





## The Paradox of Hedonism: Investigating the Media's Inducement of Deceptive Desires & its Effects on Television Viewers

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### Abstract

*The study analyses the relationship between the exposure to television advertisements and its effects in creating deceptive desires among viewers. It also investigates the interconnection with higher materialistic tendencies in buyers with their favorable attitude towards hedonic messages shown in advertising. Drawing upon the theoretical foundation of utilitarianism, it suggests that by portraying products in a hedonic manner, advertisements lead the viewers towards compulsive buying resulting in false sense of fulfillment and immediate gratification from the viewers. The data was collected through a closed-ended questionnaire from a sample-size of 300 participants in Pakistan. The results confirm that media, through hedonic advertisements, develop false desires in viewers with the intention of driving immediate purchase decisions. Moreover, with the desires being deceptive, the false sense escapism is created in viewers. Findings show a significant level of P-value as 0.05 thus both the study hypotheses are approved.*

**Keywords:** : Deceptive desires, Hedonic advertisements, Compulsive buying, gratification,

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## INTRODUCTION

Modern media instills hedonic purpose in its marketing by presenting products and experiences as desirable. It encourages viewers to make immediate purchases by instilling in them the belief that owning a specific materialistic lifestyle will provide happiness in life. Hedonism is the concept of a life spent seeking pleasure (Veen oven, 2003). Motivational hedonism is the persistent pursuit of pleasure in life, driven by desires, which results in small moments of hedonic escape (Holmqvist et al., 2020). Such is the notion with which the advertising industry has equipped itself in practice. Nowadays, it is apparent to observe if one is mindful of the fact that commercial creators inject a ‘Hedonistic message’ in their contents that creates ‘desire’ in viewers; these advertisements have a persuasive effect. Persuasive advertising focuses on establishing desires, garnering attention, creating buzz, and influencing behavior to build a preference for a product (O’Shaughnessy, 2003). Persuasion is fostering a consumer-based society, resulting in greater desire to purchase material commodities. Advertising targets the consumer’s emotional weaknesses, continually fueling and sustaining his or her demands. Advertising does this using a hedonic strategy (Dr. Gonca, 2020). Hedonism has a substantial effect on consumer behavior and decisions (Lim, 2014).

Consumer culture nowadays is associated with materialistic hedonic society, resulting in a close relationship between customers and their acquired products (Featherstone, 1990). Individuals

are motivated to spend more than they save to conform to societal patterns (Arnold & Thomspson, 2005). These ‘wants’ are instilled in people because of uneven society, social class, and the divide between the wealthy and middle classes. This disproportionality in society generates a desire to compete with others for a wealthy existence. In disregard of this, one may express displeasure and ill-will against people who have a pleasant, successful, and reputable existence, as well as their own goods (Schoeck, 1966). Such is the incentive that our advertisements promote to elicit a motivating response from the audience; however, these tendencies are not explicitly stated in advertising messages, but rather through subliminal tactics, signs, and signals. Conveyed knowledge creates a subliminal signal in people’s thoughts, both directly and indirectly. Subliminal communications have a significant impact on an individual’s ideas and behavior (Ruch et al., 2016). The most well-known example of subliminal messaging is the New Jersey audience experiment. The audience was enticed to buy extra popcorn and Coke, which they did (Vokey, 1985). The concept of hedonism is expanded when marketing depicts a product as ‘valuable’ and something worth having in life. Pakistani media follows western lifestyle patterns, inhibiting the belief that if you do not have certain financial items in life or even follow a social trend, you are outcast by the judgments of those who do; this inclination is known as ‘FOMO’. (Parijs, 2020) defines FOMO as an excessive attitude toward the idea of not taking advantage of available possibilities and hence missing out on the expected delight that comes with them. It is this propensity and all-consuming thought that an individual ignores, something in which others participate, and what others know or possess (Reisenwitz, 2023). Numerous research investigations have demonstrated that the media, through

the form of advertisement, has gone on a manipulative trip to induce the idea of Materialism and such urges as Compulsive Buying (Chen 2022; Moore & Lee,2013; Peckover,1983).

Even though many countries are experiencing economic downturns, the media continues to encourage viewers to indulge in increasingly extravagant purchasing habits. Materialistic principles have been instilled by capitalism, persuading civilizations to crave material items beyond their necessity for survival, and communities to enjoy a materialistic life. All this conduct by the advertising sector lacks moral/ethical and, more importantly, cultural values.

Materialism is inherently harmful because it contradicts the concept of relationship values and is inextricably associated with the concept of happiness and subjective well-being (Kasser & Kanner, 2004). Marketing methods encourage materialism as “a focus on what a person has, not their identity,” as well as emphasizing what a person should do rather than who he is and what he wants. TV advertising instills false wants in viewers through advertisement exposure. It creates a vicious loop (advertisements>hedonism>>false desire) that encourages viewers to repeatedly expose themselves to advertisements and develop false or deceitful desires. As a result, viewers do not pay attention to the current social and political reality around them, nor does the media promote such issues because it wants the audience to engage in consumer-driven experiences. Consumer culture has strong and frequently negative consequences on society as well as on individuals (Kasser & Kanner, 2004). Scholars examining materialism have formulated slightly different explanations for the issue, but they all point to an individual who is too preoccupied with accumulating material possessions and wealth, which becomes their main life objective and sources of fulfilment. Belk, who pioneered materialism research, emphasized two aspects of materialism: that material items play a significant role in a person’s life and that it functions as a source of life contentment or satisfaction. Media in the modern age is a prominent transporter of materialism, as it serves as a platform for marketers to endorse materialistic possessions (Sirgy et al., 1998).

The prime motive of the advertisement is to induce materialistic values in the viewers. Advertisements psychologically manipulate individuals to perceive the meaning of life in objects, possessions and belongings (Lasch, 1978). By portraying objects, material possessions, consumption of products, luxurious lifestyle as something ‘valuable’ and ‘morally justified’ the media is driving the viewers into a hedonic addiction and motivation to pursue such a way of life. When advertisements glamorize a product as something worthy of attainment, this produces deceptive or false desires in us. By technological means and visual effects, images are created in a perfect, idealized manner. Through airbrush, cropping and editing techniques they can create an appealing effect on otherwise imperfect images. Though advanced lighting effects and camera angles in advertisements, are making the ordinary seem special (Richins, 1992). Viewers of such advertisements start to experience desires and want to have a life of fulfillment, desires to have more and more, desires to live a wealthy life. In spite of that, such a way of life is not even lived by the most inhabitants of the society (Richins, 1992). But what the advertisement industry won’t explain is that, it is only a momentary escapism from

the dark facts of life. The reasoning consumers postulate for compulsive buying is that it imparts immediate relief from anxiety and depression, albeit it is short term (Hassay & Smith, 1998). But the advertising industry would not illustrate this fact as that would not motivate individuals to engage in consumer culture or behavior and deep rooted in this lies the hedonic value. The hedonistic values in terms of compulsive purchasing behavior promotes the consumer to take a task-oriented approach for the objective of having pleasure, excitement, and enjoyment through product acquisition and consumption.

It can be found that the advertisements postulate the idea of engaging in product consumption as something that will free the public from different tribulation. The need to conduct research and the entire basis of its reasoning was that you'll find individuals in Pakistani society that indulge in consumer behavior or try too, no matter what their economic state is. As the media is inducing in viewers such desires with the intention to fulfill it. It is also this constant inclination to have more than others or that of equal, but it is also the nature of existence that a person's 'will' is found as insatiable. Advertising industry without a doubt wants individuals to buy more so that it can benefit itself and big corporations. But it is the sinister stipulation that viewers are receiving in its contents. Upon exploration, will find emotional appeal, psychological persuasion and the need for consumerism in the advertisements. More eminently there is a need to establish a recognition of how the media is shaping the attitudes and moral behavior of people.

Morality and what it is and how it defines people has been a subject of discussion amongst many philosophers, theoreticians and intellectuals for ages. Who people are, how people live and what defines them is something humans should all ask themselves. Especially when it comes to recognizing the forces that are dictating the terms, paving the road of morality. To be conscious about how media influences behavior and most importantly why the masses tend to accept the induced trends, messages, patterns at the hands of the media. Quintessentially what media is doing? And why people are accepting it, is the soul essence of this systematic research.

### **Objectives:**

To study the effects of hedonistic advertisements on individual consumer behavior

To investigate the exposure to hedonic advertisements and its correlation with deceptive desires in individual's

### **Research Questions:**

To what extent does exposure to luxurious advertisements lead to the development of deceptive desires among individuals engaging in consumer behavior?

How do individuals with higher materialistic tendencies demonstrate a more favorable attitude towards hedonic advertisements compared to those with lower materialistic tendencies?

## **Hypotheses:**

**H1:** Increased exposure to luxurious advertisements will result in adaptive compulsive buying.

**H2:** Individuals with higher materialistic tendencies will have a more favorable attitude towards hedonic messages.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Previous research investigations have conclusively proved that the media, largely through advertising, has gone on a deceptive quest to instill materialism and a proclivity for compulsive purchasing. Scholars have recognized this (Chen, 2022; Lee, 2013; Long, 2023; Peckover, 1983;). Even in the midst of economic downturns in many countries, the media continues to aggressively encourage people to engage in consumer activities. The rise of capitalism has nurtured materialistic attitudes, leading cultures to prioritize material things over what is necessary for survival and to focus on a materialistic lifestyle. These advertising-driven activities appear to lack moral, ethical, and cultural values. Marketing methods aggressively encourage materialism by focusing on a person's belongings rather than their identity, and they place an even larger emphasis on telling people what to do rather than helping them realize who they are and what they want. This propensity advertisement takes viewers on a hedonic road of fulfillment through the gratifying of their obsessive purchases.

### **Materialistic Attitudes and Consumer Behavior**

Arisal (2016) posits that materialistic attitude influences buying behavior. The researcher outlines two basic motivations for consumerism: Hedonism and Utilitarianism. These factors play an important role in the assumption that materialistic attitudes influence consumer preferences in terms of purchasing behavior. The purpose of this study is to see if there is a link between materialistic tendencies, hedonic and utilitarian value of buying. If there is, it is crucial to comprehend the nature of the link that exists between these factors.

It is crucial to appraise college students' materialistic tendencies with respect of their market potential. The participants of this study were university students. Data was gathered using appropriate sampling strategies. The data was analyzed using structural equation modelling, exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. The findings support the existence of a relevant association between hedonic purchasing and a sub-dimensional materialistic attitude. (Piotr & Richard, 2023) explored materialistic values, hedonic shopping experiences, neuroticism, extraversion openness to experience and compulsive shopping adopting a mediation model. The research was carried out through surveying the Polish households. An in-depth interview was conducted face to face. Upon research results and findings

which suggested a positive relationship between compulsive shopping, neuroticism and extraversion that transpired materialistic values. These values precipitated individuals to pursue hedonistic shopping.

### **Understanding Advertising Impact**

Fan (2021) is of the notion that marketers employ a variety of techniques on media platforms to influence consumer behavior and to keep customers loyal. It's important to realize that adverts on media platforms can provide varying product information. This engages the consumer and generates interest in the products offered by organizations. Changes in customer behavior have been strongly linked to digitalization in today's market. To build a favorable relationship with consumers, it's important to understand how commercials influence their behavior. The primary topic of this study is the influence of advertising on customer behavior. This study's major data collection method was an online survey. This study report included data from 600 online participants. Different ages and educational levels were examined, as well as gender parity. The research used statistical tools such as Kruskal-Wallis (K-W), Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), and Cronbach Alpha to examine acquired data.

The study found that newspaper advertisements can influence customer behavior. Internet and television commercials impact consumer behavior by providing a clear understanding of products available in the market. This study report included data from 600 online participants. Different ages and educational levels were examined, as well as gender parity. The information gathered indicates that advertisers have spent money on magazine and newspaper ads to change customer behavior and win them over to the products being sold. Marketing managers will find this research invaluable as it provides them with insights into how to make their ads more objective and what kind of media to use.

### **Hedonic and Materialistic Values in Buying Behavior**

Iqbal (2020) explored how hedonistic and materialistic values influences individuals buying behavior. In the context of product consumption, the values that customers seek within making purchase decisions arises out of the Hedonic notion. These Hedonic and Materialistic Values play a crucial role in influencing compulsive buying behavior. Shoppers seek and drive pleasure, excitement and enjoyment from compulsive buying that is prompted by Hedonic and Materialistic Values. These values not only influence one's buying behavior but also establish a change trend and buying patterns. The research was executed through a mixed method approach incorporating the elements of both qualitative and quantitative methodology. Through primary and secondary means the data was collected. Moreover, interviews were conducted and survey questionnaires were utilized for data collection. The population size for this study were 200 respondents for survey data collection and a size of 100 respondents for interviews conducted from Pakistani shoppers. The study encompassed simple random and stratified sampling. SPSS software was used to analyze quantitative data using reliability, frequency, correlation and

regression analysis, while thematic analysis was equipped to analyze the qualitative data. The quantitative data provided the results denoting a significant influence of hedonic and materialistic values on compulsive buying behavior, furthermore the qualitative analysis suggested that hedonic and materialistic values functioned as more influencing factors for buying behavior of Pakistani shoppers.

### **Advertising on Consumer Behavior**

Inga (2013) said that advertising is the key for building, creating and sustaining brands. Consumers are becoming increasingly brand conscious, and that value branded products to express their status symbol (Turunen & Pöyry, 2019). Advertisements play a major role in persuading, informing and reminding both potential and existing customers towards making a purchase decision. Advertisements can be used to inform the new audiences, persuade them to buy the product and it can have huge influence on consumer decision making, advertisement can also be used as reminder to the existing customer about their connectivity to their products and have long lasting association with product or services and helps in brand building creating brand loyalty (Amandeep et al., 2017). To reinstate a product as top-of-the-mind for consumers, organizations from all areas of the world spend huge amounts on advertisements (Yan, 2020). It plays a vital role in shaping dreams and aspirations and helps customers make conscious product and brand decisions. Affect tends to play a prominent role in models of attention and perception (Ittelson, 1973). Advertisements with endorsements create easy remembrance for the customers for the advertised brand or product as the customers associate the brand with the celebrity and can easily register the brand. A celebrity endorsement has been used for decades as a marketing tool to promote a brand or products, and in turn have become a large part of modern marketing

(McCracken, 1989). Measuring the influence of advertisement in consumer brand preference is very essential for every marketer. If advertisement does not create any positive change in consumers' brand preference, all the resources such as money, time and efforts spent on advertisement will go in vain. Advertising also helps in creating top of the mind awareness of a brand and aims at facilitating brand recall.

### **Consumer Impulses in Response to Advertising**

Moore & Lee (2013) explained how hedonic advertising influences impulses in advertisement viewers. The research design adopted a multiple mediation model. Data was collected through 198 undergraduates with 85 being male and 140 being female. The research largely focused on exploring how hedonic advertising appeals to the consumption impulses desires. The research explored how the hedonic visualization of advertisements invokes feelings of sensory pleasure who could actually feel the product being advertised. That advertisement would influence impulsive desires to try out the product. The study results demonstrates that advertisement through its appeal describes the enjoyment of consuming the product, this consumer process acts as a tug of war between impulses and self-restraint, the results indicated that these feelings to consume were overwhelming, and the advertising messages serves as justification to yield to their impulses.

## **Hedonic and Utilitarian Values in Brand Loyalty**

Khalid & Jalal (2015) investigated the role hedonic and utilitarian value and its influence in formation of brand loyalty, to mediate customer satisfaction. In modern time customers engage in consumer behavior for the purpose of experiencing pleasure when it comes to shopping.

Individuals' perception and attitude are the identifying element of shopping value (Perma Rupan et al., 2014).

## **Muslim Consumer Behavior in Luxury Purchases**

Kassim & Zain (2016) investigated Muslim consumers and their inclination towards 'materialistic' lifestyle and relationship quality of lifestyle, whilst purchasing luxury products or services. The study has adopted quantitative methodology, by which a close-ended survey was distributed to 233 Muslim consumers. Data was collected and analyzed using exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling once it was collected. The results indicated that Muslim consumers' relationship with quality of lifestyle has an insignificant effect on their materialistic quality of lifestyle. This indicates that achieving quality of lifestyle is by the notion of sharing and generosity and by materialistic lifestyle. Results also indicate that relationship quality of lifestyle do not affect the basic needs of Muslim consumers through physical and communal relationship nor through social relationship. Furthermore, the basic necessity 'Quality of Lifestyle' has a negative impact on both 'Materialistic Quality of Lifestyle' and 'Luxury buy tendency', indicating that individuals tend to gravitate towards material goods if their basic needs are met. Finally, the Materialistic quality of their lifestyle has a considerable beneficial effect on their interests when purchasing luxury goods or services.

## **Emotive and Cognitive Values in Compulsive Buying**

Neda et al., (2022) research attempted to address how advertising's emotive and cognitive values influence compulsive purchasing on Instagram. The study examined the roles of hedonic and utilitarian browsing, as well as client concern. To meet the study's stated goal, an applied research technique was used, with data collected using an online survey. To analyze the data, structural equation modelling with partial least squares was used. The findings revealed that advertising's emotive and cognitive values influence hedonic and utilitarian browsing, and so the desire to buy impulsively and compulsively. The study also found that customer fear was an influential element for compulsive buying and an impressible variable for the desire to buy impulsively. This study may help firms in transitional economies attract clients by manipulating environmental factors that influence Instagram searches and, ultimately, purchasing behavior.

## **Impact of Advertising in development of Desires**

Naz (2016) explores advertisements and its objectives is to create a sense of appeal and desire for the consumption of products. Those advertisements are created as per the policies of the company. Advertisement makers indulge in the practice to affect the conscious minds of the viewers. The advertisement makers use strategies and techniques that are called ‘Subliminal Cue’s’. These tactics are employed to influence a much larger group of individuals with a powerful impact on their minds (Aarts et al., 2000). With the rise of technology, the influencing factor has arisen out of territorial boundaries, to reach the audience at international stage. Similarly, the influence of social media platforms, utilizing similar strategies, is widespread (Aberystwyth, 2014). Within the context of traditional media, advertisements should be created in the sense of guidance to one’s decision making when it comes to purchasing goods and services. To conduct a systematic investigation 17 Pakistani ads were considered that had the most effect on the conscious or unconscious minds of the viewers. The research study dwells upon deductive approach that refers to the logic, reasoning and investigating ones aims, purpose or objectives upon the information gathered through secondary data. This approach will help in analysis and conclusion. The research conducted concluded that advertisements indeed play a crucial role in inducing the image of a product or a brand into consciousness of the audience. Having a lasting impact on the consumer behavior of individuals.

### **Advertising as the leading domain of Purchase Decisions**

Sama (2019) suggests that to influence consumer behavior, marketers make investments across a range of media channels (CB). Every media platform has a unique composition of advertisements that engage viewers in a distinctive way. The media habits of consumers have changed as a result of digitalization. Therefore, a deeper comprehension of media platform advertisements and their effects on CB must be formed. This article focuses on how customer awareness (AWR), interest (INT), conviction (CON), purchase (PUR), and post-purchase (PPUR) behavior are affected by advertisements on television (TV), radio, newspapers, magazines, and the Internet. The study employed the online survey method. 529 respondents, who were Indian students, provided the data. The gathered data was analyzed using statistical methods like Cronbach alpha, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and the Kruskal–Wallis (K–W) test. The results indicate that newspapers advertisements affect all the five stages of CB. It is statistically clear that TV and the Internet have an impact on consumers’ AWR, INT, and CON. The findings also showed that newspapers and magazines are useful media for influencing consumers’ PUR and PPUR behavior. By investing in the right medium, advertising managers can improve the objectivity of their ads by taking a lead from this research.

## **Mediating Role of Brand Awareness in Advertisement Influence**

Zhao et al., (2022) indicates that in order to get the most out of the market, consumer purchasing behavior is a crucial component of every marketing plan. By taking into account a mediator between brand awareness and the moderating effect of perceived quality, this study seeks to ascertain how advertisements influence consumer purchasing behavior and brand loyalty. This study aims to address the growing cosmetics market for this reason. This study employed an online survey method via google doc to gather data from 300 respondents using the purposive sampling strategy. To confirm the correlations between the hypotheses, partial least squares structural equation modeling, or PLS-SEM, was utilized. The results have verified that brand awareness, brand loyalty, and consumer purchasing behavior are significantly predicted by commercials. Moreover, the relationship between advertisements and consumer purchasing behavior and brand loyalty was partially mediated by brand awareness. Additionally, there is a considerable moderating effect of perceived quality on the relationship between brand awareness, brand loyalty, and consumer purchasing behavior. Based on these results, the study has added to the body of knowledge and offered fresh perspectives on the practical ramifications in addition to the survey's future direction.

### **Theoretical Framework**

When applying utilitarianism as a theoretical framework for conducting research on the effects of 'hedonistic advertisements' for the inducement of 'deceptive desires' in individuals, it is understood that the 'principles of utilitarianism' further stipulates that advertisements with intention makes individuals to engage in consumer behavior. It intends this by postulating the idea that taking actions such as buying/consuming more and more products could potentially make us happy and make the experience pleasurable. This 'intention and motivation' for the maximization of pleasure and happiness and the 'negation and limitation' of pain and suffering is the foundation of 'hedonism'. Jeremy Bentham in his doctrine introduced the 'hedonistic calculus' which is an integral element of his utilitarian philosophy in which he establishes the concept of Hedonism that's herein defined as the pursuit of pleasure and avoidance of pain as the ultimate goal of life. Such is a notion being emphasized in advertisements. Utilitarianism helps us to evaluate how being exposed to Hedonistic messages in advertisements makes an individual engage in such behavior that they tend to seek the desires that are being induced in them and what consequences are being produced that makes engaging in such actions ethically and morally right or wrong? Quintessentially Utilitarianism as applied for the theoretical framework in this investigative research establishes a connection between 'Effects of Hedonistic advertisements > Inducement of False/Deceptive Desires > Fulfillment of those Desires by seeking and maximizing pleasure and happiness.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Method:**

Quantitative approach was employed to systematically investigate and analyze the research inquiries presented. The chosen research design adopts a closed-ended survey approach, utilizing a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale, meticulous attention is paid to ethical considerations concerning participant agreement, data privacy, and confidentiality.

### **Sampling:**

The participants of this study include advertisement viewers selected through convenience-sampling. With a sample size of 300 university students aged 22-26 with an income background ranging from 50,000-125,000, from all around Lahore.

### **Research Tool:**

For this study, a questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale was utilized to gather data. The responses were used to generate a composite score.

### **Procedure:**

The data collecting method, which was carried out through the distribution of online questionnaires, was meticulously planned to guarantee that each question statement was linked with the selected factors and indicators, promoting precision and dependability in acquiring

essential information. Furthermore, stringent quality control methods were adopted to ensure the integrity of the data gathering process, hence increasing the validity of the study's results.

### **Data Analysis:**

Following data collection, rigorous analysis was performed using SPSS software, which used frequency analysis to find patterns and trends in the dataset. Furthermore, statistical tests such as Spearman's rho were used to determine correlations between independent and dependent variables, allowing for a more in-depth knowledge of the linkages at play. This comprehensive analytical technique ensured reliable interpretations and enhanced the study's conclusions.

### **Ethical Considerations:**

Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the methodology, with adherence to established guidelines ensuring participant confidentiality, informed consent, and protection from harm. Measures were implemented to safeguard against potential biases, respecting the autonomy and rights of all involved parties while upholding

the integrity of the research process.

### **Reliability:**

Reliability assessments were conducted to ensure the consistency and stability of the study's measures. The Spearman's rho correlation coefficient test was employed to examine the potential correlations among the variables under investigation. For the first set of variables, Luxurious Advertisements and Compulsive Buying, the Spearman's rho test yielded a statistically significant correlation coefficient of 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ). This indicates a strong and positive association between exposure to luxurious advertisements and adaptive compulsive buying behavior. The reliability of this correlation was further supported by the robustness of the statistical analysis, suggesting a consistent relationship between the variables.

### **Validity:**

Validity assessments were conducted to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the study's measures in capturing the intended constructs. The validity of the study's measures is supported by both content and construct validity considerations.

The content validity of the chosen variables was ensured by selecting measures that were theoretically relevant to the research questions and constructs under investigation. Furthermore, the significant correlations observed between the variables align with theoretical expectations, providing evidence of construct validity. Specifically, the observed relationships between exposure to luxurious advertisements and compulsive buying behavior are consistent with existing framework.

## **HYPOTHESIS TESTING**

**H1:** Increased exposure to luxurious advertisements will result in adaptive compulsive buying.

**Table 1: Correlation between LA and CB**

<i>Correlations</i>				
			LA	CB
Spearman's rho	LA	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.966**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	300	300
	CB	Correlation Coefficient	.966**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	300	300

Note. of  $p < 0.05$

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Spearman's rho correlation coefficient test was utilized to examine the potential correlation between the variables under investigation. In this analysis, two key variables were considered: luxurious advertisements and compulsive buying. The obtained results, displayed in the table, indicate the outcome of the Spearman's rho test, with a predetermined significance level of  $p < 0.05$ . The obtained test statistic value of 0.05 suggests a robust correlation between luxurious advertisements and compulsive buying behavior. This implies that heightened exposure to luxurious advertisements is significantly linked to an increased inclination towards adaptive compulsive buying behavior, as evidenced by statistical analysis. Consequently, the alternative hypothesis, proposing a positive association between luxurious advertisements and compulsive buying, is supported by the findings.

**H2:** Individuals with higher materialistic tendencies will have a more favorable attitude towards hedonic messages.

**Table 2: Correlations Between MT and ITHM**

<i>Correlations</i>				
			MT	ITHM
Spearman's rho	MT	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.960**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	300	300
	ITHM	Correlation Coefficient	.960**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	300	300

Note.  $p < 0.05$

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Spearman's rho correlation coefficient test was conducted to explore potential correlations among the variables under examination. Specifically, the study focused on analyzing the relationship between two variables: materialistic tendencies and inclination towards hedonic messages. The results, presented in the table, indicate that the Spearman's rho test was performed with a predetermined significance level of  $p < 0.05$ . The obtained test statistic value of 0.05

indicates a robust relationship between materialistic tendencies and inclination towards hedonic messages. This suggests that individuals with higher materialistic tendencies are more likely to exhibit a favorable attitude towards hedonic messages conveyed in advertisements. In essence, as materialistic tendencies increase, there is a notable inclination towards adopting a positive perception of hedonic messages. Consequently, the alternative hypothesis, which suggests a positive association between materialistic tendencies and inclination towards hedonic messages, can be accepted based on these findings.

## DISCUSSION & ANALYSIS

Luxurious advertisements possess a psychological allure that elicits a pleasing effect on viewers upon exposure. In response to the question "How often do you encounter luxurious advertisements?", the survey results reveal that 37.7% of respondents indicated encountering such advertisements "often", 13.3% responded "sometimes", and 33.7% responded "always", suggesting a prevalent exposure to these ads. This finding aligns with prior research conducted by Nelson et al., (2009), which suggests that individuals often derive enjoyment from television shows interrupted by commercials, regardless of the quality of the ads themselves. The observed results are consistent with the existing literature, indicating that a

significant proportion of respondents harbor a positive perception of luxurious advertisements, associating them with pleasant experiences.

Consumer behavior often delves into the realm of compulsive buying, which is frequently triggered by motivational factors. Regarding the question “How often do you make unplanned purchases in a month,” the results indicate that 39.3% of respondents stated “often,” 5.7% responded “never,” and 30.7% responded “always.” This finding is consistent with Suzana Đukić & Jelena Stanković’s (2020) study, which identified factors such as discounts, product characteristics, and marketing strategies as motivations behind occasional unplanned purchases, thus supporting the findings of the current research. Analyzing these results in conjunction with the literature review suggests that a significant number of individuals frequently engage in unplanned purchases, possibly influenced by the allure of luxury items, potentially leading to compulsive buying behavior.

Compulsive buyers often find relief through their purchases. In response to the question “How often do you experience a sense of longing that is relieved by making purchases,” 39% responded “often,” 13% responded “sometimes,” and 30.3% responded “always.” These results are further supported by Saman Attiq (2013) research, which suggests that for some consumers, shopping is a routine activity or a thrilling life experience. This aligns with the findings of this study, indicating that a substantial number of individuals derive a sense of relief through shopping, highlighting the connection between luxury advertising and emotional responses.

Luxury advertisements often promise excitement and adventure, influencing consumers to make purchases. Regarding the question “How often do you buy items because you believe they will bring excitement in your life,” 40% responded “often,” 13% responded “sometimes,” and 31.7% responded “always.” This aligns with existing research by Richins (2013), which suggests that high-materialism consumers believe acquiring desired products can enhance their lives significantly. These findings indicate that most individuals are inclined to purchase items for this reason, illustrating the persuasive power of luxury advertisements.

Advertisements frequently evoke desires in individuals to own luxury products, contributing to consumer culture. In response to the question “How often do you experience a strong desire to buy luxury items,” 39.7% responded “often,” 12.3% responded “sometimes,” and 31.3% responded “always.” This corresponds with Dholakia’s (2014) research, emphasizing the role of desire in consumer decision-making. The findings suggest that individuals often harbor a strong desire for purchasing luxury items, influenced by advertising messages.

The act of making purchases is often associated with the belief that acquiring material possessions leads to happiness. Regarding the question “How often do you believe that owning more things would make you happier,” 39.7% responded “often,” 12% responded “sometimes,” and 31.3% responded “always.” These findings resonate

with Lipovčan et al., (2015) research, suggesting that possessions play a central role in increasing happiness. The literature and the current study's results establish a connection, indicating the influence of luxury advertising on the perception that material possessions lead to happiness.

Hedonic messages in advertisements have a cognitive effect that captivates human consciousness. Regarding the question "How often do you find hedonic messages appealing," 38.3% responded "often," 12.7% responded "sometimes," and 33% responded "always." This aligns with Chang's (2004) study, revealing the influence of affective states on the evaluation of such messages. These results validate the assumption that hedonic messages in advertisements are positively received by respondents.

Hedonic messages in advertisements evoke desirable effects that influence individuals' emotions to seek out products or experiences. Regarding the question "How often do you think hedonic messages influence your desire to try the products or experiences being advertised," 40% responded "often," 12.7% responded "sometimes," and 32% responded "always." This presumption is supported by Dr. Gonca's (2020) research, which suggests that advertising targeting emotional weaknesses can fuel desire. These findings demonstrate a significant connection between hedonic messages and the influencing of desires to try advertised products or experiences, emphasizing their substantial impact on consumer desires.

## CONCLUSION

The present research was conducted to investigate Pakistani media's inducement of deceptive desires in viewers through the mode of Hedonic advertisements. The research presented the argument that advertisements through postulating hedonic messages in its contents offered the notion of escapist attitude. The study's results offer insightful information on the intricate connection between "Hedonic Advertisements and its inducement of Deceptive Desires in viewers" Data from a sample of 300 respondents were analyzed using a quantitative research approach, with an emphasis on a number of characteristics such as demographics, data frequencies, and correlations between important variables. Demographic data provided key details about the respondents, including their age, gender, degree of education and income. These ideas are essential for comprehending how the varied backgrounds viewed the hedonic messages in advertisements and they reacted to the desires induced in them. Conversely, the correlation analysis revealed significant connections between the variables; "Luxurious Advertisements", "Compulsive Buying", "Materialistic Tendencies". The research further verifies that advertisements are being created in a hedonic manner, to suggest that pleasure by means of consumer intention is morally justified. The media in its active manipulative role is dictating the moral behavior of our society by postulating the importance of pleasure seeking or indulging in pleasurable experiences. The results and findings of this research further verifies that role of hedonic messages as means of persuasion and motivation to make purchase decisions. This intention begs a ethical and moral dilemma at the hands of advertisement makers that is shape shifting Pakistani society into that of western values. By instilling the idea of compulsive

buying that is forced through the inducement of deceptive desires generated through hedonic means, the viewers upon exposure of such advertisements finds escapism from the socio-economic deterioration of Pakistan.

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