The Subliminal Phenomena in Advertising: A Pakistani Perspective

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Abstract: *As consumer markets have expanded globally, the role of advertising mediums has gained significant prominence. Subliminal advertising has evolved as a prominent media tool to attract consumer attention and support the advertising agenciesof the twenty first century. Though, it has not been targeted directly; it has been inculcated under the umbrella of corporate marketing schemes of global organizations.*

The proposed research attempts to study how subliminal advertising affects the consumer's self-image (Social Integration) and his pleasure seeking drives (Hedonism) in relation to the Pakistani market.The study portrays the Hedonic and Social appeals displayed in the subliminal advertisements that focus on building a personality for the product from which consumers can scheme images about their values, beliefs and lifestyles.It distinguishesthe subconscious and the unconscious levels of brain activity, the latter being characterized by an absolute lack of control by the individual. Consumer behavior has also been discussed under the light of Hierarchies of Effect model (2007) and Rokeach Value Survey (1968) etc. Previous research in the field of subliminal advertising is discussed and evaluated in detail, specifically the experiments that were conducted in the post millennium year. Research from the past highlights the usage of projective techniques conducted in the decade of the 90's such as the tachistoscope methodology involving flashing brand imagery to provoke consumer purchase.

The Study suggests that the registration of an advertisement does not necessarily indicate an appeal to purchase on behalf of the consumer. Conglomerates spend Trillions on advertising each year to achieve global recognition and healthy market share. Hence this study attempts to convince consumers to consider the brands that have been subliminally advertised targeting their subconscious level. Surprisingly, in Pakistan, only a few multinationals advertise directly. Others have gained attention through mass and social media promotional channels. Thus the advertiser's main goal is to reach potential customers effectively and influence their responsiveness and consequently, buying behaviors.

Keywords:*Subliminal advertising, Social integration, Hedonism, Brand Imagery,Consumerbehavior.*

I. Introduction

The subconscious is the part of consciousness that is not currently in focal awareness. Pierre Janet argued that underneath the layers of critical thought functions of the conscious mind, there lays a powerful awareness called the subconscious mind.(F.Ellenberger, 1970). Freud argues that the subconscious mind has a will and motivation towards some act or merely the thought process that is out of one's own control. This relates to his theory that the subconscious mind is dynamic; it can mend in any direction without the inclination of the person in concern. Freud used the words 'subconscious' and 'unconscious' interchangeably; subconscious is das Unterbewusste; unconscious is das Unbewusste in German. This portion of the mind receives information unknowingly to the human and translates it into the unmet needs of the human, in the words of Freud (Freud, 1927).

This uncontrollable element of the mind was considered relatively useless by most people until the modern age when it captured the attention of advertisers and marketers alike. The characteristics of such marketing that capture one's attention without intentional focus is known as subliminal messaging. It is used in various industries such as FMCG's, tobacco, adult products and a wide variety of others. Several attempts at subliminal advertising and its success were made by marketers, such as James Vicary, in the 1950's. He claimed to put the words"Eat Popcorn, and Drink Coca-Cola" for a few milliseconds in theaters and the sales of both the items increased in the theater. Although it was never proven, the CIA historical review program (18th Sep 1995) used the works of Vicary in defining that the advertisers who are currently interested in this phenomenon as a technique for promotion argue that the short-duration stimulus appeals to a positive motive, for example an appetite for popcorn, without raising the rational, conscious sales-resistance of the individual, based perhaps on the desire to save money or lose weight(Gafford, 2012) .

Interestingly, multinationals around the globe are using these techniques for increasing the sales of their products. Over the years, legislation by governments has prohibited certain industries to advertise their business model or product altogether. A classic example is the tobacco industry, which was banned from above the line advertising since many years. Although such methods of advertising such as television and event-advertising have been prohibited, other means such as subliminal advertising fall under legal loopholes for corporations to utilize.

Subliminal marketing takes place below the absolute threshold of a person, which is the minimum level of influence that a particular stimulus requires to be registered as an adequate detection by the human nervous system. Therefore, a marketing technique is subliminal only if it is not registered consciously by consumers. This definition streamlines the difference between contemporary and subliminal marketing in that the latter requires some form of registration of a stimuli that is not within the consciousness of a human being.

Conspiracy theories are presented by activists around the globe against major multinationals. They claim that consumerism is promoted by these companies on immoral grounds. Promotion through violence and utilization of the fear appeal for increasing sales in today's cut-throat world of advertising is the norm. Yet, subliminal advertising has not been targeted directly; it has been inculcated under the umbrella of corporate marketing schemes of global organizations in general. Children frequently become targets of advertising through the use of television and animation in particular. Cartoon characters and items used by those characters gain attention of children through extensive visualization on TV and the internet. Products such as breakfast cereals, foods and locations are frequently associated with characters; such as Ronald McDonald of the McDonalds chain or the bear of Chocos by Kelloggs.

A question that stems from this topic is where to draw the line. For relatively safe products such as Safeguard soap or Surf Excel, the fact is that there marketing is open form of communication with inferences being open for adults. This means that the subliminal part of their marketing is easily understandable by adult consumers, yet it is not clearly registered as advertising in the minds of young people. On the other hand, advertisements for products such as birth control pills and safe intercourse are purposely made inferential to the general audience to avoid criticism and to communicate a product related to a taboo issue on an open platform. The fact that arises from the above is that these hidden messages obviously capture the attention of young and old alike and they are registered in the minds of all consumers without personal intent.

Young minds are easily influenced by their surrounding environment. According to studies conducted at Harvard, the portion of the human brain that is responsible for planning, reasoning and judgment does not develop completely until the age of 25-30. It requires the cortex to connect to the frontal lobes starting from the back. It is also suggested in the study that the development of mental tendencies are correlated with the environment around a person, regardless of any genetic dispositions (Bradley, 2011). This mental development can be obscured or inclined towards any topic of interest, based on unfulfilled needs of an individual. Children in particular, are at a larger risk of being affected through the environment in which they are placed in. This gives corporations the chance to cash in through advertising in general. Subliminal advertising adds to the intensity by analyzing psychological patterns of needs and eventually utilizing the needs of people into acquiring profit.

In a developing economy like Pakistan, the market attracts investors in the form of multinationals to tap the low-margin, high-volume profit generating economy. Industries that heavily advertise in Pakistan include FMCGs, telecom and political parties. Most of the advertisements seek to attract their potential audience through excitement and social affiliated appeals that reflect emotions and cultural traditions of our society. Thus this study shall establish and analyze the relationship between Hedonism (pleasure seeking principle) and attitude towards Subliminal Advertising. It shall also study the relationship that develops between Social Integration and Subliminal Advertising techniques.

II.   Historial Outlook Of Subliminal Advertising
In the history of research regarding subliminal advertising, it has been constantly postulated that there exists minimal or no link between marketing techniques that provoke consumers to commit to any act of purchase (DeFleur, 1959).Other researchers in academia have maintained that there exists only some psychological linkage and a limited association between subliminal advertising and consumer attention (Moore T. , 1982).Some activists that speak against subliminal advertising propose that somehow the rapid ad-flashing techniques used by advertisers penetrate the defenses of the human mind and get registered (Saegert, 1987). Moore's arguments against subliminal advertising can be summarized as follows;

Subliminal stimuli are relatively weak for the perceiver to register them. Even if they are registered, there are many other stronger stimuli that are being derived from the environment, and can negate the initial stimulus.Overt behavior is a consequence of reasoning and logic that people follow. They are in control of their actions and can therefore choose their plan of action rather than being manipulated by subliminal messaging techniques (Moore T. , 1982).By this analysis, strong and weak responses can be generated through the

subliminal messaging. It is improbable that an advert that tries to touch the subconscious part of the consumer generate a strong response in the form of buying behavior. Weak responses that compel emotions and feelings can go unregistered due to the presence of other stronger stimuli.(Moore T. , 1982)

III.   The Subconscious And The Unconscious

At this point it becomes imperative to differentiate clearly between subconscious and the unconscious. The subconscious basically asserts more influence on an individual than the unconscious. In experimentation, it has been noted that the most thoroughly registered stimuli that influence a person's behavior are those at the threshold of the subconscious. In simple words, the subjects knew that the information was being transmitted, albeit only at the minimal sensory threshold that could be registered. The unconscious is a state when lack of control is characterized by the cognitive part of the brain. In an experiment when images were flashed in front of students, the instinctual recollection of the images was related with the physical need of the student; e.g. a hungry student recalled the image of food. (Class, 1958)

Neuroscientists disagree with psychologists in the definition of the term unconscious. According to them, the term refers to an actual position in the mind of a person as opposed to being a state of the mind. Freud did not have the modern tools, however, to help him analyze the structure, function and complex interactions among nerve cells; the neural-linkage and brain mapping technologies that exist today.

Today, therapists do not think of the unconscious as a neuroanatomical structure. Rather, they use the term as shorthand to refer to a complex, but familiar, psychological phenomenon. That is, a good deal and perhaps most of mental life happens without our knowing much about it. Neuroscientists are researching into these processes too. They realize that any knowledge of the neurobiology of mental life is definitely more than conscious cognition and feelings. (Miller, 2010)

According to Freud, the mind can be divided into two main parts. Everything that we are aware of, composes our conscious mind. This part of our cognition is the one that controls our logical thinking and talking pattern as it is. Our memory is also part of this but not totally and it can be retrieved as per the needs of the human in most instances. Preconscious is the term that Freud used to denote this ordinary memory.   The unconscious mind is composed of feelings, thoughts, urges and memories that are outside of a person's conscious awareness. Most of the contents of the unconscious are unacceptable or unpleasant, such as feelings of pain, anxiety, or conflict. Unresolved or unmet needs are part of this memory. In terms of Freud, the unconscious influences our behaviors, even though we are unaware of these underlying influences. (Cherry, 2010)

IV.   Consumer Behavior

The hierarchy of effects model (Belch G. a., 2007) tends to explain the difference between advertising and perception. The consumer goes through a hierarchy of awareness leading all the way up to the actual purchase. Thus, a scale is constructed which rates the willingness of the individual to actually make a purchasing decision. This scale helps determine the influence that a particular marketing promo could have on a consumer.

The Hierarchy of Effects model was formulated to explain the relative importance of the three components. Each hierarchy specifies the direction of a pre decided sequence of steps that occur in the formation of an attitude. There are three different types of Hierarchies that include: The Standard Learning Hierarchy, the Low Involvement Hierarchy and the Experiential Hierarchy. The standard learning hierarchy assumes that the consumer approaches towards a product decision in the form of a problem solving process. He initially forms beliefs about the product or service based on the knowledge he has, then analyzes and develops feelings about it and finally engages in the relevant behavior (Ray, Marketing Communications and the Hierarchy of Effects, 1973). On the other hand, the low involvement hierarchy assumes that the consumer does not possess highly strong likings for a specific brand over another and develops an evaluation once he has purchased the product. Thus the consumer first uses his cognition to understand product features, then he directly purchases the product and finally he develops emotional attachments if the desired gratification level is attained(Thompson, Advertising Age, 2005). Lastly, the experiential hierarchy says that the consumer is a by-product of his or her emotional reactions. The affection part comes first, then the action inducing behavior presides in and finally the cognitive aspects take over. At the time of making a decision, consumers often form an appeal towards a certain object rather than a brand in general. Therefore the consumer drive created might be for a certain object instead of the advertised brand or product.
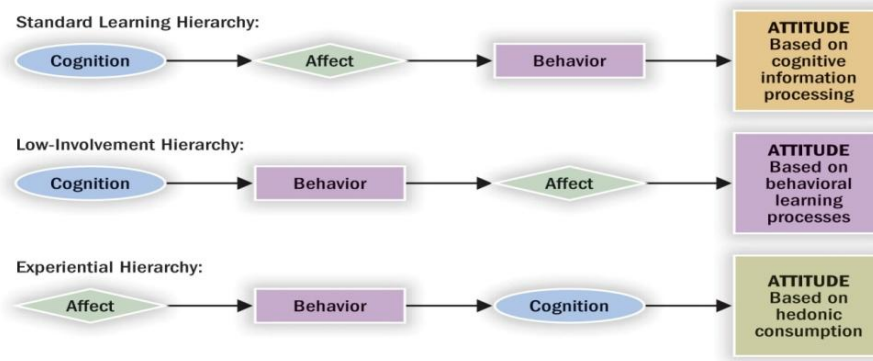
Figure 1: Hierarchies of Effects Model Adapted from the Book: Solomon, Michale R. Buying, Having and Being; 8th.

Meeting consumers' needs is the fundamental goal of marketers. Consumer products are generally marketed to appeal to three basic types of consumers' needs. Previous segmentation studies identified the three categories of consumer needs;

1) Functional needs (e.g. product attributes);
2) Social needs (Peer pressure\environmental inclination);
3) Experiential needs (taste, pleasure\gratification). (Chryssohoidis, 7 October 2005)
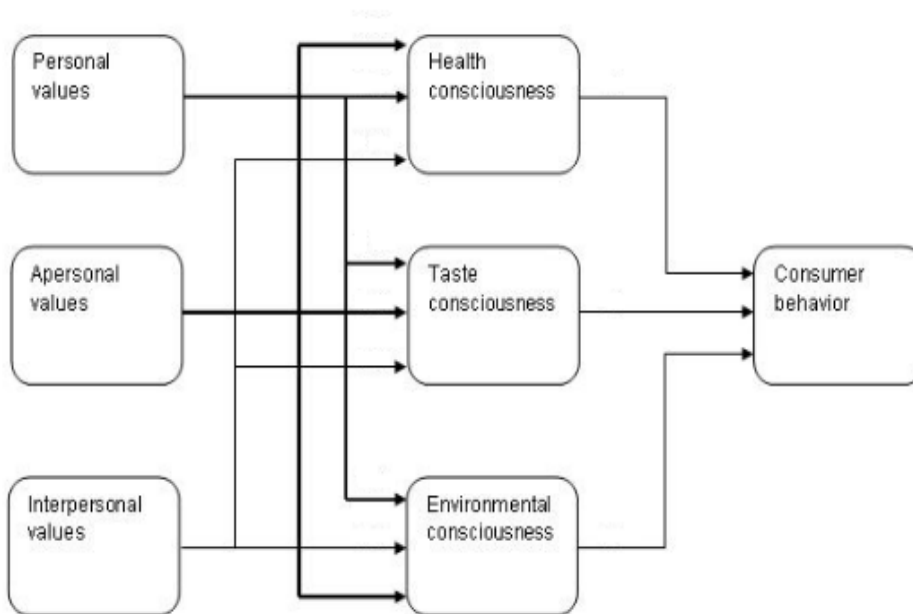
Figure 2: Adapted from Proceedings 2nd CBRC, Lahore, Pakistan November 14, 2009 (Khadija Humayun, 2009)

The above diagram helps explain how personal, apersonal and interpersonal values would influence the health, taste and environmental consciousness of a human being in deriving the consumer behavior. The independent variables are the values of the consumer that have been created as a result of the environment and experience of the individual. The independent values create dependent needs of the consumer that influence the consumer behavior and thereby provoke a consumer to consciously purchase one product rather than another. (Khadija Humayun, 2009)The first values are related to a person's link with the rest of the society, which is called the personal values. The next value represents an internal/ apersonal value factor; and the remaining value relates to interpersonal associations. (Khadija Humayun, 2009)

The Rokeach Value Survey (RVS) is a survey created to assess the consumer choice of individual based on terminal and instrumental values. Terminal values refer to the desirable end states of existence while instrumental values refer to preferable modes of behavior. Therefore, instrumental values are preferable modes of behavior that shall be followed to reach desirable end states of existence, or terminal values.(Rokeach, 1968) The values under the Rokeach system are given in Figure 5.

Instrumental Values	Terminal Values
Ambitious	A comfortable life
Broad-minded	An exciting life
Capable	A sense of accomplishment
Cheerful	A world of peace
Clean	A world of beauty
Courageous	Equality
Forgiving	Family security
Helpful	Freedom
Honest	Happiness
Imaginative	Inner harmony
Independent	Mature love
Intellectual	National security
Logical	Pleasure
Loving	Salvation
Obedient	Self-respect
Polite	Social recognition
Responsible	True friendship
Self-controlled	Wisdom

Figure 3: Adapted from Rokeach, M. (1973).The Nature of Human Values. New York: The Free Press.

Other surveys include VALS (Mitchell, 1983) and the List of Values (Kahle, 1983) that are designed to assess the values of human beings. The values of people are variable according to culture, environment, personal beliefs and influences that in turn create needs. These needs are already embedded into the human but the values identify the proper channel through which these needs are to be met.

V. Subliminal Experimentations

Studies have been conducted on the topic of subliminal advertising since the 1950's. After the hype created in late fifties, the topic has been given relatively less attention in the marketing world. Experimentation has been conducted over time with some positive results, and some that were not verified properly or proved to be futile.

There are accusations made against advertisers that they influence consumer decisions by inserting subliminal messages in advertisements. There can be at least two questions that could be derived from the above accusation;Firstly, do advertisers purposely insert messages that influence a consumer in a manner that they could not perceive consciously? Secondly, do these ads actually influence a consumer's buying decision more intensely? (Kelly, 2007).

There are two kinds of messaging mediums, visual and verbal. Most research concentrates on a mixture of both these mediums; print and electronic media advertisements. At the verbal side, marketing teams design jingles and themes that appeal to a wide variety of people. This practice is based on recall. On the visual side, imagery flashed for a fraction of a second in between a movie is an example of how subliminal visual messages are transferred across to the target audience.

The assumption behind subliminal advertising is that it provokes consumers to act in some way that they would not normally since it plays with the unconscious part of the mind. This means that people might be inclined to vote for someone they would not choose otherwise, or buy things that they do not need. Rather the advertising 'commands' people to act in certain ways that they cannot fully comprehend themselves. If so, then the potential threat of such messaging is hypnotizing the masses to follow the direction that is dictated by corporations and agencies that develop such captivating advertisements(Class, 1958).

The U.S. House of Representatives held meetings the in 1980's to discuss the issues relating to subliminal advertising. Dr. John Kemp addressed this issue in the following words;

"First, as a social scientist, I must note that there is considerable doubt in the scientific community that these techniques are effective. There is a whole host of problems, stemming from such things as the fact that individuals have highly varying levels of perception, making generalized threshold levels of subliminal perception very complicated. Another such problem is that to the extent these messages are designed to change

people's behavior, scientists as well as advertisers know that subtle appeals are often more interesting than effective"(Kemp, 1984).

In the 80's the concept of back masking took to play, where music was recorded on cassettes with subliminal messages being played in the opposite direction. Legislation was considered that could ban back masking in Texas, Arkansas and Canada. The Associated Press reported in 1983 that no such link between satanic messaging and back masking was determined(Associated Press, 1983).

In "Subliminal Advertising: What is the Controversy About?" (Dudley, 1987), a sample of subliminal research from 1959 through 1985 was reviewed. The conclusion was that "The possibility that subliminal stimulation offers an effective means of controlling consumer or political behavior is highly unlikely."Since this research was an analysis of the previous experimentation on the subject, it offers a conclusion based on variable studies and their futile results in relating subliminal messaging and the link between unmet needs of individuals. Theus analyzes other researches in the same manner and determines that it might not be indicated that subliminal messaging provokes a consumer to make a choice based on hypnotizing messages, but it provides sufficient effect on consumer drive or brand preference. The words he chooses are "consumer attitude" and "consumer preference"(Theus, 1994).

George and Jennings researched that if the words "Hershey's Chocolate" had any effect on the consumers. There was no effect, according to the study(George, 1975). Research conducted by Hawkins stated otherwise that subliminal advertising can serve to arouse basic drive, also known as consumer drive in our own research. Hawkins subliminally presented the stimulus words "COKE", "DRINK COKE", and a control word "NYTP" through a tachistoscope. The subliminal stimulus "COKE" was found to arouse only the basic drive of thirst, and the command to "DRINK COKE" was not any more effective. While indicating some success, the frequently presented subliminal word "COKE" may have been as effective as supraliminal presentation of the same cue(Hawkins D. , 1970).

Most research on subliminal stimulus has employed tachistoscopic methods which transmit the subliminal message at high speed. The ability to infer or catch such stimuli is based on the subject's speed of perception(Kelly, 2007).

Cuperfain and Clarke tried to change consumers' preferences for a brand of washing soap, following subliminal exposure of the package during a short film about washing techniques. Images were thought to provide more clues for interpretation of the stimulus. An increase in preference was observed, but only for a known brand, not an unfamiliar brand. These results were considered ambiguous due to the absence of threshold determination: the unknown brand stimulus may have been below the threshold level due to its lighter color (Cuperfain, 1985). Moore explains that "no controls for experimenter bias were evident, and the marginal results were made even more suspect because of improper statistical analysis"(Moore T. E., 1988).

In 1972 Key published findings that subjects felt excitement or sexual stimulation when presented with a gin advertisement that contained sexual vocabulary; the words "SEX" were inserted into an ice cube in the visual aspect of the ad. Bagley and Dunlap tried to repeat Key's experiment in 1980, finding a significant percentage of respondents who reported excitement or sexual stimulation to half the ads with subliminal messages (Caccavale, 1981). While it was better designed than the original study, Bagley and Dunlap failed to measure the degree of effect the advertisements had on attitudes, recall or purchase intentions reported (Caccavale, 1981)(Theus, 1994).

While research supports that subliminal messaging can drive stimulus and produce psychological results, it does not support the notion that it can compel consumers to actually buy products because of the stimulation. Some authors have negated the theory that subliminal advertising has any effect at all on consumer drive and purchase patterns (Berelson, 1964). Research, therefore has not reached the stage where strong influences on buying patterns could be linked with subliminal advertising and the accused agenda of corporations.

VI.   Forthcoming Determinants Of Subliminal Publicizing
Role Of Advertising

It is characterized by a vital focus on the visual cues which comprises of the expressions, posture and gestures. Advertising reflects to a great extent; the social values, beliefs, prevailing norms and stereotypes of a society. In most of the cases, images presented in advertising act as a strong agent in reshaping the society's norms and beliefs, appreciation of "good life" and depiction of sexuality(Polly, 1993). Advertising, sales promotion and public relations are the Mass Communication tools readily available to marketers. As the name suggests, Mass Communication utilizes the same message for everyone in the potential audience. The Mass Media tools trade off the advantage of personal selling. Etzel in 1997 proclaimed that it provides an opportunity to adapt a message for each prospect and benefits in reaching a number of people at a lower cost per person(Etzel, 1997).

Arens in 1996 defines Advertising as a communication process, an economic and social process, a marketing process, a public relations process and a persuasion process(Arens, 1996). Dunn in 1987 viewed advertising from its core functional perspective thus he defines it as a paid, non-personal communication through various forms of media by business firms, non-profit organizations and even individuals(Dunn, 1987). They are identified in some way in the advertising message and hope to inform and persuade the members of the general public. Petrovici and Marinov evaluated the two major groups of the predictors of attitudes towards advertising(Petrovici, 2005). It includes the attitudes to the Institution and Instruments of advertising and the "personal uses" of advertising i.e. product information, social integration and hedonic pleasure(Polly, 1993). It incorporates the perceptions people hold of advertising as a source of product information, social role and hedonic pleasure. These proportions can a have a positive impact on the general attitudes towards advertising that could stimulate the purchasing decisions. Shavitt in 1998 reported that while the positive perceptions of advertising as a source of product information have been thoroughly evaluated, the reliability of product information through advertising have turned out to be fairly controversial(Shavitt, 1998).

According to Dan Petrovici and Marin Marinov (2005), Persuasion is a core element in Subliminal Advertising but its presence needs to be concealed. Truthful and realistic advertising can be expected to have positive advantages including brand recognition and acquisition rather than advertising based on the feel good factor, which may not be conveyed. It is quite surprising to know that as much as two thirds of advertising budget is wasted in some form, either due to an unclear message, greater noise or poor response of the consumers(Rotfeld, 2007).

With respect to Pakistan, the effectiveness of Subliminal Advertisements is gradually increasing as consumer awareness has reached high peaks through Mass Media in the form of a number of television channels and the internet social media. Most of the consumers in Pakistan especially the teenagers in the urban areas are politically and socially aware of the daily happenings. Still no significant research has been conducted on measuring Advertising Efficiency. A limited research has been conducted by Malik in 1999 on subliminal advertisement effectiveness in relation to the consumer behavior of women university students(Malik, 1999).

Social Integration

Subliminal Advertising provides a platform for the development of the consumer's self-image(Richins, 1991). With that, it also provides product meaning, with many of the potential consumers paying high prices for branded products that carry influential logos and prominent corporate designs(Polly, 1993). Advertising as a tool could turn out be very significant in terms of developing consumer's self-identity and style. This results in the positive image development of the associated advertising. The Social Comparison Theory has also enabled marketers to analyze the various types of phenomenon including the comparison of physical attractiveness against the advertised models, assessment of the associated material possessions and the consumer sensitivity to the social comparison statistics(Richins, 1991). Most of the marketing studies have identified the prior reason for comparison to be self-evaluation(Festinger, 1954). Moreover, three motives have been identified in the social psychology including: self-evaluation, self-enhancement and self-improvement.

Talking in terms of advertising, the subliminal advertising models serve as a benchmark for the ideal image of beauty so the comparison made tends to be upward. This means that the consumers consider advertising models to be superior in terms of physical attractiveness with any of the three motives mentioned above could be served through upward comparisons(Martin, 1993). However, it could also be the case that upward comparisons to the advertising models may not turn out to be self-enhancing due to similarity on the immediate dimensions like age(several models are in their twenties) or the context(the model is not a college mate). So when self-enhancement tends to be the main source of comparison, female preadolescents and adolescents will not make upward comparisons against the advertising models. This will assist them in stabilizing their elf-esteem.

In the recent times, most of the researchers have applied Thematic Apperception Test sketch (TAT), a type of a projective technique that was applied to a sample of female adolescents to evaluate the dominating motive that emerges when comparing oneself to advertising models. On the other hand, many marketing researchers used TATs to discover the personal grooming rituals of the consumers(Richins, 1991). The potential viewers that generate imaginative stories with reference to a pictorial stimulus will reveal various hidden aspects of their current concerns, motivations and views of the world. This in turn assists to identify the core reasons of comparisons with others such as the advertising models and what characteristics of these models tends to become a source of persuasion for the consumers.

In Pakistan, the middle, upper middle and the elite class are prone to branded products. These are actually the hardcore brand loyal consumers of products and services who are willing to provide any price as long as the quality aspect is not compromised. Most of the advertisements like that of Olpers, Mobilink and National Foods inculcate the social aspect of the Pakistani society. As the standards of living improve, the aspect of social integration will take more hype and consumers would only consume those products and services

that are widely accepted among their friends and family. This facet has hardly been identified in the previous researches with respect to Pakistan and identifying it, would lead to better understanding of the evaluation criteria of the consumers when they are exposed to various subliminal media advertisements.

Hedonisim

Advertisements can also become a source of entertainment and pleasure(Alwitt, 1992). The more mass media advertisements and subliminal promotional tools display desire and entertainment, the greater the attraction for the consumer. Without any doubt, the hedonic function plays a pivotal role in influencing favorable and positive attitudes towards advertising(Polly, 1993). In general, the consumer's attitudes have been considered quite important to track as they have an impact on their exposure, attention and reaction to specific ads including a combination of cognitive and affective processes. With the traditional advertising in place, consumers play an inactive role in terms of exposure. Most of the advertisements disturb or intercept the consumer's attention to a television or a radio program. Hence, most of the subliminal advertisements are pushed to the end consumer with a focus on providing maximum amusement and pleasure(Lutz, 1985).

In general, the advertising appeals comprise of the Hedonic (image and value expressive) and Utilitarian (functional) appeals(Johar, 1991). The hedonic appeals displayed in the subliminal advertisements focus on building a personality for the product from which consumers can scheme images such as the values, beliefs and lifestyles of the potential product users. On the other hand, the utilitarian appeal directly attempts to highlight product attributes and product quality. The previous literature indicates that both the hedonic and utilitarian appeals are moderated by other factors like a product's features determine whether it requires a hedonic or a utilitarian appeal. An ideal match between both the appeals tends to generate favorable results. Additionally, the success of both the appeals is actually a by-product of individual differences including gender roles, levels of self-monitoring and levels of control orientations(Zuckerman, 1988). In the same way, the efficiency of both the hedonic and utilitarian appeals is highly dependent on the participant's effective states.

Adaval in 2001 has evaluated that the affect-confirmation effects are based on the judgments grounded on affect. Analyzing products based on the hedonic pleasures involves affective responses. His studies identify that the affect-confirmation process provide meaningful results only when the consumers construct the decisions on the hedonic criteria rather than being utilitarian(Adaval, 2001). The hedonic appeal presented in the advertisements is reflected through attractive user portrayals showing affective responses. In the positive affective states, hedonic advertisement messages turn out to be more relevant and thus the importance of hedonic ad messages to utilitarian ad messages on brand evaluations is further strengthened. In case of neutral affective states, the consumer response to hedonic and utilitarian ad messages is considered to be equally taken into account when analyzing brand portfolios.

Talking in the Pakistani context, the pleasure seeking principle is quite prevalent in our society especially among the youth and middle age segment comprising majorly of women. These advertisements mostly comprise of consumer goods including food items and confectioneries. Previously, no significant research has been conducted in Pakistan, on exploring the hedonic element that leads to positive attitude development towards subliminal advertising. In 2010, Aneeza Bashir and Najma Iqbal Malik conducted a research on the effects of advertising on consumer behavior with a brief focus on the pleasure seeking principal.

The importance of subliminal advertising in Pakistan has gained a lot of momentum with the emergence of the social media and latest technological gadgets. The country presents one of the most vibrant media in the world and the attitudes of the consumers towards it play a very pivotal role. The type of media technology used in influencing consumers towards company products requires extensive primary and secondary research. The people of Pakistan are quite emotional and most of the advertisements that reflect patriotic and family values attract them.

VII. Directions For Future Research

The research study has valid implications for further study. The propositions that have been presented are based on recent literature and case studies. There is a need to empirically evaluate the framework and determine if the issues highlighted adequately capture the complexity of Pakistani media markets.

From my point of view, this research will play a significant role in highlighting the importance of subliminal advertising in Pakistan. It will also help in defining the attitude formation of the people towards different forms of advertising keeping in mind the role of social integration and hedonism. Such a research is quite new in the field of social sciences and as new ways of interacting with potential consumers are being developed, the importance of the way consumers evaluate advertisements will also hold immense importance.

I would also like to suggest that the consumers of today are well aware of the ways information about products is being disseminated and are educated enough to analyze the various options available and they possess the ability to choose the most optimum one. Any form of misleading information advertised subliminally on television or through the social media is easily detected and later defamed. So the subliminal

advertisements developed should fit in with the evoke set of the target consumers and should be an integral part of their perceptual map in order to gain recognition or acceptance.

Lastly, the consumer needs and tastes are ever evolving. The companies of today should not only focus on consumer perceptions but also on the latest promotional gadgets, in order to increase the scope of their products. Most of the products and services are heavily advertised through the social media in the form of Facebook& YouTube on minimum promotional expenses. So the companies of the twenty first century should not be only be socio culturally aware but also technologically sound in order to survive in the market and influence consumer buying patterns.

Acknowledgment

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