

## The Impact of Sensory Appeal, Self-Reference and Positive Affect on Brand Attitude

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### Abstract

*Advertisement has high sensory appeal hence it attracts more customers toward the brand because people can easily refer themselves toward the brand due to which the positive affect creates in their minds influence the brand attitude. Purpose of the study is to identify various reasons that contribute toward brand attitude in Pakistan some of them are sensory appeal, self-reference and positive affect (which are core part of the advertisement) and the preventive strategies that can be taken to overcome this issue. The scope of study is twin cities (Islamabad and Rawalpindi) and the data is collected from different segments of society which includes professionals and students. So keeping in view the importance of the core part of the advertisement the study is conducted to analyze the effect of sensory appeal, self-reference and positive affect on brand attitude. For this purpose questionnaire method is used for data collection. It is examined that SA, SR and PA are important factor which have positive relationship with the attitude of the brand.*

**Key Words:** Sensory Appeal, Self Reference, Positive affect and brand Attitude.

### Introduction

Senses of humans are an unbelievable information collection system. Through them, we recreate and create images of ambient circumstances and, on that information, instinctively and immediately process sensory information to make coming up decisions. Recently promising behavioral economists have begun addressing this need for “sensory marketing,” which stresses the sensory impressions that usually accompany optimal emotional responses to cause changes in purchasing behavior.

Brand attitude is most important thing for every organization because on the bases of that the sales increase and decrease. Positive affect plays an important role in advertisement and decision making process. While this is the main part through which the brand attitude create in customer’s mind. Whereas the Self reference is also important in order to attract the customer toward the brand. Self-reference works when you put the same characteristics which really exists in your target audience otherwise it is very difficult or near to impossible for the customers to think their selves at that position. Our based research is “do sensory ad appeal influence brand attitude?” by Yoon and Park (2012). In which they try to check the relationship of sensory appeal, self-reference and positive affect on brand attitude. For this they choose the coffee brand to interpret the results while they also recommend that the further research on it could be done by choosing the different brands of same category and try to do the comparison between them in order to check the impact of variables.

### Industry Profile of Detergents in Pakistan

In the Pakistan market, Laundry detergent is extensively used. In (Pakistan) last two years, the market movement in the laundry detergents has taken a good pace, and various customers are moving to laundry

detergents from the bar soaps. The average per annum consumption of laundry detergent is around 33,000 tons. One tone detergent costs approximately Rs. 138,000. The ratio is increased to 20-25% per annum.

### **Challenges and Opportunities for Advertisement Industry in Pakistan**

Whereas, we are focusing on the advertisement side so that's why it is also important to discuss the challenges and opportunities of advertisement industry in Pakistan. The main challenges for Advertising agencies in Pakistan has related to trust that it is very important and big factor that try to create the trust between the target audience and the product. Otherwise the advertisement creates the bad impression on the audience. The other big challenge is that the lack of resources for different advertisement agencies due to which the quality of ad decreases, so they have to create such ad in low resources by which they can easily attract and convey the message. In Pakistan, the most of the population comes in the lower and middle class and due to which they have very less resources and it's very difficult to convey the message to them due to low media penetration.

### **Significance of Research**

Our study will explore impact of sensory ad appeal on the brand attitude in Pakistan. Compared to the base study by Yoon & Park (2012) we have chosen detergent industry. Whereas, the objective of the research is to study how the positive affect ad self-reference helps the sensory ad appeal in order to influence the brand attitude.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Brand Attitude:**

"The ultimate impact of a brand is dependent upon the quality of consumers' experiences with that brand and the extent to which these experiences succeed in creating vivid linkages within the mind of the consumer." (Fournier, 1998). Our research is to examine how the sensory ad appeals impact the brand attitude. So, for that we are going to focus on both things the ad and BA both. In doing so, Vakratsas and Ambler (1999) studied that a multipath approach to influence in which costumers are suggested to reply to advertisements in various ways. Whereas, Yoo & MacInnis (2005) examine different brand attitude formation processes by ad execution format type (emotional vs. informational). In doing so they also try to focus on the Ad type and how it formats the brand attitude. They discuss different ways by which it affects the brand attitude. They also discuss the process by which brand attitudes are formed that how the customer are exposed and it's all depend on type of the ad

#### **Positive Affect:**

"PA represents the extent to which an individual experiences pleasurable engagement with the environment." (Watson & Clark, 1984). Watson, Clark, & Tellegen (1988), claims that the two primary dimensions of mood are negative affect and positive affect. The focus of this research is on positive effect, which is normally characterized by, activity, alertness and enthusiasm. Whereas, Eisenberg & Fabes, (1991) studied that positive affect has a significant influen cepositively on pro-social actions.

#### **Self-Reference:**

"Self-referencing is a process inducing relative significance where a consumer relates message information to her or his self-expectation or experience" (Burnkrant and Unnava, 1989). For example, consumers see the advertisement and after that he/she resemble him/her self with their any past experience. Such as, Coke

Cola's current advertisement in Pakistan try to relate the friends' trip and the enjoyment they do when all friends were together on any trip.

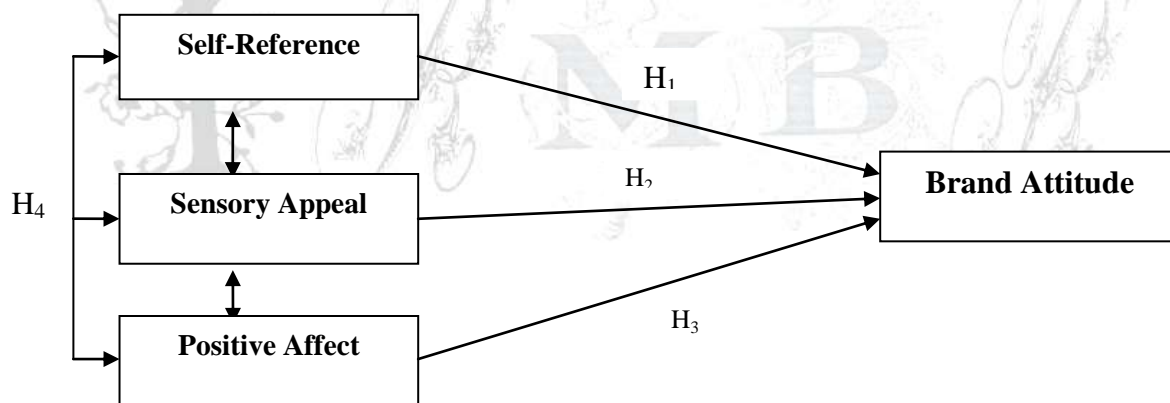
Burnkrant & Unnava (1995) suggest that the self is a complex memory and highly controlled structure that includes both the periodic and semantic knowledge got over a lifetime. Whereas, Krishnamurthy & Sujana (1999) studied that self-referencing is stimulated and influences that in which way the message is processed. So, that's means that self-reference in advertisement is depends on the message strategy of the ad.

### Sensory Appeal

"Sensory branding is a type of marketing those appeals to all the senses in relation to the brand. It uses the senses to relate with customers on an emotional level." Brown and Lindstrom (2005) did study which is taken on in twelve countries, Brown created "Sensagram," a more conclusive five-sense elemental approach, in order to calculate the dynamics of the interaction between the senses, and found that a multisensory practice directly affects the brand value and perception of product or service quality. Besides, the number of senses stimulated in a brand is considerably related to the product's price, so that brands tempting to all five senses can create a higher price demand than those appealing to few senses.

### Theoretical Framework:

This study analyzes the causal relationship between SA, SR, and PA response to BA in the Detergents Category (Surf Excel and) Sunlight in Rawalpindi in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Based on earlier mentioned literature review the study develops the following relationship model.



Relationship Diagram:

### Variables:

#### Independent:

Variable that influences the dependent variable in either a positive or negative way. (Umasekran). In this research SR, SA and PA are independent variable and have impact on dependent variable.

#### Dependent:

Dependent variable is of primary interest to the researcher. The researcher objective is to understand and describe the dependent variable. (Umasekran). In this study brand attitude is the dependent variable and the purpose of researcher is to find out the impact of independent variables that influence the customers toward brand attitude.

## Hypothesis

On the basis of above conceptual framework the following main four hypotheses have been developed.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** self-referencing has positive effect on brand attitude.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Sensory appeal has positive effect on brand attitude.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Positive affect has positive effect on brand attitude.

**H<sub>4</sub>:** Self-referencing, Sensory Appeal and positive Affect are correlated.

## Methodology

This study used TV ads rather than print ads because the in TV ads the audience can easily imagine and attract toward the product that's why we choose to show the TV ads rather than printed ads. We selected the two brands in order to do the comparison "Surf excel" and "Sunlight". In Surf Excel advertisement they try to show the soft relationship between child and Mother and then they said that "dirt is good" in order to give a message to mothers that they should have to allow their kids to play with dirt in order to learn something new and good. Whereas in Sunlight ad, they try to focuses on the married couple relationship and try to show that every husband like the cleanness with good perfumed smell and they try to convey a message that every person not only wants the cleanness but also want the good smell from them. They focus on smell more because no other detergent is offering such feature in their product.

### Type of Study:

This study is hypothesis testing as it tests the relationship between Sensory appeal, self-reference and positive affect's responses on brand attitude. However, in this study we will also check the inter-relationship of the independent variables.

### Type of investigation:

The type of investigation is causal as it analyzes the cause and effect relationship between Sensory appeals, self-reference and positive affect's responses on brand attitude.

### Sampling:

A questionnaire survey was carried out to gain how the sensory appeal influence the brand attitude and what are the other factor that helps this relation. For this purpose questionnaire is formed which is then distributed among different university students (those who live in hostels and they have to wash their clothes by their self) and professionals. Sample of 200 participants from undergraduate class and professional is taken. We then showed Surf excel Ad to 100 participants and sunlight Ad to the remaining 100 participants. We selected undergraduate class students because mostly living in hostels and they have to wash cloths by their own. In addition, Calder et al (1982) said that random error might arise in a heterogeneous sample and can be reduce by using a homogeneous group such as college students which can help reduce random error. So, that's why we focused on this sample. Convenient sampling is used which is also known as non-probability sampling & has been used due to limited time frame.

### Research instruments:

The questionnaire was created to compute how brand attitude is affected by sensory appealed advertisement. Like scale was used for dependent variable attitude towards brand, independent variables sensory appeal and mediating variable (positive affect, self-reference) & use 5-point scale (1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree).

Sensory Appeal's questionnaire was adopted from previous study (Cooper and Braithwaite, 2002). Whereas the scales used in that study were not appropriate for our research so we modified it according to our need. It contains five statements such as

- This Ad is nice to see.
- I like sound of this Ad
- I can imagine nice smell after watching this Ad
- This Ad gives a feeling of softness.
- The Ad appeal to my sense.

Positive affect's scale was derived from the previous research (Watson & Clark, 1999) which contains different items related to positive affect such as, 'excited, interested, strong, inspired and enthusiastic.'

Self-reference's scale is also derived from the past researches (Debevev& Iyar 1988; Burnkrant & Unnava 1995; Krishnamurthy & Sujana 1999) in which four statements were provided to the participant to express their feelings.

However, the brand attitude's items are selected from various researches; (Vakratsas and Ambler, 1999; Bagozzi and Moore, 1994). Our study includes the seven items from these studies and asked them to rate the statements.

### Pretest:

In pretest a total of twenty participants in an undergraduate class were taken. We had shown the Ad of sun light and after that we asked them to fill the questionnaire in order to express their experience.

After compiling that data, cronbach's alpha of "positive affect" was low as compare to other variables. The first statement of positive affect's (The Ad was interesting) alpha comparatively low. Therefore, we investigated that if alpha could be increase by deleting the item. We are presenting item total statistic of positive affect variable in table 1:

Table-1: Pretest

Items	Corrected item- Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if item Deleted
The Ad was interesting.	.110	.729
The Ad made me Excited.	.382	.649
The message of the Ad was Strong.	.639	.519
The theme of the Ad was enthusiastic.	.470	.607
The Ad inspired me.	.546	.568

This table shows that if first item will be deleted alpha increase to 0.73. However, when we exclude the first item then the overall alpha would be .729 and if we include that statement then the alpha is .676. Therefore, this item is retained because its item total correlation is 0.11 which is positive and significance. The reason for low item total correlation may be that we are showed only sunlight ad for the pretest and this ad is not considered interesting by many of respondent. Whereas the alpha value of SR was 0.773, BA was 0.814 & of SA was 0.755.

### Data Analysis:

SPSS 17 has been used for data analysis. Different tools of regression and correlation have been used to ensure the significance level on dependent variable of independent variable. However, in this study we interpret the descriptive results separately of surf excel and sunlight because we are checking the effect of variables by comparison of two brands.

## Results

### Descriptive Analysis:

Table 2

<b>Age</b>	Mean 21.58	S.D 1.961
<b>Gender</b>	Male 42%	Female 58%
<b>Employment Status</b>	Student 91%	Professional 9%
<b>Advertisement Shown:</b>		
Surf excel (n)	100	
Sunlight (n)	100	
<b>Total (N)</b>	200	

### Interpretation:

As shown in table 2 our sample is young female 58% is student whom mean age is approximately 21. The sample consists of 91% of the students because of the time constraints and most of the students live in hostel (where they have to wash their clothes by their own). However, we show the ad of surf excel to 100 participants and sunlight to other 100 participants.

### Sunlight's Descriptive Analysis:

Table 3a: Descriptive Statistics of Sunlight

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Sensory Appeal	100	3.55	.775
Positive Affect	100	3.54	.853
Self Reference	100	3.26	.844
Brand Attitude	100	3.61	.731
Valid N (list wise)	100		

### Surf Excel's Descriptive Analysis:

Table 3b: Descriptive Statistic of Surf Excel

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Sensory Appeal	100	3.24	.749
Positive Affect	100	3.46	.746
Self Reference	100	2.96	.672
Brand Attitude	100	3.60	.625
Valid N (list wise)	100		

### Interpretation:

As we can see that the mean of the SA in Surf Excel's ad is slightly low as compare to Sunlight's ad. However, in PA case, the mean of Surf Excel is very low as compare to sunlight's mean of variables and same in self-reference case, which shows that in Sunlight's ad, customer could easily more refer themselves toward the brand. Whereas, the BA of both are same. As we know, the Surf Excel is well established brand and sunlight is a new brand in market but still giving tough time to Surf Excel which is great achievement of the Sunlight.

However, in surf excel's advertisement they show the emotional relationship between mother and children and our sample is of young unmarried females. So, they cannot relate themselves to this advertisement. But on the other side the sunlight advertisement also show the emotional relationship but they show between husband and wife (young couple) through which those female relate themselves more as compare to the surf excel's ad.



### Hypothesis Testing:

**H1:** Self-referencing has positive effect on brand attitude.

R Square: 0.305  
Adjusted R square: 0.301  
F Value: 86.774  
Significance: .000p

Table-4: Coefficient <sup>a</sup>

Model	Beta	Sig.
(Constant)	1.665	.000
Self-reference	.525	.000

Dependent Variable: Brand Attitude

### Interpretation:

Regression is reliable because the adjusted R is quiet similar to R and this should be greater than 0.2. However, the adjusted R showing that 30% difference to brand attitude is explained by difference in Self-reference.

Whereas, the constant point in table-4 show that it is useless because if the Self-reference's beta goes to zero then it would be effective but it's impossible that Self-referencing goes to zero.

Whereas, the table-4 also showed that the beta is .525 at  $p < 0.01$  which shows that if there is an increase in 1 unit of Self-referencing it will increase Brand Attitude by .525 units. So, H1 is accepted

**H2:** Sensory appeal has positive effect on brand attitude.

R Square: 0.748  
Adjusted R square: 0.747  
F Value: 587.113  
Significance: .000p

Table-5: Coefficient <sup>a</sup>

Model	Beta	Sig.
(Constant)	.545	.000
Sensory Appeal	.848	.000

Dependent Variable: Brand Attitude

### Interpretation:

Regression is reliable because the adjusted R is quiet similar to R and this should be greater than 0.2. However, the adjusted R showing that approximately 75% difference to brand attitude is explained by difference in sensory appeal.

Whereas, the constant point in table-5 show that it is useless because if the Sensory Appeal's beta goes to zero then it would be effective but it's impossible that Sensory Appeal goes to zero.

Whereas, the table-5 also showed that the beta is .848 at  $p < 0.01$  which shows that if there is an increase in 1 unit of Sensory Appeal it will increase Brand Attitude by .848 units. So, H2 is accepted.

**H3:** Positive affect has positive effect on brand attitude.

R Square: 0.414  
Adjusted R square: 0.411  
F Value: 140.051  
Significance: .000p

Table-6: Coefficient <sup>a</sup>

Model	Beta	Sig.
(Constant)	1.488	.000
Positive Affect	.597	.000

Dependent Variable: Brand Attitude

#### Interpretation:

Regression is reliable because the adjusted R is quiet similar to R and this should be greater than 0.2. However, adjusted R showing that 41% difference to brand attitude is explained by difference in positive affect. Whereas, the constant point in table-6 show that it is useless because if the Positive Affect's beta goes to zero then it would be effective but it's impossible that Positive Affect goes to zero.

However, the table-6 also showed that the beta is .597 at  $p < 0.01$  which shows that if there is an increase in 1 unit of Sensory Appeal it will increase Brand Attitude by .597 units. So, H3 is accepted.

**H4:** Self-referencing, Sensory Appeal and Positive Affect are correlated.

Table-7: Correlations

Measure	Self-reference	Sensory Appeal
Positive Affect	.433**	.646**
Sensory Appeal	.585**	

Note: \*\* $p < 0.01$  (2-tailed)

#### Interpretation:

The table-7 is showing that the Positive Affect and Self-reference is 43% correlated. Whereas, Positive affect and Sensory Appeal is approximately 65% correlated. However, the Sensory Appeal and Self-reference is approximately 59% correlated. So, that's means that all variables are correlated with each other and have a positive impact on each other. And this correlation is significant at the 0.01. So, H4 is accepted

#### Reliability Analysis:

Table-8: Reliability Analysis

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Self-reference	.711	4
Sensory Appeal	.745	5
Positive Affect	.808	5
Brand Attitude	.795	7

#### Interpretation:

The reliability of the Self-reference response scale is calculated as .711 which means that the almost 71 percent of the questions for the self-reference response are valid and measure the same results.

On the other hand, the reliability of the sensory appeal response scale is calculated as .745 in which means that the almost 75 percent of the questions for the sensory appeal response are valid and measure the same results.

However, the reliability of the positive affect response scale is calculated as .808 which means that the questions for positive affect response are valid and measure the same results.

Whereas, the reliability of the brand attitude response scale is calculated as .795 which means that the almost 80 percent of the questions for the brand attitude response are valid and measure the same results.



## Discussions:

Brand image is most important thing for every organization because on the bases of that the sales increase and decrease. During the promotion of brand the main thing on which organizations emphasizes a lot is brand attitude which is dependent variable in this research on which the effect of three independent variables self-reference, sensory appeal & positive affect is checked. For this purpose we have chosen two brands (surf excel & sunlight) from Pakistani market. 200 questionnaire have been filled by student's male & females and the results on the basis of those questionnaire shows that the sunlight is giving tough competition to surf excel which is well established brand in Pakistan as compare to sunlight. The reason behind is that our sample contains more female's students which are young and unmarried and that's why cannot self-refer themselves to those ad. To check the effect we use TV ads rather than printed ads as the audience can easily be attracted towards the product. Because printed ad doesn't influence them toward brand attitude. However, surf excel is well established brand that's why its brand attitude is quiet better than the sunlight. But sunlight is influencing customers by including more sensory appeal in their advertisement. Results show that sensory appeal, self-reference and positive affect (independent variables) has a positive relationship toward the brand attitude (dependent variable).

## Four Hypotheses:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Self-referencing has positive effect on brand attitude as explained in table-4 and also the results are similar to Burnkrant & Unnava (1995).

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Sensory appeal has positive effect on brand attitude as shown in table-5 and the results of Cooper and Braithwaite (2002) are similar to our results.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Positive affect has positive effect on brand attitude as shown in table-6 and the results are similar to Watson & Clark, (1999).

**H<sub>4</sub>:** Self-referencing, Sensory Appeal and Positive Affect are correlated as shown in table-7 and the results are similar to Fournier, (1998).

On the other hand, correlation analysis shows that independent variables (sensory appeal, self-reference and positive affect) are inter-related with each other and these are the core part of the advertisement, in order to influence the customers toward the brand attitude.

The reliability of the Self-reference response scale is almost 71 percent, the reliability of the sensory appeal response scale is almost 75 percent, and the reliability of the positive affect response scale is 81% approximately. Whereas, the reliability of brand attitude response scale is almost 80 percent.

## Conclusion:

It is a fact that when advertisement has high sensory appeal it attracts more costumers toward the company/brand because customers are being influenced by advertisement and due to which the positive affect created in their minds influence them toward brand attitude. Purpose of this study was to identify weather the sensory appeal play an important role in advertisement in order to create a positive brand attitude. As Yoon and Parker (as we discussed earlier) did research in 2012 in which they choose the coffee brand only and try to figure out the importance of sensory appeal toward the brand attitude. But in this research we try to figure out such affect in Pakistani culture and did the comparison between the two brands of similar category to check whether the sensory appeal also influence the Pakistani audience or not. The results show that on the bases of creating sensory appeal in advertisement the "sunlight" is giving tough time to the well established brand "surf excel".

## Limitations and Further Research

There were three big limitations in this research. First, the time constrain, the time was very short in order to do the research. This research could show better result if the more time was available by giving more detailed analysis and try to figure out any other factors. If the more time would be available then we go to the females which are married and housewives and try to calculate the results according to their behavior.

The second, limitation is related to budget, detailed analysis create a lot of expense because when we go to married females home-to-home it would increase the budget. However, we still have done our best & take 200 participants in which most of them are students.

Third is related to the framework, the framework of our research is very simple in order to which the actual picture is not shown. If we elaborate it in detail then we could see the big picture of the market of Pakistan. Further research could be done in such way to remove those limitations and try to figure out the actual picture of the Pakistan's market weather sensory appeal influence the brand attitude or not.

## Managerial Implications

The sensory appeal of Surf Excel is low as compare to Sunlight. Surf Excel managers have to focus on the sensory appeal in their ad and sunlight has to such appeal in their ad to maintain the difference.

The positive affect of Sunlight is higher than the Surf Excel (Table 3a, 3b). So, the manager of Surf Excel have to focus on creating such appeal in ad which create positive effect in the minds of costumers. Whereas, our sample contains many students. So, they have to also forget such segment.

Self-reference of Sunlight is high as compare to Surf Excel because when the ad has more sensory appeal then costumer refers themselves to their product. However, the Surf Excel's managers have to change their theme and have to create different ads for different market segments.

However, the brand attitude of Surf Excel is higher than Sunlight because Surf Excel is well established brand in Pakistan and Sunlight have to maintain their sensory appeal in ad in order to create a good brand attitude

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### Appendix Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

I am conducting Research on “The effect of sensory ad appeal on brand attitude, self referencing and positive affect as a mediator” in the Marketing/Advertisement industry of Pakistan. I am the student of Foundation University Rawalpindi Campus, studying in final semester of MBA. This survey should only take about 5 minutes of your time. Your answers will be completely anonymous. I am showing you an advertisement of Surf excel & Sun light. Please rate the following statements accordingly. I appreciate your precious time and consideration.

**Sex:**

☐ Male

☐ Female

**Age:**

\_\_\_\_\_ years

**Profession:**

☐ Student

☐ Employed

Brand Attitude	SD	D	N	A	SA
	1	2	3	4	5
1. The brand makes me happy.					
2. I find the brand attractive.					
3. I like the brand's design.					
4. My attitude towards this brand is positive.					
5. To me, this brand is unique.					
6. I think the products of this brand are very valuable.					
7. I am willing to buy this brand.					
Self-reference	1	2	3	4	5
1. I can easily picture myself using the advertised product.					
2. I can easily form similarity judgments between myself and the advertising model.					
3. The ad seemed to be written for me.					
4. The ad made me think about my own experiences with the product.					
Positive Affect					
1. The Ad was interesting.					
2. The Ad made me Excited.					
3. The message of the Ad was Strong.					
4. The theme of the Ad was enthusiastic.					
5. The Ad inspired me.					
Sensory Appeal					
1. This Ad is nice to see.					
2. I like sound of this Ad					
3. I can imagine nice smell after watching this Ad					
4. This Ad gives a feeling of softness.					
5. The Ad appeal to all my sense.					

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your feedback is important.