THE PERSUASIVENESS OF VISUAL HYPERBOLE

A Thesis in
Media Studies
by
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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effects of visual hyperbole and involvement in advertisements. An experiment with a $2 \times 2$ between-subjects design was conducted to see if visual hyperbole and involvement can affect ad and brand attitudes. Participants’ viewed an advertisement that contained either a visual hyperbole or a non-hyperbolic image, and their involvement level (high vs. low) was manipulated. Results reveal the use of visual hyperbole leads to greater ad liking, as well as judgments of entertaining, informative, deception, confusion, and alienation. There was a two-way interaction between visual hyperbole and skepticism, suggesting the importance of an individual’s skepticism in the effectiveness of advertising messages containing visual hyperbole. There was no significant interaction between visual hyperbole and involvement.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

When advertisers create an advertising campaign for their product, they have a lot factors to consider. One of the most important factors they consider is the intended audience’s attitude towards the advertisement. There is an arsenal of persuasion tools advertisers employ in an effort to affect consumer attitudes: humor, source credibility, and rhetorical figures to just name a few. A number of rhetorical figures have been explored theoretically (McQuarrie & Mick, 1992, 1996, 1999 & 2003); however, much of the literature on rhetorical figures focuses on the textual effects, and there is less of a focus on understanding of how persuasive visual rhetorical figures affect individuals as opposed to persuasive text.

Visual hyperbole, a visual exaggeration or understatement (Merriam-Webster, 2011), is commonly employed in advertising, and yet its frequent use as a persuasion tool is not currently reflected in the literature. Take for instance the latest commercial for Angel Soft. A husband asks his wife to throw him a roll of toilet paper. As the thrown roll of toilet paper buzzes past his head it shaves off some of his hair, denoting that that toilet paper is too harsh. He asks again for his wife to throw him another roll of toilet paper, and this time when he goes to catch it, it disintegrates, denoting that that toilet paper is too soft. He asks his wife for a third time to throw him another roll of toilet paper, and finally, he catches this roll, which denotes a “just right” texture. The advertisers have employed visual hyperbole as a rhetorical tool to engage the audience in their advertising campaign (Callister & Stern, 2007) and ultimately their brand.

The current study examines visual hyperbole and its impact by using an experiment in which a message’s content was manipulated to contain either a visual hyperbole or a nonhyperbole visual. There has been contradicting findings in the visual rhetorical figure research. Callister and Stern (2007) found visual hyperbole to be an effective persuasive tool...
leading to better attitude towards the ad, which has been defined as “an affective construct representing consumers feelings of favorability/unfavorability toward the ad itself” (MacKenzie, Lutz, & Belch, 1986, p. 130); however, they also found visual hyperbole was not an effective persuasive tool in regards to brand attitude, or the consumer’s internal evaluation of a brand (Mitchell & Olson, 1981). However, previous research done on visual rhetorical figures (McQuarrie & Mick, 2003) has shown significant results for brand attitudes. This purpose of this study is to clarify the persuasive impact of visual hyperbole utilizing a 2 x 2 between-subjects design experiment. The first factor of visual hyperbole, with the conditions being with visual hyperbole and without, and the second factor of message involvement, with the conditions being either high or low message involvement, will be explored as to their effects on the dependent variables of attitude towards the ad, brand attitude, skepticism, deception and advertising dimensions.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Since visual hyperbole is a rhetorical figure, the review of literature will first explore the rhetorical figures before delving into the scholarship on visual hyperbole. Research involving three of the dependent variables, deception, skepticism and the advertising dimensions, will be highlighted. And finally, the second independent variable of involvement will be examined.

Rhetorical Figures

According to McQuarrie and Mick (1996), the rhetorical perspective in persuasion suggests the manner in which a message is expressed may be more important than its content. The elements of the message (e.g. content, order, and information) are selected by the sender in effort to manage the expectations of the audience (Burke, 1969). When there are rhetorical figures present in message, there are important consequences for how the message is processed.

McQuarrie and Mick (1996) posit “a rhetorical figure occurs when an expression deviates from expectation, the expression is not rejected as nonsensical or faulty, the deviation occurs at the level of form rather than content, and the deviation conforms to a template that is invariant across a variety of content and contexts” (pp. 425). If a sender selects a rhetorical figure as an element of their message, and it violates the audience’s expectation of the message, they will search for a context to will reconcile the deviation (Sperber & Wilson, 1986). In a sense, the use of rhetorical figures makes the familiar strange, and the deviation creates incongruity (McQuarrie & Mick, 1996). In the previously mentioned Angel Soft commercial, the deviation occurs when the thrown toilet paper first shaves off the husband’s hair and then explodes in his hands. These are both deviations from what we would expect to happen, as such the audience
needs to search for the contexts of the toilet paper being too harsh or too soft in order to reconcile the deviations.

A rhetorical figure deviation can be classified by two different modes or categories. When a text contains excessive order or regularity, the rhetorical figure is in the schematic mode. Alternatively, a figure in the tropic mode happens when a text contains a deficiency of order or irregularities. Because irregularity creates incongruity at a deeper level of processing, deviation is greater for tropes than schemes (McQuarrie & Mick, 1996).

Durand (1987) classified rhetorical figures according to relations among elements in the rhetorical figure and rhetorical operations. There are four rhetorical operations: repetition, reversal, substitution, and destabilization. Repetition and reversal are schematic operations, and substitution and destabilization are tropic operations. This study’s focus, visual hyperbole, functions by the tropic operation of substitution, which selects an expression that requires adjustment by the audience in order to grasp the intended content. Four dimensions have been identified as the crux of the adjustments: absence/plenitude of expression elements (e.g., ellipsis), strong/weak assertive force (e.g., rhetorical question), part/whole relations (e.g., metonym) and exaggerated/understated claims (e.g., hyperbole) (McQuarrie & Mick, 1996).

Since ads do not always use images as mirror images of reality but rather they fragment, combine, or alter them in character with the deviations used in rhetorical figures, it can be construed advertising images can be a form of rhetoric (Scott, 1994). McQuarrie and Mick (1996) concur the basic principles they proposed for rhetorical figures can easily be extrapolated from language to images. Scott (1994) argues advertising images are tropes in visual form, where their function is to present an issue in a fresh way to break through accustom perception, skepticism, boredom, and resistance.
Visual Hyperbole

Examples of some of the rhetorical figures used to break through accustom perception, skepticism, boredom, and resistances are hyperbole, ellipsis, and metonym; perhaps, the best-known one by communication researchers is metaphor (Sopory & Dillard, 2002). Both hyperbole and metaphor perform the operation of substitution, but they differ by means of different relations between elements. A metaphor performs a substitution by connecting two things similar in content. In contrast, a hyperbole performs a substitution by an enhanced degree of the element in question (Durand, 1987).

Because of the element of exaggeration, McQuarrie and Mick (1996) believe hyperbole results when a statement makes an impossible claim. In speech communication, hyperbole is defined as an extravagant statement or figure of speech not to be taken literally (Websters, 2010). Roberts and Kreuz (1994) found the communicative goal in using hyperbole is to clarify, emphasize, and or to be humorous. Colston and Keller (1998) found hyperbole inflates the discrepancy between what was expected and what ensues via an overstated description of what happened.

This paper seeks to explore the use of hyperbole in visual images in advertising, and not the text, therefore, the conceptualization of visual hyperbole is the visual exaggeration or understatement of a product’s benefits or losses. Consider a recent print advertisement for Kaya King’s Peanuts. It shows an adult elephant giving a baby elephant the Heimlich maneuver, denoting the peanuts are so large that an elephant could choke on them. According to Scott (1994), consumers draw on their learned vocabulary of pictorial symbols to cognitively process the commercial. The consumer is capable of distinguishing the subtle nuances in the visual
communication and making the connection between the adult elephant performing the Heimlich maneuver and the size of the peanuts.

McQuarrie and Mick (1999) believe texts allow for multiple readings or interpretations are inherently pleasurable to readers. Mick (1992) linked this concept of pleasure-of-the text to consumer’s attitude-toward-the-ad. He argues the increased pleasure while processing the ad text makes it probable the consumer’s attitude-toward-the-ad will also increase in a favorable manner. McQuarrie and Mick (1999) tested this hypothesis with advertising composed of visual rhymes, antitheses, metaphors, and puns and found consumers did have a more favorable attitude toward the ad in the figurative condition than the nonfigurative condition.

McQuarrie and Mick (1992) posit print ads exhibit resonance when there is a deviant combination of wordplay and a relevant visual that creates ambiguity and incongruity. They found the manipulation of resonance produces positive treatment effects in attitude-towards-the-brand and offers two routes for the significant differences between resonant and nonresonant ads. First, they claim a resonant ad uses tacit assertion that the brand had positive features or benefits. Since the features and benefits are ambiguous and indirect, the ad causes the consumer to generate inferences about its meaning, which Kardes (1988) found leads to more favorable brand attitudes.

The second claim McQuurrie and Mick (1992) made is the other route to produce positive brand attitude involves a kind of distraction effect. According to the authors, the ambiguity and indirectness distracts the consumer’s attention away from a counterargument, because their effort is on resolving the incongruity created by the ad, not on contesting its claims.

Anand and Sternthal (1990) found persuasion attempts are most successful when the processing demands on the consumer match their available processing resources. Ads that place
too few or too many cognitive demands are likely to fail. As such, both deviation and complexity will increase demands on processing. In looking at the deviation effect, McQuarrie and Mick (1992) found that resonant ads had greater recall for the ad’s headline than nonresonant ads.

Callister and Stern (2007) researched the theoretical implications of the use of visual hyperbole in advertising, and they found that the use of visual hyperbole increased ad liking, or participants had a positive attitude-toward-the-ad. They state “hyperbole allows the visual to tell a story that is part fiction and part fact, and the ability of the consumer to separate out the two, to some extent, determines its effectiveness” (p.10). Callister and Stern’s (2007) study did not find significant results for brand attitudes; however, previous research exploring the persuasiveness of rhetorical figures on brand attitudes (McQuarrie & Mick, 2003) predicts there should be a relationship between the two. Based the above review, it is therefore expected visual hyperbole will likely increase ad effectiveness. More formally stated the first hypothesis is as follows:

H1: Participants exposed to ads with visual hyperbole will likely have (a) better ad attitude and (b) brand attitude than those exposed to ads without visual hyperbole.

Deception

The use of visual hyperbole in an advertisement is a persuasive tool meant to grab the attention of the consumer. The result of using visual hyperbole could be the consumer negatively processing it as deceptive. The Merriam-Webster (2011) defines deception as “the act of misleading through falsehood and misrepresentation;” however, this definition only takes into consideration the advertisement, and it fails to take into account the perception of deception of the consumer. Gardner (1975) offers the following definition of deception:
If an advertisement (or advertising campaign) leaves the consumer with an impression(s) and/or belief(s) different from what would normally be expected if the consumer had reasonable knowledge, and that impression(s) and/or belief(s) is factually untrue or potentially misleading, then deception is said to exist (p. 42).

In an effort to further explicate the concept, Gardner classified three categories of deception: unconscionable lie, claim-belief interaction, and claim-fact discrepancy.

According to Gardner (1975), an advertisement would be classified as an unconscionable lie if the claim it makes is completely false. Even if the advertising claim in this category is properly qualified, it is still deemed false. Basically, the advertisement is a lie, and there is no way the claim would meet the expectation of the consumer.

To be classified as a claim-belief interaction, an advertisement would interact “with the accumulated attitudes and beliefs of the consumer in such a manner as to leave a deceptive belief or attitude about the product of service being advertised, without making either explicit or implied deceptive claims” (Gardner, 1975, p. 42). For instance, a cosmetic company discovered including a wide-bristle brush in their blush products resulted in a significant number of women attributing long-lasting wear to the blush products containing a wide-bristle brush than those products with just a regular sized-bristle brush. If the cosmetic company were to advertise their blush products as having a wide-bristle brush, the statement would be deceptive, even though no claims about long-lasting wear were made.

Gardner (1975) classifies advertisements as a claim-fact discrepancy when “some qualification must be placed upon the claim for it to be properly understood and evaluated” (p. 42). In order for the consumer to benefit from the advertisement’s claim, they would need to use the product in a given manner or with proper precautions. For example, an acne cream may have
the desired effect on consumers with a distinct skin problem; however, the skin problem is not the predominant problem amongst acne sufferers. This classification also includes claims that are only deemed true if the consumer knows the exact information on which it was based. An example of this type of claim-fact discrepancy, would be an advertisement that claimed four out of five experts agreed the acne cream cleared skin. In order for the consumer to evaluate the claim truthfully, they would need to know what types of experts were surveyed, how many were surveyed and what questions were included on the survey.

An advertisement containing visual hyperbole could be classified as any one of the three types of deception. Gardner (1975) concurs these categories are not mutually exclusive and there is typically overlap between them. Take for instance the advertisement from Kaya King’s Peanuts featuring an adult elephant giving a baby elephant the Heimlich maneuver, implying the claim that the peanuts are so large that an elephant could choke on them. This advertisement could be classified as an unconscious able lie, because surely no elephant has ever choked on a peanut. In additions, if a significant number of consumers attributed great taste to larger peanuts than regular sized peanuts, then the Kaya King advertisement could be deemed deceptive via a claim-belief interaction, even though no claims about great taste were made. And finally, in order for this advertisement to not be classified as a claim-fact discrepancy deception, the consumer would need to definitively know whether or not an elephant has ever choked on a peanut.

Callister and Stern (2007) believed in order for a consumer to not deem an advertisement featuring visual hyperbole as deceptive, the consumer would need to be able to distinguish visual hyperbole as a rhetorical figure and not a literal representation of the advertising claim. Their results indicated participants in the visual hyperbole condition did not identify it as a rhetorical
figure; however, participants in both conditions (visual hyperbole and control) did not view the advertisements as deceptive. Campbell (1995) believes attention getting tactics increase the likelihood a consumer will negatively process advertisements. Friedstad and Wright (1994) state consumers accrue persuasion knowledge, including advertising tactics, throughout their lives, and the consumers use this knowledge to judge advertisements on whether they are fair or manipulative. Campbell (1995) argues use of an attention-getting tactic causes a judgment of manipulation, and as a result, it creates negative ad and brand attitudes. Since the literature indicates the use of an attention-getting tactic like the use of visual hyperbole could lead the consumer to deem the advertisement at deceptive, the second hypothesis is as follows:

H2: Participants exposed to ads with visual hyperbole will likely consider them to be deceptive more than those exposed to ads without visual hyperbole.

Skepticism

Deception is concerned with a belief created by a consumer from an advertisement’s claim; however, consumers already have established beliefs regarding advertising. One such belief is skepticism. Obermiller and Spangenberg (1998) define skepticism as “the tendency toward disbelief of advertising claims” (p. 160). The attention-getting tactic of visual hyperbole is the feature that could confirm a skeptics advertising beliefs.

Obermiller and Spangenberg (1998) clarify how advertising tactics effects are different from advertising skepticism. The attention-getting tactic is a situational variable, and ad skepticism is an individual difference. As a result, the use of visual hyperbole may lead a consumer to deem an advertisement manipulative, but someone who is a skeptic may not necessarily deem the same advertisement as manipulative. However, in their study of visual hyperbole, Callister and Stern (2007) hypothesized there would be a negative relationship
between ad skepticism, ad attitude, and brand attitude for participants viewing a visual hyperbole advertisement. They found a significant correlation for participants in the visual hyperbole condition between skepticism, ad and brand attitudes. It could be reasoned that since a negative correlation was found between skepticism, ad and brand attitudes, there should be a positive correlation between non-skepticism, ad and brand attitudes. Expanding on their findings, this study posits there will be an interaction between skepticism and visual hyperbole and hypothesize the following:

H3: Non-skeptic participants exposed to ads with visual hyperbole, will likely have (a) better ad attitude and (b) brand attitude than non-skeptics exposed to ads without visual hyperbole.

**Advertising Dimensions**

In an effort to explore the manner in which the participants qualify ads featuring visually hyperbole, the current study will include six advertising dimensions. In an analysis of over 500 commercials, Schlinger (1979) discovered six advertising dimensions: entertainment, confusion, relevant news, brand reinforcement, familiarity and alienation. According to Strasheim, Pitt, and Caruana (2007) these advertising dimensions are a means to measure the consumer’s subjective feelings towards an advertisement.

Stout and Rust (1993) looked at the relationship between consumer’s emotional responses to an advertisement and their responses to the advertising dimensions. In their exploratory study, they found that relevant news and confusion were unaffected by the independent variables of descriptive, empathic and experiential emotional responses. For consumers who had a strong empathic emotional response or for those who had a less descriptive
emotional response, there was a significant effect in the advertising dimension of brand reinforcement, where both types of emotional responses generated a favorable brand attitude.

Olson (1985) employed the advertising dimensions to quantify consumer responses to new product advertising. The researcher discovered that a new product advertisement that scored high in entertainment and relevant news was more likely to receive a strong trial amongst consumers in the marketplace. In his analyses of the consumers’ responses, he found that if a new product advertisement was rated above average on both entertainment and relevant news, there was a 50% chance of the product receiving a high trial in the marketplace.

MacInnis and Stayman (1993) adapted items from the advertising dimensions to develop measures for focal and emotional integration in advertising. The intention of including these advertising dimensions is to provide some insight into the consumer’s judgment of an ad featuring visual hyperbole and propose the following research question:

RQ1a: Will participants exposed to ads with visual hyperbole find them entertaining?
RQ1b: Will participants exposed to ads with visual hyperbole find them confusing?
RQ1c: Will participants exposed to ads with visual hyperbole find them informative?
RQ1d: Will participants exposed to ads with visual hyperbole find them brand reinforcing?
RQ1e: Will participants exposed to ads with visual hyperbole find them familiar?
RQ1f: Will participants exposed to ads with visual hyperbole find them alienating?

Message Involvement

In looking at persuasive messages it is important to understand the concept of involvement. Johnson and Eagly (1989) did a meta-analysis looking at involvement in persuasion studies, and they identified three sub-constructs of involvement: value-relevant
involvement, outcome-relevant involvement, and impression-relevant involvement. These three sub-constructs all have different effects when it comes to persuasion of attitudes and values.

To better understand involvement, the concepts of attitude and values must be clearly defined. According to Rokeach (1968), a value is an enduring belief which guides an individual in their attitude construction and maintenance, their actions and their judgments. An attitude is “an organization of several beliefs focused on a specific object (physical or social, concrete or abstract) or situation, predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner” (p.16). The difference between an attitude and a value is that an attitude is compromised of several beliefs and a value is just one belief; however, a crucial definitive factor is a value is what an individual uses as their standard “to guide actions, attitudes, comparisons, evaluations and justifications of self and others” (p.16).

The predisposition that compromises an individual’s attitude can be further defined by three subsets of latitudes. The first latitude is acceptance, which contains an individual’s own predisposition and the other positions that they find acceptable. The second latitude is rejection, which contains the positions the individual finds objectionable. The third latitude is noncommitment, where the positions are neither acceptable nor unacceptable. A message that lies in an individual’s latitude of acceptance is likely to be persuasive. The further a message deviates from the latitude of acceptance into the latitudes of rejection and noncommitment the least likely it will be persuasive (Johnson & Eagly, 1989).

**Value Relevant Involvement.** Johnson and Eagly (1989) define value-relevant involvement as “the psychological state that is created by the activation of attitudes that are linked to important values” (p.290). The persuasive affect of value relevant involvement lies within the widths of an individual’s attitude latitude. An individual with high involvement has a
wide latitude of rejection and a small to no latitude of noncommitment. An individual with low involvement has a small latitude of rejection and a wide latitude of rejection. As a result, high-involving attitudes are more difficult to change than low-involving attitudes.

**Impression-Relevant Involvement.** The definition for impression-relevant involvement stems from Zimbardo’s (1960) definition of response involvement. The conceptual definition is “the individual’s concern with the consequences of his response or with the instrumental meaning of his opinion” (p.87); however, operationally he defined response involvement as the impression an individual makes on others. Johnson and Eagly (1989) propose Zimbardo’s conceptualization was actually impression-relevant involvement not response involvement. An individual with high impression-relevant involvement is concerned with other’s perceptions, and they are more likely to support a flexible, moderate position on an issue in anticipation of public scrutiny (Leippe & Elkin, 1987).

**Outcome-Relevant Involvement.** The definition for outcome-relevant involvement stems from Petty and Cacioppo’s (1979) conceptual definition of involvement which is “the extent to which the attitudinal issue under consideration is of personal importance” (p. 1915); however, operationally the concept’s conditions was ultimately defined by one dimension of personal importance: future consequences. Johnson and Eagly (1989) offer the clarification that Petty and Cacioppo’s conceptualization is actually outcome-relevant involvement. According to Cho and Boster (2005), “when involvement is elicited by the perception that important future consequences are at stake, people are likely to pay attention to messages and to process them in-depth and extensively as outcome-relevant involvement stimulates the motivation to process information and the subsequent cognitive processing” (p. 239).
**Message Involvement.** The previous definitions of involvement focused operationally on values, impressions, and outcomes. In the persuasion literature exploring advertising effects, the operationalization of involvement often focuses on cognitive ability and motivational factors, this is considered message involvement. Baker and Lutz (2000) define message involvement as “a motivational construct that influences consumers’ motivation to process information at the time of message exposure” (p. 2).

Cognitive ability and motivational factors are the final parameters of the persuasion process. There is considerable cognitive work involved in gleaning the relevant evidence from the information presented in a message. Additionally, the belief that gives the evidence its relevance has to be retrieved from the recipient’s memory or made accessible beyond just activation. It is during the gleaning and retrieval process that motivation and cognitive capacity considerations become factors. Kruglanski, Chen, Pierro, Mannetti, Erb, and Spiegel (2006) argue “if information is lengthy, complex or unclear, the ‘distillation’ of intelligible evidence may require considerable amount of processing motivation or capacity. Similarly, if the audience’s motivation and/or capacity is low, only relatively straightforward evidence will register or exert persuasive impact” (pp.110). In other words, when motivation and ability is high, any relevant information will be processed; however, when motivation and ability is low, only straightforward evidence will be processed. Kruglanski et al. (2006) termed this effect the appreciation hypotheses.

Kruglanski and Thompson (1999) tested the appreciation hypotheses in a series of four experiments and found information that is relatively difficult to process exerts greater persuasive impact under high processing motivation. Conversely, they found information that is relatively easy to process exerts greater persuasive impact under low processing motivation. In one study
(Kruglanski & Thompson, 1999, Study 1), the results illustrated when the cue information is relatively lengthy and complex, participants under high involvement are more successful in realizing its implications than participants under low involvement, and as such they support their argument that it’s not the content of the evidence but rather the length or complexity that matters.

Since advertising contains rhetorical figures have been proven to create incongruity at a deep level of processing (McQuarrie & Mick, 1996), in applying the appreciation hypothesis, one might assume high involvement and rhetorical figures would lead to greater persuasion; however, Petty, Cacioppo, and Heesacker (1981) found the opposite to be true in their study looking at the effect that the rhetorical figure of rhetorical question had on persuasion. In their study, they manipulated message style (statement vs. rhetorical) and involvement (high or low) and found when the participant had low involvement, the use of rhetorical questions enhanced the persuasion of the message. They found for participants in the high involvement condition, the use of rhetorical figures disrupted their processing. Therefore, participants in the high involvement condition were more persuaded by the statement message style. The current study looks to expand on the Petty, Cacioppo and Heesacker (1981) study and look at the cognitive elaboration of visual hyperbole. Since rhetorical question is a text based rhetorical figure and this study’s focus is on the visual communication of hyperbole, the following research question will be explored:

RQ2: Will visual hyperbole ads and message involvement interact with each other in affecting ad attitude?
CHAPTER THREE

METHOD

Design

To test the hypotheses and explore the research questions, a 2 x 2 between-subjects design experiment was run, with participants randomly assigned to the conditions. The first factor was visual hyperbole with the conditions being with visual hyperbole and without. The second factor was message involvement with the conditions being either high or low involvement.

Procedure

A total of 363 participants were recruited from undergraduate classes at Penn State. The number of male participants was 166, and the number of female participants was 192. For the Visual Hyperbole condition, 191 participants viewed advertisements featuring a visual hyperbole, and 172 participants viewed an advertisement with no visual hyperbole. For the message involvement condition, 175 participants were assigned to the high message involvement condition, and 188 participants were assigned to the low message involvement condition.

The students received emails in groups inviting them to take part in a study session for extra credit. The online study took 10-15 minutes. Once the participant clicked on the link, they were directed to a landing page that instructed them to view an advertisement and then fill out a short questionnaire about the advertisement they just viewed. Upon completion of the questionnaire, the participants were debriefed and given the opportunity to email the researcher any questions that they had about the study.

Stimulus Advertisement Construction

Three sets of advertisements were used in this study that met the conceptualization of visual hyperbole. The original three ads were found from various online resources, and then
three additional advertisements were created by manipulating the original ads into non-hyperbole form. The products in the advertisements were products that were easily identifiable by an undergraduate sample: backpack, peanuts, and binoculars. The font type, size, and color and the placement of the copy were uniformly formatted (see Appendix A and B).

**Message Involvement Manipulation**

In order to manipulate message involvement, this study employed both a processing motivation manipulation and an ability manipulation. To manipulate processing motivation similar to the Shiv, Edell, Britton, and Payne (2004) study, the first page of online questionnaire for the high involvement condition stated, “As participants in this survey, your opinions are extremely important and will be analyzed individually by us; and therefore, your individual opinion will have tremendous implication for this research” (p.202). For participants in the low involvement condition, the first page of the online questionnaire stated, “As participants in this survey your opinion will be averaged with those of other participants, and will be analyzed at the aggregate level by us; and therefore, your individual opinion will not have much of an implication for this research” (p.202).

Ability was manipulated by the amount of time the participants were given to view the advertisements. The average viewing time for a print advertisement was found to be 10 seconds (Pieters, Rosbergen, & Hartog, 1996), therefore participants in the high involvement condition were given 20 seconds to view the advertisements. For participants in the low involvement condition, the viewing time of the advertisement was set at 10 seconds.
Postexperimental Measures

**Brand Attitude (Ba).** Based on Mick’s (1992) brand attitude scale, this study utilized the three items created by Mick: bad/good, pleasant/unpleasant, and worthless/valuable. Each category was measured on a 7-point semantic differential scale ($\alpha = .88$).

**Attitude Toward the Ad (Aad).** Attitude toward the advertisement was measured using McQuarrie and Mick’s (2003) scale. It was also comprised of three items: liked/disliked, unpleasant/pleasant and enjoyed/did not enjoy. Each of the three categories was measured on a 7-point semantic differential scale ($\alpha = .91$).

**Deception.** Based on the measures used in the Callister and Stern (2007) study, deception was measured using the item, “The advertisement is intentionally trying to deceive me.” Response options was measured utilizing a 7-Point Likert-type scale, where 1 represents “strongly disagree” and 7 represents “strongly agree.”

**Skepticism.** Skepticism was measured using Obermiller and Spangenberg’s (1998) scale. The nine item scale (“We can depend on getting the truth in most advertising,” “Advertising’s aim is to inform the consumer,” “I believe advertising is informative,” “Advertising is generally truthful,” “Advertising is a reliable source of information about the quality and performance of products,” “Advertising is truth well told,” “In general, advertising presents a true picture of the product being advertised,” “I feel I’ve been accurately informed after viewing most advertisements,” and “Most advertising provides consumers with essential information.”) was measured on a 7-point Likert-type response scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree ($\alpha = .92$).

**Advertising Dimensions.** Based on the advertisement response profile created by Schlinger (1979), participants rated the advertisements on six dimensions: entertaining (“I
thought it was clever and quite entertaining.” and “The ad wasn’t just selling the product – it was entertaining me. I appreciated that.”), confusion (“It required a lot of effort to understand the ad.” and “It was too complex. I wasn’t sure what was going on.”), relevant news (“The ad gave me a new idea,” “The ad reminded me that I’m dissatisfied with what I’m using now and I’m looking for something better,” “I learned something from the ad that I didn’t know before,” “The ad told me about a new product I think I’d like to try,” and “When I read the ad, I thought how that product might be useful to me.”), brand reinforcement (“That’s a good brand, and I wouldn’t hesitate recommending it to others.” and “I know that the advertised brand is a dependable, reliable one.”), familiarity (“This kind of ad has been done many times…it’s the same old thing.” and “I think that this is an unusual ad. I’m not sure I’ve seen one like it.”), and alienation (“What they showed didn’t demonstrate the claims they were making about the product,” “The ad didn’t have anything to do with me or my needs,” “The ad didn’t show me anything that would make me want to use this product,” “The ad made exaggerated claims. The product would not live up to what they said or implied,” “It was an unrealistic ad – very farfetched,” and “The ad irritated me – it was annoying.”). Each of the six categories was measured using a 7-point Likert-type response scale, where 1 represents “strongly disagree” and 7 represents “strongly agree.”

An initial principal axis factoring (PAF) was employed, which extracted five advertising dimension factors with eigenvalues greater than one, which accounted for 66.4% of the variance after Direct Oblimin rotation. An analysis of the pattern matrix revealed that the items “I learned something from the ad that I didn’t know before,” “What they showed didn’t demonstrate the claims they were making about the product,” and “The ad irritated me – it was annoying” were not loading on any factors in accordance to the 60/40 rule. After deleting the three items, a
second PAF was employed, which extracted five factors with an eigenvalue greater than one, which accounted for 70.6% variance after Direct Oblimin rotation. An analysis of the pattern matrix revealed that two items “The ad didn’t have anything to do with me or my needs” and “The ad didn’t show me anything that would make me want to use this product” were not compliant to the 60/40 rule. Those two items were deleted, and a third PAF was employed, which extracted five factors with an eigenvalue greater than one, which accounted for 74.1% variance after Direct Oblimin rotation.

In checking the reliabilities for the newly formed advertising dimensions, it was revealed that the Factor V, Familiarity, had a low reliability of .40. As a result, the items “I think that this is an unusual ad - I’m not sure I’ve seen one like it” and “This kind of ad has been done many times...it’s the same old thing” were deleted. A fourth PAF was employed, which extracted four factors with an eigenvalue greater than one, which accounted for 73.6% variance after Direct Oblimin rotation.

The final factors had small or no correlations with one another. Factor I, Entertaining and Informative, was modestly correlated with Factor II, Confusion, \( r = 0.59 \) and Factor III, Product and Brand Reinforcement, \( r = 0.54 \); however, it was weakly correlated with Factor IV, Alienation, \( r = -0.05 \). Confusion was weakly correlated with Product and Brand Reinforcement \( r = 0.21 \) and Alienation \( r = 0.20 \), and Product and Brand Reinforcement was weakly correlated with Alienation \( r = -0.12 \).

Factor I, Entertaining and Informative, had five items. These items indicated the participants thought the ad was clever and quite entertaining and wasn’t just selling the product but also entertaining them. This factor also included the items that indicated the ad gave the participants a new idea, reminded them that they’re dissatisfied with what they’re using now and told them
about a new product they think they’d like to try. The five items included in Entertainment and Informative had a $\alpha$ of 0.81 and an average score of 3.26 ($SD = 1.16$).

Factor II, Confusion, included two items. These items indicated the ad required a lot of effort to understand and was too complex - they weren’t sure what was going on. The two items included in the factor had a $\alpha$ of 0.87 and an average score of 3.50 ($SD = 1.15$).

Factor III, Product and Brand Reinforcement, consisted of three items. These items indicated that when participants read the ad, they thought how that product might be useful to them. This factor also included the items that the participants believed the advertised brand is a good brand and is a dependable, reliable brand. This factor had a $\alpha$ of 0.81. The scores were averaged across the three items ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 1.20$) to construct an index.

Factor IV, Alienation, had two items indicating that the participants thought that the ad is an unusual – they were not sure they’ve seen one like it and that this kind of ad has been done many times…it’s the same old thing. The factor had a $\alpha$ of 0.75. An index was created by averaging the scores across the two items ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 1.31$).

**Manipulation Check of Stimulus Ads**

In accordance with the Callister and Stern (2007) study, the participants rated the ad on the following attributes using a series of 7-point Likert-type scales: the ad “contains an exaggeration/does not contain an exaggeration,” “contains an intentional exaggeration/contains an unintentional exaggeration,” and “can be taken literally/can be taken figuratively.” A 1-tailed independent sample t-test showed participants viewing ads containing visual hyperbole ($M = 5.29$, $SD = 1.62$) perceived them to contain an exaggeration more than participants viewing the non-visual hyperbole ads ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 1.67$), $t (358) = -6.44$, $p < .01$. In addition, a 1-tailed independent sample t-test showed participants viewing ads containing visual hyperbole ($M = 22$
5.41, \(SD = 1.70\) perceived them to contain an intentional exaggeration more than participants viewing the non-visual hyperbole ads \((M = 4.24, \ SD = 1.77), \ t (356) = -6.42, \ p < .01.\) The means showed that participants viewing visual hyperbole ads \((M = 2.73, \ SD = 1.67)\) had lower literal scores than participants viewing non-visual hyperbole ads \((M = 3.51, \ SD = 1.67), \ t (355) = 4.63, \ p < 0.01\), revealing that the visual hyperbole ads were viewed as rhetorical.

**Manipulation Check of Message Involvement**

Based on the scale used by Laczniak and Muehling (Laczniak & Muehling, 1993), four items ("I paid attention to the content of the ad," "I carefully read the content of the ad," "When I saw the ad, I concentrated on its contents," and "I expended effort looking at the content of this ad.") will measure the participants involvement in the message on a 7-point Likert-type response scale ranging from not at all to extremely. A 1-tailed independent sample t-test showed that participants in the high involvement condition \((M = 5.23, \ SD = 1.40)\) paid more attention to the ad than the participants in the low involvement condition \((M = 4.70, \ SD = 1.48), \ t (361) = .502, \ p < .01.\) In addition, a 1-tailed independent sample t-test showed that participants in the high involvement condition \((M = 4.93, \ SD = 1.55)\) carefully read the content of the ad more than the participants in the low involvement condition \((M = 4.41, \ SD = 1.63), \ t (360) = 3.11, \ p < .01.\) The means showed that participants in the high involvement condition \((M = 5.02, \ SD = 1.46)\) concentrated on the ad’s contents more than participants in the low involvement condition \((M = 5.02, \ SD = 1.43), \ t (360) = -2.93, \ p < 0.01.\) In addition, the means showed that participants in the high involvement condition \((M = 4.71, \ SD = 1.54)\) expended more effort looking at the ad than participants in the low involvement condition \((M = 4.24, \ SD = 1.57), \ t (360) = -2.86, \ p < 0.01.\)
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Means of all the dependent variables across the experimental conditions are presented in Table 1. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted looking at the effect of visual hyperbole ads versus the non-hyperbole ads on the dependent variables brand attitude, attitude toward the ad and deception. The multivariate test was significant, Wilks' $\Lambda = .957$, $F(3, 350) = 5.257$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .04$.

Analyses of variances (ANOVA) on the dependent variables were conducted as follow-up tests to the MANOVA. Hypothesis 1a predicted that participants exposed to ads with visual hyperbole would likely have better attitude toward the ad. The ANOVA on ad attitude was significant and supported this hypothesis, $F(1, 354) = 3.88$, $p = 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.01$. The participants liked the ads with visual hyperbole more than the ads without visual hyperbole, where the mean for the visual hyperbole ads ($M = 4.31$, $SE = .11$) were slightly liked and the non-visual hyperbole ads ($M = 3.99$, $SE = .12$) were slightly disliked.

Hypothesis 1b predicted that participants exposed to ads with visual hyperbole would likely have better brand attitude than those exposed to ads without visual hyperbole. The ANOVA on brand attitude was not significant, $F(1, 354) = 0.11$, $p > 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.00$, and Hypothesis 1b was not supported. The means reveal that participants viewing both the visual hyperbole ($M = 4.39$, $SE = .09$) and non-visual hyperbole ads ($M = 4.43$, $SE = .10$) indicated slightly positive brand attitudes.

Hypothesis 2 posited that participants viewing a visual hyperbole ad would consider them more deceptive than participants viewing a non-visual hyperbole ad. The ANOVA revealed significant main effects of visual hyperbole for deception and support for Hypothesis 2, $F(1,
354) = 8.62, p < 0.01, \eta^2 = 0.02.  An examination of the means shows participants viewing the visual hyperbole ads rated higher in deception \( (M = 3.11, SE = .10) \) than participants viewing the non-visual hyperbole ads \( (M = 2.67, SE = .11) \).

Hypothesis 3 predicted a two-way interaction between skepticism and visual hyperbole such that non-skeptic participants exposed to ads with visual hyperbole would likely have (a) better ad attitude and (b) brand attitude than those exposed to ads without visual hyperbole. The skepticism variable was dichotomized, where participants scoring from 1 to 3 were categorized as skeptics and participants scoring from 4 to 7 were categorized as non-skeptics. A MANOVA revealed a significant interaction, Wilks' \( \Lambda = .97, F (3, 241) = 2.90, p < 0.05, \eta^2 = .04 \). A follow-up univariate analyses indicated that the two-way interaction effect was significant on ad attitude, \( F(1, 243) = 8.41, p < .01, \eta^2 = .03 \), and significant on brand attitude, \( F(1,243) = 3.92, p < .05, \eta^2 = .02 \), and Hypothesis 3 was supported. An examination of the means shows non-skeptic participants viewing the visual hyperbole ads rated higher in ad attitude \( (M = 5.02, SE = .19) \) than non-skeptic participants viewing the non-visual hyperbole ads \( (M = 3.96, SE = .20) \). The brand attitude means illustrated that non-skeptic participants viewing the visual hyperbole ads rated higher \( (M = 4.87, SE = .16) \) than non-skeptic participants viewing the non-visual hyperbole ads \( (M = 4.50, SE = .16) \). These findings indicate the non-skeptic participants perceived the visual hyperbole ads better than the non-visual hyperbole ads (see Figures 1 and 2).

A MANOVA was conducted looking at the effect of visual hyperbole ads versus the non-hyperbole ads on the dependent variables entertainment and informative, confusion, product, and brand reinforcement and alienation. The multivariate test was significant, Wilks' \( \Lambda = .853, F (4, 344) = 14.82, p < .01, \eta^2 = .15 \).
An ANOVA on the dependent variables were conducted as follow-up tests to the MANOVA. RQ1a and RQ1b inquired about whether participants exposed to ads with visual hyperbole would find them entertaining and informative. The ANOVA on the entertaining and informative factor was significant, $F(1, 347) = 24.69, p < 0.01, \eta^2 = 0.07$. The participants found the ads with visual hyperbole ($M = 3.54, SE = .09$) more entertaining and informative than the ads without visual hyperbole ($M = 2.94, SE = .09$).

RQ1c explored the relationship between visual hyperbole and confusion. The ANOVA on confusion was significant, $F(1, 347) = 35.11, p < 0.01, \eta^2 = 0.09$. An examination of the means shows that participants viewing the visual hyperbole ads rated higher in confusion ($M = 3.82, SE = .08$) than participants viewing the non-visual hyperbole ads ($M = 3.12, SE = .09$).

RQ1d explored whether ads with visual hyperbole would have better product and brand reinforcement than those exposed to ads without visual hyperbole. The ANOVA was not significant, $F(1, 347) = 1.53, p > 0.05, \eta^2 = 0.00$. The means reveal that participants viewing both the visual hyperbole ($M = 3.66, SE = 0.9$) and non-visual hyperbole ads ($M = 3.53, SE = 0.09$) indicated slightly negative product and brand reinforcement.

RQ1f inquired about the relationship between ads with visual hyperbole and alienation. The ANOVA on the alienation factor was significant, $F(1, 347) = 20.601, p < 0.01, \eta^2 = 0.06$. The participants found the visual hyperbole ads more alienating than the ads without visual hyperbole, where the mean for the visual hyperbole ads ($M = 4.18, SE = .10$) were slightly alienating and the non-visual hyperbole ads ($M = 3.55, SE = .10$) were slightly less alienating.

RQ2 asked whether visual hyperbole ads and involvement would interact with each other in affecting ad attitude and brand attitudes. Participants’ ratings of attitude toward the ad and
brand attitude were analyzed using a 2 X 2 MANOVA. This analysis revealed no significant Ad Type X Involvement Level interaction, Wilks' $\Lambda = .99$, $F (2, 351) = 1.684$, $p = .19$, $\eta^2 = .01$. 
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

This study replicated the results in the Callister and Stern (2007) study, where the impact of visual hyperbole in advertising was first explored. The results support a persuasive effect of visual hyperbole on ad attitude but not brand attitude. McQuarrie and Mick’s (2003) research indicate that visual rhetorical figures should have a positive effect on both ad and brand attitude; however, with visual hyperbole the consumer is too focused on reconciling the incongruity of the advertising image. Perhaps this leaves little cognitive effort for brand attitude.

An interesting result of this study is that consumers viewing the visual hyperbole ads deemed them to be deceptive more than consumers viewing non-visual hyperbole ads. This supports Campbell’s (1995) belief that attention-getting tactics lead consumers to negatively process an advertisement. Today’s consumers are persuasion savvy, and they are quite aware of when an advertisement is utilizing an attention-getting tactic. In this study, the use of visual hyperbole lead them to process the ad as deceptive; however, the significant results indicating that visual hyperbole leads to positive ad attitudes creates a something of a contradiction.

In exploring the impact of visual hyperbole on non-skeptics, this study has shown the power of this rhetorical figure in enhancing both ad and brand attitudes. For consumers, who aren’t skeptical of advertising, the use of visual hyperbole showed significant positive effects on ad attitude, where the participants were more likely to like the ad if they were viewing an ad featuring visual hyperbole. The use of visual hyperbole also showed significant positive effects on brand attitude, where the participants were more likely to like the brand if they were viewing an ad featuring visual hyperbole. These findings are consistent with previous research on other rhetorical figures like visual rhymes, antitheses, metaphors and puns (McQuarrie & Mick, 1999);
however, previous research has not looked at the effect of skepticism. Because of the persuasion knowledge consumers accrue over their lifetime, it is important to consider factors like skepticism and the effects it has on ad and brand attitude.

In addition, this study sought to show what kind of judgments the consumer makes while viewing an ad featuring visual hyperbole. The participants found the visual hyperbole ads both more entertaining and informative than the ads without visual hyperbole. This may be due to the element of humor that is often identified with hyperbole (Roberts & Kreuz, 1994). Visual Hyperbole ads were also found to be confusing and alienating. Since the consumer needs to resolve the deviation from what is expected when a rhetorical figure is used, this discrepancy may lead to confusion for the consumer. It is not surprising that visual hyperbole ads were found to be alienating, in light of the deception finding. As the use of visual hyperbole has the possibility of increasing the pleasure-of-visual to the consumer, it has also shown to be equally deceptive, confusing and alienating.

**Limitations and Future Research**

The cognitive elaboration involving visual rhetorical figures needs to be further explored. Rhetorical figure research has shown that when participants had low involvement, the use of rhetorical figures enhanced the persuasion of the message. However, when participants had high involvement, they were less persuaded by a message containing a rhetorical figure (Petty, Cacioppo, & Heesacker, Effects of rhetorical questions on persuasion: A cognitive response analysis, 1981). The previous cognitive elaboration research focused on textual rhetorical figures, and the current study sought to explore the interaction between involvement and visual hyperbole. The insignificant findings perhaps are a result of the involvement manipulation. The survey was conducted using Qualtrics, and the ability was manipulated by allowing the high
involvement participants to view the advertisement for 20 seconds and the low involvement participants to view the advertisement for 10 seconds. This was operationalized by having the “next” button appear after either 20 or 10 seconds; however, the participants were able to view the advertisement as long as they wanted. Even though the manipulation check was significant for involvement, it is possible that a stricter ability manipulation would produce different results.

In addition, this sample consisted of undergraduate students. It would be interesting to run a similar study with a sample consisting of participants of varying ages. Since an individual’s persuasion knowledge would grow as they age, the persuasiveness of visual hyperbole may not have as great an effect for an older sample. It is possible that there would be more instances of skepticism in an older sample due to their persuasion knowledge.

**Conclusion**

Visual Hyperbole is a proven persuasive tool that has shown to bring judgments of entertainment and informative. For non-skeptical consumers, the use of visual hyperbole has extremely positive persuasive effects for both ad and brand attitudes. Advertisers should use visual hyperbole with caution. Just as the rhetorical figure was found to bring positive judgments, it also caused the negative judgments of deception, confusion and alienation.
References


Table 1.

Means and Standard Deviations for Ad Attitude, Brand Attitude and Deception by Experimental Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ad Type</th>
<th>Visual</th>
<th>Non-Visual</th>
<th>Involvement</th>
<th>High (1.54)</th>
<th>Low (1.49)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hyperbole</td>
<td>Hyperbole</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad Attitude</td>
<td>4.31 (1.59)</td>
<td>3.99 (1.41)</td>
<td>4.22 (1.54)</td>
<td>4.10 (1.49)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Attitude</td>
<td>4.39 (1.39)</td>
<td>4.43 (1.09)</td>
<td>4.53 (1.31)</td>
<td>4.29 (1.20)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deception</td>
<td>3.11 (1.39)</td>
<td>2.69 (1.32)</td>
<td>2.78 (1.43)</td>
<td>3.04 (1.31)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Cell numbers are means and standard deviations (in parentheses) for each experimental condition.
Figure 1. Effects of Visual Hyperbole and Skepticism on Ad Attitude
Figure 2. Effects of Visual Hyperbole and Skepticism on Brand Attitude
Appendix A

Stimulus Ads Featuring Backpack

Since 1950, we've designed, engineered and manufactured water-resistant products that can help you get from point A to point B.

The new Monochrome collection features Cordura® fabric for superior durability.
Appendix B

Stimulus Ads Featuring Peanuts and Binoculars

Kaya King Peanuts are the most convenient snack – available at your local deli, grocery store and gas station...just grab and go!
For just under 200 calories, you get a highly nutrient dense food.

Enjoy an expansive field of view through high-quality coated optics.
These binoculars bring your view to you, with easily focused, wide-angle views that are great for keeping up with fast moving subjects.

Kaya King Peanuts - Jumbo Sized

Olympus Optical Zoom – See it Closer

Kaya King Peanuts are the most convenient snack – available at your local deli, grocery store and gas station...just grab and go!
For just under 200 calories, you get a highly nutrient dense food.

Enjoy an expansive field of view through high-quality coated optics.
These binoculars bring your view to you, with easily focused, wide-angle views that are great for keeping up with fast moving subjects.
Appendix C

Questionnaire

Welcome to the Research

High Involvement: This study has two separate parts. In the first part, you will be given 20 seconds to read an advertisement. Please read the advertisement as you normally would – just as when you read newspapers and magazines. Secondly, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire. Please follow the instructions carefully. As participants in this survey, your opinions are extremely important and will be analyzed individually by us; and therefore, your individual opinion will have tremendous implication for this research. Do not skip pages or go backward to a previous page. At the end of this study, you will be redirected to a separate site to provide course related information—saved separately-- so that you will get the extra credit for your class. Please note you will have 20 seconds to view the following advertisement.

Low Involvement: This study has two separate parts. In the first part, you will be given 10 seconds to read an advertisement. Please read the advertisement as you normally would – just as when you read newspapers and magazines. Secondly, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire. Please follow the instructions carefully. As participants in this survey your opinion will be averaged with those of other participants, and will be analyzed at the aggregate level by us; and therefore, your individual opinion will not have much of an implication for this research. Do not skip pages or go backward to a previous page. At the end of this study, you will be redirected to a separate site to provide course related information—saved separately-- so that you will get the extra credit for your class. Please note you will have 10 seconds to view the following advertisement.
Q1. Now that you have seen the advertisement, please list all of the thoughts that came to mind as you were viewing the advertisement. Write up to four thoughts. In the space provided below, please write your thoughts and ideas as concisely as possible...You may use single words, phrases, or short sentences. Do not worry about spelling, grammar, and punctuation. There is no right or wrong answers. Please take about 2 minutes to write your thoughts.

1st Thought

2nd Thought

3rd Thought

4th Thought

5th Thought

6th Thought

7th Thought

8th Thought

Q2. What was the product being advertised?

Q3. Please indicate your opinions by clicking the appropriate circle on the following lines. How do you feel about the brand in the advertisement?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bad</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unpleasant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Pleasant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worthless</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Valuable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q4. How do you feel about the ad you saw?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dislike</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Like</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unpleasant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Pleasant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did Not Enjoy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Enjoyed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q5. Please indicate the extent to which you find the product being advertised useful.

Useless  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Useful
Ineffective 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Effective
Worthless  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Worthwhile

Q6. The product in the advertisement I saw is:

Unappealing  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Appealing
Not Likeable 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Likeable
Undesirable 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Desirable

Q7. What are your chances of buying the product in the advertisement the next time that you need to purchase that type of product?

Unlikely  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Likely
Impossible 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Possible
Improbable 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Probable

Q8. Here are three more questions regarding the likelihood of you purchasing the product.

Would you like to try the ________?  

No, Definitely not  1  2  3  4  5  6  7
Yes, Definitely

Would you buy ________ if you happened to see it in a store?

No, Definitely not  1  2  3  4  5  6  7
Yes, Definitely

Would you actively seek out ________ in a store in order to purchase it?

No, Definitely not  1  2  3  4  5  6  7
Yes, Definitely
Q9. For me the product is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unimportant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of No Concern to Me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means Nothing to Me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does Not Matter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insignificant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undesirable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q10. Rate your experience regarding the ad you’ve seen:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I paid attention to the content of the ad.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I carefully read the content of the ad.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I saw the ad, I concentrated on its contents.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I expended effort looking at the content of this ad.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q11. With regards to the ad that you just read, please indicate how easy or difficult it was to process or understand the ad.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulty</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to understand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q12. Please indicate the extent to which you perceive the ad to be detailed or not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Detail</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all detailed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely detailed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Q13.** To what degree do you perceive the ad to be persuasive, convincing, effective, coherent and credible?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not At All</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>Very Much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ad is persuasive.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ad is convincing.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ad is effective.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ad is coherent.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q14.** The next set of questions asks you to make judgments about the advertisement you just saw.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) The advertisement is intentionally trying to deceive me.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) The advertisement wants me to believe this product can actually perform as shown in the ad.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) I thought it was clever and quite entertaining.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) The ad wasn’t just selling the product – it was entertaining me. I appreciated that.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) It required a lot of effort to understand the ad.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) It was too complex. I wasn’t sure what was going on.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g) The ad gave me a new idea.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h) The ad reminded me that I’m dissatisfied with what I’m using now and I’m looking for something better.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) I learned something from the ad that I didn’t know before.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j) The ad told me about a new product I think I’d like to try.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q15. The next set of questions asks you to make judgments about the advertisement you just saw.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a)</td>
<td>When I read the ad, I thought how that product might be useful to me.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b)</td>
<td>That’s a good brand, and I wouldn’t hesitate recommending it to others.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c)</td>
<td>I know that the advertised brand is a dependable, reliable one.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d)</td>
<td>This kind of ad has been done many times...it’s the same old thing.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e)</td>
<td>I think that this is an unusual ad. I’m not sure I’ve seen one like it.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f)</td>
<td>What they showed didn’t demonstrate the claims they were making about the product.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g)</td>
<td>The ad didn’t have anything to do with me or my needs.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h)</td>
<td>The ad didn’t show me anything that would make me want to use this product.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i)</td>
<td>The ad made exaggerated claims. The product would not live up to what they said or implied.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j)</td>
<td>It was an unrealistic ad – very farfetched.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k)</td>
<td>The ad irritated me – it was annoying.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q16. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your advertising beliefs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) We can depend on getting the truth in most advertising.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Advertising’s aim is to inform the consumer.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) I believe advertising is informative.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Advertising is generally truthful.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) Advertising is a reliable source of information about the quality and performance of products.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) Advertising is truth well told.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g) In general, advertising presents a true picture of the product being advertised.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h) I feel I’ve been accurately informed after viewing most advertisements.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) Most advertising provides consumers with essential information.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q17. Please rate your inclination to argue against the advertisement?

No, Not at All  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Yes, Definitely

Q18. Did you think of reasons not to use the product while viewing the advertisement?

No, Not at All  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Yes, Definitely

Q19. Please indicate your opinions by clicking the appropriate circle on the following lines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Definitely Not</th>
<th>Definitely Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ad contains an exaggeration.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ad contains an intentional exaggeration.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ad can be taken literally.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q20. Please indicate your opinions by clicking the appropriate circle on the following lines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Not At All</th>
<th>Very Much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How much attention did you pay to process the ad?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How engaging was it for you to process the ad?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What was the overall attention you had with the ad?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How involving it was for you to process the ad?</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q21. Finally, here are some questions for us to tabulate the results. Your age is:

Q22. Your gender is:

1. Male        2. Female

Q23. What category best describes your ethnicity?