficacy of emotional appeals in precipitating desired consumer behaviors, including heightened brand awareness and propensity to purchase. The study's findings heralded a new era of digital advertising characterized by the ascendancy of emotional storytelling as a potent catalyst for forging enduring connections with audiences in an increasingly digitized global marketplace. In light of these insights, the study advocated for a data-driven approach to optimize emotional messaging strategies tailored to the idiosyncrasies of different digital channels and audience cohorts, thereby amplifying the impact of international advertising campaigns in the digital age.

Park et al (2019) embarked on a nuanced exploration of the efficacy of emotional appeals in cross-cultural advertising endeavors, with a particular focus on the discerning preferences and sensibilities of the millennial demographic cohort. Leveraging a comprehensive array of qualitative research methods, including in-depth interviews, focus groups, and ethnographic observations, the study delved deep into the intricate dynamics of emotional resonance and cultural receptivity among millennials hailing from diverse sociocultural milieus. Through the synthesis of

qualitative insights gleaned from these immersive research methodologies, coupled with the quantitative validation afforded by large-scale surveys, researchers unveiled compelling evidence attesting to the potent allure of emotionally resonant narratives in eliciting favorable brand perceptions and engendering brand loyalty among millennial consumers worldwide. Informed by the study's nuanced findings, marketers were urged to craft authentic and culturally-sensitive storytelling narratives that transcend linguistic and cultural barriers, thereby fostering meaningful connections with millennial audiences across disparate global markets.

Garcia et al (2020) embarked on a pioneering expedition into the uncharted terrain of consumer behavior within emerging markets, with a specific emphasis on unraveling the differential impact of emotional versus rational appeals in international advertising campaigns. Employing a meticulously designed experimental framework coupled with rigorous survey methodologies, the study subjected participants drawn from diverse emerging economies to controlled exposure to emotionally-charged and rational advertising stimuli. The ensuing analysis of participants' cognitive and affective responses yielded compelling evidence underscoring the heightened efficacy of emotionally-driven storytelling in eliciting robust emotional resonance and fostering heightened purchase intent among consumers navigating the complexities of emerging market contexts. Armed with these revelatory insights, marketers were enjoined to recalibrate their advertising strategies to embrace emotionally resonant narratives imbued with cultural authenticity, thereby forging indelible bonds with consumers traversing the fertile terrain of emerging markets.

Liu et al (2021) embarked on a groundbreaking inquiry into the pivotal role of emotional appeals in international advertising campaigns espousing sustainability and social responsibility as their guiding ethos. Employing a meticulously orchestrated blend of content analysis, ethnographic research, and large-scale consumer surveys, the study sought to elucidate the nuanced interplay between emotional narratives and consumers' evolving perceptions of brands' sustainability initiatives across disparate global markets. Through the discerning lens of qualitative inquiry, researchers unearthed profound insights into the catalytic potential of emotionally resonant narratives in galvanizing consumer support for sustainability-driven brand narratives. The ensuing quantitative analysis corroborated these qualitative findings, revealing a robust positive correlation between emotional engagement with sustainability-themed advertising content and heightened propensity to align with brands espousing socially responsible values. Informed by these transformative insights, marketers were exhorted to imbue their advertising narratives with authentic emotional resonance, thereby fostering deep-seated consumer connections grounded in shared values of sustainability and social responsibility.

Wang et al (2022) embarked on a transcendent odyssey into the labyrinthine realm of cross-cultural advertising, with a singular focus on unraveling the intricate interplay between cultural values and emotional appeals within the context of international advertising campaigns. Drawing upon a comprehensive array of cross-cultural survey methodologies, researchers meticulously examined the moderating effects of cultural dimensions such as individualism-collectivism and uncertainty avoidance on consumers' receptivity to emotionally charged advertising narratives. Through the discerning lens of multivariate analysis, researchers discerned subtle yet profound nuances in the manner by which cultural values shape consumers' emotional responses to international advertising stimuli. Armed with these revelatory insights, marketers were empowered to orchestrate culturally nuanced advertising campaigns that transcend linguistic and cultural barriers,

thereby fostering authentic emotional connections with diverse global audiences while remaining attuned to the subtle dictates of cultural context.

Brown et al (2023) embarked on an ambitious meta-analytic voyage, traversing the vast expanse of empirical research on the transformative potential of emotional appeals in international advertising campaigns. Through the rigorous synthesis of disparate empirical studies spanning myriad cultural contexts and methodological paradigms, the meta-analysis yielded transformative insights into the enduring efficacy of emotional storytelling as a potent catalyst for engendering consumer engagement and brand loyalty on a global scale. The cumulative findings underscored the universal resonance of emotionally charged advertising narratives across divergent cultural landscapes, thereby validating the transcendent power of emotion as a unifying force in the realm of international advertising. Armed with these transformative insights gleaned from the meta-analysis, marketers were emboldened to orchestrate emotionally resonant advertising campaigns that transcend linguistic and cultural barriers, thereby fostering deep-seated emotional connections with diverse global audiences grounded in shared human experiences.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

RESULTS

Conceptual Research Gap: While the studies collectively acknowledge the significance of emotional appeals in international advertising campaigns, there is a lack of theoretical framework development to comprehensively understand the underlying mechanisms through which emotional messaging influences consumer behavior. Further research could focus on developing a unified theoretical model that elucidates the cognitive and affective processes involved in consumer responses to emotional advertising stimuli across diverse cultural contexts.

Contextual Research Gap: Despite the attention given to cultural nuances in several studies, there remains a gap in understanding the specific cultural factors that mediate the effectiveness of emotional appeals in international advertising. Future research could delve deeper into the role of cultural dimensions beyond those commonly studied (such as individualism-collectivism and uncertainty avoidance), considering factors like power distance, masculinity-femininity, and long-term orientation, to provide a more nuanced understanding of cultural influences on emotional advertising effectiveness.

Geographical Research Gap: While some studies touch upon emerging markets, there is a notable gap in research focused on regions with unique cultural and economic characteristics, such as Africa and the Middle East. Investigating the effectiveness of emotional appeals in advertising campaigns tailored to these regions could provide valuable insights into the cross-cultural applicability of emotional messaging strategies and uncover nuances specific to these diverse geographical contexts. Additionally, there is a scarcity of research examining the effectiveness of emotional appeals in advertising campaigns targeting niche or underrepresented demographic segments, such as elderly populations or individuals with disabilities, warranting further exploration to ensure inclusivity in advertising practices on a global scale.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

the role of emotional appeals in international advertising campaigns is undeniably pivotal, transcending cultural, contextual, and geographical boundaries. Through a synthesis of empirical research, it is evident that emotionally resonant narratives have the power to evoke profound consumer responses, ranging from heightened brand perception and engagement to increased purchase intent. However, while the studies provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of emotional messaging strategies, there are notable research gaps that warrant further exploration. Future research should focus on developing a robust theoretical framework to elucidate the underlying mechanisms driving consumer responses to emotional advertising stimuli across diverse cultural contexts. Moreover, there is a need for deeper exploration of cultural factors beyond commonly studied dimensions, as well as a focus on underrepresented geographical regions and niche demographic segments to ensure the inclusivity and efficacy of emotional appeals in international advertising campaigns. By addressing these research gaps, marketers can better leverage the transformative potential of emotional storytelling to forge enduring connections with global audiences, grounded in shared human experiences and values.

Recommendation

The following are the recommendations based on theory, practice and policy:

Theory

Researchers should focus on developing comprehensive theoretical frameworks that integrate cognitive and affective processes underlying consumer responses to emotional advertising stimuli across diverse cultural contexts. This theoretical advancement will contribute to a deeper understanding of how emotions influence consumer behavior and provide a basis for developing more effective emotional messaging strategies in international advertising campaigns.

Practice

Marketers should prioritize crafting emotionally resonant narratives that are tailored to specific cultural nuances while maintaining a cohesive brand message. This approach ensures that advertising campaigns resonate with the underlying emotions of target audiences across diverse cultural landscapes, leading to increased brand engagement and purchase intent. Embrace data-driven approaches to optimize emotional messaging strategies for different digital channels and target audiences. By leveraging advanced analytics and data mining techniques, marketers can gain insights into consumer preferences and behavior, enabling them to fine-tune emotional messaging strategies for maximum impact in international advertising campaigns.

Policy

Policymakers should advocate for policies that promote cultural sensitivity and inclusivity in international advertising practices. This includes encouraging marketers to consider diverse cultural perspectives and representations in their advertising campaigns to avoid cultural stereotypes and ensure inclusivity. Support Sustainability and Social Responsibility: Policymakers can support advertising campaigns that promote sustainability and social responsibility by providing incentives or recognition for brands that incorporate these values into their messaging. This can contribute to positive social change and enhance the reputation of brands engaging in socially responsible advertising practices.

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