

INFORMATION CUES AND EMOTIONAL APPEALS IN MAGAZINE ADVERTISEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The aim of this study is to reveal how advertising messages were constructed in Turkish magazines, in addition to revealing the state of Turkish magazines in the span of seven years. **Methodology:** A content analysis has been conducted to reveal the usage levels of information cues and emotional appeals on 876 advertisements published in Turkish magazines in February 2018, 2021, and 2024. **Results:** Magazines carry a lower number of ads compared to 2018, with some exceptions. Information cues are present in all ads, while emotional appeals are found in 35,3%. There is a statistically significant difference in Price/Value, Quality, Availability, Independent Research, Company Research and New Ideas cues and humor appeal across the years. The most used emotional appeal is the warmth appeal (23,9%), and it is followed by nostalgia (5,8%), eroticism (5,3%), humor (2,5%) and fear (1,9%). **Discussion and conclusions:** Print magazines are facing challenges in an increasingly digital environment. In addition, the effects of the pandemic are evident in the advertisements published in 2021, according to our findings. However, not all magazines are the same. Some of the magazines have a higher ad-to-total page number

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ratio compared to 2018. Another factor affecting magazine advertising and advertisers in general is the economic challenges. These are reflected in the use of cues and appeals. Among the emotional appeals, warmth may be relatively low-risk compared to the rest, and this may explain their lower percentages.

Keywords: Information cues, advertising appeals, emotional appeals, print advertising, magazine advertising.

1. INTRODUCTION

What to say and how to say it? These are two essential questions that advertising professionals must answer in the process of creating an advertisement. It can be said that these are also important research topics for academics. The information content of advertisements is sometimes regarded as informational/rational appeals by the researchers working in this field. For example, De Pelsmacker et al. (2013) list information cues under the topic of informational appeals. Many researchers are using the classification system proposed by Resnik and Stern (1977). Taylor et al. (1997) studied the effects of information level in TV commercials in a cross-cultural context, Abernethy et al. (1997) highlighted the information strategy differences in radio advertising for products and services, Çekiç-Akyol (2011) studied information content of magazine ads.

In the process of developing an advertising campaign, choosing the right appeal is one of the important steps of the creative strategy phase. Many scholars have worked on advertising appeals in various forms. Pollay (1983) called them “cultural values” while Davies (1993) preferred to name their message appeals like many other academics. Appeals on newspapers (Leonidou & Leonidou, 2009), magazines (De Pelsmacker & Geuens, 1997), television (Cantor, 1976), radio (Janssens & Pelsmacker, 2005), and the web (Dobrenova et al., 2019) have been studied. Some studies focused on the effects of various appeals such as grabbing the viewers’ attention (Bae, 2016), helping them recall advertising messages (Grigaliunaite & Pileliene, 2016), increasing the purchase intention (Lwin & Phau, 2013) or enhancing the attitude toward the ad (Akbari, 2015). Advertising appeals have been a topic of interest in Türkiye too. Scholars have studied fear appeals in political ads (Balci, 2006), sex appeals in TV commercials (Şahin, 2014), humor appeals in financial services commercials (Zengin, 2017), emotional appeals in general in public service announcements (Tarakcı, 2019).

The main contribution of this study is to reveal the state of magazine advertising in Türkiye by examining advertisements over a seven-year period. More specifically, we investigate the use of information cues and emotional appeals, and how these vary across the years studied and different product/service categories. Thus, our research problem relates to the current state of magazines and the advertisements they carry in Türkiye, in addition to the information cues and the emotional appeals used in the ads published in these magazines. Studies focusing on information cues in magazine advertising in Türkiye have been scarce, particularly in recent years; this study provides up-to-date data on the topic. As the media landscape continues to shift toward digital, it is crucial for advertisers and publishers to examine changes in print

advertising and its content. It should also be noted that, in contrast to some other studies, this research considers all elements of an advertisement and does not limit the unit of analysis solely to headings or images.

1.1. Advertising Appeals

An advertising appeal is “an approach used to attract the attention of the consumers and/or influence their feelings toward the product, service, or cause” (Belch & Belch, 2018, p. 303). There are different classifications of advertising appeals. Some academics focus on a handful of appeals, while others are listing more than 40 appeals. Clow and Baack (2018, pp. 181-182) list seven appeals as the most successful ones: Fear, humor, sex, music, rationality, emotions, and scarcity. De Pelsmacker and Geuens (1997, pp. 126-128) focused on 5 emotional appeals: Humor, warmth, nostalgia, eroticism, and fear.

Some researchers have identified more appeals. Hetsroni (2000, pp. 60-61) listed 25 ad appeals, which are drawn from the literature. These are adventure, beauty, collectivism, competition, excellence, convenience, courtesy, saving, efficiency, joy/happiness, family, health, individualism, leisure, modernization, charity, patriotism, popularity, quality, safety, sex, tradition, wealth, wisdom, and youthful spirit. Elden and Bakır (2010, pp. 89-90) identified 31 ad appeals that are “used heavily in advertising”: Product/service features, comparison, saving/economy, scarcity, magic, music, sex, masculinity/femininity, humor, popularity, safety, morality, patriotism, adventure, youth, maturity, curiosity, nostalgia, warmth, modernity, naturalness, health, environmentalism, social status, individualism/collectivism, freedom, sincerity, success, fear, shock, and guilt. Pollay (1983, pp. 80-84) listed 42 appeals. See Tarakcı (2019, pp. 107-119) for more on the several classifications that were put forward by researchers.

There are two appeal categories at the broadest level: Rational (or informational) and emotional. Rational appeals focus on utilitarian needs and emphasize features and benefits using strong arguments. Emotional appeals aim to satisfy consumers’ emotional desires rather than their utilitarian needs (Grewal & Levy, 2008, pp. 496-497; Copley, 2004, p. 125). Emotional appeals can be both positive and negative. Positive emotional appeals are used to produce feelings that evoke favorable evaluations of a brand. Negative appeals are about the consequences of an action or inaction of the consumer (Copley, 2004, p. 125).

1.2. Emotional Appeals

Emotional appeals are viewed as a subtle soft-sell approach aiming to influence the consumers’ feelings (Fennis & Stroebe, 2010, p. 4).

1.2.1. Humor

Advertisers want to cut through the message clutter and capture the attention of their intended audiences, which is a difficult goal to achieve. The usage of humor offers a solution to this problem. Humorous ads can capture and maintain the attention of consumers (Clow & Baack, 2018, p. 184).

It should also be noted that humor should be handled with care. Drewniany and Jewler (2008, pp. 16-17) point out that many Super Bowl ads use humor, but even if they become popular, they still may be flops in terms of sales. The authors elaborate that advertising professionals should not avoid the use of humor but use it strategically.

There is a lack of consensus in the categorization of humor types in advertising literature. Crawford and Gregory (2015, p. 571) listed humor categorizations and concluded that these categorizations mainly classify humor according to content. Speck (1991, pp. 11-16)'s "Humorous Message Taxonomy" identifies five categories: Comic wit, sentimental humor, satire, sentimental wit, and full comedy. Catanescu and Tom (2001, p. 93) proposed the taxonomy of comparison, exaggeration, personification, pun, sarcasm, silliness, and surprise.

1.2.2. Warmth

Warmth is defined as a positive, mild, volatile emotion involving physiological arousal and is caused by experiencing direct or indirect love, family, or friendship relationship. It is important to point out that this is a mild emotion, and it differs from strong emotions like fear and anger (Aaker et al., 1986, p. 366).

According to Elden and Bakır (2010, pp. 106-107), the increased use of warmth appeal in advertising can be attributed to the increased need of advertisers to create emotional bonds with their target audience. They listed some examples from advertisements such as: A couple wrapped themselves in a blanket, cuddling and drinking coffee; a happy family on the way to their vacation; two close friends chatting on the phone, a mother bathing her baby with great compassion. The authors argue that in all these examples, the advertised brand is either a part or the creator of the happy and joyful moments that are filled with love and pride.

1.2.3. Nostalgia

Upon reviewing the marketing literature on nostalgia, Kessous and Roux (2008, p. 195) found that there are multiple definitions of nostalgia: An evocation, a mood, a preference, an emotion, an emotional state, or an affective reaction. Holbrook and Schindler (1991, pp. 330-331) define nostalgia as a preference toward objects that were more common when one was younger, but no longer commonly experienced. According to Elden and Bakır (2010, p. 106) nostalgia corresponds to the desire for positive experiences that one had in the past (which the individual misses and idealizes). The authors list sample usages in advertisements as: The usage of images from the past, reminders of good old times, customs and traditions. They point out that many Turkish advertisements aired on Ramadan use nostalgia appeal.

Unger et al. (1991, p. 350) studied nostalgia in the context of television commercials. Out of the 1031 commercials, 102 (10%) were identified as nostalgic. According to their findings, period-oriented symbols and music were the most common nostalgic elements. This is followed by references to “olden days” and past family experiences.

1.2.4. Eroticism

Sutherland (2008, pp. 117-118) argues that sex is one of the attention-getting devices used in advertising along with humor. Advertising needs to cut through message clutter and attract the attention of the consumer. Shimp (2007, pp. 315-316) lists several roles of using sex appeal in advertising and puts attracting attention to the top spot. He argues that the use of this appeal also helps to hold attention for a longer period. The second role is to enhance recall, but only if the advertised product has a relationship with the advertising execution. The third one is evoking emotional responses. However, the relevance of sexual content to the advertised product still plays an important role.

Shimp (2007, p. 316) states that sexual content in advertising stands little chance of being effective unless there is a direct relevance factor. Sutherland (2008, p. 118) on the other hand points to the fact that getting the consumers’ attention is only the first step and the ads that consumers are highly aware of may be ineffective too. In addition, Clow and Baack (2018, p. 185) argue that sex in advertising has lost its shock value in a world where teens are immersed in it. Shimp (2007, pp. 316-317) also draws attention to the ethical issues about portraying women and men as sex objects.

1.2.5. Fear

Fear appeals identify the negative consequences of not using the advertised brand or engaging in unsafe behavior. There are two fundamental forms of consumer fears: Social disapproval (social risk) and physical dangers (Shimp, 2007, p. 312). The advertising for mouthwashes and deodorants uses fear appeal in the form of social disapproval: “If you do not use the advertised product, you might not have a fresh breath, and your friends may avoid you”. The advertising for insurance companies and automobile tires uses fear appeals in the form of physical danger: “If you do not use our tires, you might not stop in time to avoid an accident”. In addition, De Pelsmacker et al. (2013, p. 225) list several types of risks in advertising as: (1) Physical risk: The risk of bodily harm, (2) Social risk: The risk of social disapproval, (3) Time risk: The risk of spending unnecessarily long time, (4) Performance risk: The risk of product performing poorly, (5) Financial risk: The risk of losing money, (6) Opportunity loss: The risk of missing special opportunities.

Fear appeals have been extensively studied in the advertising literature. Balcı (2006, p. 434) studied the use of fear appeal in political advertising of three election periods (1995, 1999, and 2002) and revealed that political parties do not prefer to use fear appeal in their ads for the most part. The ratio of fear appeals never exceeded 15% in the sampled timeframe. Shin et al. (2017, p. 485) studied the effectiveness of fear appeals along with consumer and source variables in the context of green advertising. Their findings indicate that fear appeals affect attitudes toward ads and advertised products

negatively. There is also the case of using multiple appeals in one advertisement. Mukherjee and Dubé (2012, p. 153) studied the effects of fear appeals when another emotional appeal, humor appeal is present. Their findings revealed that the use of humor can reduce defensive responses to advertising messages and increase persuasiveness.

1.2.6. Information Cues

Resnik and Stern (1977, pp. 50-51) explored the information content of TV advertising: Every advertisement conveys some information, but do these information cues assist consumers in making intelligent choices among competing brands? The authors argue that in order to be considered as informative it must provide cues that enable viewers to better achieve their objectives. They proposed a system for the classification of information cues. There are 14 criteria for classification as informative or non-informative (Stern et al., 1981, p. 40). Some of these are category-specific: Taste and nutrition cues can only be found in advertising for food. Another cue, “packaging or shape” is not applicable to services.

The Resnik and Stern (1977) classification is widely used in the literature. Abernethy and Butler (1996, p. 415) studied information cues in newspaper advertisements and compared ads for services to ads for products. Their findings indicated that service advertising had less information than product advertising. In another study on newspaper advertisements, Abernethy (1996, p. 67) found that newspaper ads were information-rich, compared to magazine and television ads. Choi et al. (2006, pp. 199-201) compared magazine, television, and web advertisements. In addition to 14 information cues proposed by Resnik and Stern (1977), the authors added 5 new categories (800 number, web address, mail-in address, brand name, and disclaimer). They have found that the advent of the web did not decrease the amount of information in traditional media advertising. They also found that advertisements in magazines and television are used to redirect consumers to sources where they can find more information. They argue that, since space and time are limited for ads, it might be reasonable to redirect consumers to other sources. Çekiç-Akyol (2011, p. 174) added “Corporate information” and “Product variety” cues to the 14 cues and analyzed five Turkish magazines from 2009. According to her findings, almost all ads (98,4%) in the sample contained at least one information cue. The most common cues are corporate information cue (95,1%), packaging and shape cue (76,5%) and quality cue (36%).

2. OBJECTIVES

The aim of this study was to analyze the use of information cues and emotional appeals in Turkish magazines over a span of seven years, and to assess the current state of these magazines. According to the literature review, the following three research questions are formulated:

RQ1: What is the current state of magazines in Türkiye?

RQ2: What is the current state of advertising in Turkish magazine advertisements?

RQ3: Which emotional appeals are used most in Turkish magazine ads?

RQ4: Which information cues are used most in Turkish magazine ads?

3. METODOLOGY

This study uses content analysis and utilizes the information classification system developed by Resnik and Stern (1977). Kassarian (1977) defines content analysis as “*a scientific, objective, systematic, quantitative, and generalizable description of communications content.*” The Resnik-Stern system sets out 14 information cues (see Table 1). According to Stern et al. (1981, p. 40), these cues allow the consumer to make intelligent choices. Some researchers, using the Resnik-Stern categorization added more cues (e.g., Taylor, 1983) some combined cues to make it better fit their study (e.g., De Pelsmacker & Geuens, 1997) and some omitted cues that are not related to the specific product/service categories they are examining (e.g., Jones & Smythe, 2003). Since differences in measurement procedures may hamper the possibility of comparison with other studies, in this study it was intended to use the original 14 information cues. However, in the light of the pre-test conducted, it was decided to separate the availability cue into two. Address and contact information (store location, web address, handles of social media accounts, telephone number) are separated from other cues of availability like time of availability, or text such as “Available in select stores”. In addition, another cue, variety, is added to the list of cues, since some ads may inform consumers about the existence of various versions of the product. The resulting information cues were: Price/value, quality, performance, components or contents, availability, special offers, taste, nutrition, packaging or shape, guarantees and warranties, safety, independent research, company research, new ideas, variety, and address.

This study limits the scope of appeals to emotional appeals and uses De Pelsmacker and Geuens (1997, pp. 126-137)’s five emotional appeals, namely, humor, warmth, nostalgia, eroticism, and fear. These are listed below. De Pelsmacker and Geuens also studied “provocation” as an emotional appeal and omitted it from the results upon their findings, thus it is also omitted from this study.

3.1. Criteria for Classification as an Emotional Appeal

Humor: Catanescu and Tom (2001, p. 93)’s taxonomy of humor, which includes comparison, exaggeration, personification, pun, sarcasm, silliness, and surprise was employed.

Warmth: De Pelsmacker and Geuens (1997), pointing to a lack of taxonomy of warmth appeal, propose their own which includes: Family situations and love. Core family (man, woman, child or children), couple, woman and child, man and child, grandparent(s) and child, children, friends. Love and affection for animals, a country

or a football team, etc. Depictions of genuine happiness were also treated as an indication of warmth appeal in this study.

Nostalgia: This study uses Unger et al. (1991, p. 350)'s taxonomy of nostalgic elements in advertising: References to past family experiences, and references to "olden days", period-oriented symbolism, references to old brands. Another nostalgic element according to the authors is patriotism, but this study excludes this element. They also listed "period-oriented music" in their taxonomy, but it is not applicable to this study as this study focuses on magazine advertisements.

Eroticism: De Pelsmacker and Geuens's (1997) criteria were used in this study. An ad should include one of the following to be identified as using eroticism appeal: Suggestive language, suggestive looks, suggestive posture, suggestiveness and physical contact between men and women, suggestion of sexual intercourse; seductively dressed, semi-nude or nude models.

Fear: De Pelsmacker et al. (2013, p. 225) lists several types of risks, such as physical risk (the risk of bodily harm), social risk (the risk of social disapproval), time risk (the risk of spending unnecessarily long time), performance risk (the risk of the product performing poorly), financial risk (the risk of losing money), and opportunity loss (the risk of missing special opportunities). An ad should include at least one of these to be identified as using fear appeal.

3.2. Sampling

A total of 24 magazines were selected at the beginning of this study in the year 2018. A wide variety and the selection of at least one magazine from each category were bought. However, in 2021 and 2024, we were not able to buy some of the magazines since they went out of publication. Two of those magazines were supplemented with appropriate alternatives. Five magazines from this set were selected for pre-testing. Thus, the final sample consisted of 16 magazines. No special issues are included in the sample. Supplements that were included with some of the magazines were also omitted from the sample. All magazines were bought in print form and no digital versions were used since it was found in the pre-testing phase that digital versions may have different ads from the print version or may leave out ads completely.

Following Stern et al. (1981, p. 40)'s sampling frame, February was selected to avoid holiday and post-holiday advertising since some advertisers are using the last month of the year to celebrate the new year with advertisements that contain little information, other than a brand name and an accompanying text like "We wish a sweet new year".

All single and double-page advertisements are included with the exception of the publishers' own ads (i.e. ads for the publisher's other magazines and books). Although Abernethy and Franke (1996, p. 5) suggest that smaller than full-page ads should be included since they are common and they are rich in information cues, the magazines in this study's sample contained a very low number of small ads (one ad per magazine or none). In addition, the coding sheet for this study did not include ad size, since it is

outside of the scope of this study. Advertorials are also omitted. However, duplicate advertisements were not omitted in this study since one of the aims of this study is to reveal what type of information cues and emotional appeals are used commonly in various magazines. This resulted in 876 ads to be included in the final sample.

3.3. Coding procedure and data analysis

The unit of analysis is each magazine ad in this study. The two authors of this study attributed the advertisements to the defined categories discussed above. We noted the product or service type, the information cues that were communicated, and the emotional appeals used on the coding sheet for every advertisement as present or absent. We also noted whether the advertising is informative or non-informative. An advertisement was considered informative if it communicated at least one of Resnik and Stern's (1977, p. 51) 14 information cues in addition to the added cues discussed above. Ads on the magazines that were bought in 2018 were coded in the same year, however, they were re-coded in 2024 to ensure consistency.

It is important to note that all elements of the ads were analyzed in this study contrary to some studies limiting analysis to heading or visuals. We read all of the text in the advertisements, including the body copy, and analyzed all the visuals presented in the ads.

Pre-tests were conducted on five magazines that were not included in the final sample. Cohen's Kappa was calculated and there was a perfect agreement ($\kappa=1,000$) for 80% of cases. The Kappa value ranged between $\kappa=0,738$ and $\kappa=0,904$ for the remaining cases, which indicates moderate to strong reliability (McHugh, 2012). We coded all the ads together and discrepancies were solved by discussion until 100% agreement was reached.

4. RESULTS

Table 1 shows the number of advertisements in each magazine, in addition to the total page numbers of specific issues. The ad-to-total page number ratio is also presented in the table.

Table 1

Distribution of advertisements across the years, number of pages and the ratio of advertisements

	2018			2021			2024			Total		
	Ads	Pages	%	Ads	Pages	%	Ads	Pages	%	Ads	Pages	%
Atlas	15	116	12,9	11	100	11,0	14	100	14,0	40	316	12,7
Capital	45	236	19,1	34	204	16,7	27	164	16,5	106	604	17,5
Ceolife	18	124	14,5	13	116	11,2	10	124	8,1	41	364	11,3
Derin Tarih	12	124	9,7	13	108	12,0	14	148	9,5	39	380	10,3
Formsante	-	-	-	7	84	8,3	7	84	8,3	14	168	8,3
Level	9	116	7,8	3	116	2,6	4	116	3,4	16	348	4,6
Maison Française	54	236	22,9	30	196	15,3	40	196	20,4	124	628	19,7
MediaCat	21	98	21,4	15	98	15,3	21	100	21,0	57	296	19,3

NatGeo	22	168	13,1	6	100	6,0	-	-	-	28	268	10,4
Oto Haber	12	116	10,3	10	84	11,9	9	84	10,7	31	284	10,9
PopSci	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	100	3,0	3	100	3,0
Sofra	14	84	16,7	8	84	9,5	16	116	13,8	38	284	13,4
ŞamdanPlus	25	140	17,9	19	132	14,4	14	108	13,0	58	380	15,3
Vogue	42	264	15,9	21	248	8,5	35	242	14,5	98	754	13,0
Womens Health	20	132	15,2	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	132	15,2
Yacht	75	212	35,4	43	132	32,6	45	140	32,1	163	484	33,7
Total	384	2166	17,7	233	1802	12,9	259	1822	14,2	876	5790	15,1

Source: Own elaboration



















The total number of pages and ads is higher in 2018 compared to 2021 and 2024. The magazine with the most ads is Yacht, although it is not the magazine with the highest number of pages. That title belongs to Vogue. It can also be seen that the ad ratio is declining in general, with a few exceptions like the Atlas magazine. It should be noted that magazines used in this study were bought in their respective years for this study. Some of the magazines ceased publication after data collection started, and these were supplemented with equivalent magazines. For example, we collected data from Formsante instead of Women's Health magazine for the years 2021 and 2024. These are marked with a dash on the table.

When product/service categories were examined, it can be seen that most encountered categories are related to yachting (13,6%) and furniture/household goods (11,8%). When categories are cross-tabulated with years to break down the data, these two categories kept their top spot for all three years examined. In addition, the data reveals that the number of ads for health, automotive, and durable consumer goods has decreased, while retail ads have increased. An interesting finding is that the number of ads in certain categories declined in 2021, followed by a resurgence in 2024 (possibly due to the effects of the pandemic). These are, recreation/leisure/holiday, events, transportation, building materials, banking/insurance/finance.

Table 2

Percentages of information cues and emotional appeals across the years and statistical significance

		2018	2021	2024	Graph	Sig	All Years
Information cues							
Price/Value	%	10,9	1,7	1,9		*	5,8
	n	42	4	5			51
Quality	%	42,2	27	34,7		*	36
	n	162	63	90			315
Performance	%	62,8	71,2	66,4			66,1
	n	241	166	172			579
Components or contents	%	26,6	21	27,8			25,5
	n	102	49	72			223
Availability	%	29,7	6,9	12,4		*	18,5
	n	114	16	32			162
Special offers	%	11,5	7,7	13,5			11,1

	n	44	18	35			97
Taste	%	2,6	1,3	0,8			1,7
	n	10	3	2			15
Packaging or shape	%	75,8	75,1	74,1			75,1
	n	291	175	192			658
Guarantees and warranties	%	2,9	2,1	3,1			2,7
	n	11	5	8			24
Safety	%	1,8	6	1,5		*	2,9
	n	7	14	4			25
Nutrition	%	0,8	0,9	0			0,6
	n	3	2	0			5
Independent research	%	5,7	1,3	0,8		*	3,1
	n	22	3	2			27
Company research	%	3,4	0,4	0		*	1,6
	n	13	1	0			14
New ideas	%	4,2	2,6	0,8		*	2,7
	n	16	6	2			24
Varieties	%	25,5	20,2	17,8			21,8
	n	98	47	46			191
Addresses	%	89,6	89,3	90,3			89,7
	n	344	208	234			718
Emotional appeals							
Humor	%	2,3	4,7	0,8		*	2,5
	n	9	11	2			22
Warmth	%	23,4	23,6	24,7			23,9
	n	90	55	64			209
Nostalgia	%	4,9	6	6,9			5,8
	n	19	14	18			51
Eroticism	%	4,9	3,4	7,3			5,3
	n	19	8	19			46
Fear	%	2,6	1,7	1,2			1,9
	n	10	4	3			17
Advertisements containing...							
At least one information cue	%	100	100	100			100
	n	384	233	259			876
At least one emotional appeal	%	33,6	37,3	35,9			35,3
	n	129	87	93			309

Source: Own elaboration

Table 2 presents changes among the scores of information cues and emotional appeals through the years. According to Pearson chi-square test results the following variables yielded significant results: Price/ value ($\chi^2(2) = 32,64$, $p = 0$), quality ($\chi^2(2) = 14,68$, $p < 0$), availability ($\chi^2(2) = 59,29$, $p = 0$), safety ($\chi^2(2) = 11,43$, $p < 0$), independent research ($\chi^2(2) = 16,14$, $p = 0$), company research ($\chi^2(2) = 14,03$, $p < 0$), new ideas ($\chi^2(2) = 6,72$, $p < 0$) and humor ($\chi^2(2) = 7,89$, $p < 0$). These are marked with an asterisk (*) in the table.

Table 3
Percentages of information cues/Emotional appeals among categories

	Food	Personal Care	Fashion and Clothing	Automotive	Electronics	Recreation/Leisure/Holiday	Insurance and Finance	Home/Residence	Furniture/Household Goods	Durable Consumer Goods	Other	Fuel	Events	Publishing	GSM Operator	Education	Transportation	Building Materials	Retail	B2B Services	Healthcare	Small Household Appliances	Yacht and yachting	Total
Price/Value	3,5	0,0	12,3	7,0	0,0	10,5	14,0	8,8	3,5	0,0	5,3	0,0	1,8	3,5	1,8	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	8,8	7,0	0,0	12,3	100
Quality	3,2	4,3	10,4	3,5	0,9	4,1	4,3	3,8	13,3	1,7	4,1	0,3	3,2	1,2	0,9	1,7	4,1	5,2	1,4	2,6	4,1	2,0	19,7	100
Performance	3,5	5,5	4,0	5,5	3,4	6,9	7,9	3,1	5,2	1,8	4,5	0,5	4,7	3,1	2,1	2,1	2,9	1,9	4,5	4,5	3,5	1,5	17,4	100
Components or contents	6,3	9,8	2,8	3,1	2,8	6,7	2,4	1,6	8,3	0,8	2,8	0,0	11,4	6,7	0,4	2,4	3,1	2,4	3,1	2,4	5,9	0,0	15,0	100
Availability	0,5	3,8	2,7	5,4	2,2	15,6	4,8	1,6	8,6	0,5	3,2	0,5	10,8	2,2	0,0	2,7	0,0	0,5	1,6	0,0	5,4	0,0	27,4	100
Special offers	1,8	1,8	7,3	3,7	0,0	18,3	7,3	9,2	4,6	0,0	6,4	0,0	7,3	1,8	5,5	0,9	0,0	0,0	3,7	1,8	2,8	0,0	15,6	100
Taste	63,2	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	10,5	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	5,3	0,0	5,3	0,0	15,8	0,0	0,0	100
Packaging/Shape	4,7	5,8	14,1	5,0	2,9	7,4	2,2	2,9	15,4	1,7	3,1	0,3	1,2	3,6	0,1	0,4	1,8	3,9	2,1	1,5	2,6	1,4	15,8	100
Guarantees/Warranties	7,4	3,7	0,0	22,2	0,0	7,4	3,7	14,8	3,7	0,0	3,7	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	3,7	0,0	11,1	0,0	3,7	14,8	0,0	100
Safety	3,1	6,3	6,3	12,5	9,4	15,6	3,1	0,0	0,0	0,0	6,3	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	6,3	0,0	0,0	9,4	12,5	0,0	9,4	100
Nutrition	50,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	10,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	10,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	30,0	0,0	0,0	100
Independent research	0,0	15,6	0,0	0,0	21,9	3,1	12,5	0,0	9,4	0,0	12,5	0,0	0,0	0,0	3,1	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	15,6	6,3	0,0	100
Company research	11,1	5,6	11,1	22,2	0,0	0,0	0,0	5,6	11,1	0,0	11,1	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	11,1	0,0	11,1	0,0	0,0	100
New ideas	7,1	10,7	3,6	10,7	7,1	0,0	14,3	3,6	7,1	3,6	3,6	0,0	3,6	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	3,6	0,0	3,6	0,0	0,0	17,9	100
Varieties	6,7	6,7	13,9	2,4	4,3	4,3	3,4	3,8	4,3	4,3	1,9	0,0	0,5	3,4	1,0	1,9	0,0	2,4	0,0	1,0	2,4	1,4	29,8	100
Adresses	2,5	3,9	10,9	3,6	1,5	7,9	5,8	2,7	12,6	1,1	4,3	0,2	6,0	4,1	1,3	2,1	1,8	3,3	3,5	3,3	2,9	1,1	13,8	100
Humor	4,2	0,0	4,2	4,2	4,2	4,2	4,2	4,2	0,0	0,0	12,5	0,0	4,2	12,5	12,5	0,0	0,0	0,0	20,8	0,0	0,0	0,0	8,3	100
Warmth	7,5	5,8	11,3	3,3	2,1	12,9	7,9	0,8	5,0	1,7	4,2	0,8	0,8	4,2	5,4	2,5	1,3	1,7	7,5	2,9	3,3	0,8	6,3	100
Nostalgia	9,3	0,0	3,7	0,0	0,0	16,7	5,6	5,6	14,8	3,7	0,0	1,9	9,3	24,1	0,0	0,0	0,0	5,6	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	100
Eroticism	0,0	12,0	14,0	4,0	0,0	32,0	0,0	0,0	2,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	6,0	2,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	2,0	0,0	0,0	2,0	0,0	24,0	100
Fear	5,3	10,5	0,0	10,5	0,0	0,0	21,1	0,0	0,0	0,0	15,8	0,0	10,5	0,0	5,3	0,0	0,0	0,0	10,5	10,5	10,5	0,0	0,0	100

Source: Own elaboration

Table 3 shows cross tabulation for product and service categories. Among all ads in our sample, the price/value cue is presented most in insurance and finance advertisements. However, this cue is not present in more than one-third of the categories. The quality and performance cues can be found in all categories, least in the fuel category. The taste and nutrition cues can be seen mostly in the food category. guarantees/warranties cue can be found in automotive ads the most. It is interesting that no electronics or durable consumer goods ads employed this cue. It is no surprise that the addresses cue is present in all categories. Independent research results are presented mostly in the electronics category, and it is followed by personal care and healthcare. On the other hand, company research is employed most by the automotive industry. When the table is examined for emotional appeals, it can be seen that warmth appeal is present in all categories, mostly in leisure/holiday category. Humor might be an important appeal; however, it is not present in every category. It is used most in the retail category. Fear appeal, on the other hand, is present most in the insurance and finance category. Eroticism appeal is present most on leisure/holiday and nostalgia appeal is in publishing. Table 3 also shows categories that are almost devoid of the emotional appeals studied. Only warmth appeal can be seen in education, small household appliances, and transportation categories.

Table 4

Changes in the number of cues used across the years

Number of Cues		2018	2021	2024	All Years
1	%	31,0	44,8	24,1	3,3
	n	9	13	7	29
2	%	39,1	32,7	28,2	17,8
	n	61	51	44	156
3	%	36,6	24,5	38,8	31,2
	n	100	67	106	273
4	%	41,8	28,0	30,2	21,6
	n	79	53	57	189
5	%	52,9	30,0	17,1	16
	n	74	42	24	140
6 or more	%	68,5	7,9	23,6	10,2
	n	61	7	21	89
Total	%	43,8	26,6	29,6	100
	n	384	233	259	876
Mean		3,95	3,34	3,45	3,64
SD		1,58	1,24	1,28	1,43

Source: Own elaboration

A one-way between-subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare means belonging to three time periods. A significant difference was found between the mean values of 2018, 2021, and 2024 ($F(2, 873) = 16,84, p = 0$). Post hoc comparisons indicated that the mean value for 2018 ($M=3,95; SD=1,58$) was significantly different from 2021 ($M=3,34;$

SD=1,24) and 2024 (M=3,45; SD=1,28), however, no significant difference was found between 2021 and 2024. In addition to time periods, when mean values are analyzed according to product/service categories, it can be seen that the top three categories are yachting (M=4,96; SD=1,45), home/residence (M=4,87; SD=1,05) and small household appliances (M=4,5; SD=1,41). As Table 4 shows, most of the ads contain three cues (31,2%). Maximum number of cues recorded is 9 (two ads in the yachting category and one ad in the healthcare category).

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this study, we have analyzed a total of 876 ads from 16 magazines published in 2018, 2021, and 2024 in Türkiye. Our aim was to analyze how the advertising messages were constructed (the use of information cues and emotional appeals) in addition to revealing the state of Turkish magazines in the span of seven years.

It is clear that the media landscape is changing. Digital media offers consumers more choices to read, listen, or watch and most of the time it is more accessible, more convenient, and more cost-effective than traditional offerings. It is widely known that printed newspapers have been in trouble for several years. Although printed magazines have different qualities and consumers might have different reasons to buy them compared to newspapers, the advantages of digital media might be outweighing the reasons to buy magazines. This, in turn, affects media planning choices of advertisers. In this digital age, is there really a reason for advertising in magazines? According to our findings, the total number of pages and the ratio of ads decreased when the 2018 and 2024 data were compared. However, the lowest point is not 2024, it is 2021. This might be related to the Covid pandemic. It should also be noted that, as stated in the methodology section, we started data collection for this study in 2018 with 24 magazines, and some of them ceased publication. This is in line with the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK) (2023) data showcasing declining numbers of magazines published in Türkiye between 2014 and 2022. It is very telling that in 2023, TÜİK issued a statement that it had stopped collecting data on print media, citing ever-shrinking state of the sector (2024). TÜİK also states declining sales of magazines (2021). The reports of one of the prominent magazine publishers in Türkiye, Doğan Burda, show similar data. Their results from 2018, 2021, and 2024 state declining number of sales (Doğan Burda, 2018; Doğan Burda, 2021; Doğan Burda, 2024). Change can also be seen in the physical state of magazines. In the seven-year timeframe of this study, the magazines we bought not only got pricier, but they also got worse in terms of paper and print quality. Although anecdotal, we can also add that we witnessed shrinking or disappearing magazine stands. These all paint a dark picture for print magazines, however, when the data is closely inspected it can be seen that all magazines are not the same. Some magazines have the same or higher ad-to-total page number ratio compared to 2018. In addition, some magazines like Yacht, Maison Française, and MediaCat are leading in all three years when ad ratio is concerned. It can be said that the demographics of these magazines' audience, especially their income, coupled with the theme of the magazine, might be motivating advertisers to continue advertising on them. On the other hand, some magazines have a very low number of ads. For example, Level, a gaming magazine, while staying at the same number of pages (116),

has a very low number of ads (just four in 2024) even though ad prices for this magazine are lower than other magazines from the same publisher (Doğan Burda, 2019). Future studies could reveal consumer profiles, purchase reasons, and advertiser attitudes toward these magazines.

According to our findings, all ads (100%) contain at least one information cue. So (2004), Suher (2006), Srivastava & Schoeëbachler (1999), and Akan (2007) also studied magazines and found a very high level of informativeness. In comparison to the information cues, emotional appeals can be found in one-third of the ads (35,3%). Most encountered cues are, understandably, addresses (89,7%), packaging or shape (75,1%), performance (66,1%) and quality (36%). These are again consistent with the aforementioned studies with the exception of price/value cue (5,8%). In addition, some of these studies found the components and contents cue to be among the most used cues (e.g., Oyman & Ergüven, 2006). Our findings indicate that there are no statistically significant changes throughout the years to the usage level of the top three cues of this study. The usage level of some cues declined in 2021 and subsequently increased in 2024; statistically significant ones are quality and availability. An inverse effect can be seen about the safety cue, which is significantly higher in 2021 compared to other years sampled. It can be said that these are caused by the pandemic. However, why the pandemic might have been affected by the use of quality cue is not clear. Further investigation of the years covering the pandemic might help better understand the reasons behind this finding. Price/value cue is an interesting one: Since economic conditions have been worsening globally for some time, one might expect advertisers to put forward more ads using this cue. However, for the years covered in our sample, the level of this cue declines sharply in 2021 and does not recover fully. This may be due to the difficulties around talking about price propositions when the future is uncertain for both companies and consumers. Another interesting finding is the decline of both independent research and company research cues. In the 2024 sample, there is no ad containing the company research cue. We believe these are important information cues. Thus, we suggest advertisers invest in research and include these cues in their ads. In general, studies researching the informativeness of advertising count the number of cues. Our findings suggest that 31,2% of the ads contain three cues and the mean score for all three years combined is 3,64. Ads with six or more cues account for 10,2% of the total sample. For comparison, Abernethy and Butler (1992) found four or more cues in 8% of the magazine ads, while Bozkurt (2006) found the same number of cues in 40% of ads when newspaper ads and TV commercials were combined. When it comes to emotional appeals, it can be seen that the most used appeal is warmth appeal (23,9%), and it is followed by nostalgia (5,8%), eroticism (5,3%), humor (2,5%) and fear (1,9%). It can be said that warmth appeal is the most risk-free appeal, in addition to having the most general appeal, compared to others. The findings also indicate that, among these appeals, there is only one that changes significantly throughout the years in our sample, and that is the humor appeal. The use of this appeal increased from 2,3% to 4,7% in 2021 and lowered down to 0,8% in 2024. The spike in 2021 might be related to the post-pandemic consumer in search of positive messages, however, it is hard not to state that the usage level of humor appeal is low in general. It can be argued that printed magazines might not be the most

preferred medium for advertisements containing humor. Weinberger et al. (1995) found humor to be used less in magazine ads compared to ads on television and radio. They suggest that this may be due to print being reader-paced and TV and radio being media-paced. In addition, although there is no statistical significance, we should also note that the usage of nostalgia appeal appears to be rising steadily, while the opposite is true for fear appeal. The use of eroticism appeal on the other hand increased in 2024. We must posit that in the digital age we are in, information is abundant and not limited to printed publications. Thus, print magazines, as well as the ads they carry, must be engaging for their readers. One way to achieve this might be through adding interactive features to printed pages either digitally, with the aid of smartphones and augmented reality, or traditionally. The latter involves using printed pages creatively (e.g., die-cut pages, textured printing, scented ads, transparent overlays, or special inks), none of which were employed by the ads in our sample. Whether digital or traditional, it is clear that implementing these ideas could be costly. However, it can be said that an economical alternative for engaging readers might be the use of emotional appeals; thus, we suggest that advertisers consider using them more.

Limitations and suggestions for future studies:

This study is limited to print magazines. Further studies may take digital editions of magazines into consideration. It should also be noted that the ads in digital editions might differ from print versions, thus researchers should be cautious. In addition, a comparison of advertising in print magazines and in the digital touch points of these magazines (such as social media) might be suggested for the academics working on this topic. It can be said that there is a growing trend of new types of magazines in Türkiye: “Culture, art and literature” magazines. These are crossovers between newspapers and magazines, printed on lower quality paper. In addition, magazine shelves carry more “Special Issues”, sometimes called “Bookazines”, each year. These new formats might rekindle interest in print, and they definitely need to be studied, along with digital magazines. It should be noted that studies on other media might yield to different results. We found almost all ads to contain at least one information cue, however, some studies on TV commercials found fewer portions of the commercials to be informative (e.g. Cengiz & Güneş, 2018; Resnik & Stern, 1977).

Some of the changes observed in 2021 might be due to the pandemic. Future studies might include a wider timeframe to better understand the effects of the pandemic on the level of information cues and emotional appeals preferred by advertisers. Additionally, on some occasions, we observed the repetition of identical ads over the seven-year span of the sample. This appears to be a cost-saving measure by the advertisers; however, it is still an odd choice to use the same ads for such a long period of time. Future studies might take this into consideration. We suggest that advertisers move away from this practice. Lastly, future research might focus on why consumers purchasing print magazines, prefer them over digital content, since it might reveal clues about magazines’ survival.

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