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Effect of a Cause-Related Marketing Campaign on Printed Media, on Disposition to Help and Empathy

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Effect of a Cause-Related Marketing Campaign in Printed Media, on Disposition to Help and Empathy

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ABSTRACT

Cause-related marketing has been the source of a great number of research. A research line has focused on external factors that influence donors' behaviors. Notwithstanding, not much is known about the effect of the role played by the type of message and transmission means used on donor's behavior. This work focuses on the relation existing between the type of message and the printed media vis-à-vis the desire to help and empathy. The results obtained in an experiment show that the rational messages in printed media significantly affect the intention to help and empathy.

INTRODUCTION

Cause-related marketing has had a great acceptance in the entrepreneurial world and, strategically, it has become an attractive activity for enterprises, since it generates value, increases brand equity and brand preference. Cause-related marketing is any commercial activity whereby a company establishes an alliance with a non profit organization in order to contribute with a specific amount to a particular cause or foundation, encouraging participation of purchaser, in order to obtain mutual benefits. (Hernández 2005; Polonsky and McDonald 2000; Ross III, Patterson and Stutts 1992; Varadarajan and Menon 1988). A great number of research on cause-related marketing has stemmed as a response to the growth and acceptance that such trend has had worldwide. A line of research as focused on external factors that influence donors' behavior. Notwithstanding, not much is known on the role played by the type of message and the media used, with respect to donor's behavior.

This project intends to determine the impact the role of the message, the communication media used, and the brand, have on consumer's empathy and intention to help. It is considered that when social causes sponsored by existing brands in the market are communicated using only text (rational) in printed media, they generate more intention to help and empathy towards the cause. In order to achieve the proposed objective, one pilot study and one experiment were accomplished. The present paper is organized as follows: the first part presents the principal research conducted, and the hypothesis. Subsequently, the targets of the pilot study and the experiment are described. Finally, the results are analyzed and certain conclusions are presented.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on the role of cause-related marketing concerning consumer donor's purchase decision has followed different trends or lines. The first line is made up by a series of reflections that explore evolution, meaning and applications of the cause-related marketing (Austin, Herrero and Reficco 2004; Hernández 2005; Polonsky and McDonald 2000; Varadarajan and Menon 1988). The second line of research assesses the impact that cause-related marketing has on the brand equity and image of the sponsoring companies (Polonsky and McDonald 2000). The third line researches the influence of cause related marketing on the behavior of the consumer as donor (Hernández 2005; Strhilevitz 1998). The fourth line of papers researches factors that promote altruist behavior in the donor (Barrett, Dunbar and Lycett 2002; Buss 2003; Batson 1999; Cialdini, Brown, Lewis, Luce and Neuberg 1997; Dawkins 1989; Eisenberg 2002; Penner, Dovidio, Piliavin and

Schroeder 2005). The works that look for the role of the type of message and communication media on donor's behavior are found in this same trend (Bagozzi and Moore 1994; Wells, Burnett and Moriarty 2002). Although social marketing and corporate and consumer behavior as donor have been amply researched, nonetheless, not much is known on the role played by the type of message, the communication media, and the brand, concerning donor's behavior. In addition, existing literature on this topic has not registered any research conducted with real brands and in different cultural contexts.

Literature considers that there are several factors that encourage human beings to adopt altruist behaviors. Among the most important factors, there are biological factors (Penner, Dovidio, Piliavin y Schroeder 2005) and psychological factors, such as emotions, affection and personality (Cialdini, Brown, Lewis, Luce and Neuberg 1997; Eisenberg 2002; Penner, Dovidio, Piliavin and Schroeder 2005; Penner, Fritzsche, Craiger and Freifeld 1995). The reasons associated with volunteer activities constitute another factor (Omoto and Snyder 1995; Penner, Dovidio, Piliavin and Schroeder, 2005; Piliavin 2004; Wilson and Musick 1997). A third factor is utilitarianism (Austin, Herrero and Reficco 2004; Porter and Kramer 2002). A fourth factor is social pressure (Hopper and McCarlnielsen 1991). Finally, persuasion exerted through the different media is another factor worthwhile mentioning (Petty, Cacioppo and Schumann 1983). This project concentrates on persuasion through printed media. Its main purpose is to see how messages on social causes executed through printed media influence behavior of donors.

The involvement concept has occupied an outstanding place in consumers' literature (Traylor 1981). The different definitions that the specialists give to this concept reflect ambiguity, complexity and the equivocal nature thereof (Greenwald and Leavitt 1984; Lastovicka 1979; Park and Young 1983; Petty and Cacioppo, 1979; Zaichkowsky 1985; Andrews, Durvasula and Akhter 1990). The research on involvement has followed different paths. A group of researchers has focused mainly on the definition of the constructed domain, its dimensions, types and levels (Greenwald and Leavitt 1984; Krugman 1965; Laurent and Kapferer 1985; Petty and Cacioppo 1979; Zaichkowsky 1985). Another group of researchers has focused on involvement measuring (Laurent and Kapferer 1985; Krugman 1966; Ray 1978; Rogers and Schneider 1993; Zaichkowsky 1985; 1994; Andrews, Durvasula and Akhter 1990). The third group of researchers has engaged in studying the involvement role in cognitive structures attitudes (Lastovicka and Gardner 1978; Park and Young 1982; Petty and Cacioppo 1979) and their applications. With regard to this latter point, literature suggests that a consumer may be involved with the products (Clarke and Belk 1978), with the purchase decisions, (Clarke and Belk 1978) and with advertisements (Bogart, Tolley, Orenstein 1970; Krugman 1965; 1970; 1971; Eagly and Manis 1966; Wright 1974; Zaichkowsky 1985).

Many of the roads followed by researchers in consumers' behavior on TV advertisement and the involvement level were originated in the works published by Krugman (Greenwald and Leavitt 1984; Traylor 1981). Krugman (1965) directed his attention to the effect of the media on involvement, observing that TV advertisement brings forth low involvement. In his first publication

he established that involvement is the number of conscious “bridging experiences”, connections, or personal references per minute of the receiver. On the other hand, he adduces that the impact of advertising is limited. He suggests very different effects could be expected according to involvement level (Krugman 1965). In a subsequent writing he stated that advertisement involvement tends to be higher for magazines than for television with high involvement products, and there is no difference when dealing with low involvement products (Krugman 1966). In another publication he stated that persons passively process the information provided by massive media, such as television (Krugman 1970). Finally, Krugman (1971) reported another study using brain waves and shows that the differences of the brain’s electric response are more related with the media than with the content. In this study, the investigated subject recorded a high proportional “fast waves” in response to magazine advertising, towards which the subject showed higher interest than towards TV advertising, on which his interest was not very clear. Notwithstanding, the results of such study are questionable due to the fact that in the research, the content differences between messages were not controlled (Wright 1974).

Other authors have confirmed TV’s limited impact (Bogart, Tolley, Orenstein 1970) and have evidenced that for certain products people establish or generate more connections in response to printed advertisement than in response to TV advertisement. They stated that printed execution provides a larger opportunity to give an active response than executions for radio and TV. It establishes that TV’s advertising impact is of low involvement when compared with high involvement of magazine advertising. They consider that the message transmitted through this high involvement media, involves consumer more in a cognitive activity than the same message transmitted in an audio or audiovisual media (Wright, 1974).

In one of their studies Petty, Cacioppo and Goldman (1981) found that to the extent the topic discussed in the message presents a level of personal relevance for whoever perceives it, it is more probable that the person who detects the message assesses it in a more rational manner. Other researchers argue that certain people have evidenced a trend to rely more on messages transmitted through printed media than through audiovisual media (Wells, Burnett and Moriarty 2002). Bagozzi and Moore (1994) argue that emotional campaigns produce stronger feelings, and generate a greater desire to help than rational campaigns.

Based on the above discussion, this experiment conducts a research on the influence exerted by the type of message executed at printed media and the brand, on the desire to help and empathy of consumer.

First of all, it is established that:

H1 rational messages executed in printed media concerning brands that compete in the same category and that are related with social causes generate greater intention to help than emotional messages of the same brands executed in printed media.

Secondly, it is sought to evidence that:

H2 rational messages executed in printed media concerning brands competing in the same category and that are related with social causes generate greater empathy than emotional messages of the same brands executed in printed media.

PILOT STUDY

In order to achieve the proposed objectives, a pilot study and an experiment were conducted. The pilot study was done with the

following targets: 1) to determine the most relevant social cause and to establish the type of feelings associated with each one of them. 2) To identify the most remembered campaigns and the type of social cause associated with the campaign and 3) to select the product category and the real brands that have more affinity with the social cause, which would be used in the experiment.

A total of 78 students that are taking different undergraduate courses participated in the pilot study, which was accomplished in two stages. In the first stage, the most important social cause was established, together with the feelings associated therewith, and the social cause campaigns that the individuals remembered most. The second stage allowed to select the category and the brands that were used in the experiment.

First Stage. 42 undergraduate students registered at the administration, industrial design, industrial engineering and architecture curricula at Universidad de Los Andes, were selected. These subjects were asked to establish the importance of eight social causes in accordance with the measuring system proposed by Carpenter, Glazer and Nakamoto (1994). The subjects were presented the eight causes and were subsequently asked to order them, based on their importance. The subjects were to indicate first the least important cause, marking the left end of a line (ranging from 0 to 10 centimeters) and, subsequently, they were to indicate the most important cause, marking the right end of the line. The subject then placed a labeled mark for each of the six remaining causes, along the line, to indicate relative importance. The rating for each cause was the distance in centimeters from the least important brand (0 centimeters). The subjects also answered questions related with the feelings generated by the preferred causes, the social causes remembered, and the brand associated therewith.

The results show that the subjects perceived infant ill-treatment, humanitarian help to displaced people, and intra-family violence, as the most important causes. On the other hand, 67% of the subjects remembered social campaigns focused on children, such as the campaign of Fundación Cardio Infantil, or the Alliance Alkosto-Best Buddies. Finally, it was found that campaigns related with social causes are associated with positive feelings of happiness and satisfaction.

Second Stage. This stage was carried out in order to select the product category and the brands that would be used in the experiment. 36 students of different semesters and undergraduate programs of Universidad de los Andes participated. The subjects were presented eight products and then they were asked to select the option that had more affinity with infants’ ill-treatment social cause. Subsequently, they were asked to select the brand they considered more appropriate for the development of the campaign.

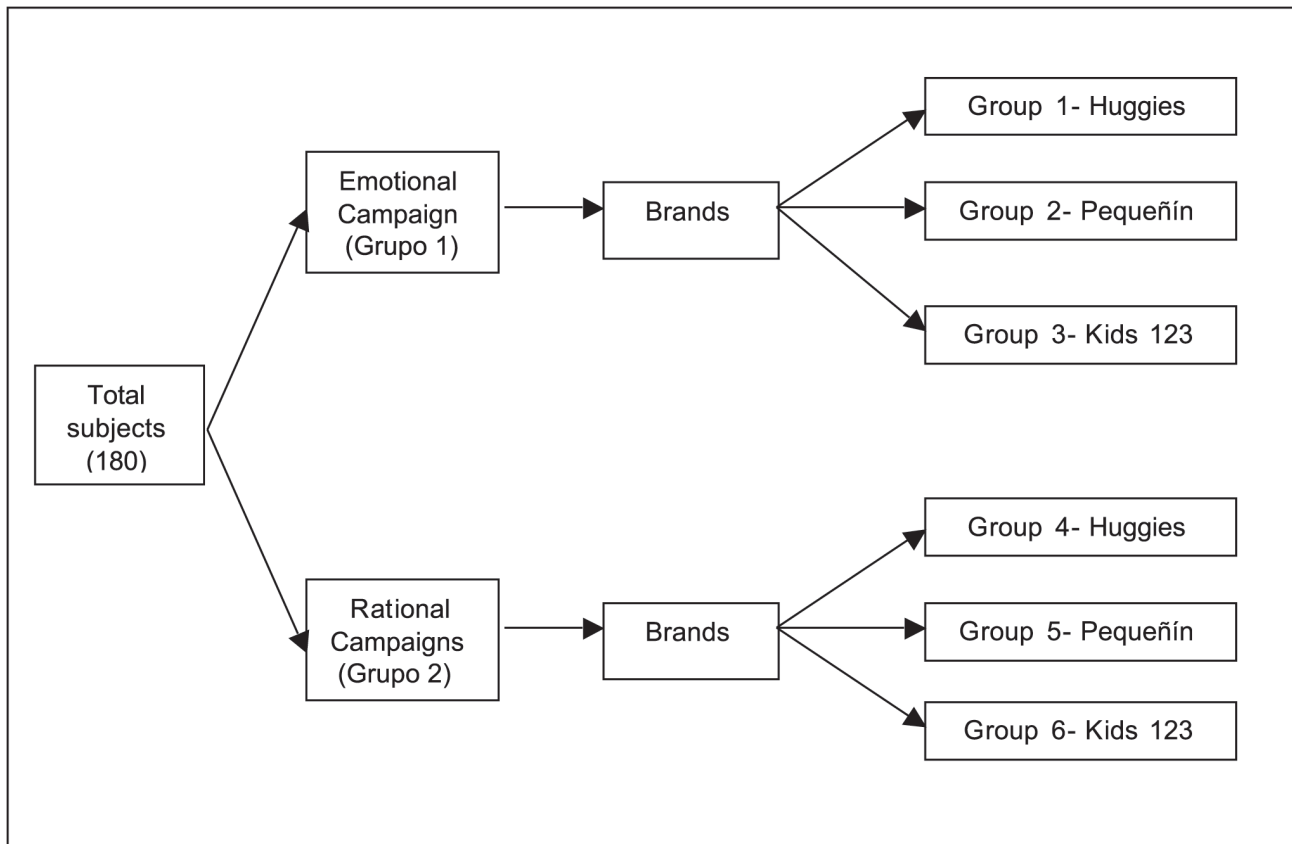
The results show that the greatest affinity was found among a diapers category with the infant ill-treatment social cause. In addition, the brands Huggies and Pequeñín had the greatest affinity with the infant ill-treatment social cause.

In summary, the infants’ ill-treatment social cause and the brands Huggies and Pequeñín in the diapers category were taken into account for the design of the experiment.

EXPERIMENT

Method. This work researches the relation existing between the rational or emotional nature of the message placed in printed media concerning three diaper brands, and donor’s empathy and desire to help. The experiment employed 2 (types of message: rational vs. emotional) x 3 (brands: Huggies, Pequeñín and Kid123) between subjects design. Huggies and Pequeñín are real brands that actually compete in the diapers market and 123 is an artificial brand that does not exist in the market.

FIGURE 1
2 x 3 Factorial Design used in Experiment



Subjects. This experiment was conducted at Universidad de Los Andes to test Hypothesis 1 and 2. The first hypothesis affirms that rational messages executed in printed media, on diaper brands related with social causes generate greater empathy than emotional messages executed in printed media, concerning the same brands. The second hypothesis says that rational messages executed in printed media concerning diaper brands related with social causes generate greater intention to help than emotional messages executed in printed media concerning the same brands. One hundred eighty undergraduate students of the administration curricula participated in the study. Half of them were female students, and the group age ranged between 17 and 28. Subjects were randomly assigned to one of the six experimental treatments. In addition, within each condition, the presentation order of scales was counter-balanced across subjects.






Procedure. In order to assess the role of the brand associated with the social cause with regard to the empathy and the desire to help from the donor, three brands were selected. Huggies is leader in the Colombian market and it was the most remembered one in the pilot test. Pequeñín was the second most remembered brand of the pilot test. Kids 123 is a fictitious brand. Figure 1 summarizes the 2 x 3 factorial design used in the experiment. Two types of campaigns for printed media were designed, a rational one and an emotional one. The campaigns design was taken from the description of the campaigns used in the study developed by Bagozzi and Moore, using images with just a few text for the emotional campaign, and a lot of text without images for the rational campaign. The emotional type campaign was characterized by having an image that sought to awaken emotions and tenderness feelings. To achieve

these feelings, a photograph of a sad girl was shown, with tears in her face, hugging a bear and just a few text. An emotional campaign associated with infants' ill-treatment social cause was designed for each one of the brands (Huggies, Pequeñín and Kids 123). The emotional campaign used was the same one; the only thing that changed was the sponsoring brand. The rational campaign only had text (no image) and sought to call the attention of the subjects using real and alarming data on Colombian children. It included real data on the infant ill-treatment situation provided by UNICEF, the Colombian Institute of Family Welfare (ICBF), and the International Organization for Migration in Colombia (OIM) and articles of opinion on infant ill-treatment in Colombia. For each of the brands (Huggies, Pequeñín and Kids 123) a rational campaign associated with infant ill-treatment social cause was designed. The rational campaign used was the same one; the only thing that changed was the sponsoring brand (Figure 2).

Each one of the six experimental groups was presented the respective campaign. For example, emotional campaign with Huggies brand sponsoring a social cause to help children that have been ill-treated was presented to group number 1. Group 2 was assigned the emotional campaign to help children that have been ill-treated, sponsored by Pequeñín. This was followed in the same way with each one the remaining groups until completing six groups. In each group the researcher delivered to each subject a booklet with the printed campaign and a questionnaire. The researcher requested to open the booklet and carefully observe the campaign. Subsequently, the researcher requested the subjects to answer the scale of empathy developed by Bagozzi and Moore (1994). When the subjects finished answering the scale of empathy, the researcher

FIGURE 2

Rational and Emotional Campaigns sponsored by Huggies

 <p>Every 2 years, 2 million boys and girls are ill-treated at home, 850.000 of them in a severe manner.</p> <p>361 boys and girls of every 1.000, suffer some kind of ill-treatment.</p> <p>In average, 7 boys and girls die for homicide daily.</p> <p>Between 2003 and 2006 47.767 cases of infant ill-treatment were reported, representing a 65% increase.</p> <p>84.3% of sexually abused victims are minors.</p> <p>When you purchase Huggies diapers and wipes, you are contributing for a better future of ill-treated children victims</p> <p>Huggies will donate 5% of the value of your purchase to Foundations that support this cause.</p> 	 <p>You can make the children victims of ill-treatment smile Again.</p>  <p>When you purchase Huggies diapers and wipes, 5 % of the value of your purchase will be donated to recover the smile of children victims of Infant ill-treatment</p> 
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invited them to continue answering the scale of intention to help, and to record certain demographic data. At the end of the experiment, the researcher thanked the participants for their cooperation.

Dependent Measures. To measure the empathy, a scale developed by Bagozzi and Moore (1994) was adopted to assess the empathy generated by a message through audiovisual means. The scale consists of six Likert type statements. Subjects evaluated the empathy generated by the campaign on a 7-point scale ranging from totally in agreement to totally in disagreement (from 7 to 1, respectively).

The intention to help was measured using the scale developed by Bagozzi and Moore (1994). With a Likert type statement the subjects evaluated their intention to help, on a 7-points scale, ranging from very probably, to not at all probable. (From 7 to 1, respectively).

RESULTS

Validation of the empathy scale. A research on the dimensionality of the six item scale was carried out for each group. The items were factor analyzed using varimax rotation. The general pattern of results showed two main factors (eigenvalues > 1). The two factors across groups accounted for a range of common variance from 60% to 77%. These brands were also tested for internal scale reliability. Over all groups, items B, D, E and F loaded positively on the first factor, and item A loaded positively on the second factor. The correlation between the two factors was 0.51, and it was significant at $p \leq 0.001$. This strong correlation of empathy among the two

factors indicates that they are converging on a common underlying construct, thereby providing evidence of convergent validity. For the first factor, the Cronbach alpha ranged from 0.80 to 0.88 across the groups. The results of the confirmatory factorial analysis show that the empathy scale is made up by two dimensions. The first dimension was called empathy towards causes of others. By empathy with causes of others it is understood a situation where the social cause announced is not directly related with family or persons that directly affect the feelings of donor. For example, hunger in Africa, or ill-treatment of children, or of persons different from inquired's family or relatives.

Empathy for causes of others was operationalized with statements such as "upon seeing that add I could feel the need for protection of children victims of infant ill-treatment, or I felt great compassion for the children victimized with ill-treatment". The first dimension was evaluated by items B, D, E and F where Cronbach's alpha exceeds 0.7 (0.84), the threshold Nunnally (1994) recommends for exploratory research. The second dimension was called empathy towards the inquired's own cause. By own empathy towards a social cause it is understood a situation where the announced cause evokes images, emotions and feelings related directly with the person or with a very close relative. The following statement describes the way in which this dimension was operationalized: "that add made me see the need of taking any kind of action to prevent my children from being victims". This second dimension was evaluated by items A and C (Cronbach's alpha < 0.7) (Table 1). However, item C was eliminated from the final scale due

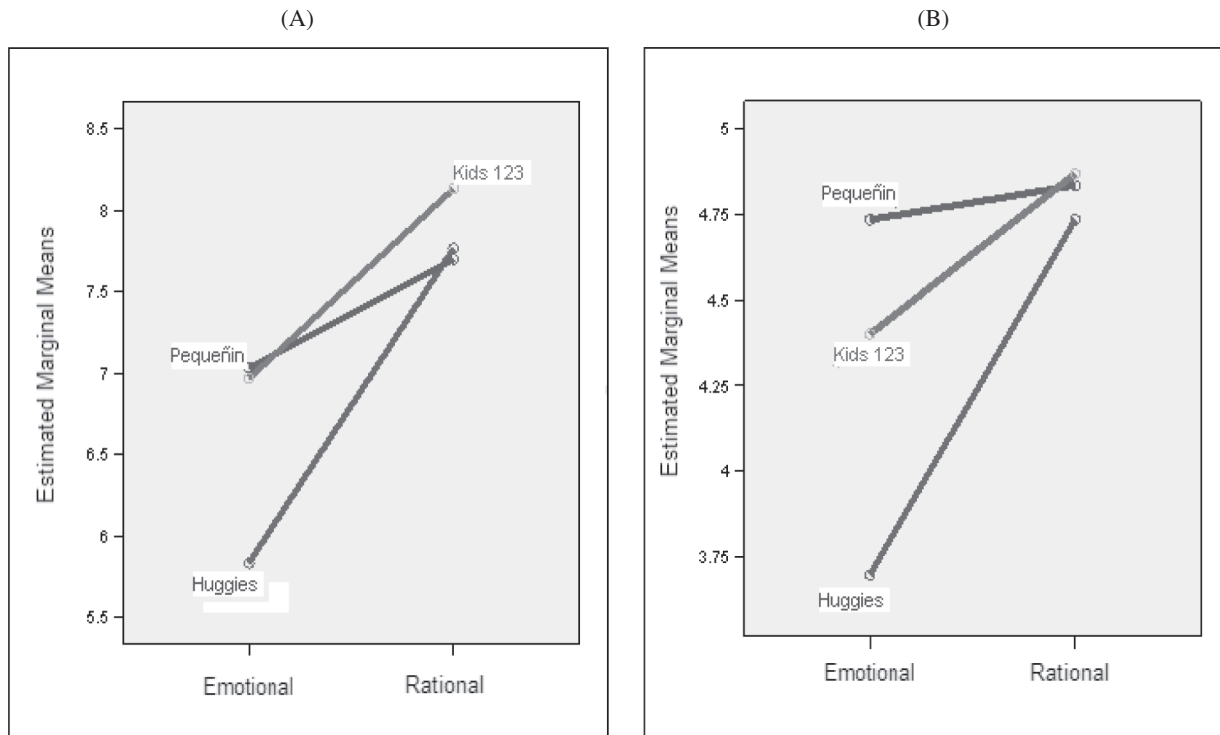
TABLE 1
Scale items for Empathy Measurement

Item	Empathy towards causes of others	Empathy towards the inquired's own
A	Upon seeing that ad I could feel the need for protection of children victims of infant ill-treatment	That ad made me see the need of taking any kind of action to prevent my children from being victims
B		
C*	That ad tended to evoke within me a desire to offer protection to the victims of infant ill-treatment	That ad made me feel fear of thinking that I could be an ill-treatment victim
D	I feel great compassion for the children victimized with ill-treatment	
E	The ad caused me to have tender feelings of concern for the victims of ill-treatment	
F		

*Item C was eliminated

FIGURE 3

Interaction between the type of message and intention to help (A) and interaction between the type of message and empathy (B)



to its low correlation and low reliability. Bergkvist and Rossiter (2007) argue that when the construct consist of a concrete singular object, single-item measures should be used. A strong correlation among the two components of empathy indicates that they are converging on a common construct, thereby providing evidence of convergent validity. The correlation between the two components, exceed 0.49 and is significant at $p < 0.001$. (Narver, Slater, 1990; Gray, Matear and Boschof, 1998)

A 2 (rational message, emotional message) x 3 (Huggies, Pequeñín, Kids, 123) between-subjects ANOVA on intention to help measure yielded a significant main effect for the type of message ($F_{1,179}=4.135, p \leq 0.05$). The intention to help was significantly higher when the campaign used a rational ad than

when the campaign used an emotional add. Figure 3 shows that the interaction between the type of message and the brand was not significant with regard to the intention to help; notwithstanding, the results obtained show that when the campaign is rational, the intention to help increases, particularly in the brands Huggies and Kids 123 than when the campaign has an emotional content (Huggies: $M=3.7$ vs. 4.7 and Kids: $M=4.4$ vs. 5.0).

To test Hypothesis 2, an ANOVA was run on the two empathy measurements: general empathy, empathy towards causes of others and empathy towards our own causes. A 2 (rational, emotional) x 3 (Huggies, Pequeñín, Kids 123) mixed analysis of variance performed on empathy towards our own causes uses a significant main effect for the type of message ($F_{1,179}=3.638, p \leq 0.05$). The

rational message generated significantly higher empathy towards our own causes than the emotional message, in the three brands. Analysis of variance for empathy towards our own causes showed a marginally significant interaction for the type of message and the brand ($F_{2,179}=2,815$ $p \leq 0.06$). In addition, it was found that when the campaign is rational, the empathy towards our own causes increases, particularly in Huggies and Kids 123 brands than when the campaign has an emotional content (Huggies: $M=3.8$ vs. 5.2 and Kids 123: $M=4.1$ vs. 5.5).

DISCUSSION

The results of the experiment suggest that the rational messages transmitted in printed media concerning brands related with social causes generate more intention to help and empathy for ourselves than emotional messages transmitted in printed media concerning the same brands and associated social cause. The subjects showed an intention to help and empathy for themselves significantly higher when the message was rational than when it was emotional.

The experiment also yielded interesting novel and different conclusions from those suggested by Bagozzi and Moore (1994). On one part, the confirmatory factorial analysis suggests that the empathy construct measured by six Likert type items is made up by two dimensions that were identified by the researchers as empathy towards others and empathy towards oneself. In order to precise the role of the type of message in the empathy, a variance analysis was conducted on the two empathy measures: empathy for others, and empathy for ourselves. When the rational message of a brand associated with a social cause, such as infant ill-treatment, is compared with an emotional message, the results allow to establish that the rational message affects significantly people's own empathy and does not affect empathy for others. In other words, the rational message has more influence when the individual interiorizes or experiences the cause as something of its own. On the other hand, the results obtained suggest conclusions different from those found by Bagozzi and Moore (1994). In their experiment, these researchers conclude that the emotional type campaigns carried out in audiovisual media generate greater levels of empathy; on the contrary, this research suggests otherwise when the campaign is conducted in printed media.

The results allow to conclude that the type of brand does not play an important role in the intention to help, or in own or others empathy.

In future research, the following must be taken into account: this research reckoned with the participation of students from Universidad de los Andes. In further research, other social causes should be taken into account, including other product categories and having the participation of actual purchasers of the researched products. Finally, the moderator role of empathy with regard to the purchase intention should be explored.

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