

CULTURE VALUE AND EMOTIONAL APPEALS IN VIETNAMESE ADVERTISING

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Abstract: Emotional appeals have been proven to play an important role in advertising. In addition, many researchers have identified the influence of cultural background in the emotion-shaping process. As a result, advertisers have combined cultural and emotional appeals in their advertisements, using cultural values as the factor to evoke emotions of the audiences. Previous researchers have studied this model in both individualistic and collectivist cultures. However, research on this model in advertising in Vietnam - a collectivist culture - needs to be more extensive. This paper examines relevant case studies to strengthen the stand that advertisements intentionally made embracing Vietnamese cultural values have an emotional influence on the audiences. Content analysis was applied as a methodology in our research to demonstrate certain cultural factors' influence on the emotions of ad viewers. Moreover, we examine the impact of advertising lyrics and images on consumers' emotional responses in the Vietnamese cultural context using particular case studies. The research's scope would only show how the advertisers apply the cultural elements to audiences' emotions; any reaction measuring method would not be mentioned in this paper. Results showed that culture has an impact on the emotional component of advertising. In particular, Vietnam, a collectivist nation, had some cultural aspects, including patriotism, personal interdependence, and great consideration of social norms. Those influenced how specific emotions are evoked through advertising in Vietnam. In conclusion, relying on collectivist culture can elicit diverse emotional characteristics in Vietnamese advertising. These studies show that the above methodology can be used in practice and has some influence on the creation of advertising with a broad target audience since it focuses on the various and common emotions that the collectivist society elicits.

Keywords: emotion, emotional appeal, advertising, cultural value, culture, Vietnamese advertising, collectivist culture

Introduction

Advertising has always been an international debate of marketing research; thus, many researchers have explored and achieved significant findings. It is interesting to realise the

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profound relationship between cultural values and mass advertising. However, the history of cultural research in advertising in Vietnam needs to be revised. Therefore, this study aims to explore advertising appeals and cultural values in print advertising in Vietnam.

Cultural elements and emotional relations were well-known due to various findings and how the advertiser used to provoke emotional appeals. In Asia, numerous specialists investigated this so-called relation, for example, the connection between the mother, the target audience, and the commercial message, which included the mother-daughter relationship in Nido Fortigrow Nestle T.V Advertisement. Nevertheless, this relationship was studied in Europe, the US, and Japan to compare customer mindset differences. Therefore, it has been argued that cultural dimensions have a significant impact on emotional appeals.

In this paper, we examine relevant case studies to strengthen the stand that advertisements intentionally made embracing Vietnamese cultural values do have an emotional influence on the audiences. Bitis, Vinfast, or Omo commercials were evaluated as successful in provoking emotional appeal by using cultural elements in their ads. However, some failed to apply the relationship effectively. For example, Mi Gau Do was a famous instant noodles brand in Vietnam but failed to enlighten the audience's emotions by using cultural features. Then, the cultural factors could appeal to the target audience's emotions as the limitation has yet to be investigated, and this paper will give out the solution.

Both intellectual and emotional arguments are referred to as appeals in this essay. The two arguments are founded on the notion that consumers' choices can be either thought-based (logical) or feeling-based (emotional) (Hoyer & Macinnis, 2004). The remainder of the study begins with a review of previous research on cultural values and marketing appeals. In the next section, we first review the literature on cultural values and advertising appeals, particularly emotional appeals. The second item in our study is a content analysis of emotional appeals, cultural values, and questions related to Vietnamese advertisements. Finally, we review this study's ramifications, limits, and possible future directions.

Literature Review

Cultural perspectives on oneself, others, and their interconnectedness are strikingly varied, as HR Markus and S Kitayama (1991) show. These interpretations can shape a person's experience and, frequently, define its fundamental qualities, such as cognition, emotion, and motivation. Different ideas of individuality that emphasize people's underlying interconnectedness are prevalent in many Asian cultures. The focus is on being considerate of others, blending in, and getting along well with them. Such a strong sense of interpersonal connection is neither

appreciated nor tolerated in American culture. People, on the other hand, aim to keep their independence from others by taking care of themselves and discovering and expressing their special inner attributes. These construals are significantly more powerful than was previously thought, as was suggested above.

By combining self-theories from psychology and anthropology, the difference between a construct of the self as independent and a construct of the self as interdependent is thoroughly articulated as Spiro, M. E. (1993). *Is the Western Conception of the Self "Peculiar" within the Context of the World Cultures?* The implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation are provided for each of these construals, and the pertinent empirical research is evaluated. Focusing on variations in self-construals makes it feasible to explain seemingly contradictory empirical data, which also puts into question previously believed culturally invariant characteristics of cognition, emotion, and motivation. Additionally, B Czarnecka, R Brennan, and S Keles (2018) examine the extent to which the national cultures of the target countries were reflected in the cultural allusions made in advertising. 847 magazine advertisements from England, Hungary, Ireland, and Poland were examined using content analysis to determine whether their commercial appeals reflected the cultural distinctions as stated by GLOBE Society Values. Only a few advertising pitches truly mirrored cultural variations, the research showed, and there were parallels and differences in how they were applied.

Tapan K Panda, Tapas K Panda, and Kamalesh Mishra (2013) focused on the use of emotional appeals in branding, positioning, and communication. The study explains the circumstances in which emotional appeals might be most successful while emphasizing the possible pitfalls of employing such a strategy universally. The study identifies some products and services that will gain more from emotional appeals in marketing. It clarifies the danger of using emotive language. After thoroughly discussing the variables affecting emotional appeals' effectiveness, guidelines for their effective implementation are suggested. The authors have suggested the usage of advertising appeal and its influence on the establishment of brand attitudes for further research.

H Zhang, J Sun, F Liu, and JG Knight (2014) conducted a study on consumer responses, service kinds, and the use of logical or emotive appeals in advertising. This study examines how customers react differently to emotional vs. rational arguments when given service options that range in their experience and legitimacy. It also investigates the moderating impact of individual variations in affect intensity. The results highlight the necessity of ads that are specially customized to each service area. An emotional case would be stronger than a rational one for receiving assistance.

Advertising appeals and categorizing rational and emotional appeals

There has been an ongoing debate about rational and emotional appeals used in advertising. These frameworks have been studied extensively in advertising and marketing literature. The seminal work depicting differences in impact of different execution styles based on rational and emotional appeals by Copeland (1924) posits that individual customers buy products and services for either a rational or emotional reason. The idea of rational advertising is based on the assumption that consumers process information while making purchase decisions based on logical or/and utilitarian decisions. Such models are based on the proposition that rational messages can change the receiver's belief about the advertised brand, and rely on the persuasive power of arguments put forth in marketing communication to convince customers about buying the advertised brand. Brand managers use product quality, economy, value or/and price performance phenomenon for persuading customers towards a decision.

The research article will discuss the emotional appeal of advertising in greater detail. For efficiency, these brands rely on emotions. Emotional appeals attempt to elicit either positive or negative emotions, resulting in purchase motivation (Franke et al., 1999). According to Tapan K Panda, Tapas K Panda, and Kamalesh Mishra (The IUP Journal of Brand Management, Vol. X, No. 2, 20138), fear, guilt, and shame appeals persuade people to perform or not perform things. We have observed that depending on the objective, positive emotional appeals such as love, patriotism, affection, nostalgia, humor, pride, and joy create a favorable brand awareness.

Advertising appeals in Hofstede's cultural dimensions

Collectivism and Individualism in relation with advertising appeals

In this field, numerous models of explicit cultural dimensions have been put out, according to Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997). The most complete and useful model for our study, nevertheless, is one that includes points on Vietnamese ethnic features. A common theoretical underpinning for the varying effects of cultural values on the emotive components of Vietnamese advertising is Hofstede's specialized research on ethnic culture.

Six categories are used by Hofstede to categorize culture. But in this study, we simply look at how the Individualism - Collectivism Dimension affects emotional appeals in advertising. According to Hofsted, "individualism pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family. Collectivism adds its opposite pertains to societies in which people from birth onward are

integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lifetimes continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty" (Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005:76).

Albers-Miller and Gelb (1996) ought to be considered pioneers in this field of study. The relevance of Pollay's commercial appeals to Hofstede's cultural aspects has made their study well-known. The findings of their research allowed for a novel research method for

assessing cultural values developed by combining Pollay's advertising appeals with Hofstede's framework, which helped to advance cross-cultural advertising research. Since that time, academics in the field of cross-cultural advertising have applied the application of integrating commercial appeals and cultural characteristics. Therefore, the association between collectivism and family affection/relationship is favorable in advertising and commercial sentiment.

Ads and Vietnam's social-cultural context

According to Hofstede, the power distance index in Vietnam has a high score (70). Next, with a score of 20, Vietnam is a collectivist society. Besides, this nation is classified as a feminine society with a score of 40. Vietnam scores 30 on this dimension and thus has a low preference for avoiding uncertainty. A score of 57 indicates that it is a long-term-oriented nation with a pragmatic culture. A low score of 35 on this dimension indicates that Vietnam is a restrained culture. With a low score according to Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Assessment in 2005, Vietnam is a collectivist country, ranking around 56-61 compared to other countries in the world.

Previous studies have generally shown that Vietnam has a collectivist culture. However, these studies have yet to focus on the outstanding Vietnamese social-cultural context and have not shown which traits of the collective culture of the Vietnamese people are most characteristically expressed. Furthermore, the relationship between these cultural traits and emotional appeals, as well as how they are used in Vietnamese advertising, needs to be addressed in these studies. Therefore, we will focus on analyzing the three specific cultural traits of collectivist culture connected with specific emotions to understand collectivism in Vietnam better.

Personal interdependence

While any given person is likely to belong to a few ingroups, the dynamics, and closeness of collectivist culture in ingroups are closer than those in individualistic cultures (Triandis, 1995). Some other emotions, such as sympathy, feelings of interpersonal communion, and shame, have another person, rather than one's internal attributes, as the primary referent. Such emotions may

be called other focuses. They usually emerge from being considerate of others, seeing things from their point of view, and making an effort to encourage interdependence. These feelings serve as a powerful self-validation for interdependent selves by highlighting one's dependency, allowing the reciprocal exchange of well-intentioned behaviors, encouraging other cooperative social conduct, and more. Therefore, those with interdependent selves will need to be "experts" in expressing and experiencing these emotions to function effectively. In order to preserve, support, and encourage the development of the self as an interdependent being, they will control the expression and experience of these emotions. (Markus & Kitayama, 1991)

According to co-author Sara Konrath's study from 2022, as social media usage grows, so do discussions regarding its socioemotional effects. In the current study, 1253 American individuals' use of social media was compared to their levels of narcissism, alexithymia, and empathy. We discover that, in this population, social media use is positively connected with narcissism and alexithymia and adversely correlated with self-report and performance measures of empathy, particularly cognitive empathy. The demographics of this group, however, seem to limit this result. Researchers also present a brief meta-analysis on the connection between social media use and empathy that compares our findings to those of prior studies. We discover that the date of data collection, age, and nationality may all have an impact on the relationship's strength and trajectory. Studies done in Europe or with a sample of people under the age of 18 reveal a positive association between social media use and empathy, which is the opposite of our findings. Additionally, research from more recent years generally shows a more favorable correlation between social media and empathy.

Family connection

Emphasis on family connection in collectivist countries

Cultures that emphasise individualism, like the United States, are cultures that value a person who is ambitious and takes care of themselves. Whereas a collectivist culture is one in which people are integrated from birth into solid and cohesive ingroups, often extended families, who continue to protect them in exchange for undeniable loyalty. (Hofstede, p. 4)

Hofstede's statement underscores how much a collectivist society values the importance of belonging to a group. Because the family is the first group a person belongs to, it is essential in a collectivist society to keep the group and not the individual in mind.

A person's identity resides in the family, their triumphs, and their failures as they learn, depending on the parenting style they grow up with.

The following example factors demonstrate the differences between collectivist culture and individualistic culture

Example factors	Collectivist culture	Individualistic culture
Discussing important decisions	Children are allowed to say what they think, only parents will have the final say in the matter	Every member of the family is encouraged to speak out their opinions
Marriage	Not a light matter and requires everyone in the family's input	Individuals in the couple making the decision to get married
Future plan	Parent's approval of plans is crucial	Parent supports but does not interfere

The embracement of family values in advertising during Tet holiday

For a long time, Tet has been considered the most important tradition of Vietnamese people. Family reunions and visits are required in the first three days of Tet holiday .When talking about family, people always refer to love - the emotional foundation; When going away, people often lament the homesickness, in fact it is the nostalgia for the people in that house. Grasping this mentality, brands have exploited the family theme as a fertile "land" for their advertising strategy, especially during Tet.

Tet is an occasion for family reunions, and advertising from brands has helped to strengthen family bonds. Along with the trend of putting a nation's cultural materials into advertising, Tet campaigns are the most appropriate time to exploit these values to impress and create sympathy for consumers. In return, through the emotional advertisements, what makes viewers remember and think of the company is its product.

Great consideration of social norms

According to the article “Understanding Collectivist Cultures” by Charlotte Nickerson (Sept. 22, 2021), another cultural trait of collectivistic cultures is “a greater consideration of social norms than individual attitudes when making decisions.” Specific emotions are linked with this cultural trait.

According to Tajfel & Turner (1986), to achieve good feelings about identity, individuals are likely to have a great connection with their group and internalize the social norms considered

in that community. In collectivist cultures, this tendency happens strongly because of the sensitivity to contextual social information (Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002; Triandis, 1999) and “the maintenance of group harmony” (Triandis. HC, 1995). According to Kiesler & Kiesler (1970), violating norms could jeopardize group harmony. Therefore, meeting the duties and expectation of the social role is encouraged and even obliged seriously in collectivist culture (Miller, Bersoff, & Harwood, 1990), leading to the result that individuals of this culture have “a greater consideration of social norms than individual attitudes when making decisions” (Charlotte N, 2021).

This cultural trait has been proved to connect with individuals' specific emotions in collectivist cultures, especially the emotional processes of the observers - who observe the norm violators. According to Eftychia Stamkou and other researchers (2018), individuals in collectivist cultures tend to experience moral outrage when witnessing norm violations. Psychological research has found that norm violations evoke moral outrage, which is evident in anger and blame among observers (Helweg-Larsen & LoMonaco, 2008; Kam & Bond, 2009; Ohbuchi et al., 2004).

In a collectivist culture, youngsters may be asked to comply with familial and societal standards. Specifically, they are expected to pursue a predetermined career path which can be considered a social norm (Oettingen & Zosuls, 2006). In Vietnam, education is highly valued (even more so than wealth and success). Hard work is emphasized, and the literacy rate in Vietnam is almost 90 %. Hunt (2005) also states that obtaining a degree is associated with social respect, prestige, and the possibility of upward mobility. Therefore, Vietnamese parents set high expectations for their children's academic achievement, resulting in an incredibly harsh and competitive environment. Pious children are expected to obey their parents to protect the family's pride and honor (AIFS, 1995; Nguyen, 1994). Parents can put significant pressure on their children and therefore find it difficult to accept the fact that their child is not meeting their expectations and social norms. This result demonstrates the powerful influence of cultural beliefs and values embedded in traditional norms, particularly collectivist culture, in shaping many expectations (Jackson & Dickinson, 2009; Soriano et al., 2001).

Vietnamese media campaigns using emotional appeal

One credible example was the Bitis Hunter media campaign “Di de tro ve” during the Tet holiday in 2016. Due to the research about the demographic and family concern among young people, the Bitis Hunter campaign succeeded in raising positive emotions from the audience through the journey back home to reunite with the family after a long trip. The campaign included two stages. The first stage was to raise a discussion on social media about what the

audiences would do during Tet, to go home or to travel. The second stage highlighted the campaign phrase “Di de tro ve”, “Going is experience” and the music video's release with Soobin Hoang Son. The video's main idea was the experience from every journey imprinted through worn-out shoes. Moreover, the “Sharing the most meaningful journey of the year - Begin your “Go to come back” journey with "Bitis Hunter” contest also showed off on social media. As a result, both campaign seasons gained positive and active participation and shares on social media.

Hypothesis and Research Question

In this paper, we examine relevant case studies to strengthen the stand that advertisements intentionally made embracing Vietnamese cultural values have an emotional influence on the audiences. Content analysis was applied as a methodology in our research to demonstrate certain cultural factors' influence on the emotions of ad viewers. Moreover, we examine the impact of advertising lyrics and images on consumers' emotional responses in the Vietnamese cultural context using particular case studies. The research's scope would only show how the advertisers apply the cultural elements to audiences' emotions; any reaction measuring method would not be mentioned in this paper.

Hypothesis

After reviewing the previous literature, it was hypothesized that advertisers have combined cultural and emotional appeals in their advertisements, using cultural values to evoke the audiences' emotions in the Vietnam context.

Materials & Methodology

Content analysis

One of the ways to approach the description of the content of any media text, such as advertisements, is content analysis. It is defined as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use” by Krippendorff (2004, pg.18). In addition, content analysis is the method for researchers to “describe communication content,” “test hypotheses of message characteristics”, “assess the image of particular groups in society,” or “establish a starting point for studies of media effects” (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006, pp.152-153). In other words, content analysis is an analytic approach that focuses on identifying and quantifying significant categories of content within a text (both verbal and visual elements) and investigating the relationships between those categories.

An advertisement is a complex art object that carries a combination of verbal (ad copy, voiceover, and lyrics in music), visual (the storyline and other visual components), and sonic (music and other sound effects) features (Anisimova, T., & Mullern, T, 2014). In our study, we examine the relationship among advertising, culture and emotion in Vietnamese context, as well as analyze how those components interact with the storyline of the commercial, main characters, brand associations, and the product itself to create moods, to tap in on specific subcultures and target groups, and to get consumer attention. Therefore, content analysis is the method aligning with the purposes of this study.

Discourse analysis

According to: Berger, A. A. (2016). *Media and communication research methods: An introduction to qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Sage Publications. (pp. 249-271): Analyzing the content, context, dialogue, character shaping, gestures, and facial expressions of the characters in advertisements, researchers can gain insight into the underlying meanings and implications of these messages. Specifically, research could be analyzing the ways in which family relationships and cultural values are depicted and promoted in advertising, and how these messages can resonate with viewers in advertising, determining the ad's implication and advertiser's purpose. These will be analyzed in the next case studies, used to examine the audience's comments and reactions to the ads.

Sample selection

This study aims to analyze the different elements of advertisements in Vietnam. We select advertisements representing a specific cultural value that corresponds with the Vietnamese collectivist culture, such as patriotism, personal interdependence, and great consideration of social norms. As each cultural value influences a specific emotion, patriotic appeal, sympathy, self-criticism, anger, and blame have all been considered in this study.

Sample selection based on the success the advertisement has had – in terms of popularity, but specifically on the views when placed on the scale with TVCs, viral promotional videos at the time of Tet 2017 in Vietnam. Many TVCs and viral promotional videos for Tet were released at the time, including many elements about family and empathy. The rankings are based on the advertising statistics from brandsvietnam.

Results & Discussion

“Join OMO to give new shirts to thousands of children to celebrate Tet” - OMO

In Tet 2017, 12 ads were published with many interesting and meaningful content, excelling in this ranking. Rank the most popular high-view ads from low to high: Nestle: Celebrate Tet Together (21N views), Sony Bravia: Bright New Year (23N views), Bao Xuan: Colourless Spring (32.1N views), Pepsi: Reunited Tet Givers (277N views), Coca-Cola : For a new start (366N views), TEA Plus: A gentle Tet, an peaceful Spring (624N views), Samsung: Tet rich and prosperous (2.17 million views) Kinh Do: Seeing Kinh Do is seeing Tet (3.3 million views) views), Castrol Vietnam: Truong Giang & "New Year's Ritual" (9.8 million views), Comfort: Tet with a thousand incense (10 million views), OMO: Giving spring shirts to ten thousand children to celebrate Tet (15 million views) , Nestlé: New Year's music opening spring (27 million views).

Thereby, it can be seen that, standing out in that year, it is impossible not to mention our case which ranked 2nd (15 million views) out of a total of 12 advertisements launched at the same time as Tet 2017, only behind the TVC New Year's Music - Nestlé (27 million views). Not only that, this video also received a lot of positive comments about the content, the message that the advertisement aimed at was about sympathy and sharing during Tet from the audience.

First, this video cleverly exploits the connection between emotions and advertising, often the first step in influencing beliefs and behaviour (A Cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication, 2018). Regarding the theory - rational with emotional appeal, Franke et al. (1999) point out that these brands rely on emotions. Emotional appeals attempt to evoke either positive or negative emotions, resulting in purchase motivation, which became evident in this case study when positive biased emotions were exploited - namely, empathy to develop video and influence purchasing behaviour, along with the tighter association of the Advertisers with the product with the healthy, natural emotions of love and human connection, the more effective the ad. At the same time, the liking factor is shown more clearly when this promotional video uses the collectivism element in Hofstede's cultural dimensions to explain this, as mentioned before, Vietnam is a country of collectivist culture. These cultures, which tend to be more collectivist, also tend to have higher empathy scores. This video understood the concept and used it well, bringing in the community element and the emotional aspect – empathy – to connect with the audience and win viewers' empathy naturally. The context, dialogue, visual aspects, and facial expressions of the characters of the video commercial Tet OMO - “Join OMO to give new shirts to thousands of children to celebrate Tet” are also analyzed.

Context

In accordance with Vietnamese cultural traditions, each family will purchase new items to celebrate Tet in the days leading up to the holiday with the belief of welcoming a new beginning

in the upcoming year. Children, in this case, will receive new clothing items from their parents or caregivers. The advertisement depicts Family A as a typical family who is able to purchase brand-new items to celebrate Tet. Contrarily, Family B is a low-income family and cannot afford to buy anything for the forthcoming Tet holiday. When viewers see images of individuals who are unable to afford basic activities, they perceive them as helpless and deserving of assistance. So in terms of advertisement showed the contrast and the gap in societal reality which evoke sympathy of the viewers.

Dialogue

This is one of the data extracts presented in the ads sample. It is part of the video in which the mother and the daughter talk about the preparation for Tet holiday:

D: Mom, why don't we decorate for Tet?

M: "Let's wait until next year"

D: "We have an apricot tree at home"

D: New Ao Dai for my daughter here

Below is the outstanding dialogue excerpted from the video by discourse analysis method. Through the above lines, it can be seen that thanks to the correct use of words and dialogues, the characters have highlighted the emotions that the characters want to convey.

The visual aspect

They also seem pitiful as a result. The woman and child in the advertisement are dressed in shabby, wrinkled, and faded items. They inhabited a hut with appalling conditions.

The character's facial expression

The way the child and mother express sad feelings when talking about having no money to decorate Tet and buy new things also contributes to evoking the viewers' emotions.

In addition, the advertiser also portrays the poverty, pitifulness and need for help of this mother and daughter by showing the contrast between the two life situations. On one side is a house with money and many things to buy for the new year. On one side is a poor cottage and can't afford to buy new things. These factors have aroused the sympathy of viewers.

“Đi để trở về - Going far to come back home” - Soobin Hoang Son x Biti's Hunter

Đi để trở về - Going far to come back home is another video during Tet, maybe not just for advertising, more focused on evoking viewers' emotions, trigger the emotions of the audience, and through which is to convey the message of the product passively.

The reason for choosing the First season of Going far to come back home, this case study would clarify its level of media success:

Firstly, the MV stood in Youtube Trending for 21 consecutive days and eventually received No. 1 Youtube Ads Leaderboard Tet in 2017. Furthermore, it appeared on Zing's chart for 6 consecutive months. It is also noticeable that it had generated 1.7 million interactions on social networks, of which brand mention accounts for more than 10%. Other achievements include Asia's Best Media Campaign Bronze Award, Best Use of Video Gold Award at PR Asia Awards 2017.

In terms of sales revenues, after 1 week of publishing the video, Biti's reached 300% sales target.

Besides, the study will demonstrate how the elements indicated in theory in the preceding part relate to this case. Firstly, this MV explained this using the collectivism component of Hofstede's cultural dimensions. As the statement was previously mentioned, collectivism has a positive association with family in Vietnam which demonstrates how clever advertisers are to include family features. Moreover, in this video, the advertiser showed the connection between emotions and advertising, which is often the first step in influencing beliefs and, ultimately behavior (A Cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication, 2018).

Context

According to Biti's 2017 survey, there are over 87,000 conversations on social networks about "Travel or Return". During the Tet holidays, young people are particularly interested in and debate the story of travelling or returning to family. The boy in this story is a man fascinated by his journeys to discover colorful life. On each land, he encountered the mischievous children and met some beautiful girls and Vietnamese people. New acquaintances were friendly and cheerful. Those cultural scenes were even more memorable when combined with the magnificent natural scenery the boy took in with each step. When Tet reunited, the union members were close, and the young man decided to return to his family. The reunion was filled with joy in the mother's warm embrace and the father's open arms.

Dialogue

This is one of the data extracts presented in the ads sample. It is part of the video in which the father and the son are talking in the moment of reunion on the afternoon of the 30th New Year.

D: You're back, let's have a New Year's Eve

S: *nod, smile*

Below is the first and only line throughout the MV and the father's greetings and greetings for his son after a long year of being reunited. Only the short sentence "You're back, let's have a New Year's Eve" highlights the completeness of the audience's moment of reunion and triggers emotion.

Visual aspect

The characters in the story are shaped perfectly for their roles and coloured warmly. Young actors are built with dynamic and playful images. The character line in middle age has a warm, calm image with darker colors but not melancholy. Create the characters of the young man's father and mother at the end of the MV using dark colors. Every Tet holiday in the chilly weather, the mother's sweater and the father's shirt evoke the familiar scene, the feeling of only being in the family from New Year.

The character's facial expression

Each character in the story performs admirably through facial expressions and expressions. From new acquaintances' warm eyes and kind smiles, but kind. The sparkling, bright appearance of the Highland children, the teacher's warm smile. The eyes, in particular, are filled with the love of parents, full of family love.

In addition, the message at the end of the video, "Going far to become more mature, and cherishing the place where you can always return to", emphasizes the family sentimentality conveyed throughout the story. All of the aforementioned factors have elicited powerful feelings of family.

Short film "Mom! Never had you understand" - Vinfast E-scooter

Context

The Vietnamese cultural context places a high value on social norms. Youths may be expected to conform to familial and societal standards and to follow a predetermined career path. Education is valued higher than talent in traditional Vietnamese families as they believe it would lead to a sustainable job with social respect and honor. This issue indirectly causes conflict among different generations in families, when youngsters are likely to "break the rules" to follow their dream, ignoring the social standard they might have to deal with.

The advertisement reflects the reality of Vietnamese families and even Vietnamese society. Vinfast has successfully used stereotypes and social norms about academic success, sustainable career and more specifically, the expectation of parents for their children in Vietnamese culture, thereby telling the story of a son pursuing his music passion, which is considered a norm violation, according to Vietnamese parents. The mother in the story plays the role of an observer, witnessing the child's norm violation, therefore, generating angry emotions. The son has always been interested in art and aspires to be a rap star. The mother, who works as a street vendor, wishes for her son to pursue an education so that he can later build a stable career. Moreover, the story is built with a climax, leading the audience through many emotions, from curiosity to anger, and ending with love and understanding of parents, which are the emotions that relate directly to the decision to buy the Vinfast electric motorbike. Therefore, the product appears in the ad naturally according to the emotional flow of the character as well as the audience.

The climax begins with the mother's "throwing the earphone," causing the earphone to break in half, leading to the son's anger. His angry words worsen the anger of the mother. The emotions of both characters are, especially, the mother's anger, through which evokes the audience's angry emotions. It can be seen that the climax of the story has strongly exploited the audience's emotions.

Dialogue

This is one of the data extracts presented in the ads sample. It is part of the video in which the mother in this advertisement has used irate language and an emphatic tone to express her feelings about her son's violation.

Suốt ngày xì xà xì xồ

Chả hiểu cái gì cả!

Học kiểu gì đây?

Lần cuối cùng mẹ cảm thấy xì xồ như vậy

Nghe rõ chưa?

Học thì không lo học

Toàn theo những thứ vô bổ!

In Vietnamese dictionary, “xì xồ” means speaking in a foreign language, unable to understand. In contrast to her son's thoughts and feelings, the mother has expressed her opinion about the art of rap by using this word. She believes that education is the path worth following if we want to achieve great things and have a stable job in the future, not rap. Consequently, the mother has the emotion of anger obviously as seeing her son's violation of social norms, which represents the context of a collectivist society, particularly the Vietnamese social context, which places a high value on education.

The character's facial expression

The mother often frowns, expressing concern for her child's future path when he does not pay much attention to his studies. When angry, the mother's face looks aggressive and fierce with eyes opening widely and lips tightening. The character's facial expressions have been shown most realistically, showing the anger and anxiety of the mother when the child does not pursue academic success. Obviously, the cultural value of great consideration of social norms in collectivist culture has been applied successfully in the smallest detail, such as the character's facial expression to trigger the audience's emotion.

In the Vietnamese advertising market, there are numerous ads that adopt social norms to express the angry emotions of the observer, thus triggering the emotions of the viewers. Its popularity has contributed to the success of these advertisements that use cultural values to trigger emotions. However, there are also several instances where the advertisements that employ this technique fail to reach a large audience. We chose the short film “Mom! Never had you understand” made by TRB Media to advertise Vinfast E-scooter products to substantiate the failure.

Specifically, on the Youtube platform, the advertisement was posted on two main channels: TBR Media and Vinfast Official. As of November 11, 2022, this advertisement had received approximately 500 thousand views across both platforms. The short film has not actually succeeded in reaching a large audience, so even though the advertisement still exerts the cultural element “a great consideration of social norms” in Vietnam to trigger emotion, a relatively small number of audiences are triggered by it.

Conclusion & Limitations

Through analyzing the sample advertising campaigns in Vietnam, we notice that Vietnamese advertisers seem to most frequently use emotional appeal that links with cultural values as a means to evoke audiences' emotions. Specifically, family connections and humane values are mostly exploited as the topics for advertisements; the main characters are usually family members, the fortunate and the underprivileged.

Advertisers intentionally use the setup, the acting and dialogue, and most importantly, the cultural values in their products to trigger various emotions among viewers. OMO and Bitis advertising videos of the image of Tet to trigger sympathy (OMO and Bitis); the other uses social norms to trigger anger but then empathy (Vinfast).

Additionally, it validates the authenticity of emotional appeals that reflect cultural values manifested through advertising. However, not all advertisements that use culture to trigger emotions are successful.

The results confirm the hypothesis that the bond between cultural values and emotional appeal in Vietnam ads is significant. Advertisers in the Vietnamese industry widely applied this method. Most of the provoked emotions in audiences were: sympathy, anger and empathy. The primary material used in Vietnam ads was family relationships which caused a strong bond in the audience, especially audiences from collectivist culture. This finding could eventually explain the Vietnam ads industry phenomena in using cultural values to provoke emotion. Foreign companies could apply this thesis for a better understanding of the field.

Throughout the research, there are a few limitations that further research could explore. The current study only examined a small sample of advertising campaigns. Moreover, the Vietnam stem of cultural factors and emotional engagement need to be investigated deeply in research about the topic and whether the audience could engage with the emotion in ads that contained cultural elements. Besides, there should be a statistical system to analyze famous advertisements within the industry for better and more thorough material for further studies.

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