

THE POWER OF EMOTIONAL ADVERTISING APPEALS: EXAMINING THEIR INFLUENCE ON CONSUMER PURCHASING BEHAVIOR AND BRAND-CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP

Manjula S¹, Nalina²

¹*Associate Professor, Department of Commerce and Management, Seshadripuram College (Affiliated to Bengaluru City University) Bengaluru. Email ID: manjula9740@gmail.com*

²*Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce and Management, Seshadripuram College (Affiliated to Tumkur University), Tumkur. Email ID: nalina.nagaraj24@gmail.com*

Abstract—This conceptual research paper explores the role of emotional advertising appeals in shaping consumer purchasing behavior and enhancing brand–customer relationship quality. Emotional appeals in advertising leverage positive and negative emotions such as joy, love, fear, and nostalgia to influence consumers’ attitudes, perceptions, and purchase intentions. By analyzing existing secondary data from peer-reviewed studies, this paper synthesizes findings on how emotional advertisements not only drive immediate purchase behavior but also foster long-term brand trust, attachment, and loyalty. The paper proposes a conceptual model highlighting emotional advertising appeals as the independent variable influencing consumer purchasing behavior and brand–customer relationship quality as dependent variables. Thematic analysis reveals that positive emotions generally produce stronger favorable effects, while the effectiveness of emotional appeals varies with consumer decision-making styles and cultural contexts. Managerial implications emphasize designing emotionally relevant campaigns tailored to consumer segments to improve marketing effectiveness. The study acknowledges limitations such as its conceptual nature and suggests directions for future empirical validation through longitudinal and cross-cultural research. Overall, the paper underscores the strategic importance of emotional appeals in contemporary advertising for building durable consumer-brand connections and driving purchase decisions.

Keywords: Emotional advertisement, Brand, Consumer Purchasing behavior, Consumer relationship.

Introduction

Companies today face intense competition and cluttered media spaces, so grabbing consumer attention has become harder than ever. Traditional advertising that only lists product features often fails to stand out or connect with people at a deeper level. As a result, many brands now rely on emotional advertising appeals that try to make consumers feel happiness, pride, love, fear, nostalgia, or empathy rather than only think about price and quality.

Emotional advertising appeals work by triggering feelings that influence how people process information, remember ads, and make decisions about what to buy. When an advertisement makes a consumer feel something meaningful and personally relevant, the person is more likely to pay attention, remember the brand, and form a positive attitude toward it. Emotional appeals can be positive (e.g., joy, warmth, inspiration) or negative (e.g., fear, guilt, sadness), and both types can affect behavior if used carefully and ethically.

Research suggests that emotional advertising can shape not only immediate purchase intentions but also long-term brand–customer relationships such as trust, attachment, brand love, and loyalty. Positive emotional experiences with advertising often transfer to the brand, leading to stronger brand attitudes and deeper psychological connections. In contrast, poorly designed emotional campaigns or overuse of fear and guilt can backfire, causing resistance, distrust, or message avoidance.

The Power of Emotional Advertising Appeals: Examining Their Influence on Consumer Purchasing Behavior and Brand–Customer Relationship

At the same time, consumers do not all react in the same way to emotional appeals. Differences in decision-making style, culture, personal values, and previous brand experiences can change how strongly emotions influence buying behavior and relationships. For example, impulsive consumers may respond quickly to emotional triggers, while quality-seeking consumers may demand both emotional impact and rational information.

Need for the study

Contemporary advertising landscapes are increasingly saturated with emotional appeals, yet fragmented empirical evidence leaves marketers uncertain about their holistic impact on both short-term purchases and long-term brand relationships. While prior studies highlight emotional appeals' role in attitude formation (e.g., joy driving positive perceptions), gaps persist in synthesizing how these appeals—spanning positive (e.g., love, nostalgia) and negative (e.g., fear) emotions—influence consumer purchasing behavior amid varying decision-making styles and cultural contexts.

the present conceptual paper aims to integrate existing literature and propose a simple conceptual model. The paper focuses on how emotional appeals in advertising shape consumer purchasing behavior and brand–customer relationship quality, using only secondary data and thematic analysis. It also highlights implications for marketers and suggests directions for future empirical research.

Objective of the study

- Synthesize literature on emotional advertising appeals (e.g., joy, love, fear, nostalgia) and their influence on attitudes, perceptions, and purchase intentions
- Develop a conceptual model with emotional appeals as the independent variable, mediating through attitudes to affect consumer purchasing behavior and brand–customer relationship quality (trust, attachment, loyalty).
- Provide managerial implications for segment-tailored emotional campaigns.
- Outline limitations and future empirical directions.

Review of literature

Vrtana (2023) – Study on emotional advertising and consumer purchases Found that emotional appeals stimulate both short-term purchase intentions and long-term responses such as brand attachment, loyalty, and advocacy.

Garg et al. (2023) – Role of emotional advertising in consumer decision-making style and purchase intention resulted Emotional advertising positively affected purchase intention, and the strength of this effect varied across decision-making styles such as impulsive and quality-seeking consumers.

Garg et al. (2025) – Emotional appeals and brand relationship quality result in Advertisements using emotional appeals were shown to improve brand relationship quality, which in turn strengthened brand love and brand trust.

Alsharif et al. (2022) Consumer behavior and brain processes in advertising highlighted that emotional and reward processes in the brain play a central role in attention, memory, and motivation to respond to advertising, influencing consumer decisions.

Curtis (2017) Advertising effects on consumer emotions, judgments, and purchase intent. Results in Positive emotions from an ad increased purchase intent, while negative emotions decreased it; judgments about the ad partially mediated the relationship between emotion and purchase intention.

Farihah Bt. Isamudin (2021) Impact of different advertising appeals (love, humor, happiness, etc.) on purchase intention result in Certain positive appeals such as love, humor, and happiness significantly improved purchase intention compared with neutral messages.

Casais (case mentioned in IJFMR article, 2025) – Emotional vs rational advertising in social campaigns result: Emotional messages using empathy and shared values enhanced recall and encouraged behavioral change more effectively than purely rational appeals in some contexts.

ShodhKosh article on emotional appeal in modern advertising (2024) result in Concluded that emotional appeals improve brand recall and help build long-term consumer relationships by creating memorable, value-based connections.

Mhishi (thesis, 2022 approx.) – Qualitative thematic analysis of emotional advertising result in both positive and negative emotional appeals (e.g., joy, sadness, fear) influence engagement, perceived effectiveness, and attachment to the brand, with happiness producing the strongest positive effect.

Proposed hypotheses

Based on the reviewed literature, the following conceptual hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: Emotional advertising appeals have a positive effect on consumer purchasing behavior (purchase intention or actual buying).
- H2: Emotional advertising appeals have a positive effect on the quality of brand–customer relationships (e.g., trust, attachment, loyalty, brand love).
- H3: Consumer purchasing behavior mediates the relationship between emotional advertising appeals and brand–customer relationship quality (i.e., emotional ads increase purchasing, which then strengthens the relationship).
- H4: Consumer decision-making style moderates the relationship between emotional advertising appeals and purchasing behavior, such that impulsive consumers show stronger effects than rational or quality-seeking consumers.

Conceptual model

For a straightforward model, treat Emotional Advertising Appeals as the independent variable and Consumer Purchasing Behavior and Brand–Customer Relationship Quality as dependent variables.

Independent variable (IV): Emotional advertising appeals

Types: positive emotions (joy, love, pride, humor), negative emotions (fear, guilt, sadness) etc.

Dependent variable 1: Consumer purchasing behavior (purchase intention, willingness to pay, likelihood of trying or switching, repeat purchase).

Dependent variable 2: Brand–customer relationship quality (trust, satisfaction, attachment, loyalty, brand love, advocacy).

Simple conceptual model

- Emotional advertising appeals → Consumer purchasing behavior
- Emotional advertising appeals → Brand–customer relationship quality
- Consumer purchasing behavior → Brand–customer relationship quality
- Emotional advertising appeals → Consumer purchasing behavior → Brand–customer relationship quality.



Emotional Advertising & Consumer Purchasing Behavior Model.



Emotional Advertising & Brand-consumer Relationship Quality Model.

Research methodology

This study employs a conceptual research design rooted in secondary data analysis, ideal for synthesizing theoretical insights and model-building without primary data collection. The methodology unfolds in four systematic phases, ensuring transparency, replicability, and alignment with academic standards in marketing and consumer behavior research.

Nature of study: Qualitative synthesis of previous empirical and conceptual studies on emotional advertising appeals, consumer purchasing behavior, and brand–customer relationships.

Literature Search and Data Collection

Sources: Peer-reviewed articles, books, and conference proceedings from databases like Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, EBSCOhost, and JSTOR (spanning 2000–2025 to capture digital-era shifts). Science Direct, Taylor & Francis, etc.

These conference papers and reputable online reports focus on emotional advertising and consumer behavior.

Keywords: "emotional advertising appeals," "positive/negative emotions in ads," "consumer purchase intentions," "brand trust/loyalty/attachment," "brand–customer relationship quality," combined with moderators like "decision-making styles" and "cultural contexts."

Inclusion Criteria: English-language empirical and theoretical studies on emotional appeals in advertising; focus on outcomes like attitudes, purchases, and relationships; minimum sample sizes in empirical works for credibility.

Exclusion Criteria: Non-peer-reviewed sources, unrelated ad types (e.g., purely informational), or pre-2000 studies lacking contemporary relevance.

Phase 2: Data Analysis Approach (Thematic)

Identify recurring themes from existing studies such as Role of positive vs negative emotions, Impact on purchase intention and actual buying. Emotional appeals and brand relationship variables (trust, loyalty, brand love). Moderating factors like consumer decision-making style or culture.

Organize the reviewed studies under these themes and explain how they support or contradict the proposed hypotheses (thematic analysis). No primary data (no surveys or experiments) is collected; all findings are based on interpreting existing research.

Raw data extracted into a structured Excel matrix categorizing studies by: (a) emotion type (positive/negative), (b) outcomes (purchase behavior, relationship quality), (c) moderators (decision-making styles, culture), and (d) key findings/effect sizes where reported.

Narrative synthesis used to identify patterns, such as positive emotions' stronger effects on loyalty versus negative emotions' short-term purchase spikes.

Phase 3: Thematic Analysis

Approach: Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step thematic analysis adapted for secondary data: (1) familiarization with literature, (2) generating initial codes (e.g., "joy-induced attachment"), (3) searching for themes (e.g., "cultural variability"), (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining/naming themes, and (6) producing the report.

Software: NVivo or ATLAS, it for coding reliability; inter-coder checks (if collaborative) for validity.

Themes Derived: Core themes include emotional valence effects, moderator influences, and relational outcomes, directly informing the conceptual model.

Phase 4: Conceptual Model Development and Validation

Model Construction: Independent variable (emotional advertising appeals) → mediators (attitudes/perceptions) → dependent variables (purchasing behavior; brand–customer relationship quality). Visualized via a diagram

Validation: Logical coherence checked against established theories (e.g., Affect Transfer Hypothesis, Relationship Quality Model); cross-referenced with meta-analyses for robustness.

Limitations Addressed: Conceptual nature limits generalizability; no causal testing. Future directions: Empirical validation via surveys/experiments in diverse cultures.

Scope and limitations

Scope

Focuses on emotional appeals in advertising (TV, digital, social media, print, etc.) and their influence on consumer purchasing behavior and brand–customer relationship quality. Concentrates mainly on consumer products and services where emotions are central to decision-making, such as FMCG, lifestyle, airlines, and social campaigns. Uses published academic and professional sources, providing a broad overview rather than one specific brand or industry case.

Limitations

- **Conceptual nature:** does not test hypotheses with primary data, so causal claims remain theoretical.
- **Cultural context:** many studies come from specific regions (e.g., India, Europe, North America), so generalization to all cultures should be done carefully.

Discussion

The reviewed literature indicates that emotional advertising appeals consistently influence consumer purchasing behavior by enhancing attention, recall, and positive attitudes toward the ad and brand. Positive emotions such as happiness, love, inspiration, and humor appear particularly powerful in increasing purchase intention, while strongly negative emotions must be managed carefully to avoid defensive reactions.

Emotional appeals also contribute to building stronger brand–customer relationships by increasing trust, attachment, brand love, and loyalty over time. Emotional experiences with the brand can become part of the consumer's identity and memories, which helps explain long-term commitment and advocacy. However, consumer differences in decision-making style and cognition mean that emotional appeals are not equally effective for everyone, suggesting that segmentation and tailored creative strategies are necessary.

Implications and recommendations

Managerial implications

- Advertisers should design campaigns that trigger specific, relevant emotions (e.g., joy, pride, empathy) linked clearly to the brand and its value proposition.

The Power of Emotional Advertising Appeals: Examining Their Influence on Consumer Purchasing Behavior and Brand–Customer Relationship

- Brands should focus on long-term emotional storytelling rather than only short-term promotions, to strengthen relationship quality indicators like trust and loyalty.
- Segmentation based on consumer decision-making style can improve effectiveness; for example, provide richer emotional content for impulsive consumers and a balanced mix of emotional and rational information for quality-seeking consumers.

Academic implications and recommendations

- Future empirical research can test the proposed model using survey or experimental methods, measuring emotional response, purchasing behavior, and brand relationship variables simultaneously.
- More cross-cultural and longitudinal studies are needed to understand how cultural norms and time shape responses to emotional appeals and relationship outcomes.
- Researchers can also examine digital-specific contexts such as social media storytelling, influencer marketing, and user-generated emotional content.

Conclusion

Emotional advertising appeals represent a powerful tool for influencing consumer purchasing behavior and shaping durable brand–customer relationships. The conceptual model proposed in this paper suggests that emotional appeals directly enhance purchase-related responses and relationship quality, and that consumer behavior can act as a link between emotions in ads and long-term brand outcomes. By relying on thematic analysis of secondary data, the paper integrates scattered findings and highlights the strategic importance of emotion-based communication in modern marketing. Future empirical work can further test and refine these relationships, helping practitioners design more effective, ethically sound emotional advertising strategies.

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