



Vol. 3 No. 12 (Dec) (2025)

Creative Ads to Memorable Content: Relationship Between Dimensions of Creativity of Advertising, Attitude and Recall

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Advertising is more than a tool for promotion; it also serves as a medium for persuasion, creative expression, and the formation of consumer culture. Within this context, creativity plays a central role in determining how advertising messages are perceived and remembered. This study examines how three key dimensions of advertising creativity—novelty, emotionality, and meaningfulness—influence viewers' attitudes toward advertisements and brands, their purchase intentions, and their ability to recall advertisements. An observational experimental design was employed, involving both experimental and control groups, followed by a survey-based assessment. The results indicate that advertisements incorporating these creative dimensions generate more favorable viewer attitudes than non-creative advertisements. In addition, creative advertisements demonstrated significantly higher levels of both aided and unaided recall. Overall, the findings suggest that creativity in advertising meaningfully enhances audience engagement, brand perception, and memory, highlighting the importance of integrating novelty, emotional appeal, and meaningful content in advertising strategy.

Keywords: Advertising, creativity dimensions, Novelty, Meaningfulness, Emotionality, Recall

Understanding the idea of advertising benefits in appreciating how it works in modern times. The history of advertising can be attributed to a system that was centered on the market. It then grew in a capitalist, open economy of the market where large-scale manufacturing was integrated into the advertising process, making it a crucial tool. The spread and pervasiveness of advertising have all been influenced by urbanization, better transportation, and communications developments (Morales, 2017).

Broadcasting and commercializing have existed for many years in different forms, ranging from basic "word of mouth" to newspapers, radio, the internet, television, and magazines (Schwarzkopf, 2009). Newspaper and magazine ads originated in seventeenth-century England and later spread to colonial America in the early eighteenth century. As soon as radio became available, it was quickly used for advertising, gaining substantial popularity in the early 1920s. In the middle of the 1940s, the television period started, which led to the use of this medium for advertising (Jef Richards, 2009). Internet advertising began to take off as one of the most economically effective public advertising channels in the late nineteen eighties as a result of advancements in Internet technology and the increase in affordability of home computers. (Singh,



2017)

Before assessing the effectiveness of any communication campaign, it is necessary to clearly define what is meant by “effectiveness” and to establish appropriate objectives for its measurement. Drawing on extensive experience with major organizations, three primary criteria have been identified for evaluating advertising effectiveness. The first is the recall axis, which relates to cognitive factors and considers a campaign effective if it is remembered by consumers. The second is the image axis, which focuses on emotional responses and seeks to improve consumers’ perceptions of the advertised brand. The third is the business axis, which evaluates attitudinal outcomes and emphasizes increasing consumers’ purchase intentions. White (1998) introduced these three criteria, highlighting the importance of purchase intention, consumers’ perceived ideas, and brand recall.

In today’s media-saturated environment, creativity has become increasingly important in advertising as a means of overcoming consumers’ perceptual resistance and capturing their attention. In Pakistan, however, advertisements often fail to receive adequate attention, leading to considerable wastage of resources on campaigns developed without a strong understanding of advertising principles. This study seeks to address this gap by offering insights that can assist industries and companies in designing more compelling advertisements capable of generating meaningful viewer responses. To achieve this objective, the research examines various dimensions of creativity and investigates how they influence the overall effectiveness of advertisements. Specifically, the study focuses on exploring the effects of creative dimensions on viewers’ attitudes toward advertisements as well as their impact on advertisement recall.

This research holds practical significance for industry practitioners, as it can help advertisers better understand how to design creative advertisements that achieve optimal outcomes. By comparing the effects of creative advertisements with those that are less creative, industries can gain valuable insights into the role creativity plays in advertising success. From an academic perspective, the study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by examining different aspects of creativity and their influence on advertising effectiveness. Furthermore, it provides a foundation for future research by highlighting areas that remain underexplored, thereby offering students and researchers a clearer understanding of creativity within the advertising industry.

Literature Review

Developing effective advertisements requires careful consideration of multiple factors that influence how audiences perceive and respond to marketing messages. Scholars have consistently emphasized the role of consumer behavior analysis, market dynamics, and psychological insights in shaping purchasing decisions. Research by Hirsh and colleagues (2012) highlights the importance of demographic analysis, demonstrating how advertisers can tailor messages to specific audience segments. Their findings suggest that personality-based communication strategies enhance message relevance and improve audience engagement. Similarly, Madura and JNowacki (2018) examined the use of visual elements and storytelling in advertising, emphasizing that compelling narratives combined with visually appealing content can significantly strengthen message impact. Ethical dimensions of advertising have also been addressed in the



Vol. 3 No. 12 (Dec) (2025)

literature. An interview-based study conducted by Anderberg (2006) with John Morris stressed the responsibility of advertisers to uphold transparency and authenticity, arguing that ethical practices are essential for building long-term consumer trust. Collectively, these studies suggest that effective advertising campaigns emerge from a balance between strategic creativity, audience understanding, and ethical responsibility.

Visual stimuli, in particular, play a crucial role in influencing consumer perceptions and decision-making processes. Existing research consistently points to a strong relationship between visual elements in advertising and consumer responses. Studies by McCrudden and Rapp (2017) explored the cognitive processes activated by visual content, demonstrating that visually engaging advertisements are more likely to capture attention and evoke emotional responses. Their work indicates that such cognitive and emotional engagement contributes to stronger brand recall and can positively influence purchasing behavior. Further research by Farace and colleagues (2020) examined the role of visual aesthetics in advertising, revealing that aesthetically pleasing designs foster favorable brand associations and enhance overall consumer perception. Expanding on this perspective, Argyris et al. (2020) emphasized the importance of visual congruence, noting that alignment between visual elements and brand messaging increases consumer engagement. Taken together, these studies underscore the influential role of visual communication in advertising, highlighting how visuals shape consumer attitudes, preferences, and behavioral outcomes in the marketplace

Ad Creativity Dimensions

Studying specific creative features is essential for understanding how different dimensions of creativity influence viewers' responses to advertising. In this study, three key dimensions—novelty, emotionality, and meaningfulness—are examined due to their established relevance in prior research. The selection of these dimensions is grounded in existing literature, which demonstrates their significant role in shaping audience attention, cognitive processing, and attitudinal outcomes. Research by Sung et al. (2016) and Hoon et al. (2000) emphasizes that novelty is critical for attracting viewers' attention, stimulating curiosity, and encouraging active engagement with advertising content. Meaningfulness has also been identified as a vital component of creativity, as it influences how advertising messages are cognitively processed. Studies by Lastovicka (1983) and Lehnert et al. (2014) suggest that meaningful content enhances message comprehension and leads to improved viewer memory. Emotionality further contributes to advertising effectiveness by shaping attitudes toward advertisements. Moore and Harris (1996) argue that emotional intensity influences attitudes particularly when audiences are exposed to positive emotional appeals.

By systematically examining these dimensions, the research seeks to develop a comprehensive understanding of the complex relationship between creativity and audience attitudes. Rather than functioning in isolation, these creative elements interact to shape how advertisements are perceived, remembered, and evaluated by viewers. The incorporation of novelty into advertising strategies, for instance, extends beyond merely capturing attention and represents a strategic approach to creating a lasting impression on the audience. Supporting this view, Ang et al. (2012) demonstrated that advertising



Vol. 3 No. 12 (Dec) (2025)

effectiveness is maximized when novelty is combined synergistically with other creativity dimensions, particularly meaningfulness and connectedness. Their findings indicate that the convergence of these dimensions forms a powerful creative framework that enhances audience engagement and message resonance. This synergistic relationship underscores the collective importance of novelty, meaningfulness, and related creative elements in producing compelling advertisements. Based on these insights, the following hypothesis has been proposed.

H1: Ad Novelty will have a significant effect on viewers' attitudes (attitude towards an ad, attitude towards a brand, and attitude towards purchase intention) while controlling for individuals' perceptions of novelty. The second creative dimension, meaningfulness, plays a crucial role in enhancing the effectiveness of advertisements by improving audience comprehension and recall. Lehnert, Till, and Ospina (2014) suggest that meaningful advertising content delivers messages that are coherent, relevant, and closely aligned with the values and needs of the target audience. Such alignment enables viewers to process advertising messages more easily, thereby increasing the likelihood that the content will be understood and remembered. In addition to its cognitive benefits, meaningfulness has been shown to generate emotional responses among viewers. Wu and Dodoo (2017) emphasize that advertisements perceived as meaningful are more likely to evoke emotional engagement, which helps establish a stronger psychological connection between the audience and the message. This emotional resonance further contributes to enhanced advertisement recall, as consumers tend to remember content that stimulates both cognitive understanding and emotional involvement. So, let's assume;

H2: Ad Meaningfulness will have a significant effect on viewers' attitudes (attitude towards an ad, attitude towards a brand, and attitude towards purchase intention) while controlling for individuals' perceptions of meaningfulness.

When combined with novelty, meaningfulness plays a pivotal role in creating a comprehensive and impactful advertising experience. While novelty primarily captures the audience's initial attention, it is the meaningfulness of the message that sustains engagement and deepens the viewer's understanding, as highlighted by Ang et al. (2012). Novelty alone may generate momentary interest, but without meaningful content, the advertising message is less likely to resonate or be retained in memory over time. By integrating novelty and meaningfulness, advertisers can adopt a more holistic approach that not only draws attention but also ensures lasting cognitive and emotional impact.

The third creative dimension, emotionality, is equally critical in enhancing advertising effectiveness. Emotional content in advertisements helps capture viewers' attention, strengthens recall, and fosters a positive perception of the brand and the advertisement itself. Guitart and Stremersch (2021) note that emotionally charged advertisements stand out in a crowded media environment because they evoke strong emotional responses that create memorable viewing experiences. Furthermore, Stout and Leckenby (1986) emphasize that emotionality is directly associated with favorable attitudes toward the brand, the advertisement, and its content. Emotional engagement facilitates a deeper



Vol. 3 No. 12 (Dec) (2025)

connection between the audience and the message, influencing perceptions and attitudes. By generating positive emotional associations, emotionally resonant ads can have lasting effects on consumer behavior and brand perception. So, let's assume that;

H3: Ad Emotionality will have a significant effect on viewers' attitudes (attitude towards an ad, attitude towards a brand and attitude towards purchase intention) while controlling for individual's perceptions of emotionality

When emotionality is integrated with novelty and meaningfulness, it produces a synergistic effect, forming a comprehensive set of creative elements in advertising. Ang and colleagues (2000) highlight that the combination of these three dimensions creates a holistic and engaging advertisement, in which each element complements the others. Emotionality draws attention and elicits audience responses, while novelty and meaningfulness enhance coherence, relevance, and relatability of the content. This integrated approach ensures that advertisements not only capture initial interest but also sustain engagement and leave a lasting impression on viewers. In essence, the triad of emotionality, novelty, and meaningfulness strengthens the creative appeal of advertisements, enabling them to resonate more effectively with audiences and maximize positive reception.

Effects and Impacts

The way viewers perceive and respond to advertising is profoundly influenced by creative content. Advertisements that are original, meaningful, and emotionally engaging tend to leave lasting impressions on consumers. Research by Ang and Low (2000) and other scholars has shown that creative features such as humor, emotionality, and storytelling elicit stronger emotional reactions, which in turn enhance positive brand associations and improve brand memory. For instance, Smith and Yang (2004) found that advertisements lacking originality or meaningful content often fail to capture attention, leaving viewers disengaged or indifferent. Similarly, Zhang (1996) reported that repetitive or uninspired commercials are more likely to be ignored or actively avoided, reducing their effectiveness in conveying brand messages and influencing consumer behavior.

These findings suggest that creative advertising has a measurable impact on viewers, promoting favorable emotional responses, higher brand recall, and positive consumer attitudes. Conversely, advertisements that lack creativity struggle to engage audiences, limiting their ability to achieve marketing objectives. By incorporating innovative, emotionally resonant, or humorous elements, marketers can better capture audience attention and enhance memory retention. Studies by Ang and Low (2000) further indicate that memorable advertisements are those that sustain attention while evoking strong emotional reactions, whereas uninspired ads are quickly forgotten. Overall, these insights underscore the importance of creativity in shaping audience perceptions, enhancing recall, and driving desired consumer responses. Having said that, let's assume.

H4: Creative ads will have a significant relationship on aided recall than non-creative ads.

H5: Creative ads will have a significant relationship on unaided recall than non-creative ads.

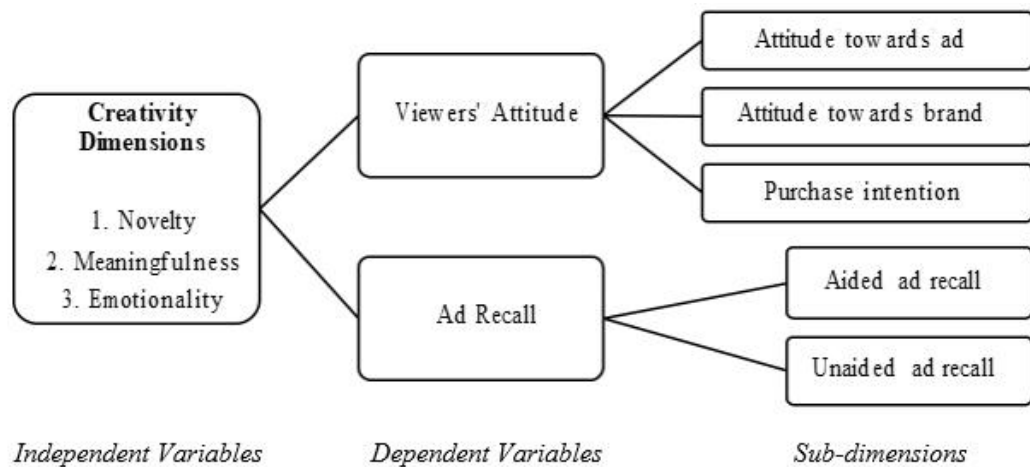


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Method

Research Design

This research study used a quantitative approach using experiments to collect data, to delve into creativity dimensions within advertising campaigns and their influence on consumer perceptions and behaviors. Observations were recorded through questionnaires after the experiment was done. A series of experiments were conducted. To find out more accurate results that could then easily be generalized, it was chosen to perform 6 series of experiments. 3 assemblies were made, and each assembly comprised of 2 groups, experimental group and control group.

Population and Sampling

The study population is bachelor students at Foundation University School of Sciences and Technology (FUSST) with an age spectrum of 18 to 22 years. Since the study aims to find out whether or not viewers get attracted to ads comprising specific kinds of creativity dimensions, it was favourable to collect data from young minds that are more prone to technology and have a keen eye towards modern aesthetics.

The sample size was 180 students and the sample was created through simple random sampling or randomization. Two groups were made, an Experimental and a Control group so that both of them could be compared. To make this comparison as fair as possible, the groups need to be as similar as possible. Almost similar number of people of each gender were assigned. Participants were randomly assigned people.

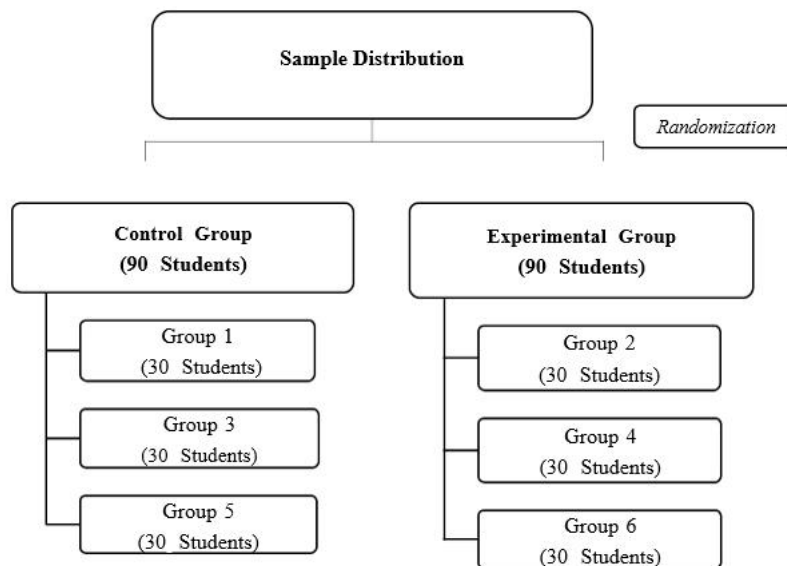


Figure 2: Sample Distribution

Experimental Design and Setup

Two types of ads were chosen to show the audience for each set. One with no creativity dimension covered and the other comprising all three creativity dimensions.

Different things were kept in consideration while choosing the ads. English, Hindi and Urdu languages were on priority for selecting ads so that students could easily understand them. People often have developed their pre-recognized opinions regarding specific ads that are of their own country, therefore to avoid biases, international ads were chosen. Ads for everyday products were shown so that respondents could easily resonate with them. Those include 1. Milk Ads (Milo and Fairlife), 2. Coffee Ads (Nescafe and Voltabean), 3. Chips Ads (Lays and Sabritas).

Data Collection

Students were grouped for the experiments and their observations were recorded via questionnaires once the experiment was over. Measures were adapted to note the responses from different sets of variables. i.e. novelty, meaningfulness and emotionality, and the effect of these creativity dimensions on dependent variables which include attitude towards ad, attitude towards brand and attitude towards purchase intention. There were 6 versions of questionnaires created. Each version asked relevant questions related to the ad shown for ad recall, with differing aided and unaided ad recall questions. Questionnaire items were adapted from existing measures. Details are given in table 1. To assure validity and reliability, Prior to the final experiment, the researcher conducted a pretest of the measuring instrument to assess its reliability. The pretest involved 30 respondents sampled from the population, and the reliability of the scale was checked using SPSS. The results indicated that all scales had Cronbach's Alpha coefficients ≤ 0.7 suggesting internal consistency.

Table 1: Constructs Variables, Scale, Indicators and Source

Construct	Variable	Items	Source
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Creativity Dimensions	Novelty	6	Sheinins etal (2011)
	Meaningfulness	6	Lastovicka, (1983)
	Emotionality	2	Hill etal (1986)
	Attitude towards Ad	5	Biehal and colleagues (1992)
Viewers Attitude	Attitude towards brand	4	Singh and colleagues (2018).
	Attitude towards purchase intention	3	Singh and colleagues (2018)
Recall	Aided Recall	3	Niederdeppe, 2005
	Unaided Recall	3	Niederdeppe, 2005

Data Analysis

To effectively present the findings of the study, data was collected through an experimental study using SPSS 21 statistical software. Tables and graphs were used to display the results. The internal consistency of items was measured using reliability statistics, and group descriptions were analyzed by examining the means to gain a comprehensive understanding of the data. These statistical measures provided insights into the tendencies and variabilities within each group. Additionally, the relationship between creativity dimensions and viewer attitudes among the groups was assessed using ANCOVA Tests.

Hypotheses H1a through H3c, which tested the effect of the three creativity dimensions on the continuous dependent variables (Attitude towards the ad, Attitude towards the Brand, and Purchase Intention), were analyzed using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA). This test controlled the viewers' Perception (P) of the respective creativity dimension to ensure the measured effect was purely due to the ad manipulation and not pre-existing perception. Hypotheses H4 and H5, which compared creative versus non-creative ads on Aided Recall and Unaided Recall, were analyzed using Independent Samples t-tests.

Results of ANCOVA Testing (H1, H2, H3) The ANCOVA results, detailed in Table 2, indicate that all hypotheses related to Novelty, Meaningfulness, and Emotionality were supported at a high level of statistical significance ($p < 0.05$).

Table 2: Anova Results

Hypothesis	Test Applied	F-Value (df)	p-Value	CG Mean	CG Mean	Result
H1a	ANCOVA	42.45 (1, 178)	.00	2.10	3.49	Supported
H1b	ANCOVA	46.45 (1, 178)	.00	10.60	14.50	Supported
H1c	ANCOVA	68.78 (1, 178)	.00	7.66	11.40	Supported
H2a	ANCOVA	16.39 (1, 178)	.00	2.06	3.52	Supported



Vol. 3 No. 12 (Dec) (2025)

H2b	ANCOVA	22.59 (1, 178)	.00	2.07	3.52	Supported
H2c	ANCOVA	36.41 (1, 178)	.00	8.01	11.11	Supported
H3a	ANCOVA	46.29 (1, 178)	.00	1.77	3.82	Supported
H3b	ANCOVA	92.91 (1, 178)	.00	9.55	15.65	Supported
H3c	ANCOVA	117.80 (1, 178)	.00	7.01	12.11	Supported

Note: CG-Control Group, EG -Experimental Group

In all cases, the mean scores for the Experimental Group (EG), exposed to creative dimensions, were markedly higher than the Control Group (CG), confirming the strong positive impact of the creative element after controlling for perceived differences.

To Test H4 and H5 , the independent samples t-tests were conducted to directly compare the effectiveness of the advertisements on viewer memory. Specifically, the test compared the mean recall scores of the Experimental Group (EG), which saw ads with the creative dimensions, against the Control Group (CG), which saw non-creative ads. Both hypotheses related to recall were strongly supported (all $p=0.00$), indicating that the difference in memory scores between the two groups is highly significant and not due to chance.

Table 3: Test Statistics for Aided and Unaided Recall

Hypotheses	Dependent Variable (DV)	Test Applied	CG Mean	EG Mean	p-Value	Result
H4	Aided Recall	T-Test	1.08	2.60	0.00	Supported
H5	Unaided Recall	T-Test	0.70	2.05	0.00	Supported

Hypothesis 4, indicating that creative ads are significantly more effective in generating aided recall was supported ($p=0.00$). Aided recall measures recognition (recalling information when prompted with cues). The significant result means that when viewers were given memory cues (e.g., brand list, product category), those who saw the creative advertisements (EG) were able to recognize and recall the advertisement or brand at a significantly higher rate than those who saw the non-creative advertisements (CG).

Hypothesis 5 that creative ads are significantly more effective in generating unaided recall was supported ($p=0.00$). Unaided recall measures spontaneous memory (recalling information without any cues). This is considered a stronger measure of memory strength. The mean unaided recall score for the Experimental Group (EG), exposed to creative advertisements, was 2.05, which is significantly higher than the mean score for the Control Group (CG), which was 0.70. The analysis indicates that viewers' perceptions and responses to advertisements are strongly influenced by the presence of creative elements. Advertisements that incorporate originality, meaningfulness, and emotional appeal were associated with higher levels of audience engagement and more



Vol. 3 No. 12 (Dec) (2025)

favorable attitudes toward the brand. Specifically, creative features such as humor, emotionality, and storytelling were observed to elicit stronger emotional reactions, which contributed to enhanced brand associations and improved recall. These results are consistent with previous findings by Ang and Low (2000), who reported that creative advertising increases both emotional impact and memory retention.

Conversely, advertisements lacking in originality or meaningful content were less effective in capturing viewers' attention. In these cases, audiences exhibited lower engagement, and recall performance was reduced. This pattern aligns with observations by Smith and Yang (2004), who found that uninspired ads often fail to hold viewer interest, and with Zhang (1996), who noted that repetitive or unoriginal commercials are more likely to be ignored or actively avoided.

Overall, the data suggest that integrating creativity into advertising—through novelty, meaningfulness, and emotional appeal—enhances both cognitive and emotional responses. Ads that are perceived as innovative and emotionally engaging not only attract attention but also create lasting impressions, thereby supporting positive brand perceptions and increasing the likelihood of consumer action.

Conclusion:

This study confirms that creative advertisements significantly outperform non-creative ads in influencing viewer attitudes and recall. Using experimental design, the Experimental Group (EG), exposed to ads featuring novelty, meaningfulness, and emotionality, showed significantly better attitudes toward the ads and the brand, as well as superior aided and unaided recall, compared to the Control Group (CG).

These findings highlight that successful advertising depends fundamentally on the dynamic interaction between creativity and consumer engagement. By employing novelty to capture attention, infusing content with meaning, and evoking genuine emotion, marketers can dramatically enhance consumer response and foster lasting relationships.

For industries, particularly in Pakistan, this research serves as a mandate to elevate creative standards. Contemporary consumers, especially the youth, demand intellectually stimulating and relevant advertisements that resonate with their worldview. Instead of relying on large budgets, advertisers should focus on adopting modern creative techniques that strategically blend novelty, relevance, and emotional appeal to effectively engage large audiences and boost marketing effectiveness.

Recommendation for Future Research

- i. The data collected in the study was limited to only one university
- ii. This study only examined three specific dimensions of creativity and their effects. Future researchers can add additional dimensions and explore their effects further.
- iii. This study examined only three sub-variables of attitude including attitude towards ads, brand and purchase intention. Future researchers can see the effect of creative advertisements on several other variables of attitude.



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Vol. 3 No. 12 (Dec) (2025)

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Vol. 3 No. 12 (Dec) (2025)

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