

SOCIAL SCIENCE REVIEW ARCHIVES

Language of Advertisements and its Impact on the Buying Behavior of Youth

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Abstract

Advertisements have been used to influence the buying habits of youth because they persuade their parents to buy the products shown in advertisements without understanding that whether they are useful for them or not (Rizwan.et.al, 2022). The language that is used in advertisements is highly convincing so that it can attract its consumers towards a certain service, persuasiveness can also be seen by the use of language that implicitly suggests the consumer to make a purchase (Fan, 2022). This research paper is focusing on the impacts of advertisements on youth's buying behaviours and mentality. The purpose was to explore the effects of advertisements on youngsters and to explore the convincing nature of advertisements that plays with the psychology of young children. The primary data of the study was conducted through descriptive analysis by using Likert scale questionnaire which was filled by 50 students of matric class studying in a private school and thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews of 10 students whereas the secondary data was collected through works of different writers on this particular issue. The results examined that advertisement is becoming a business now a days and a major source of suggestion for the consumers by the use of its language, also identified that advertisement have a great impact on the buying habits of teen agers as they are the target audience of this study. Therefore, the study concludes that teen agers and their buying behaviours are highly affected by advertisements.

Keywords: Advertisements, Buying Behaviours, Persuasiveness, Business, Highly Convincing.

1. Introduction:

Advertising is a marketing communication that employs an openly sponsored, non-personal message to promote or sell a product, service or idea. Sponsors of advertising are typically businesses wishing to promote their products or services. Veerkumar, (2015) characterized that nearly everybody grows in the world that is deluging with mass media e.g., billboards, magazines, television, newspaper, films, internet and advertising. From all of these marketing weapons advertising is widely known for its enduring impacts on viewer's mind, because it has a broader exposure. On the other hand, Dabija, (2009) examined that the language of advertisement plays a pivotal role in reinforcing the ever-changing norms of individuals and societies. It functions as a major tool to create product awareness in consumers and that it influences the audience through its every medium. It also influences the individual's buying behaviour, attitude and exposure. Aqsa, and Risal, (2015) opined those advertisements not only entertain young children but also forces them to demand for such items. Earlier, advertisers indirectly focused on children but now advertisers directly appeal them. It is a major source of communication tool between the

manufacturer and buyer of the product. It acts as an advisor and the language used in it is the method to bring the consumer towards the purchase of a service.

Another study by Harish, K. (2013) determined that language plays a major role in the world of advertisement because of its meditating impact. The language used in advertisements has a great impact on the mind sets of individuals especially youth because they are vulnerable and lack the knowledge and experience to critically understand the purpose of advertiser's persuasive appeals. Advertisers convey specific messages with a proper intention of influencing them. Its major aim is to affect the buying behaviours and implicitly persuade the individuals to buy a certain substance. It is a way to push the consumer's demand and it acts as a tool which plays a vital role in the decision-making process.

According to the claims of Zakirbayeva, (2018) the powerful language of advertisement not only provides the consumer with the information of services and products but it is a process of pushing youth to action. In other words, the flow of advertisement not only ends with the information provided but it further goes to convince and persuade youth to act. Because of its persuasive and influencing nature, it also affects as a child's social and personal development. Similarly, Rani and Sharma, (2014) declared the main aim of the language used in advertisements to be the source of attraction for its consumers or buyers towards the purchase of an article. By seeing advertisements customer tends to purchase products whether they are useful or not. Advertisement is a process of influencing particular human actions and it also awakens the desire to purchase services and products.

Whereas, Khandai and Agrawal, (2012) scrutinized that the objective of every marketing firm is to achieve their targets by selling their article to increase their purchase ratio. It suggests the consumer about a particular product's feature, benefits and usage. It introduces the idea or product in a way that it strengthens the acquaintance of the product. Additionally, Singh and Sandhu, (2011) declared that advertising helps in stimulating and to creating the demand to make purchases by persuading the preferences of the buyers. Adverts are designed to inform the consumers about a certain service. They also inform the consumers with the availability and location of the services.

Problem Statement:

As advertising becomes increasingly pervasive in modern society, it is drawing growing scrutiny for its influence on individuals, particularly youth. Advertising not only invades public spaces but also penetrates personal spaces through digital and print media. According to Ali (2021), escaping advertising has become nearly impossible as public spaces turn into billboards for products of all kinds. A major focus of advertisers today is children and teenagers due to their impressionable nature and significant influence on family consumption patterns. Youth are especially targeted because of their responsiveness to trends, peer influence, and developing consumer habits. Some scholars even argue that advertisements exploit and manipulate children, applying psychological pressure that may be harmful to their mental and emotional well-being.

While research exists on how advertising affects youth in terms of consumerism, materialism, and psychological behaviour, relatively little attention has been paid to the linguistic dimension of advertising, that is, the role of language in shaping youth perceptions and behaviours. Particularly within the Pakistani context, there is a clear lack of empirical data on how teenagers perceive, internalize, and are influenced by the persuasive strategies and language choices used in advertisements. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by exploring the extent and nature of influence that advertising language has on the attitudes, perceptions, and buying habits of youth aged 13 to 18, offering a sociolinguistic perspective that is both timely and underexplored.

Research Questions:

1. How does advertisement impact the buying habits of youth?

2. What type of language is used in advertisement to influence the society particularly youth?

Research Objectives:

- To examine the impact of advertisements on the buying behaviours of youth
- To identify the type of language that is used in advertisements to influence youngsters now a day.
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2. Literature Review

This chapter will explore the linguistic landscape of researches of advertisements and it's publicly and privately placed representation. Advertising shape and mirrors society also mirrors culture and mind sets of society. The usage of persuasive language in advertisements to attract the targeted audience has become a trend as Edirisingha and Gunathunga, (2023) stated that television advertisement has become new force which has power to influence or compel the audience to do what advertiser want. Advertisements are designed in such a way that it appeals to the sensibilities of people in a given society. Linguistic landscape deals with issues related to multilingualism, literacy, multimodality, language policy, linguistic diversity, and minority languages, among others.

Pine, (2007) in his research observed that the UK and Swedish children, who watched more advertisements on television demanded more branded gifts on Christmas than the children who are not exposed to television and advertisement. This study used a novel and ecologically valid method of measuring how toy advertising affects children. Also, this research highlighted that the children who watched more television and specially those who watched it alone, at very early stages become consumers then others. Children at early stages don't realize that how advertisements can give a positive information withholding a negative information through persuasive language, this lack of knowledge and awareness in children results in higher trust on the advertiser which leave child at a vulnerable stage.

Television advertisements and social media is the medium by which adolescents get information regarding different objects some of them are beneficial and some are not useful for them, however, Strasburger, (2013) in his argument focused that how potential harmful effects does media messages and images give to children. The impact of the advertisements can be positive as well, as it gives information and awareness to the audience, but Galdolage, (2007) in his research on Sri Lankan children stated that television advertisements not only provide information but also force children to demand for the things. Furthermore, he stated that advertisements have spoiled children's habitual actions it also disturbs family budgets, and it provides minimal advantages. He also explored that children below age twelve have influence on their parent's decision making with regard to their buying choices.

Additionally, Kenechukwu, (2013) claimed that the language usually used in the advertisements has a great impact on audience, this persuasive language is one of the main causes due to which targeted audience is compelled to buy the products. The language is used to persuade the audience and to develop interest of the targeted consumer in the respective product. He also identified that advertisement is a force that makes it possible to sell more products because it is persuasive in nature, persuasive communication employs such persuasive techniques to attract people. Every individual reacts to the advertisements differently and make decisions according to their available resources, but the persuasive language used in advertisements provokes or force people to buy the product. Whereas, Wijesundara, (2007) explained that advertising has spoiled the habitual actions, increased the budgets of the families, it emerges conflicts, it leads to pester and it spoils children when they make unnecessary demands which leads them towards obesity and poor health. The government should take actions to minimize this kind of harmful advertising and regulate control over advertising that particularly aims at children.

Ponce, et.al, (2020) in his research investigated that advertisements put a negative impact on the psychology of youth by convincing them to eat food unnecessarily and also it increases their exposure to intake food which increases their obesity and poor health conditions. It is observed that obese children recognise more food adverts and this ability is correlated with the food that is eaten by having their increased exposure.

Likewise, Delfino, et.al, (2020) explored that advertisements have affected the eating habits of children. Their eating behaviours and excessive food consumption have been resulted in to different diseases like diabetes, cancers, hypertension, heart diseases and obesity. The food that is advertised is mostly rich in fat and sugar which proves to be really bad for their health.

The discourse in advertisements is persuasive, it persuades consumers to act and think in a particular way. Esther, (2013) discussed in a clear term that newspaper and news watch magazines have linguistic and non-linguistic features which are employed to compel consumers to purchase things whether good or bad for them. It is further argued by objectors that much advertising is misleading and untruthful.

Meanwhile, Kannan, and Tyagi, (2013) identified that advertisements play a pivotal role for a company to enhance its sale and revenues. The language of advertisements has great influence on youth and its behaviours. The choice of language that is uses in advertising is very important. Advertising is the art of influencing human behaviours and actions and also it awakens the desire of people to possess the specific products. It is a type of persuasion activity that is done by the manufacturers, retailers and dealers of the specific advertisements.

Gunter, et. al, (2004) also declared that children are highly vulnerable towards advertising because of their psychological immaturity as they are not mature enough to deal with the tactics of advertisers. They somehow try to play with the little minds of children by using strong persuasive and convincing words.

In addition to it, Zarouli.et. al, (2020) explored about the dominant and persuasive language of advertisements that it is a dominant part of our everyday life and it directly attacks our privacy. Advertisement has an attractive power of manipulating the consumer especially the vulnerable youth. He says that it has become a science of describing, analysing and evaluating the linguistic means of language which maximizes the effects of advertisements. The effects of advertisements influence us whether we like it or not because advertisement is everywhere around us: on the television, streets, bill boards, magazines, newspapers, transports and radios etc. He says that the main purpose of advertisement is to persuade the people to buy that particular product.

Also, Widyahening, (2015) explained that advertisement has become a very important part of human's everyday life. Language is considered to be an equipment which mediates in the production process. The role of language in advertisements is to affect the reader, listener and the audience. Language also is a media to spread the ideology of capitalistic consumerism to the society. He also explains that media has become an equipment that builds dominant and cultural ideologies for the interests of a particular class. Also, media is a way to communicate in giving news and general views about everything because it forms the public opinion as it develops pressure which effects the life context. Pabalkar, and Balgaokar, (2014) characterised that advertising is a part of media which can develop both negative and positive influences. The language that is used in mass media has responsibility towards people's prejudices and stereotypes. Therefore, the choice of words in using language which is spread to a mass should be appropriate that develops a general view about something.

Kemp, et.al, (2012) stated that advertising has an adverse effect on youth in both positive and negative ways. Youth observes everything passively and tends to capture each and every message given by advertisements. Directly or indirectly advertisements compel youth to think and consider about a particular agenda portrayed by it which has a negative or a positive consequence. It proves to be a best way of persuasive communication. The role of commercials has a great influence on the decisions of youth that cannot be over looked. Another study by Kumar, and Raju, (2013) expressed his view that advertisement has a misrepresentation, false image and unrealistic viewpoint when it comes to its negative aspect. It aims to present the best light that can be possible. Advertising creates images that are unattainable and influences the thoughts of people about a certain product. The negative effects of advertising on youth include the increased usage of cigarettes and eating disorders. The positive impacts of advertisement are that it helps to maintain mass communication media by making the information less expensive and more approachable to the public.

In Pakistan, advertising has a massive influence on our lives, especially the lives of youth. It has both positive and negative effect on their minds and ways of spending their life. Advertisements have made them specific to their wants and needs. It is thought to be a process that persuades them to take a particular action that can be of making a purchase or of participating in a specific behaviour. It can have a massive impact on youth as they are extremely vulnerable because they lack both experience and knowledge to understand and evaluate everything critically especially the purpose of persuasive advertising appeals (Anjum, Irum, & Sualtan, 2015). Also, it is a part of life so it is too important to make the youth aware to this so they can develop the skills that are needed to function in this market place. It should be realized that youth is more imaginative towards everything than adults so advertisers should care not to exploit their imaginative quality (Siddiqui, 2014).

3. Methodology

In order to investigate the impacts of advertisement on teen agers and to explore the language that is used in advertisements research was carried out, data was collected using a mixed method approach. The gathered results were based on data collected through survey questionnaire and interviews from 50 participants of secondary school of Lahore, using simple random sampling technique. Likert scale questionnaire was developed keeping the objectives in view and questions were constructed in a way to know the impact of language that is used in advertisements on the teenager's buying habits. For the quantitative data, a survey questionnaire was administered to 50 students from a secondary school. For the qualitative data, 10 individual semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore their attitudes and interpretations towards advertisements. The main focus of the study was students of teen age group (13-18). Research ethics were kept in mind throughout the research and the anonymity or confidentiality of the participants and their responses was also ensured.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to standard ethical research practices. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and in the case of minors, permission was also secured from their parents and school authorities. Participants were clearly informed about the purpose of the study, their right to withdraw at any time, and how their responses would be used. To ensure privacy and confidentiality, no identifying information was collected, and all data were anonymized. The language of the questions was kept age-appropriate, respectful, and free from any psychological pressure or harm. The research was conducted in a school setting with the approval of relevant administrative bodies.

4. Results and Discussion

In this part, results of the data are presented. The data was collected in response to the objectives discussed before, those were impacts of advertisements, its convincing language and effect of advertisements on our buying habits.

Table 1 Language of advertisements and its impacts.

	Ν	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	50	13.00	18.00	15.300 0	1.23305
Gender	50	1.00	2.00	1.5400	.50346
SWLS1	50	1.00	2.00	1.4400	.50143
SWLS2	50	1.00	3.00	1.5800	.57463
SWLS3	50	1.00	3.00	1.7000	.64681
SWLS4	50	1.00	3.00	1.6800	.65278
SWLS5	50	1.00	3.00	1.5000	.54398

*SWLS (Survey on the way language Suggests)

The findings of the quantitative data revealed insightful patterns regarding the influence of persuasive language used in advertisements and its effect on the buying habits of Pakistani teenagers. The statistical results indicated that the mean score for SWLS1 was 1.4400, which clearly reflects that the respondents perceived the language used in advertisements as highly persuasive and convincing. This suggests that advertisements are no longer merely informational tools; rather, they are crafted strategically to influence consumer psychology by appealing to emotions, desires, and perceived needs.

Moreover, the mean scores for SWLS2 (1.5800) and SWLS3 (1.7000) further emphasize the deep and pervasive impact that advertisements have on the daily lives of young individuals. These results illustrate that advertising messages have become embedded in the social fabric of everyday life, subtly guiding consumer decisions and lifestyle choices. SWLS3, in particular, suggests that advertisements are not only shaping purchasing decisions but also contributing to the formation of cultural norms and social expectations, especially among impressionable youth.

In addition, the study examined the implications of advertising beyond surface-level consumerism. The results of SWLS4 and SWLS5, with mean scores of 1.6800 and 1.5000 respectively, indicate a significant influence of advertisements on the consumer behaviour of Pakistani teenagers. SWLS4 suggests that advertisements have a measurable effect on altering or reinforcing buying habits, indicating that repeated exposure to persuasive content may condition youth to adopt certain consumption patterns. SWLS5 further highlights a growing perception among respondents that advertising is increasingly driven by commercial motives. This suggests a shift in public consciousness, wherein teenagers recognize that advertisements are designed primarily to promote business interests rather than to provide honest or neutral information.

The qualitative results were derived from semi-structured interview with ten secondary school students aged 13 to 18. The participants were asked four open-ended questions to explore how they perceive and respond to the language used in advertisements. Thematic analysis of the responses revealed four key themes: persuasive language techniques, emotional appeal, peer influence and identity formation, and language-triggered buying behaviour.

To begin with, students were asked, How do advertisements catch your attention? Can you recall any phrases or words from an ad that stayed in your mind? Most respondents mentioned that advertisements often use catchy phrases, rhyming words, and repetition to gain attention. Words such as Limited offer, Buy now, and Sale ends soon were commonly recalled. Additionally, several students pointed out that the mixing of English and Urdu made the ads sound trendy and more engaging, reflecting how code-switching increases relatability among youth. The second question focused on the emotional impact of advertisements: Do you feel any emotion (like excitement, happiness, or pressure) when you watch advertisements? Why? In response, participants described experiencing excitement, joy, and a fear of missing out when watching certain commercials, especially those that depicted group celebrations, friendships, or ideal lifestyles. This emotional appeal was cited as a major factor in drawing their attention and influencing their preferences.

The third question, Have you ever wanted to buy something just because you saw it in an ad or because your friends had it? revealed that peer pressure and identity formation play a significant role in shaping teenagers' consumer behaviour. Students shared that they often felt compelled to purchase items that were popular among their friends or advertised by celebrities and social media influencers. This indicates how advertising not only sells products but also reinforces social belonging and image among adolescents.

Lastly, students were asked, What kind of language or words in advertisements makes you want to buy something? Most respondents admitted being influenced by words that promised exclusivity or savings, such as discount, free, limited edition, and buy one get one free. These terms, they noted, triggered impulsive buying behaviour, even when there was no actual need for the product. Several participants reflected on the power of such language in creating urgency and desirability. In summary, the findings suggest that the language of advertisements significantly shapes the buying attitudes of teenagers. The participants demonstrated an awareness of the persuasive techniques used, yet their responses revealed that emotional and linguistic strategies in ads effectively influence their desires and decisions. This highlights the critical role of advertising language in forming youth consumption patterns.

Implications

This study provides valuable insights of how advertisements, specifically their language, influence the buying behaviour and attitudes of teenagers. It also emphasizes the need for media literacy education in schools in order to help students critically evaluate the persuasive content. The findings may inform the marketers and advertisers too to adopt more ethical approaches when they are targeting young audiences. Furthermore, the research also contributes to the sociolinguistic understanding by emphasizing the role of language in shaping the youth perceptions and the consumer culture.

Limitations

Despite its relevance, the study has certain limitations. The sample size is small and restricted to secondary school students in Lahore, which may not reflect the experiences of youth from other regions or backgrounds. The reliance on self-reported data may also affect accuracy, as students might not fully recognize or disclose how advertisements influence them. Additionally, the focus on a specific age group (13–18) limits the generalizability of findings to other age brackets, and the study may not account for all types of advertising media.

6. Conclusion:

Young children play a pivotal role as consumers. Teenagers do not really care about the essentiality of a product. In this situation, it is safe to say that advertisement has a stronger effect on youth more than a mature consumer. However, these days it is seen that children's impact on the family's decision in shopping is steadily increasing. The conclusion was drawn on the basis of the results collected from the questionnaire filled by the students and the analysis of the interviews which were conducted. The research validated that the language used in advertisements plays a significant role because of its persuasive and convincing in nature.

The overarching aim of the study was to investigate how the persuasive language of advertisements affects the decision-making processes of the targeted audience, with a particular focus on

teenagers. The research sought to explore the linguistic landscape of advertising in the Pakistani context by identifying key language features, rhetorical strategies, and emotional appeals that render advertisements convincing. It also aimed to uncover current advertising trends, particularly those targeting younger consumers, and to examine how these trends vary across demographic categories such as gender, region, and age.

With this in mind, a questionnaire with five focused questions was provided to the teenage respondents. These questions were structured to examine their attitudes around advertising language, the psychological and emotional influences of advertising, and opinions about the ongoing growth of advertising in consumer culture. The reasoning behind the questions was designed to examine the more general mentality of teenagers, with regards to advertising content, including how frequently they were exposed to ads, how they interpret the language of advertising, what these interpretations translate into as attitudes and choices. The data did not indicate any difference in response patterns based on the gender of teenage respondents. The implication is that the persuasive impact of advertising language and its influence on teens is not isolated to a specific gender. Teenage males and females seem equally influenced or impacted by advertising and have similar exposure to and consumption of marketing messages. Clearly, the lack of difference based on gender reinforces how modern advertising is equally focused on a generalized audience, and that advertisers often use shared psychological triggers that we know are not dependent on gender identity.

The qualitative analysis from this study indicates that advertising language significantly influenced how teenagers perceive advertisers, their emotions and buying behaviour. Participants in semistructure interviews revealed that techniques such as repetition, emotional appeal, and code switching, are persuasive to teen agers. The language of advertising engages the emotions of young people, creates a sense of belonging to a social structure and reinforces self-identity, even without the influence of peers or media trends.

The study provides compelling evidence that advertisements, through their calculated use of persuasive language, significantly influence the attitudes, behaviors, and consumption patterns of Pakistani teenagers. The findings underscore the power of language as a tool of persuasion in media and marketing, revealing how advertising not only shapes consumer behavior but also contributes to the construction of youth identity, aspirations, and social values. Given these implications, the study calls for further research into the ethical dimensions of advertising targeted at young audiences, as well as the development of media literacy programs to help teenagers critically evaluate the messages they encounter in commercial media.

Conclusively, it can be said that advertisement plays an important role in the living style of youth and the language used in it tempts, attracts and motivates them to make a purchase. Further recommendations are made in order to minimize the impacts of advertising on youth and to protect and control the temptation of children and persuasive language of advertisements. Parents should minimize their unnecessary spending on their children's demands. Misleading advertisements should be regulated by the Government. Moreover, government should advice the advertisers to not use convincing or suggestive language.

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