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# Advertising appeals in magazine : a framing study

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**ADVERTISING APPEALS IN MAGAZINE**

**A FRAMING STUDY**

**A Thesis**

**Presented to**

**The Faculty of the School of Journalism and Mass Communications**

**San Jose State University**

**In Partial Fulfillment**

**of the Requirements for the Degree**

**Master of Science**

**by**

**S. Aparna Gayatri**

**August 2008**

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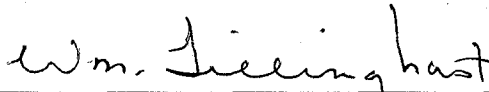
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## ABSTRACT

### ADVERTISING APPEALS IN MAGAZINES A FRAMING STUDY

by S. Aparna Gayatri

The purpose of this study is to look at how advertising is framed in magazines.

The study proposes to look at the three different advertising appeals: humor, sex, and fear appeal from the theoretical perspective of framing. Framing theory enables defining each appeal according to the various frames present in the different appeals. The sample for the study comprises of top ten magazines for the year 2007 based on their advertising revenue.

The sample enabled the researcher to study the different kinds of appeals used by the top ten magazines and the products that use these appeals. The research revealed that sex appeal is the most commonly used appeal in magazines, followed by fear appeal and humor appeal. The products that use sex appeal the most fall under the red and blue good categories that include products like fashion, perfume, clothing, jewelry, body wash, moisturizers, etc. Fear appeal is used by products in the white and blue good categories that include products like insurance services, medicines, automobiles, and household cleaners. Humor appeal is used by products in the yellow good category that include products like chips, snacks, alcohol, and chewing gum.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Literature Review	5
Chapter 3: Method	54
Chapter 4: Results	58
Chapter 5: Discussion	77
Chapter 6: Conclusion	84
References	85
Appendix: Codebook	95



## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: FCB Model	25
Table 2: Product Color Matrix	28
Table 3: Percentage of sex appeal ads in the top 10 magazines	60
Table 4: Percentage of products using sex appeal	61
Table 5: Percentage of framed sex appeal ads in magazines	63
Table 6: Percentage of humor appeal ads in the top 10 magazines	64
Table 7: Percentage of products that use humor appeal	66
Table 8: Percentage of products thematically related to the use of humor appeal ads	67
Table 9: Percentage of framed humor appeal ads in magazines	69
Table 10: Percentage of fear appeal ads in the top 10 magazines	72
Table 11: Percentage of products using fear appeal	74
Table 12: Percentage of framed fear appeal ads in magazines	76

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Advertising practitioners employ different persuasion tactics, referred to as advertising appeals, to gain attention of the target audience. There are different kinds of advertising appeals such as sex appeal, humor appeal, fear appeal, music appeal, and guilt appeal. These different emotional appeals form the basis of many advertising messages. Humor appeal uses entertainment to both attract attention and provide product and brand information. Sex appeal creates a fantasy for the target audience in the presentation of information, and fear appeal portrays the dangers of not using the product or service.

Researchers and practitioners find the medium of television and radio best suited for humor appeal because it provides the necessary audio and visual tools to gain the attention of the audience. Sex appeal is largely prevalent in magazine advertising due to indecency restrictions on television owing to its ubiquitous reach (Lin, 1998). Research in fear appeal has not clearly defined the medium best suited for the use of fear appeal.

Research in this field has largely focused on understanding the effects of the different appeals on the consumer's attitude towards the ad ( $A_{ad}$ ) and attitude towards the brand ( $A_{ab}$ ). For instance, studies in fear appeal have mainly focused on the effects of fear appeal ads on consumers' perception towards message and the product or service (LaTour & Zahra, 1988; Tanner, Hunt & Eppright, 1991). Similarly, studies in humor appeal and sex appeal have focused on exploring the effects of these appeals on consumer attitude towards the ad and attitude towards the brand. Sex and humor appeal studies

have also focused on the use of these appeals in different media and for different products.

The presentation of ads in the context of the medium is an interesting study from a framing perspective. Framing as a theoretical concept has largely been used in the context of news and political communication. Social scientists use framing to understand the presentation of events and issues by journalists. Framing study of advertising content has been rare and has mostly focused on the effects of framing ad messages on consumer processing the information in the ad, when the message was framed either negatively or positively. Smith (1996) found that educated consumers react favorably to ads that are consistent with a positive effect they generally feel or associate with the product category. Less educated consumers, on the other hand, show a significant propensity to rely on negatively framed advertising.

Framing has been defined as an organizing principle that is socially shared and persistent over time, which works symbolically to meaningfully structure the world. Frames are relatively comprehensive structures of meaning made up of a number of concepts and the relation among these concepts (Hertog & McLeod, 2003; Reese, 2003). The concept of framing can be applied to advertising, as like news and political communication, advertising is a comprehensive structure made up of a number of concepts and the relation among these concepts. For example, humor appeal, sex appeal, and fear appeal are the different concepts that create structure for an advertisement.

The various elements of these appeals relate to the overall concept of the ad and the advertising appeal itself, thus creating a frame for the advertisement and the

product/brand. A perfume ad that aims to convey sexual attractiveness uses the frame of sex appeal to relate the perfume with the element of sexual attractiveness. Similarly, a fear appeal ad may be framed either as physical harm to the self or social disapproval. An insurance ad can be framed in terms of loss, where the lack of fire or flood insurance could lead to financial loss; the same ad could also be framed in terms of gain, where having a fire or flood insurance prevents financial loss to the audience. In a similar manner, ads that disparage a rival product or brand use the frame of sarcasm.

Framing study of advertising appeals might help in better understanding of the way in which advertisers frame a particular product/brand message and the consumer's reaction to the message and its comprehensibility.

#### *Proposed Study*

To better understand the different frames an advertisement uses in presenting its product or brand message and in which magazines these message occur, the study uses Tankard (2003) list of frames approach to classify the frames in an advertisement.

Tankard (2003) suggested the following:

1. Make a range of possible frames explicit.
2. Put the various possible frames in a manifest list.
3. Developing key words, catchphrases, symbols to help detect each frame.
4. Coding of content into categories.

The purpose of the research is to study the use of advertising appeals in magazines. Magazines have been chosen because they provide a wide range of choice for the study. The sample is composed of the top ten magazines based on advertising revenues for the year 2007. This sample allows a better understanding of which magazines in the top ten list use which appeal more often and for which products. Magazines were also chosen for logistical reasons as they are readily available at the San Jose State University library.

This approach classifies the different advertising appeal according to the frames present in each appeal. Further, each product can be classified according to the advertising appeal and the frame present in the product advertisement.

#### *Research questions*

1. Which appeals are used most in magazine ads?
2. Which products use which appeals the most?

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Framing refers to the way events and issues are organized and made sense of especially by media, media professionals, and their audiences (Hertog & McLeod, 2003; Reese, 2003). Entman (1993) referred to framing as a fractured paradigm, but like the communication field, its interdisciplinary nature makes it attractive. Reese (2003) defined frames as organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world.

According to Hertog & McLeod (2003) “frames are a relatively comprehensive structures of meaning made up of a number of concepts and the relations among those concepts” (p. 140).

#### *Framing*

Gamson and Modigliani (1989) defined framing as a central organizing idea for making sense of relevant events, suggesting what is at issue; the core of which is the media package that offers a number of condensing symbols which suggests the core frames and positions in shorthand, making it possible to display the package as whole with deft metaphor, catchphrases or other symbolic devices. According to Maher (2003), “framing implies relationship among elements in a message, because those elements have been organized by the communicator (rather than by a communication researcher)” (p. 86). According to Reese (2003), framing “when viewed as the interplay of media

practices, culture, audiences, and producers, guards against unduly compartmentalizing components of communication (sender, content, audience) (p. 8)".

According to Maher (2003), framing theorists have consistently postulated between the microcosmic elements in a given message and the macrocosmic worldview of the communicator. Entman (1993) noted that frames highlight some bits of information about an item that is subject to communication, thereby elevating them in salience. He, also, noted that communicators make conscious or unconscious framing judgments in deciding what to say, guided by frames that organize their belief system. Texts, according to Entman (1993) contain frames, which are manifested by the presence or absence of certain key words, stock phrases, stereotyped images.... that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments.

According to Gamson and Modigliani (1989), there are five framing devices; metaphors, exemplars (historical examples from which lessons are drawn), catchphrases, depictions, and visual images (icons). Frames have their own content as well as a set of rules for the processing of new content. A core set of concepts determines much of the meaning assigned to the frame as whole and, by extension, to all content in relation to the frame. Frames, further, provide the widely understood context for understanding new phenomena, for instance when a topic is framed its context is determined (Hertog & McLeod, 2003).

Tankard (2003) noted the three ways that framing has been used in looking at media content; two of the ways that framing has been used is related to the metaphor of a picture frame. One of the functions of a picture frame is to isolate certain material and

draw attention to it. Another function of a picture frame can be to suggest a tone for viewing the picture; the third way relates to Gamson and Modigliani's (1989) suggestion of frame as a central organizing idea for making sense of relevant events and suggesting what is at issue.

### *Frame Analysis*

According to Hertog and McLeod (2003), the first step in a frame analysis is to identify the central concepts that make up varied frames. The second step in frame analysis is to identify the master narrative. Tankard (2003) noted three different kinds of frame analysis; the first one is based on Gamson and Modigliani (1989) "media package" concept as it presents the keywords and common language that would help identify a particular frame. The second one is a multidimensional concept which sees framing as involving various elements or dimensions of stories; this concept combines the traditional story-presentation variables. The third one is the list of frames approach in which the vital step would be to identify a list of frames for a particular domain under discussion. The list of frames approach suggests the following framework:

1. Make a range of possible frames explicit.
2. Put the various possible frames in a manifest list.
3. Developing key words, catchphrases, symbols to help detect each frame.
4. Coding of content into categories.

The list of frames approach uncovers terms through an examination of media content.



### *Framing and Advertising*

According to Berger and Smith (1998), there are three tactics that are employed in advertising: “frames of reference that act as an ‘*anchor point*’ to influence attributes considered for examination and provide a benchmark for comparison of alternatives. Frames of references are sub divided into three types; *attribute frame* of reference that refers to presentation of specific attributes other than price (in addition to, or as opposed to, others); *price frame* that specifically focus on the aspect of price since it is a potentially dominant attribute; *outcome frame* focuses on outcomes or benefits as opposed to a focus on product attributes” (p. 594). “Frame valence is used to influence potential buyers evaluate alternatives relative to anchor point in positive or negative terms (e.g. hamburgers described as 75% lean or described as 25% fat)” (Berger & Smith, 1998, p. 594). Frame perspective is used to influence how potential buyers temporally evaluate alternatives relative to the anchor point. Berger and Smith, further, noted that frame perspective referred to whether the frame is presented in prospective terms in the present or future tense or in retrospective terms in the past participle.

Edell and Staelin (1983) described framing in print ads as either ‘framed’ or ‘unframed’ advertisements. According to Lutz and Lutz (1977, 1978), in a framed pictorial advertisement the picture and the verbal message are mutually reinforcing and thereby facilitate interactive imagery. The picture functions more like an illustration of the verbal message than as a potential source of distraction. A framed picture is processed more like the verbal material in the absence of the picture, than the picture is in the absence of the verbal label (Edell & Staelin, 1983). The picture demonstrates the

verbal message, typically through a display of the advertised product or through a demonstration of the uses(s) of the product. Likewise the verbal message relates the picture to the product/brand being advertised. The verbal message reinforces and is reinforced by the picture, thereby driving home the advertiser's message and reducing distraction (Shimp, Urbany & Camlin, 1988). An unframed advertisement precludes the interactive imagery because the picture does not offer a demonstration of the verbal message. The use of unframed picture reduces the probability that consumers will retrieve from memory any stored information about the product class or brand being advertised (Edell & Staelin, 1983).

Rothman and Salovey (1997) noted that message framing refers specifically to the emphasis in the message on the positive or negative consequences of adopting or failing to adopt a particular behavior. They noted two kinds of message framing, *gain framed message* that usually presents the benefits accrued through adopting the behavior and *loss framed message* that generally conveys the costs of not adopting the requested behavior (Rothman & Salovey, 1997). Loss framed persuasive messages encourage people to consider the negative consequences of their choices. By contrast, exposure to gain framed messages may cause people to feel less endangered, making them less likely to perform a behavior with uncertain outcomes (Salovey, Schneider & Appanovitch, 2002).

Message framing has been operationalized either by focusing on positive product attributes or benefits gained through product use, or by focusing on the negative product attributes or benefits lost by not using the product (Maheshwaran & Meyers-Levy, 1990). Though these concepts have been used to study audience attitude and behavior changes

with regard to health related issues, they can be applied to study the framing of advertisements.

### *Theoretical Overview*

Framing concept has been used in the context of news and political communication. Framing is a central organizing idea that makes sense of relevant events. It provides a media package that offers a number of condensing symbols that suggests the core frame and positions in shorthand, making it possible to display the package as whole with deft metaphor, catchphrases or other symbolic devices. Framing implies a relationship among elements in a message, because those elements have been organized by the communicator (rather than by a communication researcher) (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989; Maher, 2003).

In advertising, framing is used in the context of *frames of reference* such as price frame, attribute frame, outcome frame, frame perspective, and frame valence. Framing in advertising is also described as either framed or unframed advertisements. Message framing is a key concept of framing in advertising. Messages, in advertisements, can be framed in terms of 'loss' or 'gain'. The different appeals, sex, humor and fear appeal may be viewed as condensed symbols that suggest the core of an advertisement. The different appeals imply a relationship among the elements in a message as these elements have been organized by the advertiser (communicator).

## HUMOR APPEAL

“Humor is operationally defined in terms of heightened arousal, smile and laughter exhibited by an audience in response to a particular message. A second approach to humor definition entails examination of the responses elicited to an identifiable stimulus” (Sternthal & Craig, 1973, p. 13). “Humor is a rubric most accepted as the stimulus evoking an intended or unintended pleasurable effect resulting in a form of subdued or exuberant laughter”(Gulas & Weinberger, 2006, p. 22). “Humor may be defined as painless incongruity” (Tellis, 2004, p. 157). Humor is all encompassing and a generally accepted definition of humor does not exist (Weinberger & Gulas, 1992). In humor, the world of play and serious overlap and humor serves as an ironic overlay, a commentary, on the details of life. Humor takes meaning from and gives meaning to the normal world. The essence of humor lies in its ironic dualism, serious and playful, involved and detached, in this world and out of it at the same time (Speck, 1991). According to Raskin (1985), “the individual occurrence of a funny stimulus is a humor act” (p. 3).

### *Humor in Advertising*

Humor is often used in print and television media to sell products (Catanescu & Tom, 2001). Humor has long played a role in advertising. The growth of humor has been fueled by many factors such as, television fueled spending resulting in a creative advertising revolution, that gave ad agencies a new platform and set of tools to express humor. Many advertisers have turned towards humor as a way to break through the media clutter and to reach increasingly jaded consumers (Gulas & Weinberger, 2006).

Humor has the ability to enhance the credibility of comparative advertising and to distract the development of counter arguments (Sternthal & Craig, 1973; Madden & Weinberger, 1982)

A survey by Madden and Weinberger (1984) of advertising executives showed that most ad executives agreed on humor being effective at gaining attention, particularly for new products. Further, ad executives agreed on humor being an effective means of gaining name registration, registering simple copy points and gaining retention. Ad executives also agreed that humor aids in persuading consumers to switch brands by creating a positive mood that enhances persuasion. Duncan (1979) provided a list that included (a) humor as a distraction from counter argument; (b) humor as reward; (c) humor as a positive stimulus paired with sales proposition; (d) humor as creator of a positive reception of the environment; (e) humor as creator of source credibility and likability.

Humor research involves discussion of humor within the framework of three underlying humor processes and five combinations of humor types (Speck, 1991; Weinberger, Spotts, Campbell & Parson, 1995; Cantenscu & Tom, 2001; Kelly & Solomon, 1975; Spotts, Weinberger & Parson, 1997; Weinberger & Gulas, 2006; Beard, 2008).

### *Humor Theories*

Speck (1991) provided a framework for the study of humor ads. According to Speck (1991), humor is multidimensional in two ways; (a) in respect to certain underlying processes (basic dimensionality) and (b) in respect to various combinations of those processes (combinational dimensionality).

Basic dimensionality involves the building block of humor and has three underlying processes; combinational dimensionality concerns the mixture of underlying processes that occur in a specific instance of humor and has five combinational humor types (Speck, 1991). According to Speck (1991), there are three underlying humor process; arousal safety, incongruity and disparagement processes of humor.

### *Incongruity Theory*

Incongruity theories have two stages; first stage of incongruity theory consists of three cognitive processes—interruption, perceptual contrast and playful confusion. The second stage of incongruity theories added a second cognitive stage, the resolution of the confusing incongruity (Beard, 2008). According to Speck (1991), the two stages of incongruities start with a discrepancy or surprise. The first stage emphasizes interruption, perceptual contrast and playful confusion; the second stage emphasizes insight, reintegration and discovery of meaning. The incongruity theory seems to address the issue of deliberate ambiguity of a joke text, the availability of two interpretations and the unreal nature of one the interpretations (Raskin, 1985). In this theory, there is a departure from normality or expectation that presents a challenge for the audience to resolve (Gulas & Weinberger, 2006).

According to Raskin's (1985), semantic script theory of humor, jokes describe a certain "real" situation and evoke another "unreal" situation, which does not take place and which is fully or partially incompatible with the former. The piece of incongruity theory puzzle that Raskin's theory offers explains how two situations brought to mind by a single message can be opposites (incongruous) from each other (Beard, 2008).

According to Raskin (1985), there are three basic types of opposition between the "real" and the "unreal" humor situations; actual vs. non actual—an actual situation in which the joke is actually set vs. a non actual, non existing situation, which is not compatible with the actual setting of the joke. The second type of situation introduces the normal, expected state of affairs and opposes it to the abnormal, unexpected state of affairs. The third type of situation distinguishes between a possible, plausible situation and fully or partially impossible or much less plausible situation.

The incongruity resolution involves one's interpretation of the humorous text and the subject's relief from anxiety concerning the processing of the text. Incongruity resolution requires initial play manipulation, collaborative arousal, cognitive uncertainty, and schematic resolution: Its effect is mainly cognitive (Speck, 1991).

### *Disparagement Theory*

Disparagement theory has to do with the social context in which humor occurs. The stimulus here is ridicule of somebody or something else such as a person, group, institution, or even an idea; instead of a puzzling incongruity (Beard, 2008). Disparagement theories hold that humor is fundamentally social, a tool for criticism,

censure, and control. It consists of satire, put down, sarcasm, and self-depreciation used frequently in advertising (Beard, 2008; Speck, 1991).

Disparagement humor always implies a triadic relationship between the joke teller, joker hearer, and the victim (Speck, 1991). Zillman (1983) suggested that humorous disparagement requires a “misattribution” humor. Misattribution frees us from the ethical and social consequences of enjoying disparagement in several ways; the person ridiculed is beyond our control and not our personal responsibility; the victim deserves it; it is unlikely that anyone will think less of us for enjoying it and one can tell themselves that they enjoy wittiness of put down and not ridicule (Speck, 1987). Humorous disparagement requires a play manipulation, arousal associated with the disparagement, uncertainty regarding one’s response, and elements of incongruity resolution that can facilitate necessary “misattribution”. Disparagement is largely conative since it allows the expression of disparaging feelings (Speck, 1991).

#### *Arousal Safety and Release Theory*

The theory proposes that the individual/viewer finds something funny when he/she experiences a state of anxiety or uncertainty for the safety or well-being of themselves or someone else. The tension is relieved when he/she makes a safety judgment that the object of the anxiety is safe or the negative consequences insignificant. The message stimulates arousal and affective uncertainty in the form of physiological tension or emotional anxiety (Beard, 2008). Speck (1991) noted that arousal safety involves an outpouring of sentiment or good will for people (personified creatures) that we consider warm, cute, friendly or familiar. In its fullest form, arousal safety involves



an empathetic bonding with someone who narrowly avoids disaster. In arousal safety, there is some tension or challenge to the order of the psyche (Gulas & Weinberger, 2006).

Further, the arousal safety process involves the judgment of a subject regarding the humorous source and the subject's relief from any anxiety regarding the source's intent. Arousal safety requires arousal related to the discomforting presence, behavior, intention, or fate of another person, affective uncertainty, play signal, and safety judgment: the effect is mainly affective (Speck, 1991).

#### *Relatedness of Humor in Advertising*

The significance of humor in an ad depends on the relationship of humor elements to message elements (Speck, 1991). The relationship between humorous and non-humorous message elements in advertising is referred to as either relatedness or relevance in advertising (Beard, 2008). A survey by Madden and Weinberger (1984) showed that 88% of advertising executives felt that humor should be related to the product being advertised. Speck (1991) classified relatedness of humor in an ad on three levels; (a) Intentional Relatedness; (b) Structural Relatedness; (c) Thematic Relatedness.

#### *Intentional Relatedness*

Intentional relatedness is the relationship of humor type to message type and message processing. Product-related elements (e.g. brand name, product image, product benefits and competitor weakness) are presented within a humorous structure that controls and shapes the viewer's overall experience (Speck, 1991). Intentional

relatedness is a way to identify the level of humor dominance in the advertisement.

Intentional relatedness refers to the relationship between humor and how an advertising message will be recognized and processed as information (Weinberger et al., 1995; Beard, 2008).

Intentional relatedness refers to how much of the ad consists of humorous content compared with non humorous content (Beard, 2008). Many ads are either *humor dominant* or *message dominant*. Message dominant ads have humor within message structure. In message dominant ads, the humor is secondary or subordinate to the overall message (Speck, 1991; Beard, 2008). In humor dominant ads, the humor dominates or is super ordinate to the non-humorous parts; such ads have message within humor structure (Beard, 2008; Speck (1991).

There are two types of message dominant ads: *Information-dominant ads* and *Image-dominant ads* (Speck, 1991; Beard, 2008). When humors occur in an informational ad, there is likely to be a contrast between the processing style required by the embedded humor (fantasy assimilation) and that required by the rest of the ad (reality assimilation). In an image-dominant ad, there is less likelihood of a processing contrast and humor occurs within the context of product and user imagery (Speck, 1991). According to Beard (2008), in image focused ads, the funny elements are used to reinforce the image or reputation of a product or advertiser. In information focused ads, the humor focuses more on tangible product features, benefits or price. He noted that in both cases, if the humor is removed, the ads would still make sense.

Spotts, Weinberger and Parson (1997) conducted a study that showed 55% of the ads were humor dominant, 20% were information focused and 25% were image focused. The study also found that the majority of ads for high-involvement functional products like refrigerators, computers, washers, and dryers were message dominant and information-focused. Similarly for low-involvement functional products like household cleaning supplies and hygiene products, the ads were information- focused. The study showed that ads for function-oriented goods were largely message dominant and information-focused than image-focused.

#### *Structural Relatedness*

This refers to the syntactical function of humor within message dominant ads and product information within humor dominant ads (Speck, 1991). Beard (2008) defined structural relatedness as the relationship between humor and message elements contained within an ad. He noted that structural relatedness accounts for differences on the syntactic level. According to Spotts, Weinberger and Parson (1997), structural relatedness refers to the relationship between the humor and the message parts contained within the ad. In humor-dominant ads, structural relatedness refers to the integration (or lack thereof) of the subordinate message elements with the humor. In message-dominant ads, structural relatedness refers to the syntactic relatedness. According to Beard (2008), structural relatedness, in the case of humor-dominant ads, refers to how closely connect the message elements are with the humor. In a message-dominant ad, structural relatedness refers to where the subordinate humor elements are located relative to the dominant-message elements. For instance, in print this might mean page location and in

broadcast ad whether the elements occur at the start or at the end of the advertisement (Gulas & Weinberger, 2006).

### *Thematic Relatedness*

Thematic relatedness refers to the relationship between humor and message content. In thematically related ads, the humor is related to the product, its uses, benefits, brand name, or typical users. In thematically unrelated ads, the humor is not related to the product or any product-related claims (Spotts et al., 1997). In thematically related ads, humor may also be related to the negative consequences caused by not using the products, or to the negative characteristics of competitors or the people who use their products (Beard, 2008). Almost all humorous ads employ product relevant humor, some, however, do not. For instance, local car, furniture and appliance ads are notorious for using irrelevant humor to attract initial attention (Speck, 1991; Beard, 2008).

### *Humor Message Types*

Speck (1991) noted that there are five types of humor, and provided taxonomy for these different humor types. According to Speck (1991), the five humor types are; (a) comic wit; (b) sentimental humor; (c) satire; (d) sentimental comedy; (e) full comedy. Beard (2008) used the word 'resonant' to describe 'sentimental humor' and 'sentimental comedy'. According to Beard, the term resonant does a better job at capturing the kind of affective arousal they produce. According to Beard, the five types of humor are; (a) comic wit ad; (b) resonant wit ad; (c) resonant humor ad; (d) satirical ad; (e) full comedy ad.

*Comic wit ad* requires only one basic humor process, incongruity resolution. It involves visual puns, ironic contrasts, jokes, perceptual displacement, exaggeration, parody, double entendres, comic reversal, comic understatement, humorous stereotypes, silliness, and absurdity (Speck, 1991; Beard, 2008).

*Sentimental humor/resonant humor ad* requires only one process, arousal safety. It does not appear as commonly as the other types. It requires some kind of minor disaster experienced by someone, a disruption of social order, something even more aggressively taboo, shocking or embarrassing, or a warmly sentimental image. Resonant (or sentimental) humor works best when the goal is to generate positive attitude towards the ad or the brand (Speck, 1991; Beard, 2008).

*Satire ad* requires a combination of two processes, incongruity resolution and humorous disparagement. The satirical ad relates to the social context of the humor. Satire is often used in comparative advertising. Satire is the most effective type of humor for gaining recall and comprehension of an advertising message. Satirical comparative ads will have favorable effects among audiences the advertiser would most like to influence, such as people who switch between the sponsored and compared brands and people who are non- users of either one (Speck, 1991; Beard, 2008).

*Sentimental comedy/Resonant wit* combines two humor processes, arousal safety and incongruity resolution. Sentimental comedy provides effective pleasure via incongruity resolution and cognitive pleasure via arousal safety. Sentimental comedy employs no disparagement and lacks the aggression that characterizes satire and full comedy. It is a relatively rich, complex and yet generally inoffensive form of humor

(Speck, 1991). According to Beard (2008), resonant wit is produced when something incongruous (e.g. pun, exaggeration or understatement) is combined with arousal safety humor.

*Full comedy ad* requires a mixture of all three humor processes namely arousal safety, incongruity- resolution and humorous disparagement. Full comedy involves aggression; it offsets negative affect with sentiment. Full comedy is a very rich, cognitive, affective and socially complex form of humor (Speck, 1991). Full comedy ads often include Raskin's (1983) concept of actual vs. non-actual; normal vs. non-normal and possible vs. impossible humor (Beard, 2008). Full comedy is probably better when it comes to getting attention and encouraging positive product related attitudes and perceptions (Speck, 1987). According to Beard (2008), full comedy is best used for the general audience.

Other researchers such as Kelly and Solomon (1975) classified humor according to devices such as; *pun* which is the humorous use of a word or phrase in a way that suggests two interpretations; *understatement* represents something as less than is the case; *joke* involves speaking or acting without seriousness; *something ludicrous* suggests that which is laughable or ridiculous; *satire* or *sarcasm* is used to expose vice or folly; *irony* is the use of words to express the opposite of what really means.

Catanescu and Tom (2001) used Reich (1997) practitioner-oriented classification system, which also included five types of humor to which Catanescu and Tom (2001) added two additional classifications. The seven types of humor according to Catanescu and Tom (2001) are; *comparison* involves putting two or more elements together to

produce a humorous situation; *personification* is attributing human characteristics to animals, plants and objects; *exaggeration* is overstating and magnifying things out of proportion; *pun* is using elements of language to create new meanings which result in humor; *sarcasm* according to Reich (1997) is also classified as silliness. Sarcasm also includes blatant ironic responses or situations; *silliness* ranges from funny faces to ludicrous situations; and *surprise* includes all ads where humor rises from unexpected situations.

Cho (1995) noted six types of humor executions; he classified them in terms of dimensions:

*Negativity dimension* is primarily disparagement (Beard, 2008) and consists of cynicism about human progress and morals; retaliation in a trade of insult or jokes; pessimistic attitude as opposed to optimism; exaggerated situations; representing something as less than is the case; sarcasm which is used to expose folly.

*Slice of life* dimension ads are mainly determined by arousal safety mechanism and are very similar to warm sentimental ads (Beard, 2008). Such ads consist of ordinary folks trying to overcome everyday problem, personal competence and the ability to handle uncomfortable situation. Slice of life ads involves predicament of the characters and is empathetic towards middle class values.

*Subtle complexity dimension* ads are determined mainly by incongruity resolution (Beard, 2008) and it includes subtle and sophisticated humorous mood. Subtle complexity dimension features complex metaphor or indirect situation with an element of

the intellectual and tricky allusions. It is a relatively complex and an inoffensive form of humor.

*Ludicrousness* is entirely disparagement humor (Beard, 2008). Ludicrousness includes ads in, which adults behave in an undignified or immature fashion or people are dressed up in a ludicrous manner.

*Perceptual interest* includes both disparagement and arousal safety (Beard, 2008) and consists of ads with contrasts between verbal and visual elements, puns, and perceptual displacement.

*Miniaturization* is also affected by both arousal–safety and disparagement mechanism (Beard, 2008) and consists of ads that portray children or animals struggling to get through wordy and complicated copy and represents individual desire to regress to a child like state.

#### *Product Contingencies*

Madden and Weinberger (1984) conducted a survey of ad executives and found that 70% ad executives favored the use of humor for consumer non durables. 24% compared to 37% ad executives supported the use of humor for business services, durables, retail, and industrial products. The most frequently mentioned products best suited for humor were soft drinks, food, alcohol, snacks, candy, restaurant, health, beauty, toys, and games in that order. The survey also found that humor should not be used with sensitive goods and services such as medications, illness etc. Bauerly (1990) conducted a consumer survey regarding the appropriateness of humor for goods and services. The products that were viewed as appropriate for humor were soft drinks, snack foods,



computers, automobiles, beer, bowling alleys, restaurants, diaper services, overnight delivery services, and exterminator services; inappropriate products were laxatives, feminine care products, condoms, cemetery monuments, higher education, financial and medical services.

### *FCB Model*

Richard Vaughn (1980) designed a model for the ad agency Foote Cone and Belding, which became known as the FCB model. The FCB model builds a matrix to classify products and services. Four quadrants are developed in the matrix, and each quadrant outlines four potentially major goals for advertising strategy; to be informative, affective, habit forming, and to promote self satisfaction (Vaughn, 1980). The FCB model (Table 1) characterizes product and consumers according to the high involvement and low involvement process of consumer decision making. The FCB model recognizes the critical underpinnings of the ELM framework, high/low involvement and some aspect of low and high hedonic value (Gulas & Weinberger, 2006).

*Table 1 – FCB model*

Thinking	Feeling
High involvement	Affective (feeler)
Informative (thinker)	Jewelry – cosmetics- fashion
Car – house furnishings	apparel-motorcycles.
New products	Model – feel – learn - do
<u>Model – learn – do - feel.</u>	
Low involvement	Self satisfaction (reactor)
Habit formation (doer)	Cigarette – liquor - candy
Food – household items.	Model – do – feel – learn
Model – do – learn – feel	

(Weinberger, Campbell & Brody, 1994; Weinberger, Spotts & Parsons, 1995; Weinberger & Gulas, 2006)

Quadrant 1: *High [Involvement] thinking/ informative* implies a large need for information because of the importance of the product and thinking issues related to it. Major purchases, such as car, house, furnishings, and any new product that needs to convey what its function, price and availability might fall under this quadrant. The media is necessary to convey the key points of consumer interest (Vaughn, 1980).

Quadrant 2: *High [Involvement]/Feeling (affective)* implies product decision as involving, but specific information is less important than an attitude or holistic feeling. The product's importance is related to the person's self-esteem. Jewelry, cosmetics and

fashion apparel might fall here. Media consideration includes dramatic print exposure or 'image' broadcast specials (Vaughn, 1980).

Quadrant 3: *Low [Involvement]/ Thinking (Habit Formation)*, implies product decisions in this area involve minimal thought and a tendency to form buying habits for convenience. Most food and staple packaged goods items likely belong here. Brand loyalty will be a function of habit, but it is quite likely that most consumers have several "acceptable" brands. Media implications include small space ads, 10 second I.D's, point of sale and radio (Vaughn, 1980).

Quadrant 4: *Low [Involvement]/feeling (self satisfaction)* are reserved for those products that satisfy personal tastes, for example cigarettes, liquor, candy, and movies. It involves imagery and quick satisfaction. Billboards, point of sales and newspapers might apply here (Vaughn, 1980).

#### *Product Color Matrix*

Weinberger, Campbell and Brody, (1994) designed the Product Color Matrix (PCM) for radio advertising. The PCM draws on earlier classification systems, especially the Elaboration Likelihood Model, and adds a metaphor of color to highlight the meaning of the products (Spotts et al., 1995; Gulas & Weinberger, 2006). The developed classification system is built in recognition of the consumer's involvement with the products (Weinberger, Campbell & Brody, 1994)

Along one dimension of the PCM is 'functional tools' versus 'expressive toys' dimensions and along the other is a 'low' versus 'high' risk involvement (Gulas & Weinberger, 2006) (Table 2). Similar to the FCB model in the low risk dimension cell,

involvement is lower because many decisions are routine because of habit formation or self satisfaction, lower cost, and/ or not worth the effort. Along the tools and toys dimension, products filling more logical or functional needs are contrasted with those filling more expressive needs like wants and rewards. A tool is an implement that helps us accomplish a task and achieve a goal such as safety, health, cleanliness and work completion. A toy is consumed for its sensory and pleasure filling properties (Weinberger, Spotts, Campbell & Parsons, 1995).

Table 2 – Product Color Matrix

Functional tools

Expressive toys

Higher risk

Higher risk

*White good- “Big Tools”*

*Red goods–Big Toys*

Large Appliance

Fashion, clothing, accessories

Business Equipment

Hair coloring

Insurance

motorcycle, sports car

Auto tires

jewelry

Automobiles

Non routine business products

Low risk

Low risk

*Blue goods – Little Tools*

*Yellow goods – little toys/treats*

Detergents, household cleaners,  
e.g. toilet bowl cleaners, laundry

Snack foods- Deserts, beer, alcohol  
tobacco, Gum, candy, soft drink,

Detergent, mouthwash–products

wine coolers and cigarettes

those are habitual purchase

OTC remedies; Motor oil and gas

Non desert food

(Weinberger, Campbell & Brody, 1994; Weinberger, Spotts & Parsons, 1995; Weinberger & Gulas, 2006)

### *Cell 1: White Goods*

They represent high risk, are often but not always based on price and are 'big tools'. They fulfill functional needs. They are durable and require consumers to shop and compare because of the risk involved in the choice. White goods have significant financial risk, and include products such as refrigerators, washer/dryers and other such appliances, insurance, some automobiles, and many non-routine business products (Weinberger et al., 1995; Gulas & Weinberger, 2006; Spotts et al., 1997). Generally, ads in this group are longer and use more words, and include more brand mentions and ideas (Weinberger et al., 1994). These products fall under the first quadrant of FCB model and are high involvement products (Vaughn, 1980).

### *Cell 2: Red Goods*

They symbolize flamboyance and are expressive. These products represent the individual. Red goods have significant financial and social risk. Red goods are 'big toys' and help satisfy more conspicuous and flamboyant goals, for example, sports car, motorcycle and jewelry (Weinberger et al., 1995). They are consumed more for sensory gratification than for simple functional performance (Spotts et al., 1997). Red goods fall under the second quadrant of the FCB model; they are high involvement feeling products (Vaughn, 1980). The executions for red good may be mixed with rational and emotional product benefits or be slightly weighted towards emotional (Gulas & Weinberger, 2006).

### *Cell 3: Blue Goods*

They represent low risk and functional decisions making characteristics of habit buys (Weinberger et al., 1995). These products fall under the third quadrant of the FCB

model and represent habit formation products. Due to the functional nature of the products there is some interest in relevant information, however not to the extent of white goods. The products in this group are 'little tools' that are consumable and help accomplish small tasks like cleaning, cooking, personal hygiene; it includes products such as staple food items, many health and beauty aids, and over the counter drugs. Executions could be expected to be mixed with rational and emotion, with some slight weighting towards rational (Weinberger et al., 1995).

#### *Cell 4: Yellow Goods*

These products represent the 'little toys' that are the day-to-day reward to which consumers treat themselves to (Gulas & Weinberger, 2006). These goods fall under the fourth quadrant of the FCB model and denote self satisfaction (Vaughn, 1980). The ELM frame work would classify these products into a low motivation to process category because of the low risk and routine nature of decision making and help consumers feel better. They focus on satisfaction and expressiveness. Products such as snacks, chips, beer, cigarettes, candy, gum, soft drinks, and wine coolers fall under this category (Gulas & Weinberger, 2006).

#### *Humor/ Product and Media*

Madden and Weinberger (1984) conducted a survey of advertising executives, which found that radio and television were perceived as the best media vehicles suited for humor. Outdoor and magazines received less than half the support of radio and television. The most appropriate products for the use of humor, according to the survey,

were consumer non-durables. A content analysis study conducted by Weinberger and Spotts (1989) and Toncar (2001) found that television was the best suited medium for humorous ads. Both studies concluded that humor is most commonly used for low involvement blue and yellow products. According to a compilation of studies by Gulas and Weinberger (2006), humor in magazine ads enhances attention but appears to hinder comprehension.

Weinberger et al., (1995) conducted a study that found the following; white goods used 23.9% humor in TV ads, 7.9% in magazine ads and 14.3% humor in radio ads. Red goods used 0.0% humor in TV ads, 5.5% humor in magazine ads and 10.0% humor in radio ads. Blue goods used 22.2% humor in TV ads, 11.9% humor in magazine ads and 35.2% humor in radio ads. Yellow goods used 37.9% humor in TV ads, 18.1% humor in magazines and 40.0% in radio ads. The significant differences in the usage of humor in the three different media correspond to Madden and Weinberger's (1984) survey of ad executives' preference for television and radio over magazines. The belief is that to bring humor 'alive' the devices to execute humor in print are more limited (Madden & Weinberger, 1984).

Spotts et al., (1997) conducted a study of magazine ads and found that incongruity based humor is the mechanism of choice for the magazines studied, at least 75% of the magazine ads, regardless of PCM cells, appeared to use incongruity. Further, comic wit was used 82% in the magazine ads; sentimental humor was used 2%; satire was used 8%; sentimental wit was used 7%; full comedy was used 1% of the times. The study further showed that the ads for white and blue goods are most likely to employ arousal safety



humor, 12% and 5% respectively. The overall usage of arousal safety and disparagement humor was low compared to incongruity-based humor. A high percentage of yellow and red goods used disparagement humor than arousal safety-based humor. Overall, 55% ads were humor dominant; 20% were message dominant and 25% were image dominant. A majority of ads for white goods were message dominant, information focused. Ads for red goods were primarily humor dominant; ads for yellow goods were primarily humor dominant, image focused.

### *Summary*

There are three underlying process of humor, incongruity-based humor, arousal safety humor and disparagement humor. Incongruity humor is a cognitive process that involves the interpretation of the humorous text through the subject's relief from anxiety concerning the processing of the text. Arousal safety humor is an affective process that involves empathetic bonding with someone who narrowly avoids disaster.

Disparagement humor is a conative process that has to do with the social context of humor. The significance of humor in the ad depends on the relatedness of humorous elements to the message. Humor is related to the message in three ways; intentional relatedness is the relationship of humor type to message type and humor processing. Structural relatedness is the syntactical function of humor within message dominant ads and of product information within humor dominant ads. Thematic relatedness is the relationship between humor and message content. There are mainly five types of humor; sentimental humor, satire, sentimental comedy, full comedy, and comic wit.

In terms of medium, research showed that television and radio are considered best suited for humorous messages, followed by magazines, newspapers and billboards. Television and radio provide the necessary tools for effective execution of humor in advertising. In terms of products, research shows that low risk, yellow and blue goods, are best suited for humor compared to high risk, white and red goods.

### FEAR APPEAL

Fear appeal studies have focused on the effects of fear appeal messages on consumer attitude towards the ad and attitude towards the brand. (Witte, 1992; Stiff & Mongeau, 2003; LaTour & Zahra, 1988; Nabi, 2002; Tanner, Hunt & Eppright, 1991; Henthorne, LaTour & Natrajan, 1993; Higbee, 1969; LaTour, Snipes & Bliss, 1996; Perloff, 2003; Menasco & Baron, 1983; Stuteville, 1970; Agres, Edell & Dubitsky, 1990; Ray & Wilke, 1970; Dillard, 1994; Spence & Moinpour, 1972; DeTurck, 2002). There have been no studies that specifically deal with fear appeal in the context of medium. Further, a typology needs to be developed to clearly define the different types of fear appeal, which would help future researchers to study fear appeal in a precise manner.

Fear appeal can be defined as a persuasive message that arouses fear by depicting a personally relevant and significant threat, followed by a description of feasible recommendations for deterring the threat (Witte, 1992). A fear appeal ad depicts threat, and recommends a coping response, generally some form of attitude or behavior change, as a means of avoiding the threat. Thus, the message developers hope that audience members will adopt the recommended attitude and behavior change (Stiff & Mongeau, 2003). Fear is one of the most commonly used appeals of persuasion (Sternthal & Craig,

1974). Fear is a primitive instinct which guides and activates human behavior. It creates anxiety and tension, causing people to seek ways to reduce these feelings (LaTour & Zahra, 1988).

A successful fear appeal should contain both characteristics designed to elicit fear in a target audience and evoke the desired effects (Nabi, 2002). Messages containing some sort of threat are classified as fear appeals (Brooker, 1981). Fear is an emotional response to a threat that expresses or at least implies, some sort of danger. Marketers have attempted to take advantage of this relationship by using the threat of danger to evoke the emotional response of fear and thus influence consumer behavior (Tanner et al., 1991). Rogers (1983) noted that fear may be considered a relational construct, aroused in response to a situation that is judged as dangerous and toward which protective action is taken. The use of fear appeal is grounded in the belief that some form of arousal is necessary for individual behavior change to occur (Henthorne et al., 1993). Fear appeal is referred to as the content of communications describing the unfavorable consequence that may result from failure to adopt to the communicator's response (Rogers, 1975).

Fear appeal consists of three steps; (a) creation of a fearful situation designed to activate a person's sense of risk and vulnerability; (b) depiction of danger as serious enough to warrant attention. Marketers appeal to their potential targets by suggesting vulnerability to the risk emphasized in the messages. For example, a life insurance ad emphasizes the traumatic consequences of the breadwinner's death; (c) a solution is provided as a means of fear reduction. The appeal is often coupled with assurances of

‘security from the fear’ in order to entice potential consumers to pursue the suggested action. For example, buying a life insurance policy may be depicted as providing relief from worry about financially destitute survivors (LaTour & Zahra, 1988).

According to Higbee (1969), there are two experimental approaches to fear appeal. One approach entails the presentation of a persuasive message that specifies a dangerous practice (e.g. smoking, drug use etc.). In the second approach, fear is evoked by elaborating the consequences of failure to perform certain activities (e.g. lack of proper dental hygiene, lack of life insurance etc) and describing how these outcomes can be avoided by proper practice. A fear-arousing message contains two basic elements, threat and efficacy information or a problem and solution. The use of fear appeals is quite common in many types of marketing communications. The recommendations of the advertisers, whether positive or negative, center on convincing the consumer to buy a product. The projected consequence of not conforming to the communication’s recommendations is spelled out in vivid and threatening detail (LaTour et al., 1996).

The message must contain the following elements; (a) severity information presents the seriousness or magnitude of the threat; (b) susceptibility information presents the likelihood of the occurrence of threatening outcome; (c) response efficacy is information about the effectiveness of the recommended action and (d) self efficacy information presents arguments that the individual is capable of performing the recommended action (Perloff, 2003).

The three concepts embedded in a fear appeal definition are–fear, perceived threat and perceived efficacy. Fear is a negatively valenced emotion. Perceived threat is an

external stimulus that creates a perception in message receivers that they are susceptible to some negative situation or outcome. Perceived efficacy is a person's belief that message recommendation can be implemented and will effectively reduce the threat depicted in the message (Rogers, 1975, 1983; Witte, 1992). A strong fear appeal condition suggests that the message depicted a large threat. Strong fear appeal conditions are similar to high fear appeal conditions where the severe consequences of the threat are made applicable to the respondent, usually in the form of vivid and gruesome pictures or films (Witte, 1992).

According to Sternthal and Craig (1974), there are two types of fear appeal, one that deals primarily with physical consequences of action or inaction, and second that describes the consequences of social disapproval resulting from performance or abstinence of certain behaviors; as is seen in the case of advertisements for products such as mouthwash, feminine hygiene, deodorant, detergents, etc. Menasco and Baron (1983) noted that the different kinds of fear appeal used in advertising are social, physical and self-esteem fears. Physical fear includes harm to the body; social fear is fear of disapproval by peers or other associates of some action or characteristic possessed by the receiver (Smith, Frankenberger & Kahle, 1990). Stuteville (1970) noted that in using fear appeal the advertisers are stressing on the fear of damage to the social image of the self.

## FEAR APPEAL MODELS

### *Drive Model*

The fear drive model postulates a perceived danger, the stimulus (S) leads to an emotional response [R] that causes perceived tension followed by instrumental rehearsal, which is synonymous with considering and pursuing the suggested solution (Leventhal, 1970; Ray & Wilke, 1970). The fear drive model suggests that responses to fear appeal depend on the perceptions people develop concerning the enormity of the pending danger and on their evaluations of their effect. The more serious the potential damage to one's physical or social self, the more likely the person will respond by following the recommended action (LaTour & Zahara, 1988).

In a fear-drive model, fear is conceptualized as drive state that is usually initiated by a graphic description of negative consequences that message receivers are likely to experience if they do not adopt the message recommendations. Hence the drive model suggests a sequence in, which fear appeal arouses fear in message receivers that acts as a drive. The acceptance of message recommendations reduces this fear and the corresponding drive state, thus reinforcing attitude or behavior change (Mongeau & Stiff, 2003). According to Dillard (1994), a fear appeal should have two components; a part of the message that instills fear and another that assuages it. Basic to the fear drive model is the notion that information contained in a message evokes an emotional reaction that motivates coping response (Sternthal & Craig, 1974).

### *Parallel Response Model*

Leventhal (1970) proposed two separate but parallel responses in message recipients. The basic premise behind this model is that two factors are activated simultaneously in response to fear, danger control and fear control (LaTour & Zahra, 1988). Danger control involves the evaluation and selection of responses that will avert the danger depicted in the message. Danger Control is a cognitive process that is dependent on the information available to the message receivers (Mongeau & Stiff, 2003).

Once a fearful situation is perceived, the danger control component activates an individual's desire to deal with the threatening problem (LaTour & Zahra, 1988). Danger control occurs when people perceive they are capable of averting the threat by undertaking the recommended action (Perloff, 2003). Danger control guides an individual's problem solving behavior and the ultimate action is taken; thus guiding the adaptive behavior (Sternthal & Craig, 1974). Fear control is an emotional process and aims at eliminating the unpleasant fear emotion (Mongeau & Stiff, 2003; LaTour & Zahra, 1988). Fear control occurs when people face serious threat, but focus inwardly on the fear, rather than the problem at hand (Perloff, 2003). According to Sternthal & Craig (1974) fear control deals with the emotional component of the persuasive appeal; fear control guides emotional behavior.

### *Protection Motivation Theory*

Protection Motivation Theory of Rogers (1975) noted that there are three crucial elements of a fear appeal; (a) magnitude of noxiousness or the perceived severity of the threat (Tanner et al., 1991); (b) the probability of the event's occurrence; (c) the efficacy of a protective response. Rogers (1983) revised his Protection Motivation Theory and added a fourth element to it: the individual's perceived ability to carry out the coping behavior (self-efficacy).

According to Rogers (1975), the basic postulation of the theory is that protection motivation arises from cognitive appraisal of a depicted event as noxious and likely to occur, along with the belief that a recommended coping response can effectively prevent the occurrence of the aversive event. According to DeTurck (2002), the severity of hazard refers to the extent to which a product/ context can harm the individual (e.g. death) if he or she fails to comply with the safety recommendations. The likelihood of hazard refers to the probability that a negative consequence will be associated with a product or context if the individual fails to comply with the recommended safety precautions. Self efficacy refers to the user's ability to perform the recommended behavior (s). Response efficacy refers to the utility of the recommended behavior to prevent the noxious threat.

The negative emotion most commonly used in advertising is fear (Brooker, 1981). Fear appeal is used in marketing and there is a continuous reliance on fear appeals in the sale of personal products such as deodorants and feminine hygiene (Stuteville, 1970). Products such as insurance, toothpaste, deodorants, mouthwash, and detergents



commonly use fear appeal in their advertising. Public service announcements also sometimes use fear appeals in their messages, for example to discourage driving while drinking alcohol, or to increase the use of seatbelts (Smith et al., 1990).

The typical mouthwash and deodorant ad suggests the possibility that some odor is the cause of this feared condition (Spence & Moinpour, 1972). Areas of persuasion which use such scare tactics might include public opinion campaign or public service announcements such as safe driving, anti smoking campaign, drug use campaigns, and advertising for commercial products such as mouthwash, toothpaste, and deodorant (Higbee, 1969). Marketers have employed fear appeals to advertise many types of products such as life insurance, political causes, and social awareness of serious concerns (e.g. treating alcoholism, drug abuse).

### *Summary*

Fear appeal is a persuasive message tactic that depicts personally relevant threat in the hope of changing the attitude and behavior of the audience members, to adopt the recommended action suggested by the advertiser. A fear appeal ad consists of four elements; (a) severity of information; (b) susceptibility or noxiousness of the threat; (c) response efficacy; (d) self efficacy. There are two types of fear appeal, physical fear that deals with the physical consequences of action or inaction; social fear that deals with the consequences of social disapproval resulting from abstinence or performance of certain behaviors. Fear appeal has been mostly used in personal care, hygiene products and public service announcements depicting either physical threat or social disapproval.

## SEX APPEAL

Sex appeal can be defined as messages, or brand information, in advertising context or persuasive appeal in social marketing context associated with sexual information. Sex in advertising can be mediated messages (i.e. television commercials, magazines ads) containing sexual information with the persuasive purpose of selling branded goods (Reichert, Heckler & Jackson, 2001). Sexual appeal has been defined according to the overt message features (e.g. nudity decorative models etc) (Reichert & Lambiase, 2000). Sex appeal has been visually represented as images, verbal elements, or both. Sexual information can be integrated with the message to a greater or lesser degree (Reichert, 2002). Sexuality in the form of nudity, sexual imagery, innuendo, and double entendre is employed as an advertising tool (Courtney & Whipple, 1983).

Sexual content can be used to draw attention to the product and it can be associated with the advertiser's persuasive appeal (Reichert, 2002a). Richmond and Hartman (1982) defined sex appeal as containing overt message appeals which include physically attractive models, whose alluring bodies are revealed by provocative apparel, subtle or sexual content such as double entendre, innuendo and suggestive meaning.

### *Types of Sex Appeal*

*Nudity* has been defined as revealing displays of a model's body and this constitutes an essential source of sexual information (Reichert, 2002). Nudity is also referred to as the amount of clothing and style of clothing worn by models in an ad and is operationalized as models in progressive stages of undress. Body display is a common component of sexual information in advertising (Reichert & Ramirez, 2000; Reichert,

2002, 2002a; Reichert et al, 1999). Nudity is defined as unclothed bodies, including silhouettes, the wearing of translucent under apparel or lingerie, medium shots where the models display no clothing or have only a towel over their shoulders, and full shots where the model is unclad except for a towel (Soley & Kurzbad, 1986). According to Peterson and Kerin (1977), a nude model is seen as an exploitative end of the continuum represented by cheesecake ads where the model serves a titillating function.

Nudity is classified further in terms of *suggestively dressed, demure, partially clad and nude* (Reichert, 2002 a). Ads that are defined as *suggestively clad* include a wide range of sexual stimuli such as camera angles, seductive language, double entendres, and sexual behavior (Ramirez & Reichert, 2000). Scigilmpaglia, Belch & Gain (1979) operationalized suggestiveness as heterosexual couples in various degrees of intimacy and clothing. Hartman and Richmond (1982) defined suggestiveness as 'fantasy'. *Partially clad* models are described as wearing underwear or bathing suits. *Nudity* ranges from the implication that models are not wearing anything to full frontal nudity. Complete nudity however is rare in mainstream advertising. It is often represented by side and back shots of the model, tub and shower scenes and in some cases full frontal nudity from the waist (Reichert, 2002).

Reichert et al (1999) conducted a study regarding the sexually explicit manner in which men/women dressed in magazine ads in 1993 as compared to 1983. The increase in explicit dressing rose from 28% in 1983 to 40% in 1993, suggesting that women were more explicitly portrayed in 1993 as compared to 1983. Reichert and Carpenter (2004) replicated Reichert et al (1999) study that showed 49% of women as explicitly dressed in

magazine ads in 2004 compared to 28% in 1983. Male models on the other hand, continued to be dressed demurely in 1993 (82%) and 2003 (79%). Soley and Kurzbad (1986) conducted a study, which found that among the categories of visual content, sexual dress/undress was the most frequently portrayed category in magazine ads.

*Sexual behavior* can be woven into an ad in two ways, as individual behavior and interpersonal interaction. Models behave sexually in ads by making eye contact with the viewer, flirting and moving provocatively (Reichert 2002). Reichert and Ramirez (2000) conducted a study that found 39% respondents cited movements by a model as definition of sexy, in this case sexual behavior in terms of verbal and non verbal communication by models. Respondents included movements like ‘winking’, ‘stroking themselves’, ‘flirting’, dancing around, models’ demeanor (e.g. sultry), words, and tone of voice as suggestive of sexual behavior.

A second form of sexual behavior involves two models, sometimes more, engaging in sexual contact. Sexual behavior also includes sexualized language, vocalic, kissing, and more sexually aggressive forms of touching such as passionate kissing and simulated foreplay (Reichert, 2002, 2002 a). Kurzbad and Soley (1986) defined physical contact between male and female model as (a) simple contact which only included holding hands and (b) intimate contact which included kissing, embracing and playful wrestling. They also included ads showing male and female embracing in a prone position while partially clad or nude in bed or depicting other bedroom scenes. Such a depiction of physical contact between male and female is defined as ‘very intimate contact’ by Reichert et al (1999).

Soley and Kurzbad (1986) found that 82.4% of the ads in magazines in 1964 exhibited no physical contact and contained no or very subtle sexual suggestiveness. However in 1984, the amount of male-female sexual contact was greater than 1964. Reichert et al (1999) reported that more than 53% of the ads in 1993 showed heterosexual couples engaged in a sexually suggestive behavior, as compared to 1983 where only 21% of the couples were engaged in sexually suggestive behavior. Reichert and Carpenter (2004) replicated Reichert et al (1999) study and found that 46% of heterosexual couples were depicted in a sexually suggestive behavior in magazine ads in 2003. The study also found that 'very intimate' contact increased from 1% in 1983 to 17% in 1993 and only 6% couples were depicted in that behavior in 2003.

### *Sexual Referents*

Images and words that subtly refer to sex or that trigger sexual thoughts can be considered examples of sex in advertising. These referents could be verbal or a mix of verbal and visual message elements such as sexual innuendo, or double entendre. They are less tangible and more oblique than graphic depictions of nudity or erotic behavior. Double entendre is a message with two or more interpretations, one of which has a sexual meaning when framed by a sexual image (Reichert, 20002, 2002a).

### *Sexual Embeds*

Sexual embeds in advertising are examples of sexual content in advertising. A sexual embed is a small imperceptible image of a naked person, sexual parts of a person or sexual acts, for example genitalia depicted as rockets or bottles and key inserted into a

lock are considered examples of sexual embeds. Sexual embeds are integrated into images by ad creators and are intended to go unnoticed (Reichert, 2002, 2002a).

### *Decorative Models*

Reid and Soley (1981) noted that the portrayal of women as decorative model remains a popular execution technique among advertisers. Reid and Soley defined decorative model as a non-functional model whose primary activity is to adorn the product as a sexual or attractive stimuli. Peterson and Kerin (1977) noted that decorative model in an ad is neither strictly communicative nor exploitative. Reid and Soley (1981) conducted a study, which showed that using a sexy model or an attractive woman as a product adornment is an effective attention getting device. Decorative model implies no discernable link or connection between the model and the advertised product or service (Lambiase & Reichert, 2003).

### *Sexual Brand Benefits*

Sexual information is incorporated into ads to demonstrate that brands can make consumers more sexually attractive and more sexually active. In this way, sexual models and sexual scenes are arguments for buying the brand, while also serving as attention getting devices (Reichert, 2002). Richmond and Hartman (1982) identified a type of sexual ad that features brand promises linked to wish fulfillment.

Gould (1991) used the construct of consumer love map to formulate theoretical links between consumer behavior and sexuality. He defined the consumer love map as including imaging, purchase and use of product and objects (e.g. sexual toys, sexy

clothes) directly used in love making or attracting a sexual partner, engaging in sexual activity, and developing and maintaining sexual love relationships (Gould, 1991, 1992). Much of consumer behavior involves the conditioned and scripted use of products (e.g. attractive clothing) to obtain and/or enhance relatively unconditioned erotic stimulation provided by sexual arousal and intercourse; i.e. goods that play into and help shape the way biological desires come to manifest and express themselves. Products that fit a script through conditioning or suggest aspects of one are more likely to be used than others, particularly where sexuality is salient (Gould, 1992). Consumers embody and ornament products, services, consuming practices, routines, rituals, and symbolism according to their love maps (Gould, 1991, 1992).

According to Gould (2002), an advertising love map is the cultural embodiment of all aspects of sexuality that is relevant to and is contained in advertising. Love maps can be viewed as directing scripted behavior in which products and services are included as erotic, stimulating props (Gould, 1992). Within these love maps, relatively unconditioned sexuality is joined with sexually conditioned (sexualized) products to drive both direct (e.g. having sex and using sex toys) and indirect sexual behavior (e.g. dressing in an erotic fashion). Such sexualization is used in advertising to render even what seems to be the most inert consumption activity as a highly sexualized one (Gould, 2002).

Lambiase and Reichert (2003) built on Gould's (1991, 1992) work and derived a set of common sexual benefits or promises made by advertisers. The benefits were defined as sexual appeals, either implicitly or explicitly, offering a promise of sexual outcomes that can be expected as a result of purchasing and using the product. The three

benefits may be considered as subsets of an appeal to conform to the idealized and gendered appearance or sexual performance. The three appeals are; sexual attractiveness for the consumer; likely engagement in sexual behavior; sex esteem or feelings of being sexy or sensual.

*Sexual attractiveness* appeal implies that the model is actively being observed, such as using a product while at a party (e.g. smoking, drinking or wearing a certain brand of jeans). Either the ad implies that the model will be observed, such as woman applying lipstick or wearing a particular perfume, or a man straightening his tie for an unseen, unknowable audience (Lambiase & Reichert, 2003)

*Sexual behavior* is a depiction of two people in sexual intercourse, but it could also be an anticipation of such an encounter with a particular person, such as someone using mouthwash before saying hello to his/her spouse in bed (Lambiase & Reichert, 2003)

*Sex esteem* is a reflexive category; the pleasure is for the ad's subject alone, not for any discernable, knowable audience. The promise in this appeal is that by using the product the ad subject feels good about himself/herself (Lambiase & Reichert, 2003)

### *Sex Appeal in Magazines*

Four studies provided a content analytic perspective on the use of sex appeal in magazine ads.

Soley and Kurzbad (1986) conducted a comparative study of ads in men's (*Esquire*, *Playboy*), women's (*Redbook*, *Cosmopolitan*) and general interest (*Time*, *Newsweek*) magazines in 1964 and 1984. The study found that sexual content was more prevalent in



men's and women's magazines than in general interest magazines. In a comparison of magazine ads in 1964 and 1984, the study found that in 1964, 2.4% of the ads in general interest magazines contained sexual content, compared to 11% in 1984. 26% of the ads in men's magazines contained sexual content in 1964 compared to 26.3% in 1984. 25% of the ads in women's magazines contained sexual content in 1964 compared to 26.7% in 1984. The results showed a marked increase in sexual content in general interest magazines between 1964 and 1984. There, however, was not much difference in the sexual content in men's and women's magazines between 1964 and 1984.

Ads in 1984 relied more on visual sex than ads in 1964. Further, men and women's magazines tended to portray sexually dressed and undressed models with greater frequency than general interest magazines. Among the categories of visual content, sexual dress and undress was the most frequently portrayed category. In 1984 32.4% ads in women's magazines depicted suggestively clad, partially clad or nude models. Ads in men's magazines tended to depict male and female contact with greater frequency than women's magazines (Soley & Kurzbad, 1986).

Reichert et al (1999) replicated Soley and Kurzbad (1986) study using the same samples of women (*Redbook*, *Cosmopolitan*), men (*Esquire*, *Playboy*) and general interest (*Time*, *Newsweek*) magazines, found that women were invariably portrayed in a more sexually explicit manner than men and evidence suggests that both genders are portrayed in a more sexually explicit ways in media. The study showed that women were three times more likely to be sexually explicitly dressed than men across magazine types. A viewer was most likely to view a non-sexual contact in general interest magazines than

sexual contact. The significance of non-sexual contact to sexual contact was lower in men's and women's magazines when compared to general interest magazines in both 1983 and 1993. The increased proportion of sexual contact in magazines from 1983 to 1993 took place in gendered magazines compared to general interest magazines. Ads in women's magazines were 5.7 times more non-explicit in 1983 compared to 1993. Similarly ads in men's magazines were 6.7 times more non-explicit in 1983 compared to 1993.

The study showed a sharp increase in the proportion of sexually intimate behavior in magazine ads from 1983 to 1993. The increase in sexual explicitness was more evident in gendered magazines than in general interest magazines. It is interesting to note that ads in 1993 in general interest magazines were less sexual compared to 1983. Overall, increases in sexual explicitness and sexual contact especially in advertising images of women and even men in gendered magazines reveals a growing reliance on sexual images in advertising.

Reichert and Carpenter (2004) replicated the Reichert et al, (1999) study by comparing ads in magazines from 1983 to 2003, using the same sample of study in men, women and general interest magazines. The study found most models in general interest magazines (both men and women) were dressed demurely with no instance of nudity. Overtime, between 1983 and 2003, sexual content in general interest magazines showed little change except for an increase in explicitness of physical contact, 17% of the heterosexual couples were engaged in intimate contact in 1993 compared to 40% in 2003. 90% males and 94% females were demurely dressed in general interest magazines.

In women's magazines (*Cosmopolitan* and *Redbook*), women were depicted in a more sexually explicit manner as were men and physical contact increased over time. Though there were significant differences between 1983 and 1993 and between 1983 and 2003, there was no difference between 1993 and 2003. Specifically sexual explicitness increased from 1983 to 2003, but not from 1993 to 2003, showing a decrease in explicit sexual contact from 62% in 1993 to 46% in 2003.

In men's magazines (*Esquire*, *Playboy*), over time all three categories of female dress, male dress and physical contact were explicit. Images of women in men's magazines were increasingly explicit; women were more provocatively displayed, 30% in 1983 compared to 70% in 2003; in 1983 21% of the heterosexual couples were in intimate contact compared to 50% in 2003. Further, women were shown in an explicit manner half of the time in magazine ads. Consistent with previous research, general interest magazines contained the least sexually explicit depictions in the three categories.

Busby and Leichty (1993), studied ads in traditional and non-traditional women's magazines, and found that general interest magazines portrayed women in more employment oriented roles than women's magazines. Further, women's magazines portrayed both men and women decoratively.

Reichert and Lambiase (2003) study of ads in men (*Details*, *Esquire*) and women (*Cosmopolitan*, *Glamour*) magazines showed that while more sexual ads appeared in women's magazines than men's magazines, there was no significant difference between the two. In terms of sexual appeal targeted to each sex, 72.8% contained sexual themes such as sexual attraction, sexual benefits, sex esteem and sexual behavior. Appeals in

women's magazines emphasized sexual behavior and sex esteem, whereas benefits in the men's magazines were mostly related to sexual behavior. Of the sexual ads in men's magazines over one-third (35.4%) contained no sexual benefit compared to 20.3% ads in women's magazines. 82.4% ads in men's magazines contained women. A higher proportion of ads in men's magazines were sexual compared to women's magazines. Ads in women's magazines appear to use a range of appeals namely, attractiveness, behavior and esteem. In men's magazine, 50% appeals focused on sexual behavior either getting more or better sex. Promises of sex esteem and sexual attractiveness do not seem to be popular strategies among advertisers.

### *Sex Appeal and Products*

Certain product marketers utilize a higher proportion of sexual appeal (e.g., beauty, fashion, fragrance, alcohol, and tobacco) than other marketers because of the nature of the products and the relevance of sex to product benefits. Interestingly, many of these marketers promote their brands in high circulation magazines (Lambiase & Reichert, 2003). According to Busby and Leichty (1993), advertising for 'beauty products' (mainly cosmetics) and personal care products such as deodorants, hygiene and sun tan lotions use decorative models in women's magazines. Richmond and Hartman (1982) defined products such as undergarments and personal hygiene as functional, since they can be presented in a straightforward sexual manner. Products that satisfy sexual gratification of consumers are defined as 'fantasy' products.

Ads feature provocative images of well-defined men and women in revealing outfits and postures selling clothing, alcohol, beauty products and fragrances.

Advertisers such as Calvin Klein, Victoria's Secret and Pepsi use images to cultivate ubiquitous sex tinged media presence. Sexual information is also used to promote products that are not traditionally associated with sex such as shoes (Reichert, 2002). Sexual content is rarely present in ads for banking, financial services, medicines, and home computers. It is more prevalent in ads for products that represent positive purchase motivation, such as entertainment, health, hygiene, beauty, and fashion (Reichert, Mortensen & Morgan, 2000).

Reichert (2003) noted that brands like Victoria's Secret, Wonderbra, Ralph Lauren, and La Perla, have sexualized products through mere association with the brands. Similarly designer jeans such as Guess, Tommy Hilfiger and Ralph Lauren were made sexy because they were advertised in a sexual manner, by using provocative imagery, consisting of people in scintillating dress, poses and lustful embraces. Many contemporary designers use sex imagery to create brand images that are tantalizingly sexual. Advertisers also use sex appeal as a tool to differentiate parity products like jeans, undergarments and fragrances.

### *Summary*

Sex appeal is an important advertising tool to draw attention to a particular product or brand. Sex appeal is largely used in ads appearing in gendered magazines than in general interest magazines. Sex appeal is used by advertisers to distinguish their products in a cluttered environment. Sex appeal is used as a persuasive tool to reach the target audience. Nudity, sexual behavior, sexual embeds and decorative model are key elements of sex appeal in advertising. Further, advertisers represent products as fulfilling

the desires of the consumer in the form of sexual benefits, sexual attractiveness and sex esteem, thus making products attractive to the consumer. Products that use sex appeal in their ads represent either the function dimension such as undergarments or the fantasy dimension such as beauty products, clothing and fragrance that fall under the category of sexual benefits, attractiveness and esteem.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHOD

The sample for the study was drawn from the top ten magazines list compiled by the Magazine Publishers of America based on advertising revenue. Based on the list, the sample consisted of each issue of the following magazines in that order from January 2007 to December 2007; *People*, *Better Homes and Garden*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Time*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Newsweek*, *Vogue*, *Family Circle*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Woman's Day*. The independent variable is the publications and the dependent variable is the type of ads in these publications. The sub category of the dependent variable is sex appeal, fear appeal and humor appeal.

#### *Measurement*

Variables with attributes that have only the characteristics of exhaustiveness and mutual exclusiveness are being measured at the nominal level. Nominal measurement merely offers names or labels for characteristics (Baxter & Babbie, 2004). The data was collected by coding the ads according to the list of frames approach (Appendix). A total of 5,881 ads were coded for the three appeals. The research sought to study the relation between the magazines and the advertisements in the magazines. The relation between the ads in magazines and the products in the ads was also an important aspect of the study, as it related to the question of what magazines use which of the three appeals and what products use which of the three appeals. The two questions being inter-related provided a foundation for the collection of the data and the coding process.

In order to understand and study the overall research question of which appeals are used most in magazine ads and which products use which appeals the most, chi square analysis were conducted. The chi square analysis is a frequently used non parametric test of significance to identify difference in frequency data (Baxter & Babbie, 2004). The chi square indicates the statistical significance of the relationship between two variables measured at the nominal level (Riffe, Lacy & Fico, 2005).

An important aspect of the study was also to see if the ads were framed or unframed in the case of sex appeal and humor appeal, and whether they were framed either as 'loss' or 'gain' for fear appeal. A cross-tabulation along with a chi square test was conducted to understand the interaction between the different appeals vs. product and different appeals vs. magazines.

#### *Inter-coder Reliability*

Each advertisement was coded by the researcher. A pretest was conducted with an independent coder for a sample of advertisements. The independent coder was trained to code the ads according to the coding instructions provided by the researcher. Using Scott's pi (1955), the inter coder reliability coefficient was determined to be 80% for fear appeal, 80% for humor appeal and 90% for sex appeal. Further, both coders coded independently 10% of the 5,881 ads coded. By using Scott's pi (1955), inter-coder reliability was calculated to 80% for all three categories of appeal, namely sex appeal, humor appeal, and fear appeal.



### *Hypotheses for Sex Appeal*

1. It is hypothesized that sex appeal ads would be more prevalent in gendered magazines as compared to general interest magazines.
2. Sex appeal ads are more likely to appear in beauty, personal care, fragrance, alcohol and clothing products than in other products.
3. Percentage of sex appeal ads that are framed ads are more than unframed ads.

### *Hypotheses for Fear Appeal*

1. All fear appeal ads comprise the four elements of protection motivation theory of Rogers (1975, 1983) namely: severity of hazard, likelihood of hazard, self efficacy and response efficacy.
2. Personal care products, public service announcements, insurance, automobiles, and medicines, employ the use of fear appeal the most.
3. Gain framed fear appeal ads are more than loss framed.
4. General interest magazines have more fear appeal than gender magazine.

### *Hypotheses for Humor Appeal*

1. According to Madden & Weinberger's (1984) survey of ad executives suggests that humor is used less in magazines.
2. Humor is present more in general interest magazines than gender magazines.
3. Humor is present in ads for products such as chips, snacks, alcohol, and chewing gum than other products.

4. Percentage of humor that is thematically related to the product in the ad is higher than non – thematically related humor.

5. Percentage of framed humor ads is more than unframed humor ads.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

The purpose of the research was to study the use of different appeals, namely fear appeal, sex appeal and humor appeal, in magazine advertising and if the usage of these appeals differed by magazine type. The research also wanted to study what products used which of the three appeals.

The overall research questions posed were what magazines use which appeals the most? What products use which appeals the most? A comparison of tables 3, 6, and 10 shows that sex appeal is the most preferred appeal in magazine advertising, especially in gender magazines such as *Vogue*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Woman's Day*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Family Circle*. Sex appeal (table 3) ( $p=.000$ ) is present in a general interest magazine like *People*, which can be attributed to its content as a gossip magazine.

Sex appeal is followed by fear appeal as the next preferred advertising appeal in magazines. Fear appeal (table 10) ( $p=.000$ ) is present in both general interest magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek* and gender magazines such as *Woman's Day*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Family Circle* and *Cosmopolitan*; though it is absent in *Vogue*. Humor appeal (table 6) ( $p=.000$ ) is rarely used and its usage is spread across both gender and general interest magazines.

Table 4 ( $p=.000$ ), shows that products such as fragrances, clothing, fashion accessories, shoes, jewelry, moisturizers, health, and beauty aids prefer the use of sex appeal in their advertising, as sex appeal conveys the desire of beauty, sexual attraction

and self esteem. As can be seen in table 12 ( $p=.000$ ) products such as medicines, cars, public service announcements, household cleaners, OTC's, and insurance prefer the use of fear appeal in their advertising, as fear appeal conveys the pros and cons of either adopting or not adopting a certain behavior. Table 7 ( $p=.000$ ) shows that humor appeal is largely used for products such as snacks, chips, beer, alcohol, chewing gun, and candy as these products represent self satisfaction in the form of 'little treats' and rewards.

#### *Hypothesis 1-Sex Appeal*

It is hypothesized that sex appeal ads would be more prevalent in gendered magazines as compared to general interest magazines.

Table 3 confirms hypothesis 1. The highest percentage of sex appeal ads fall under the category of demure dress (18%), followed by sex esteem category (16%).

Table 3 ( $p=.000$ ) shows 43% ads under the demure dress category are present in gender magazines like *Vogue*, followed by *Sports Illustrated* (23%). 27% ads in the suggestively clad category are present in *Vogue* magazine. The highest percentage of ads in the category of sex esteem (39%) is present in gender magazine like *Cosmopolitan*. Table 3 shows that gender magazines like *Vogue* and *Cosmopolitan* have high percentage of ads in all categories of sex appeal. Other gender magazines like *Woman's Day*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Family Circle*, have fewer sex appeal ads compared to *Cosmopolitan* and *Vogue*. General interest magazines such as *Time* and *Newsweek* have few ads in all categories of sex appeal. However, *People* magazine, in comparison to *Time* and *Newsweek*, has more ads in all categories of sex appeal; this can be attributed to its content as a gossip magazine.

Table 3—Percentage of sex appeal ads in top 10 magazines

Sex appeal	People	Better Homes & Garden	Sports Illustrated	Time	Good House-keeping	News week	Vogue	Family Circle	Cosmo-politan	Woman's Day
Not sex appeal	46	71	56	79	65	87	5	76	15	80
Demure	6	15	23	10	13	6	43	7	11	5
Suggestively clad-	6	2	9	2	2	2	27	2	11	2
P Clad - nude										
Sex benefit	1	.2	.0	.0	.0	0	.4	.0	1	.0
Sexual behavior	2	.4	1	.0	1	0	2	.6	5	.2
Sex esteem	27	8	5	3	12	3	12	8	39	9
Decorative	8	2	6	4	3	2	4	2	9	2
Other	4	2	.3	1	3	0	6	4	8	2

$\chi^2(63, n=5,881)=3195.3, p=.000$

*Table 4 – Percentage of products using sex appeal*

Sex appeal	White good	Red good	Blue good	Yellow good	Total
Not sex appeal	92	2	60	70	45
Demure	2	43	1	4	18
Suggestively clad- P Clad - nude	1	21	4	6	10
Sex benefit	.1	1	.1	.0	.5
Sexual behavior	.3	3	1	1	2
Sex esteem	.8	19	25	6	16
Decorative	3	6	3	12	5
Other	.1	5	6	.5	4

$\chi^2 (21, n=5880)=4147.3, p=.000$

*Hypothesis 2*

Sex appeal ads are more likely to appear in beauty, personal care, fragrance, alcohol, and clothing products.

Table 4 ( $p=.000$ ) confirms the hypothesis that beauty, personal care, fragrance, clothing, alcohol use sex appeal in their ads more than other products. The analysis shows that a large percentage of sex appeal ads fall under the red good category comprising of products such as perfume, cosmetics, clothing, fashion, accessories and shoes. 12% of decorative ads fall under the yellow good category comprising of products such as snacks, gums, chips, and alcohol. This suggests that ads for alcohol and little treats such as snacks use decorative models, which have no connection to the product.

Table 4 also shows that a large percentage of sex appeal ads are found in blue good category, given the different kinds of beauty products included in this category. There is a relation between sex appeal and product category. Products such as perfumes, cosmetics, moisturizers, shampoos, clothing, fashion accessories, jewelry, and other beauty aids convey a certain desire to the consumers. For example, an ad for moisturizer in the blue good category expresses the desire to have beautiful skin leading to a boost in esteem, thereby playing on the consumers' self esteem or sex esteem. Similarly an ad for cosmetics or hair color in the red good category plays on the readers esteem by portraying a desirable look; thus proving the relationship of the analysis to the hypothesis.

### *Hypothesis 3*

Percentage of sex appeal ads in magazines that are framed is higher than unframed ads.

Table 5 ( $p=.000$ ) shows that 45% of all ads in magazines fall under the framed category, meaning that a large percentage of ads relate the verbal message to the picture of the product/brand being advertised (Shimp, Urbany & Camlin, 1988). The largest percentage of framed ads are found in *Vogue* magazine (88%), followed by *Cosmopolitan* (63%), *People* (39%), *Sports Illustrated* (34%), *Better Homes and Garden* (27%), and *Good Housekeeping* (27%). Unframed ads are significantly less than framed ads, only 9% of the total ads fall under the unframed category. The largest percentage of unframed ads are found in *Cosmopolitan* (22%), followed by *People* magazine (15%).

Table 5 – Percentage of framed sex appeal ads in magazines

Message framing	People	Better Homes & Garden	Sports Illustrated	Time	Good House-keeping	News-week	Vogue	Family Circle	Cosmo-politan	Woman's Day	Total
	(n= 1042)	(n=485)	(n=315)	(n=349)	(n=445)	(n=321)	(n=1407)	(n=361)	(n=681)	(n=475)	(n=5881)
Not framed/ unframed	46	70	57	79	65	87	5	76	15	80	45
Framed	39	27	34	15	27	10	88	18	63	16	45
Unframed	15	3	10	7	8	3	7	5	22	4	9

$\chi^2$  (18, n=5,881)=2411.3, p=.000



Table 6 – Percentage of humor appeal ads in the top 10 magazines

Humor Appeal	Better People &Garden	Sports Homes Illustrated	Good Time House-keeping	News week	Vogue	Family Circle	Womans's Cosmo-politan	Day	Total		
Not humor	84	75	76	83	76	87	99	82	94	81	87
	(n=1042)	(n=485)	(n=315)	(n=349)	(n=445)	(n=321)	(n=1407)	(n=361)	(n=681)	(n=475)	(n=5881)
Appeal	3	3	3	2	3	.3	.1	.8	.9	2	1
Pun	4	7	6	2	3	.3	.1	5	.0	4	3
Personification	2	4	3	.9	6	4	.0	2	.4	3	2
Exaggeration	2	6	5	2	6	1	.4	3	1	5	3
Silliness	3	2	6	7	4	4	.1	4	2	4	3
Surprise	2	2	.3	3	1	3	.0	2	.9	2	1
Silliness/ Personification	2	2	.3	3	1	3	.0	2	.9	2	1

$\chi^2(54, n=5,881)=5640.23, p=.000$

### *Hypothesis 1-Humor Appeal*

Madden & Weinberger's (1984) survey of ad executives suggests that the presence of humor is less in magazines.

Table 6 ( $p=.000$ ) shows that humor appeal is used less in magazines compared to fear and sex appeal. As noted by Madden & Weinberger (1984) survey, the devices to execute humor in print are more limited as compared to television and radio, which brings the humor 'alive' (Madden & Weinberger, 1984).

### *Hypothesis 2*

Humor is present more in general interest magazines than gender magazines. Table 6 ( $p=.000$ ) shows that in the category of silliness, the highest percentage of ads are found in *Good Housekeeping*, *Sports Illustrated* and *Better Homes and Garden* (6%) respectively, followed by *Woman's Day* (4%); other gender magazines like *Family Circle* (3%), *Cosmopolitan* and *Vogue* (1%) have fewer humor appeal ads. In the category of surprise, the highest percentage of ads is found in *Time* (7%). Humor appeal, as can be seen in the table, is used in magazines across the spectrum, thus disproving the hypothesis.

### *Hypothesis 3*

Humor is present in products such as chips, alcohol, chewing gum, snacks than other products.

Table 7 shows a relation ( $p=.000$ ) between products and the use of humor appeal. Yellow goods category comprising of products such as chips, alcohol and little treats

employ humor more than white, blue and red good categories, which include products such as insurance, medicines, fashion, clothing, and household cleaners.

Table 7(p=.000) shows that that a large percentage of ads among the different categories of humor appeal fall under the yellow goods category; pun (9%), personification (20%), and exaggeration (6%), silliness (15%) and surprise (12%). It is interesting to note that 87% ads have no humor appeal.

*Table 7–Percentage of products that use humor appeal*

Humor appeal	White good	Red good	Blue good	Yellow good	Total
Not humor	89	98	82	36	87
Appeal					
Pun	.6	.7	2	9	1
Personification	2	.1	2	20	3
Exaggeration	2	.3	3	6	2
Silliness	2	.2	3	15	3
Surprise	4	.2	3	12	3
Silliness/ Personification	.1	.0	4	2	1

$\chi^2(18, n=5881)=1619.3, p=.000$

- White good – life, medical, home owners, auto insurance, medicines, automobiles, large appliances such as washers and dryers, refrigerators, computers etc.
- Red good – fashion accessories, clothing, jewelry, cosmetics, shoes, perfume etc.
- Blue good – household cleaners, detergents, beauty and health aids, staple food items.

- Yellow good – chips, snacks, chewing gum, alcohol, wine cooler etc.

*Hypothesis 4*

Percentage of humor that is thematically related to the product in the ad is higher than non-thematically related humor in the ads.

Thematic relatedness refers to the relation between humor and message content, where the humor is related to product, its uses, benefits, brand name or typical users (Spotts, Weinberger & Parson, 1997). As is seen in table 8, 13% of all humor appeal ads are thematically related ( $p=.000$ ) to the product in the ad, thus showing that advertisers prefer humor to be related to the product.

The largest percentage of thematically related ads falls under the yellow goods category (60%) comprising of little treats like snacks, alcohol, chips etc., followed by blue good category (17%), comprising of little tools like household cleaners, staple food items, health, and beauty aid.

*Table 8 – percentage of products thematically related to the use of humor appeal*

Thematic Relatedness	White good	Red good	Blue good	Yellow good	Total
Not humor - Relation	89	98	82	36	87
Thematically - Related	11	1	17	60	13
Not thematically - Related	.4	.0	.0	4	.4

$\chi^2(6, n=5,881)=1336.3, p=.000$

### *Hypothesis 5*

Percentage of framed humor ads is more than unframed ads.

Table 9 shows that 12% of all ads coded as humor appeal are framed ads, compared to .8% unframed ads in the category of humor appeal. The largest percentage of framed ads appear in *Good Housekeeping* (22.9%), followed by *Better Homes and Garden* (22.7%), *Sports Illustrated* (21.9%), *Woman's Day* (18.7%), and *Family Circle* (15.4%). Table 9 shows the relation ( $p=.000$ ) between framed ads and magazines suggesting, that magazines prefer framed ads to unframed ads, as framed ads help the consumer to make a direct connection between the message content and the product advertised.

Table 9 –percentage of framed humor appeal ads in magazines

Framing -	Better	Sports	Good	Family	Woman's	Total					
Message People	Homes & Garden	Illustrated	House - Time Keeping	News- week	Vogue	Circle Cosmo- politan	Day	Total			
(n= 1042)	(n=485)	(n=315)	(n=349) (n=445)	(n=321)	(n=1407)	(n=361)	(n=681)	(n=475)	(n=5881)		
Not framed/ unfamed	84	76	76	83	76	87	99	82	94	81	87
Framed	15	23	22	15	23	13	.6	15	6	19	12
Unframed	1	1	2	2	1	.3	.0	2	0	.4	.8

$\chi^2$  (18, n=5881)=4053.2, p=.000

### *Hypothesis 1-Fear Appeal*

All fear appeal ads comprise the four elements of protection motivation theory of Rogers (1975, 1983) namely: severity of hazard, likelihood of hazard, self efficacy and response efficacy.

Table 10 shows that 10% of all ads coded as fear appeal ( $p=.000$ ) contain the four requirements noted by Rogers (1975, 1983) in the Protection Motivation theory, namely seriousness of hazard, likelihood of hazard to occur, self efficacy and response efficacy. A large percentage of the four requirements appear in *Newsweek* (24%), followed by *Family Circle* (22%), *Better Homes and Garden*, *Time*(19%), *Sports Illustrated* (17%), and *Woman's Day* (15%).

These magazine ads fulfill the condition of requiring the four elements of a fear appeal advertisement. It is interesting to note that a combination of the Protection Motivation theory and physical fear appeal has more ads (14%) than Protection Motivation theory alone. A large percentage of this combination appears in *Newsweek* (44%) followed by *Time* (30%), *Woman's Day* (25%), and *Family Circle* (24%).

## *Hypothesis 2*

General interest magazines have more fear appeal than gender magazine.

Table 10 ( $p=.000$ ) shows that general interest magazines like *Newsweek* and *Time* have a large percentage of fear appeal ads in all the categories of fear appeal. Gender magazines like *Sports Illustrated*, *Family Circle*, *Good Housekeeping*, and *Woman's Day* also have a considerable share of fear appeal ads in all of its categories.

Table 10 shows the presence of fear appeal ads in both general interest and gender magazines, suggesting that fear appeal transcends magazine type. Advertisers using fear appeal ads seem to prefer gender magazines as they can reach a specific target audience, for who issues of health, child safety is paramount.



Table 10 – percentage of fear appeal ads in the top 10 magazines

Fear		People	Better Homes & Garden	Sports Illustrated	Good House-keeping	News-week	Vogue	Family Circle	Cosmo-politan	Woman's Day	Total
Appeal	70	54	68	38	59	26	96	42	91	40	68
Protection-	7	19	17	19	14	24	.0	22	1	15	10
Motivation-											
Model											
Protection-	12	14	12	30	16	44	.9	24	4	25	14
Motivation-											
Model/physical											
Fear appeal											
Physical fear	4	3	2	10	6	4	.6	4	.4	6	3
Social fear	5	9	2	3	6	2	3	7	4	14	5

$\chi^2(36, n=5881)=1724.3, p=.000$

### *Hypothesis 3*

Personal care products, public service announcements, insurance, automobiles, and medicines, employ the use of fear appeal the most.

Table 11 shows that white good category comprising of products such as automobiles, insurance, medicines, large appliance etc. has the largest percentage of ads in the Protection Motivation category (22%) and the combined category of Protection Motivation and physical fear (45%) respectively; followed by blue good category comprising of household cleaners OTC, staple food etc. with 15% in the protection motivation and 10% in the combined category of protection motivation and physical fear. 6% ads for physical fear appear in the blue good category and in the white good category. 10% ads for social fear appeal appear in the blue good category compared to 8% that appear in white good category.

Table 11 ( $p=.000$ ) shows that white good category products such as insurance services, cars, medicines etc. that require a large investment and are high thinking products use fear appeal the most . Blue good category includes household cleaners, OTC, health aids, and public service announcements that provide the readers with information on certain issues and directs the readers to adopting the right behavior in order to prevent any untoward occurrence. Fear appeal ads are absent in red good category and rarely present in yellow good category.

*Table 11 – percentage of products using fear appeal*

Fear appeal	White good	Red good	Blue good	Yellow good	Total
Not fear	19	100	58	94	68
Appeal					
Protection-	22	.0	15	.1	10
Motivation-					
Model					
Protection-					
Motivation-	45	.0	10	.2	14
Model/physical					
Fear appeal					
Physical fear	6	.0	6	1	3
Social fear	8	.1	10	4	5

$\chi^2(12, n=5,881)=3188.3, p=.000$

#### *Hypothesis 4*

Gain framed fear appeal ads are more than loss framed.

Table 12 shows that 28% ads coded as fear appeal in magazines are gain framed, compared to 2% that are loss framed and 2% that fall under the combined category of loss and gain framed. The largest percentage of loss framed ads (10%) appears in *Newsweek* magazine. The largest percentage of gain framed ads appear in *Newsweek* (56%), followed by *Woman's Day* (54%), *Family Circle* (52%), *Time* (52%), and *Better Homes and Garden* (41%).

Table 12 shows a relation ( $p=.000$ ) between the large number of fear appeal ads in magazines are that gain framed, suggesting that such ads provide the consumer with a reassurance that adopting a certain behavior is good for the consumer, as opposed to portraying overt negative consequences, which may turn the consumer off the product and the brand.

Table 12 – percentage of framed fear appeal ads in magazines

Framing - Message	People	Better Homes & Garden	Sports Illustrated	Good House-keeping	News-week	Vogue	Family Circle	Cosmo-politan	Woman's Day	Total	
	(n= 1042)	(n=485)	(n=315)	(n=349)	(n=445)	(n=321)	(n=1407)	(n=361)	(n=681)	(n=475)	(n=5881)
Not loss framed/	70	54	67	38	59	26	96	42	91	40	68
Gain framed											
Loss Framed	2	.6	3	4	2	10	.1	2	.9	3	2
Gain framed	27	41	24	52	36	56	4	52	8	54	28
Loss /gain Framed	.9	4	5	6	4	8	.0	4	.3	3	2

$\chi^2$  (27, n=5,881)=1541.3, p=.000

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

#### *Sex Appeal*

Sexual content can be used to draw attention to the product and it can be associated with the advertiser's persuasive appeal (Reichert, 2002a). Reichert (2002) noted that sexual information is incorporated into ads to demonstrate that brands can make consumers more sexually attractive and more sexually active.

The analysis of sex appeal ads show that 15% ads fall under the sex esteem category whose main premise is that, the use of products or brands makes the consumer sexually attractive and sexually active. Magazines use sex esteem as a main category to attract consumers for products that enhance their sexual attractiveness and make them sexually active. The findings of the study with regard to sex esteem confirms the idea that Reichert (2002, 2002a) proposed regarding the use of sex appeal in advertising.

Further, Gould (2002) noted that sexualization is used in advertising to render the most inert consumption activity as a highly sexualized one in which products that fit a script through conditioning or suggests aspects of one are more likely to be used than other particularly where sexuality is salient (Gould, 1992). Based on Gould's observation, the study shows a large percentage of products in the red good category follow a script where sexuality is salient (table 4). The study also shows that products in blue good category, especially beauty aids such as body wash, shampoo, moisturizers, and face cream follow a script where sexuality is salient: In this case the aspect of sex esteem is more salient than other aspects such as sexual behavior or sex benefit.

Further certain products in red good category, such as perfume, cosmetics follow Gould's (2002) advertising love map, where such products are used as erotic stimulating props suggesting that the use of these products eventually leads to being sexually active. An ad for Calvin Klein perfume, Eternity, showed a man and woman engaged in sexual behavior, thereby suggesting that the use of this particular perfume would enhance the chances of sexual intimacy. This and many other perfume ads follow a script where sexuality is salient, and where relatively unconditioned sexuality is joined with sexually conditioned (sexualized) products to drive both direct (e.g. having sex and using sex toys) and indirect sexual behavior (e.g. dressing in an erotic fashion) (Gould 2002).

Reichert and Carpenter (2004) replicated Soley and Kurzbad (1986) comparative study of men, women and general interest magazines, using the same sample of study, found that most models in general interest magazines (both men and women) were dressed demurely, with no instance of nudity. The present study concurs with the literature review, as can be seen in table 3, *Time* magazine had 10% demure ads compared to 2% in the combined category of suggestively clad - partially clad ads - nude ads. *Newsweek* had 6% demure ads compared to 2% in the combined category of suggestively clad - partially clad ads - nude ads. In terms of sexual behavior, both *Time* and *Newsweek* had 0% ads comprising of sexual behavior, which is a departure from Reichert and Carpenter (2004) finding that 17% heterosexual couples were engaged in intimate contact in 1993 and 40% in 2003.

Reichert and Carpenter (2004) study of women magazines such as *Cosmopolitan* and *Redbook* found that specifically sexually explicit ads increased from 1983 to 2003,

but not from 1993 – 2003. On the contrary there was a decrease in explicit sexual contact from 62% in 1992 to 46% in 2003. The present study found that only 1% of all ads contained sexual behavior.

Specifically in gender magazines the study found that the highest percentage of sexual behavior ads appear in *Cosmopolitan* (41%), followed by *Vogue* (29%), *Good Housekeeping* (8%), *Family Circle* (3%), *Woman's Day*, and *Sports Illustrated* (1%). While the appearance of sexual behavior is higher in *Cosmopolitan* and *Vogue*, overall the presence is very minimal, thus concurring with the study of Reichert and Carpenter (2004).

The study concurs with the literature review that a high proportion of sex appeal ads appeared for products such as fashion, fragrance, beauty aids because of the nature of the product and relevance of sex to product benefits (Lambaise & Reichert, 2003). Lambiase and Reichert (2003) noted that many of these products are promoted in high circulation magazines; present study found evidence contrary to that, while sex appeal ads are present in *People* magazine (ranked no. 1), most of these ads are present in *Vogue* (ranked 7) and *Cosmopolitan* (ranked 9) as per the rankings of Magazine Publishers of America based on advertising revenue. This seems to suggest that advertisers prefer marketing these products in magazines known to have editorial content complying with the marketing of such products.

The study concurs with Busby and Leichthy (1993) that personal care product such as deodorants, hygiene and sun tan lotions use decorative models in women's magazines. The present study disagrees with Busby and Leichthy (1993) that cosmetics



use decorative models. The study found that cosmetics do not use decorative models as advertisers want the consumers to make connection between the product advertised and the model advertising for the product.

The study concurs with Reichert, Mortensen and Morgan (2000) that sexual content is rare in ads for banking, financial services, medicines and home computers, and is more prevalent in product categories that represent positive purchase motivations such as entertainment, health, hygiene, beauty, and fashion. Further, the study concurs with Reichert (2003) observation that brands like Victoria Secret, Wonder bra, Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein, La Perla have sexualized products through mere association with the brand.

In summary, the findings of the study concur with the literature review that sex appeal is largely used in products such as fashion, beauty, accessories, and cosmetics that represent positive purchase motivation.

### *Humor Appeal*

The present study concurs with the findings of Madden and Weinberger (1984), Weinberger and Spotts (1989) and, Toncar (2001) regarding the appropriateness of the use of humor for certain products. All three studies found that the most appropriate products for the use of humor are consumer non-durables. Madden and Weinberger (1984) survey lists the products best suited for humor are soft drinks, alcohol, food, snacks, candy, restaurant, toys, beauty, and games. Weinberger and Spotts (1989) and Toncar (2001) noted that humor is most commonly used for low involvement blue and yellow products.

The present study concurs with the findings in the literature review and found that products in the yellow good category such as snacks, chips, beer, chewing gum etc. had the highest percentage of humor appeal ads compared to other product categories such as white, red and blue good categories.

Weinberger, Spotts and Parson (1995) study showed that overall magazines had less humor appeal ads in all four categories of products. The present study found humor appeal was present in nine out of the ten magazines coded for humor appeal. Humor appeal was nearly absent in Vogue magazine, which had the least number of humor appeal ads. Table 7 shows that 13% of all ads in the various product categories are thematically related to the humor appeal, suggesting that a high percentage of ads relate the humor to the product, its uses, benefits, brand name or typical users (Spotts, Weinberger & Parson, 1997).

Overall, humor appeal is largely absent from magazines, as it does not provide the necessary device to create and execute a humorous situation.

### *Fear Appeal*

Fear appeal message must contain the following elements; (a) seriousness of threat; (b) likelihood of threatening outcomes will occur; (c) effectiveness of the recommended action; (d) individual is capable of performing the recommended action (Perloff, 2003). The present study found that 10% of all fear appeal ads had the four required elements in a fear appeal message. A high percentage of the four elements are present in *Newsweek* magazine (24%). The study also found that 14% ads fell under the combined category of Protection Motivation theory and physical fear. A high percentage

of these ads are present in *Newsweek* magazine (44%). A high percentage of ads in the combined category are found in the white good category (45%).

The study concurs with Sternthal and Craig (1974) observation that a high percentage of social fear appeal ads are found in the blue good category that includes mouthwash, feminine hygiene, deodorant, detergents, etc. A high percentage of fear appeal ads are present in white good category, followed by blue good category.

Further, the areas of persuasion that use scare tactics include safe driving, health, anti smoking campaign, drug use campaigns and ads for commercial products such as mouthwash, toothpaste and deodorant (Higbee, 1969). The study concurs with Higbee (1969), and found that a large number of ads coded as fear appeal fell under these categories. Public service announcements were coded into the blue good category, as they are not high involvement products or services, but low involvement thinking products that provide information regarding a situation and direct the reader to appropriate action about the situation.

The study also found 28% of all ads in the magazine fell under the gain framed category, suggesting that fear appeal ads portray a reassuring message of adopting the said behavior. The study found that only 2% ads fall under loss framed category.

Overall the study concurs with the literature review that fear appeal messages must have the four requirements of Protection Motivation theory to enable consumers to take the necessary action to alleviate the fear of hazardous situations. The study also concurs with the literature review that public service announcements, blue good products

and white good products such as medicines, insurance use fear appeal the most compared to yellow and red good category.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

The study shows that each category of product pertains to an appeal. For instance, red good and blue good category includes products like perfume, moisturizer, body wash, fashion, clothing, and accessories that pertain to sex appeal. Sex appeal ads are prevalent more in gender magazines like Cosmopolitan, Vogue, and Woman's Day. Fear appeal falls largely under white good and blue good category and is present in both general interest and gender magazines, suggesting that fear is a potent appeal in converting consumers. Humor appeal is largely restricted to yellow good category and is present in almost all magazines, however not to the extent of sex appeal and fear appeal's presence in magazines.

It is also interesting to see that many of the advertisements coded repeated themselves in all magazines, showing a lack of creativity among advertisers as they seem to recycle the ads in all magazines across the spectrum. For example sex appeal ads are repeated in each magazine, more than once with the same layout. The same can be said for fear appeal and humor appeal ads.

Future research should aim at a comparative study of advertising in television and magazines in order to understand the extent of the appearance of these appeals in both medium and the creativity employed in both medium.

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## APPENDIX

### CODEBOOK

#### Humor Appeal Coding

##### *Product Color Matrix*

The products in the ads would be divided according to the four quadrants of the Product Color Matrix as proposed by Weinberger, Campbell and Brody (1994). Product Color Matrix is based on the Elaboration Likelihood Model and The FCB model. The Product Color Matrix highlights the differences between the products by a color scheme. The use of Product Color Matrix would be helpful in defining products according to high risk and low risk and studying the use of fear appeal, sex appeal and humor appeal based on the different product categories.

##### *Numerical Coding for Product Cells*

- White good – life, medical, home owners, auto insurance, medicines, automobiles, large appliances such as washers and dryers, refrigerators, computers, etc.
- Red good – fashion accessories, clothing, jewelry, cosmetics, shoes, perfume, etc.
- Blue good – household cleaners, detergents, beauty and health aids, staple food items.
- Yellow good – chips, snacks, chewing gum, alcohol, wine cooler, etc.



*Product Color Matrix*

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<u>Functional tools</u>	<u>Expressive</u>
Higher risk	Higher risk
White good-“Big Tools”	Red goods – Big Toys
Large Appliance	Fashion, clothing, accessories
Business Equipment	Hair coloring
Insurance	motorcycle, sports car
Auto tires	jewelry
Automobiles	
<u>Non routine business products</u>	
Lower risk	Low risk
Blue goods – Little Tools	Yellow goods – little toys/treats
Detergents, household cleaners, e.g. toilet bowl cleaners, laundry detergent, mouthwash – that are habitual purchase	Snack foods Deserts, beer, alcohol tobacco products
OTC remedies	Gum, candy, soft drink, wine coolers and cigarettes
Motor oil and gas	
Non desert food	

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(Weinberger, Campbell & Brody, 1994; Weinberger, Spotts & Parsons, 1995; Weinberger & Gulas,

### *List of Frames Approach*

Based on Tankard Jr. (2003) list of frames approach, fear appeal is classified as a frame of advertising in magazines ads. Humor appeal, sex appeal and fear appeal are classified into a manifest list containing keywords, catchphrases and symbols to help detect each frame to help in the coding of different frames. The manifest list for humor appeal is divided into three categories: (1) Humor Types; (2) Humor Relatedness; (3) message framing: unframed and framed messages. In the same manner, the manifest list for sex appeal is divided into the three categories: (1) Degree of dress; (2) sexual theme; (3) message framing: unframed and framed message. The manifest list for fear appeal is divided into four categories: (1) Severity of Hazard; (2) Likelihood of Hazard; (3) Self efficacy; (4) Response Efficacy.

### *Humor Types*

Ads employing humor would be coded according to Kelly & Solomon (1975) and Catanescu & Tom's (2001) definitions of the humor types as they would provide a simpler understanding of the different kinds of humor employed by advertisers. The ads would be coded according to the following definitions:

*Pun* – using elements of language to create new meanings which result in humor.

*Personification* – attributes human characteristics to animals, plants and objects.

*Exaggeration* – overstating and magnifying things out of proportion.

*Silliness/ something ludicrous* – it ranges from making funny faces to ludicrous situations.

*Surprise* – includes all ads where humor arises from unexpected situations.

*Silliness/ personification* – a combined category of the two humor types to incorporate ads that fall into the two categories.

*Thematic Relatedness* as defined by Spotts, Weinberger & Parsons (1997). According to them thematic relatedness refers to the relationship between humor and message content. In thematically related ads, the humor is related to the product, its uses, benefits, brand name or typical users. In thematically unrelated ads, the humor is not related to the product or any product related claims

#### *Numerical Coding for Thematic Relatedness*

If thematically related the ad is coded as 1

Not thematically related as 0

#### *Message Framing*

Framed ads - framed pictorial advertisement the picture and the verbal message are mutually reinforcing and thereby facilitate interactive imagery (Lutz & Lutz, 1977, 1978).

*Unframed ads* - An unframed advertisements, precludes the interactive imagery because the picture does not offer a demonstration of the verbal message (Edell & Staelin, 1983).

#### *Numerical Coding for Framed and Unframed ads*

Framed ads – FA 1

Unframed ads – UA 2

## Fear Appeal Coding

Rogers (1975, 1983) Protection Motivation Theory (PMT) states that a fear appeal ad must contain the following four elements:

1. Severity of hazard – extent to which the product or context can harm the individual if he or she fails to comply with the recommendations.
2. Likelihood of hazard – refers to the probability that a negative consequence will be associated with a product/context if the individual fails to comply with the recommended safety precautions
3. Self Efficacy – refers to the user’s ability to perform the recommended behavior(s)
4. Response Efficacy – refers to the utility of the recommended behavior to prevent the noxious threat.

Protection motivation theory and physical fear appeal – this combined category covers ads that fall under both these categories.

## *Numerical Coding*

Severity of hazard – H1

Likelihood of Hazard – H2

Self Efficacy – E1

Response Efficacy – E2

Protection motivation theory and physical fear – H1-H2-E1-E2-P1

### *Types of Fear Appeal*

*Physical fear appeal* – refers to the physical consequences of action or inaction, such as harm to the body or death of self or loved one.

*Social fear* – is fear of disapproval by peers or others by some action or characteristic possessed by the individual.

### *Numerical Coding*

Physical Fear Appeal – P 1

Social Fear Appeal – S 1

### *Framing of Fear Appeal Messages*

*Loss framed messages* – convey the costs of not adopting the requested behavior.

*Gain framed messages* – usually present the benefits that accrued through adopting the behavior

### *Numerical Coding*

Loss framed messages – L1

Gain framed messages – G1

### **Sex Appeal Coding**

#### *Degree of Dress*

Each discernable adult male and female mode was classified into 1 of the 4 ordinal categories of dress. Dress differed depending on the style and amount of clothing worn (Reichert et al, 1999). The variable was operationalized according to Soley & Kurzbad (1986) and Reichert et al (1999) and comprised the following levels:

1. *Demure* – defined as everyday dress. This included shorts, tennis skirts and typical dress.
2. *Suggestive dress/partially clad/nudity* – this category includes clothing which partially exposed the upper body, such as unbuttoned blouses – which expose chest areas; muscle shirts; mini skirts very short shorts; tight clothing accentuating the figure or middle inseam of the trousers; full length lingerie, except where translucent; included models being shown in underwear or bathing suits and three quarter length of shorter lingerie; included when models were holding only a towel or if models appeared to be in nude, but in silhouettes; wearing of translucent under apparel or lingerie

### *Coding*

Demure – 1

Suggestively clad/Partially clad / Nudity - 2

### *Sexual Themes*

Sexual themes were operationalized based on the definitions of Lambiase & Reichert, (2003).

1. *Sexual Benefit* implies that the model is actively being observed, such as using a product while at a party (i.e. smoking, drinking or wearing a certain brand of jeans). Or the ad implies that the model will be observed, such as woman applying lipstick or wearing a particular perfume, or a man making sure his tie is straight for an unseen, unknowable audience.

2. *Sexual behavior* is likely engagement in sexual behavior (and more enjoyment from these encounters) and is the implied promise in this appeal. This appeal is an explicit depiction of two people, but it could also be an anticipation of such an encounter with a particular person, such as someone using mouthwash before saying hello to his/her spouse in the morning, in bed.
3. *Sex esteem* is a reflexive category; the pleasure is for the ad's subject alone, not for any discernable, knowable audience. If you wear or use the product the product advertised, you will feel better about yourself.
4. *Decorative* (no appeal) implies no discernable link or connection between model and advertised product or service.
5. *Other* – this category includes a combination of more than one category.

#### *Numerical Coding*

Sexual benefit – 3

Sexual behavior –4

Sex esteem – 5

Decorative – 6

Other - 7

### *Message Framing*

*Framed ads* - in a framed pictorial advertisement the picture and the verbal message are mutually reinforcing and thereby facilitate interactive imagery Lutz & Lutz (1977, 1978). The picture demonstrates the verbal message, typically through a display of the advertised product or through a demonstration of the uses(s) of the product. Likewise the verbal message relates the picture to the product/brand being advertised ((Shimp, Urbany & Camlin, 1988).

*Unframed ads* - An unframed advertisement, precludes the interactive imagery because the picture does not offer a demonstration of the verbal message (Edell & Staelin, 1983).

### *Numerical Coding*

Framed ad – FA

Unframed ad – UA