

THE IMPACT OF PACKAGING ON CONSUMER PURCHASING DECISIONS: AN INTEGRATIVE ANALYSIS OF AFFECTIVE AND BEHAVIOURAL FACTORS

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ABSTRACT: *This paper investigates the impact of positive and negative advertisements on consumers' emotional responses and purchasing behaviour. To explore this topic, I conducted a pilot study using electrocardiography to monitor the emotional reactions of a small group of subjects while they viewed a pre-determined set of advertisements. Our findings suggest that the emotional impact of positive and negative advertisements differs significantly. Positive advertisements are more likely to evoke positive emotional responses, whereas negative advertisements are more likely to elicit negative emotional responses. These results have important implications for companies seeking to develop effective marketing strategies that influence consumers' emotional responses and purchasing behaviour. By considering the emotional impact of advertising, companies can better understand the affective foundations of consumer decision-making utility. Although this study is limited to a small number of subjects, it serves as an example in a larger study on multiple subjects and contributes to the development of an electro-physiological approach to the impact of packaging on purchasing decisions. In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the role of emotions in the consumer decision-making process and the importance of advertising in shaping consumers' emotional responses.*

Keywords: *effective marketing, packaging, electrocardiography, purchasing behaviour*

JEL Classification: *D10, D70*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of the current economy, characterized by fierce competition and an increasing diversity of offerings, companies face the challenge of attracting and retaining consumers through effective marketing strategies. In this sense, understanding the consumer decision-making process and the factors that influence it is extremely important. In recent years, researchers have focused on the role of emotions in the purchase process and have highlighted the affective foundation of consumer decision-making utility, as well as the importance of consumers' emotional reactions in determining purchasing behavior. Within this integrative analysis of current research, we propose to explore a specific aspect of this process, namely, how positive and negative advertisements can modulate consumers' emotional

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responses and, implicitly, their purchasing behavior. To this end, we conducted a pilot study in which we monitored the emotional reactions of a group of subjects using electrocardiography while they viewed a pre-determined set of advertisements, thus analyzing their emotional responses. Although the study is limited to a small number of subjects, it can serve as an example in a larger study on multiple subjects and can contribute to the development of an electro-physiological approach to the impact of packaging on purchasing decisions.

2. AFFECTIVE FOUNDATION OF CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING UTILITY

Our quality as consumers to motivate and explain our choices through their utility offers us a somewhat favourable response, which soothes our conscience when we come out of the concentration of making a purchase. We discover the process in which we engage governed by emotional impulses and demonstrate through rational arguments the necessity and well-being that the purchased product or service offers us. Thus, we become decisively involved in the pre-purchase moment, stimulating our cognition to discover the need, during the purchase process, especially by exalting the neurohormones responsible for creating and maintaining the feeling of happiness and fulfilment. And most importantly, because it encompasses the longest duration, in the post-purchase moment, when we are left with ourselves and ourselves and we strive to find rational and satisfying answers for the action we have just taken.

Our emotional attachment to a purchase often stems from the memories and emotions associated with it, rather than the usefulness of the object itself, which may or may not serve us. We link the product of our action to the moments and emotional state that characterized us, in order to motivate and absolve the buying process of any impulsive implication that may arise in response. Recent research has shown that consumers' emotional attachment to products can play a significant role in their purchasing decisions. For example, a study by Belk (2020) found that consumers often develop emotional bonds with products that remind them of important events or people in their lives. These emotional bonds can influence their decision to purchase the product, even if it may not be the most rational choice.

The reasoning used in these processes often involves the information at hand, somatic markers, and most importantly, the influence of people with whom we maintain close relationships or whom we consider decision-making or behavioural leaders. Most importantly, we mimic a cognitive behaviour, minimize any negative impulse, transfer the decision to the representative we consider rational, and develop this perspective, but ultimately reject the decision if it does not align with the momentary need for us to fulfil our happiness through the desired product or service.

The utility of most outcomes shaped by such consumer decisions is minimal or momentary. Rational justification is rarely part of the emotional cover, which is not denied. The feeling of fulfilment often takes the place of a satisfying rational response. And this motivates the consumer to engage in other purchasing and consumption activities.

Discernment and the processing of information obtained through an individual's contact with promotional campaigns, even those focused on awareness, reveal an affective tendency that guides their cognitive behavior. This stimulates marketers' interest in identifying moments of weaker cognitive concentration, or more importantly, what influences this rational process. "When the motivation and capacity of human individuals to analyze information are reduced or less profound, they generally seek to make decisions that benefit them, using a series of cognitive mechanisms to cope with information overload. Known as heuristics and naturally developed in the individual's process of adapting to the social world, these cognitive mechanisms serve the attribution of meanings and analysis of perceived information. Heuristics are automatically activated, without any conscious intention, and can simplify both the

processes of evaluating analyzed information and those of choice" (Richard and Redlawsk, 2001).

Thus, the affective basis of the consumption decision, and implicitly of the utility that arises from this process, allows for a personal demonstration of cognitive processes, real motivations, and recognition of an affective sensitivity born from the action of external factors that favour consumption through emotional stimulation. The consumption decision is often motivated by a series of details that characterize an affective behaviour. In this way, we help ourselves to demonstrate the usefulness of purchase by appealing to an affective form.

3. THE ROLE OF PACKAGING IN STIMULATING AND MODULATING THE EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL RESPONSES OF CONSUMERS IN THE PURCHASE PROCESS: AN INTEGRATIVE ANALYSIS OF CURRENT RESEARCH

In recent years, studies on the impact of packaging on consumer decisions have become increasingly numerous and sophisticated. Researchers have analyzed both the aesthetic, sensory, and informational characteristics of packaging to better understand how they influence consumers in the purchase process. Currently, packaging represents an important factor in product marketing, as it can influence the emotional and behavioural responses of consumers in the purchase process.

In such a context, the role of packaging can be approached from two perspectives: stimulating and modulating emotional and behavioural responses (Piqueras-Fiszman et al., 2019). In terms of stimulation perspective, packaging can generate a series of positive emotional responses, such as visual attraction, pleasure, and positive anticipation, which can increase purchase intention and brand loyalty. For example, packaging with an attractive design and a unique visual presentation can stimulate positive responses from consumers and can make a strong impression on them. Furthermore, the information presented on the packaging can also influence consumers' purchasing decisions. For example, studies show that mentioning natural ingredients on the packaging can increase the credibility of the product and can stimulate positive emotional responses such as trust and safety. Additionally, research suggests that packaging can influence consumers' behaviour through cognitive aspects such as perception of value and quality. For example, elegant and sophisticated packaging can suggest a high-quality product and can make consumers allocate more money to that product (Kumar, 2020).

On the other hand, packaging can modulate the emotional and behavioral responses of consumers through specific characteristics such as color, shape, texture, and packaging material. For example, packaging with cool colors and textures can convey a sense of calm and relaxation, while packaging with vibrant colors and rough textures can convey a sense of energy and power. Additionally, packaging can modulate the emotional and behavioral responses of consumers through specific communication elements, such as the logo, slogan, and product description. These elements can influence the consumer's perception of the product and can determine the purchasing decision. For example, a well-formulated slogan can convey a powerful message and generate a positive image of the product in the consumer's mind. At the same time, Hoque and Uddin (2020) investigated the packaging elements that influence consumer buying decisions in the consumer goods industry in Bangladesh. The study showed that the appearance and quality of the packaging, together with the information on the packaging, significantly influence consumer buying decisions. Similarly, Song and Kim (2019) conducted a study on 350 subjects investigating the impact of packaging design elements on consumer emotions and purchase intentions, and the results showed that packaging design has a significant impact on consumer emotions, and especially on their purchase intentions.

In conclusion, the role of packaging in stimulating and modulating the emotional and behavioral responses of consumers in the purchasing process is an important topic in product marketing. Although there have been numerous studies that have addressed this topic, current research is far from exhaustive, and there is a need for further research in this direction to better understand the impact of packaging on consumer purchasing decisions.

4. RESEARCH ON EMOTION AS A DETERMINING FACTOR IN CONSUMER DECISION MAKING

This paper aims to examine the involvement of emotions as a determining factor in influencing consumer decision-making. Based on the analysis of specialized literature (Lerner et al., 2020), the importance of the emotional framework and its involvement in the cognitive process was understood. Due to its neural belonging, emotion is expressed through specific behaviour, often reflected in habits and gestures that are harder to control or hide. According to behaviourist researchers (Hassani et al., 2020), negative emotions depersonalize people and inhibit their rational processing of the data they have access to or the information they possess. This encourages strategies from different fields of activity to include elements of fear and anxiety in their actions targeted towards the population. In addition to this depersonalization action, negative emotions are able to activate important parts of the brain responsible for decision-making in a short time. Thus, there are behavioural correlations between the negative emotional influence and individual decision-making in various situations, including consumer ones.

On the other hand, positive emotion produces unforeseeable and decisive changes. This emotion develops the quickest behaviour by neglecting reason after its involvement. Furthermore, most of the time, the influence of positive emotion is recognized as a mark in terms of memorizing a moment or a situation. In turn, this detail creates the so-called nostalgia, once again, a powerful emotional factor. Its presence in the consumerist and commercial context translates into the development of a consumption behaviour that reduces the rational aspect at the time of purchase decision. This theory formed the basis of my research idea and also motivated me to devise a scheme to verify how the emotion manifests itself.

The research question of this study is whether there is a direct influence of emotions in the decision-making process. To answer this question, I have organized an experimental framework using video material resources to construct an exaggerated environment, in order to observe if there is an attitudinal change manifested in decision-making.

I conducted a pilot study on two male volunteers who are right-handed, non-smokers, occasional alcohol consumers, athletic, 24 years old, with undergraduate and graduate degrees in public administration. With the help of a group of specialists in the field of electrophysiology and a cardiologist, I conducted a pilot study on these two volunteers to investigate the effect of emotional advertising on the cardiac activity of groups based on negative and positive emotions. The aim was to determine whether there is a cognitive integration and a vegetative reaction associated with this cognitive integration, in addition to the emotional response.

The experimental framework I considered appropriate for this study involves three main instruments: FACET, Electrocardiogram, and PDA Plus - Affective Distress Profile. The latter two instruments were applied during the research. These instruments are considered important to obtain relevant results in my evaluation study of the effects of certain informative/advertising spots on psychoemotional and physiological reactivity.

I chose the electrocardiogram as the instrument to measure the effects of emotions because it measures the heart rate. I made this decision based on my review of the relevant literature, which led me to understand that the vagal afferents of the heart determine the vegetative reactions associated with emotions, which among other things, led to the concept of

the localization of the soul in the heart. Socrates believed that the soul is the essence of a person or any being, and it decides how that being behaves. Later, Aristotle, in his work *De Anima*, localized the soul in the heart and offered a full argument in support of this theory. These concepts formed the basis of my decision to prefer the use of electrocardiogram monitoring to measure emotions.

In addition to the electrocardiogram as the primary measuring instrument, I also used alternative methods to ensure the results were relevant. I monitored the subjects' heart rate using a stethoscope and their respiratory rate.

To prepare the subjects for the experiment itself, I prepared a set of questions that checked their current state and emotional background. I sought to understand their participation in similar experiments in the past, if they have recently experienced traumatic situations, if they develop addictive behaviors, and some self-assessment elements at the level of status and behavioral assumption. The experiment took place in a sterile, comfortable, and discreet setting, to ensure a normal disposition of the subjects. To comply with the ethical norms surrounding this type of research, I drafted an agreement that the two subjects signed, understanding the entire process they were participating in.

4.1. AFFECTIVE DISTRESS PROFILE (PDA PLUS PRE-EXPERIMENT)

The research instrument PDA Plus (Opriș and Macavei, 2007) was patented by two Romanian researchers based on a universal model known in universal psychoemotional research. This instrument measures functional and dysfunctional negative emotion. It contains 26 items identified as a relevant concentration of terms that describe the state of the respondent and provide significant informational contribution to the desired results. This formulation of its content can be quantified and translated as efficient because it allows for a global estimation as well as calculation of individual scores. The physical format of the PDA Plus consists of 26 items that allow for the association of a degree of values numbered according to increasing significance. Thus, the evaluation of the state of each item begins from 1 to 5, as follows: Not at all, Very little, Medium, Much, Very much. Reliability is most often expressed based on internal consistency coefficients and the stability score over time. To this instrument, we added 7 questions that verify the subjects' state and measure their self-positioning in relation to perceived external influence. Furthermore, through the last three questions, we aimed to emphasize the process of self-recognition of details and the refreshing of assuming a status in relation to the decision-making phenomenon.

Both subjects answered negatively to the first question. We can understand the lack of previous experience in such testing. On the second question, the first respondent recounted a recent car accident in which his father and a friend of his were involved. This experience marked him because, even though his father was ultimately okay, his father's friend was seriously injured. From this response, we understand an increased sensitivity regarding the content of advertisements that use such negative actions. This subject presents a predisposition to react more acutely in moments involving accidents. On the other hand, the second respondent answered negatively, characterizing a relaxed attitude that has been constant up until this point.

The third question was designed to highlight a predisposition towards addictive behaviour. The smoker's identity may sustain a behaviour based on weaknesses, and especially a tendency to respond by copying the social behaviours of those around them. However, both subjects answered negatively to this question. This result keeps the characteristics of the subjects within the normal range, without details that highlight them in a particular way.

Positive answers were obtained for the fourth question, with the mention that the first respondent holds a driving license but has not driven for 18 months. This question was asked

to verify the impact that the commercials in the advertising set containing messages addressed to drivers will have. The fact that these two respondents hold a driving license indicates an increased sensitivity and heightened attention to messages addressed to them, whether in advertising content or in any kind of campaign.

For the fifth question, the first respondent answered positively, while the second one answered negatively. This question was considered necessary even if the answer is exclusively subjective. The answers help me understand the status that each respondent considers representative and assumes for themselves, and they help me understand how each respondent perceives themselves. I will not consider this answer in my study as a characteristic and rational answer. However, it is important during the observation of their behavior during the experiment.

In the context of assuming external influence from close acquaintances, both respondents answered positively to the sixth question, acknowledging a relatively high percentage in terms of paying attention to and adopting the ideas of their acquaintances in relation to their own decision-making. Once again, this is a subjective answer to a question intentionally formulated in this way to bring the respondent face-to-face with a natural tendency and, especially, to recognize this "weakness" in front of their own rationality. This answer helps me understand a tendency to verify one's own ideas through the perspective of those around them. This local event can be extrapolated and represents an important behavior when establishing the details of any campaign. The influence that a loyal individual has in relation to a brand or a social behavior that is intended to be inserted into a group is significant and can decisively change the behavior of another indecisive individual or one who has not had prior personal experience with the product or service being promoted.

The seventh and final question obtained common responses that characterize the same sources. Among the answers were "internet reviews", "the opinion of acquaintances", "previous experience", and "forums". These sources generally represent proximity environments from which the subjects' way of acting can be understood. At the same time, we can observe that they do not make hasty decisions without being informed. This aspect provides merchants with the opportunity to develop sources that will benefit them when future consumers seek to purchase a product or service that is the subject of their sales.

The following questions in this instrument actually measure the history of emotions in the last seven days. The result of this questionnaire revealed quite similar scores, with a difference of one point. This score is calculated by adding up the values given by the subjects for each state separately. During this time, the obtained score is quite high, which indicates a tense state in which they are placed. Thus, the first respondent obtained a total of 119 points out of a maximum of 130, and the second respondent obtained a score of 120. This characteristic state of the subjects helped me understand their predisposition to react less rationally, given the conditions under which they entered this experiment.

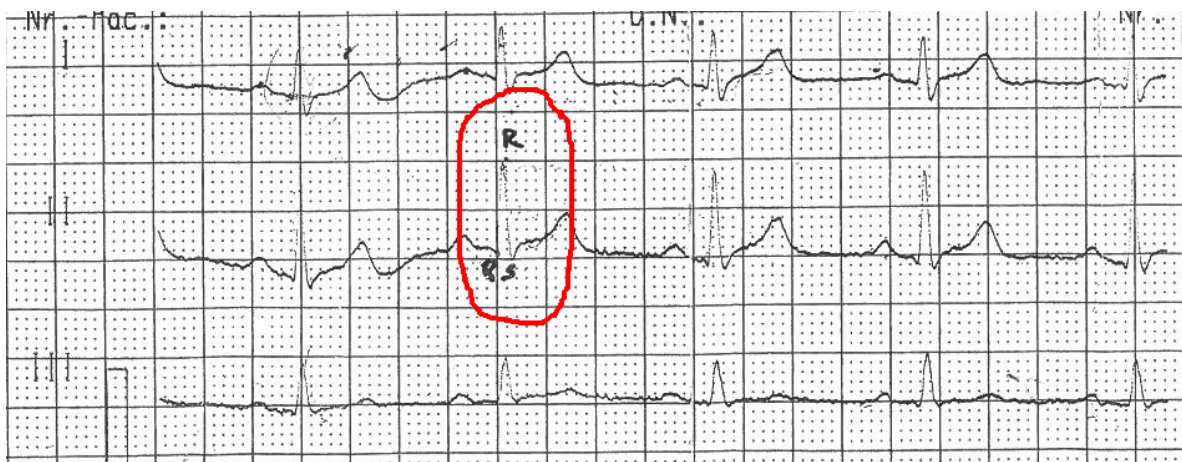
4.2 ELECTROCARDIOGRAM

The use of electrophysiological methods in evaluating emotional reactivity is a commonly used practice in the field of clinical psychology. Among the most commonly used methods are electroencephalography, electrocardiography, electromyography, and measurement of skin electrical resistance. To outline an overview of the obtained data in such research, the data are correlated and lead to the establishment of the psycho-emotional reactivity characteristics of the individual. Electrocardiography, a simple and non-invasive method, provides information on cardiac activity correlated with emotional status. Through the pair of cranial nerves X (vagus nerves/cardio-pneumo-gastric), the myocardium receives sympathetic and parasympathetic vegetative afferents intended to ensure cardiac adaptive

mechanisms under conditions of stress, physical exertion, and risky or life-threatening situations.

Cardiac activity is characterized by a well-defined electrical activity based on the myocardial excito-conductive network, which includes, in general terms, the sinoatrial node, the His bundle, and the Purkinje network. Furthermore, electrical activity is generated and sustained by pacemaker cells located in the cardiac tissue, auto-excitable cells that produce continuous electrical signals. Electrocardiography represents the graphic recording of these electrical signals, which are supported by the pacemaker cells, sinoatrial node, His bundle, and Purkinje network. The main sector of electrocardiography is the QRS complex (Figure 1). This complex, derived from EKG, provides information about the activity of the autonomic nervous system and the myocardial conducting system. Additionally, it can be used to understand the mechanisms of emotions to which a person is exposed.

Figure 1 QRS Complex



Within my project, I aimed to investigate the effect of advertisements on cardiac electrical activity (through the autonomic nervous system). In the pilot study that I conducted, I obtained four electrocardiographic expressions, two for each individual. The exposure process involved individually introducing each subject into the experimental room, where heart rate monitors were applied. The details of the process were explained to them, and they were instructed to focus solely on the set of advertisements prepared to run on the laptop screen in front of them. They were also given a pair of high-quality headphones for auditory safety. These headphones isolate the ear from any external sounds, to avoid any disturbances to their hearing. On the laptop screen, a set of positive advertisements was shown for a duration of 10 minutes and 44 seconds. These advertisements were campaigns by MetLife, Pfizer, Coca-Cola, Edeka, Monster, and P&G. They exploited the mother-son/daughter relationship, the idea of free happiness and smiles, kindness and presence, sustained and unconditional trust. These situations created a relatively strong emotional state, which conveyed a natural sense of kindness.

After recording the heart rate frequency based on the display of the set of positive ads, the experiment moved on to the second part, in which the subject had to watch the prepared ads based on negative emotion. These negative ads are mostly awareness campaigns, social campaigns like "don't drink and drive" or campaigns to reduce speed in traffic. These campaigns range from a scare factor of 2/10 to the last one that covers 10/10. This scare factor describes the impact of stress induced by fear and the details derived from the construction of the image on a negative background to ensure a feeling of fear. This fear is especially understood more brutally towards the end, when explicit images appear in the construction of

the ad. Figures 2a and 2b, 3a and 3b reflect the changes in cardiac electrical activity following exposure of the subjects to the ads explained above.

Figure 2a - The aspect of the cardiac electrical activity in a healthy individual (1) exposed to a set of positive advertisements.

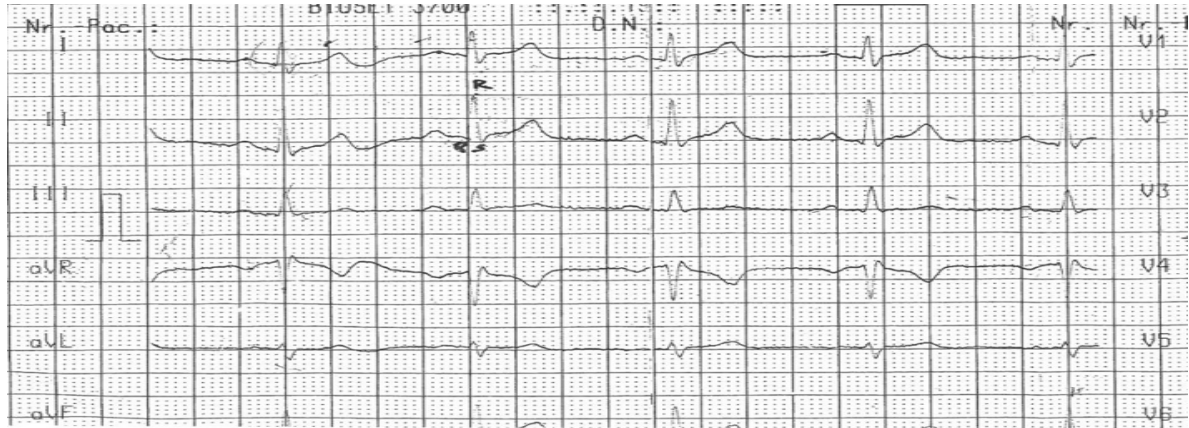
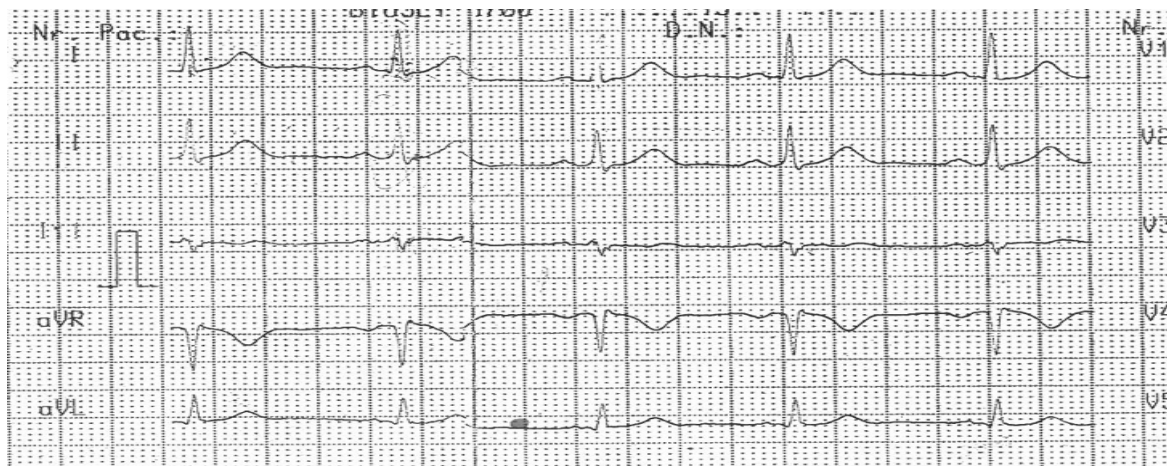


Figure 2b - The aspect of the cardiac electrical activity in a healthy individual (2) exposed to a set of positive advertisements.



Figures 3a and 3b show normal electrocardiographic sectors with non-deviated QRS complexes, suggesting that advertisements that use positive emotions do not have a negative impact on cardiac activity in a strict interpretation of EKG morphology. Furthermore, both Figure 3a and Figure 3b show a constant heart rate around the average value of 76 beats per minute, which falls within normal parameters. This analysis indicates that the subjects were relaxed while being exposed to the set of advertisements. Emotional involvement reflected by changes in heart rate would require such an exaggeration of the moment that the subject becomes emotionally unstable, anxious, and undergoes a sudden affective change. However, this part of my experiment aimed to test a real experience without recording extreme emotions, even positive ones.

Figure 3a - The aspect of cardiac electrical activity in a healthy individual (1) exposed to a set of negative advertisements.

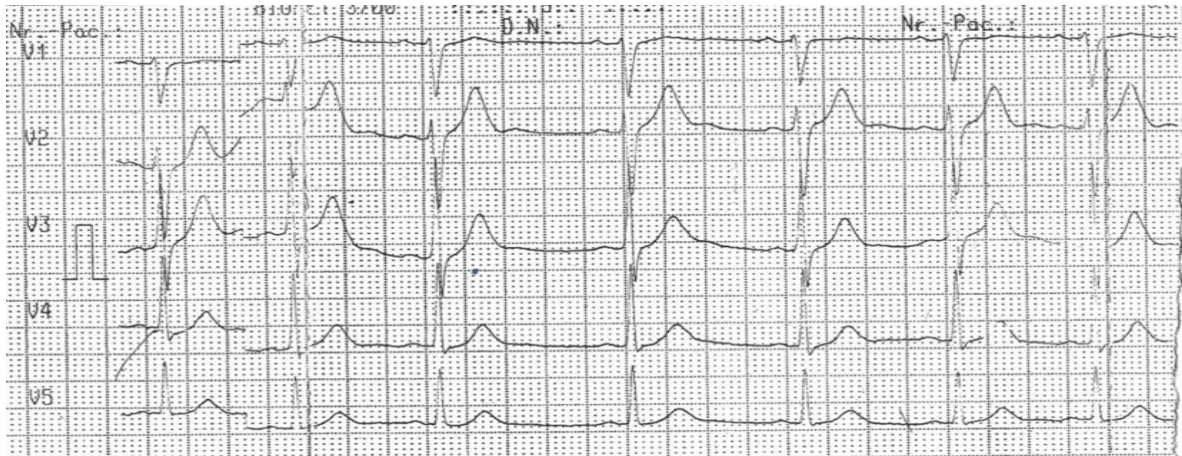


Figure 3b - The aspect of cardiac electrical activity in a healthy individual (2) exposed to a set of negative advertisements.



Figures 3a and 3b reflect the effect of negative message commercials on cardiac activity via the autonomic branch of the cranial nerve X pair. The increase in QRS interval amplitude and the decrease in heart rate are observed in Figure 3a, while the heart rate remains at 76 beats per minute in Figure 3b. Moreover, the decrease in heart rate by 15 beats per minute compared to the normal value (75 beats per minute) in Figure 3a highlights an apparently paradoxical inhibitory action of the autonomic nervous system on cardiac activity. This fact also shows the depth at which certain commercials can act in activating neuro-vegetative and hemodynamic circuits.

It is interesting that exposure to negative situations (such as these ads) led to a decrease in heart rate, an apparently unjustified fact, considering that in such situations, there is an activation of the sympathetic vegetative system which results in an increase in blood concentration of adrenaline, which in turn has a stimulating effect on the heart (increased heart rate), hypertensive and increases receptivity to signals from the environment. The decrease in heart rate in this experimental context suggests that advertising spots, negative message ads, may activate partially different pathways than those activated by exposure to stressful or dangerous conditions. In perspective, to verify this hypothesis, studies on a larger number of

subjects associated with more types of measurements (electroencephalography, stress hormones) are necessary.

The fact that the second subject exhibited a different behavior in terms of cardiac frequency dynamics can be explained either by their personal history of exposure to events or by a different neurovegetative reactivity. The natural manifestation of the heart under stress induced by exposure to a negative situation is monitored in the form of a strong initial increase in heart rate when the individual becomes aware of the unpleasant event, which then decreases to a heart rate slightly below normal limits. On the other hand, when an individual experiences positive emotions in response to a situation, the characteristic heart rate is strong throughout the event, and the constancy of this high frequency is recognized.

On the other hand, respiratory dynamics also present vegetative influences associated with the cardio-pulmonary-gastric nerves (the X nerves). Therefore, we monitored the number of breaths per minute of the subjects. Counting breaths is done by quantifying each chest rise. This rise is complete from the inhalation phase to the exhaustion of air from the lungs. The number of these breaths per minute under normal conditions is 16-20, while in conditions of anxiety, the frequency of these breaths increases up to 30. In my study, the first subject averaged 23 breaths per minute when viewing advertisements based on positive emotions and 19 breaths per minute when exposed to negative context. The second subject developed a respiratory rhythm that was almost similar in both exposures. Thus, in the first set of positive advertisements, we counted an average of 18 breaths per minute, while in the second case, we quantified an average of 17 breaths per minute. The result of this observation can be interpreted as the development of an anxious behavior in the first case, which was also reflected in the graphic measurements obtained by electrocardiogram. At the same time, a constant emotional state was identified through a normal heart rate that was almost similar between the two exposures in the case of the second subject.

4.3 AFFECTIVE DISTRESS PROFILE (PDA PLUS POST-EXPERIMENT)

In order to verify whether there was a change in the emotional state following exposure to the two sets of advertisements among the participants in this experiment, we administered the PDA Plus instrument once again. However, this time we asked the participants to only fill in the spaces related to their emotional characterization at that moment. Thus, the first subject obtained a total of 123 points. This score represents a state of high anxiety. The values obtained are consistent with the indices monitored during the experiment, through the graph obtained from the electrocardiogram. These values support the behavior of the first subject as an interesting one to study, especially regarding the development of a below-average heart rate in the case of advertisements formulated on negative emotions. Keeping in mind the method of interpreting the results of this instrument, and knowing how the scores obtained relate to a maximum of 130 points, we can verify the first score obtained before the experiment and the latest recorded values. Thus, a difference of four points is observed, supporting the evolution of the subject's anxiety and bringing it closer to the maximum limit.

On the other hand, the second subject obtained 117 points. This score highlights a small change in the emotion felt by the subject, with a negative difference of 3 points compared to the value obtained in the first test. It is interesting to study what caused this deviation from the maximum score, relaxing the subject. One interpretation could be supported by the creation over time of a resistance to stress, being less affected by an emotional mix. From another perspective, it can be said that the subject does not react significantly to the elements used in these ads.

Regarding the decisions made in the last set of A-B format questions, we found only one interesting and noteworthy detail. As can be seen, the first participant showed sensitivity

during the viewing of the negative set of advertisements. This was due to an accident involving his father. The emotional sensitivity was physically manifested by the development of discomfort in the second part of the experiment, during the viewing of ads that exploited the parent-child relationship as a basis for influence by creating a positive emotion. In the first case, it was manifested by a low heart rate, and in the second, by an attitude change. These combined details led to the influence of the final choice moment, when the participant avoided choosing the "car" option as a means of transportation, opting for a different option each time.

In the second case, the subject was relaxed throughout the experiment, not being disturbed in any way that would later manifest in their final decision.

5. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is formulated by fulfilling all chapters in order to represent a verified informational complex. The research idea emerged from the analysis of existing theory, which constitutes the starting point of this work. Beyond the analytical dimension, we tried to demonstrate practically the attitudinal and emotional changes that occur by creating a certain context favorable to these fluctuations.

Therefore, the paper presents in turn the establishment of a marked affective identity, a tendency to justify the decision-making process through an affiliation of one's own responses, using an affective grounding of decision-making cognitive processes. Then, in the same theoretical context, the paper brings together different and interdisciplinary perspectives that refer to the anatomy of emotions and their power to influence an act considered rational.

According to the initial results obtained from this pilot study, from the analysis of the information obtained through the application of the PDA Plus tool, we understand an increased sensitivity regarding the content of advertisements that use negative actions. The subjects show a predisposition to react more sharply in moments that involve negative emotions. However, it is interesting how the first subject participating in this study reacted according to his response to the second question of this tool. My expectations were that his heart rate would increase, and a significant increase in frequency would be noticed when he was exposed to ads that exploited negative emotions in public campaigns featuring accidents. These expectations were formed following recognition of a precedent involving his father. However, contrary to my predictions, the subject lowered his heart rate by 15 beats per minute below normal. Thus, I identified the second phase of the natural reaction in the anxiety phase. Based on the literature, in situations that trigger negative emotions, the heart rate increases abruptly at first, and then it decreases to a level recognized as normal. Continuing this observation with the first subject, in the case of ads that use positive emotions, no notable changes were reported. Again, based on their antecedent, my prediction was that there would be some sort of influence on their heart rate, suggesting that the parent-child relationship exploited by some of these ads could produce a significant change. On the other hand, from my observations during the experiment, I noticed an attitudinal change. Specifically, the subject began to fidget and show signs of discomfort. Studying the final results, I could not find any correlations between the electrocardiogram recordings and the moment of agitation manifested by the subject.

Furthermore, during the post-experiment questionnaire, the subject modified their obtained score by increasing it, reflecting a high level of anxiety. Therefore, we can say that the first subject went through different states explained by the development of emotions due to the advertisements they were exposed to, and due to the context created. Regarding the decision-making system at the end of the questionnaire, the subject chose different means of transportation than driving twice. This may reflect a sensitivity resulting from their antecedent (father's accident) and exposure to public health campaigns referring to accidents and traffic safety.

According to the observations made during the experimental process, the second subject exhibited a relaxed attitude from the beginning. This emotional balance can also be seen in the difference in the score obtained after the post-experiment questionnaire. Furthermore, the subject was able to relax more than before participating in the experiment, which is an unusual and interesting situation. The subject maintained a heart rate close to normal estimates and exhibited a natural attitude during the viewing of the advertisement sets. There were no notable reactions or behavioural expressions that could indicate the impact of these advertisements on the subject. Regarding the decision-making process in the second subject at the end of the experiment, there was no significant difference in their choices. Therefore, I acknowledge the need to study these aspects on a larger number of participants, to observe whether there is a tendency to reject emotional influence or whether this is a particular case, in order to understand what makes it such a strong emotional inhibitor.

It is necessary to mention the ethical dimension present throughout my experiment. I prepared an agreement which the subjects signed, indicating their commitment to the entire process. They were only given this agreement after receiving a set of information to understand the meaning of their participation, as well as the freedom to withdraw at any time if they no longer feel safe.

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