**“Isolation Effect” does it make a difference on recalling ability purchase intention and behavior of the consumer?**

Dr. Owais Mufti

Assistant Professor Institute of Management Sciences Peshawar

owais.mufti@imsciences.edu.pk

# Abstract

This study aims to scrutinize multiple isolation techniques used by the telecom companies to attract consumers. For this purpose, data was collected from different telecom officials via interviews and was analyzed after transcription. The analysis revealed diverse isolation techniques used by the telecom companies such as Ufone focuses primarily on humorous ads. Warid has introduced the latest internet technology to interconnect users across the globe. Moreover, Mobilink has initiated the Unique Selling Preposition (USP) service claiming that their service is different from the competitors. Results primarily indicate that all the cellular companies follow the strategy of Von Restorff effect in their products, pricing, and promotion, which has a significant impact on the consumers’ purchase intention and behavior.

**Introduction**

We tend to remember unique and distinctive things more than ordinary and similar objects. Isolated colors, shapes, objects and names are remembered and recalled more effortlessly. This effect is named as the Von Restorff effect. It was first discovered by Hedwig Von Restorff, a German researcher, psychiatrist and a pediatrician, in 1933. The same principle has also been named as isolation effect*,*distinctiveness principle (Nelson, 1979), prominence effects(Gardner, 1983), environmental salience effects(Taylor & Fiske, 1978), novel pop-out effect, and next-in-line effect (Brenner, 1973). Von Restorff effect emphasizes on differential attention towards an isolated object among the crowd. The isolated object stands out like a sore thumb and is remembered more than other objects in the list. After Von Restorff many researchers have conducted research on this phenomenon, and found a positive effect of Von Restorff. Attention is usually captured by salient, novel, surprising, or distinctive stimuli. These may be used to enhance the Von Restorff effect (Taylor & Fiske, 1978). The discovery of Von Restorff effect brought a great change in the marketing field. Marketers and advertiser want their product to look different, unique, and distinctive among all. They use this phenomenon widely in advertising and in branding their products. They air unique ads on television and display unusual visuals on their billboard ads, and sometimes they display “Cow” instead of “Chicken” on billboard ads, other times they misspell a word or name. The main purpose of this study is also to find out different isolation techniques used by telecom companies to attract consumers. In addition, the study at hand also tries to find out the Von Restorff Effect on consumer purchasing behavior, purchase intention and recalling ability.

**Background Literature**

The Von Restorff effect was first discovered by Hedwig Von Restorff in 1933. She was a psychiatrist and a pediatrician born on December 14, 1906 in Berlin. After an education focused on classical languages, at the age of 20, she enrolled herself in the University of Berlin at the age of 20 and studied philosophy, psychology, and natural sciences. In 1933, she obtained her Ph.D. under the supervision of Gestalt psychologist Wolfgang Köhler (1887-1967). In the same year she published her first article “Über die Wirkung von BereichsbildungenimSpurenfeld”, announcing her discovery of what is known till this day as the "Von Restorff effect" or "isolation effect". Unfortunately, her paper was never translated into English. Von Restorff conducted a set of experiments; she presented three lists over a span of three days to the participants. On the first day the experiment was different, she presented a mix list of ten unrelated items, which included a number, a symbol, a word and a picture. On second and third day she presented two more lists, each list contained one isolated item. Each of the two lists either contained one isolated number and nine nonsense syllables or one nonsense syllable and nine numbers. Moreover, these isolated numbers and syllable happened to come in either at second or third serial positions. The results showed a robust recall for the isolated items than the other items in the list. After the discovery of this phenomenon a series of experiments by other researchers have been done revealing a robust effect of the phenomenon. On the other hand, numerous researchers have already worked on isolation paradigm years before Von Restorff’s publication, namely, Jersild 1929; Van Buskirk 1932, a few of the papers written in English.

**Era of Attention**

The Cat is on the mat, is not a story, the Cat is on the Dog’s mat, now that is the story. In the current era, people are more concerned about how to get attention, so it won't be wrong to label it an age of attention. People are encircled by a media which is in a nonstop contest against each other to get the attention of the people around them by using different kinds of techniques. It is not possible for any person to gain attentiveness and concentration without having awareness. Therefore, companies spend lots of money, time and energy in advertising and marketing. Advertising is one of the major tools in promotion mix and its mission is to inform, influence, remind or reinforce the consumer purchase choice (Philip Kotler, 2003). In other words, Stephen Leacock said: “Advertisement may be considered as a science through which we can capture the human intellect or mind for a time period that is sufficient to get money from him”.

Philip Kotler (2003) criticized advertising and suggested that the companies should invest more money and time in producing excellent products and a smaller amount of advertisements. He added further that satisfied customers are the best advertisers. In response to the proponents of advertising, Kotler advised: don’t make awful advertising but excellent advertising. In order to differentiate themselves companies, especially advertisers, are operating more thoughtfully with the notion of coming up with something exceptional every time. For this purpose, Von Restorff effect will be instrumental since it takes on the subject of standing out in the competitive world.

Mind Mapping inventor, Tony Buzan (1970) suggested a technique for students accentuating that the easiest way to remember concepts is to use imagery and visualization, which gives strength to the memory. Students usually use highlighter to mark important topics, which enables them to better memorize and remember specific topics.

**The Von Restorff Effect and Distinctiveness**

Individual parts or items, which are distinctive in relation to their context, can be recalled well than non-distinctive items, such effect is known as Von Restorff effect. Most psychologists termed this effect as the effect of distinctiveness on memory. Sarno and Alley (1997) found that, in comparison with the less distinctive faces, more distinctive faces in an ad are recognized more easily by the viewers. Hedwing Von Restorff conducted several experiments to assess the authenticity of this phenomenon. She found that an item is better remembered when it differs in one or more dimensions from the other items in the same list. Hunt (1995) also explained this phenomenon with a simple example, which included two lists, one is known as isolated lists 4.5.6.8.2.**T**.5.8.7.6 and the other one is homogeneous list Q.W.E.R.T.Y.U.I. In first list, the word “**T**” is catching the eyes as it is in isolation in the list as compared to the homogeneous list. So, it means, in any given number of items, an item that is notably different from the rest of the numbers can be recalled easily. Similarly, in L.S.P.K.O.T.W.E.V, the word O is more prominent than the other words because of its color. Hence, these studies suggest that Von Restorff effect has many general forms of distinctiveness, which may affect memory. Compared to the daily routine happenings, one can better remember the distinct events. This phenomena, according to most psychologists, is often referred as the Von Restorff effect (Schmidt, 1991). Hunt (1995) in his experiments about recall for uniqueness or distinctiveness found that isolated items can easily be recalled and described as two more aspects of distinctiveness, i.e., related and unrelated. Like related items such as fox, tiger, lion will be associated with the dimension of animal, but these terms may also be indicating other aspects associated with the aforesaid animals such as cunningness, largeness, and fastness. While unrelated items such as fox, laptop, airplane attributes will be different, but the difference will not be associated to any specific dimension of similarity. Certainly, in contrast to the unaligned differences, aligned differences can be detected more often and easily (Markman and Gentner 1993).

It can be concluded from the above discussion that distinctiveness alone is not a complete resolute of recall or memory phenomenon. Random experiments proved that novelty associated components are generated by the isolated list or items, but the findings suggest that novelty alone is not the grounds of the Von Restorff effect. Unexpectedness or novelty, meaningfulness or relevancy, and positive or affirmative feelings (emotional contents) known to be the dimensions of creativity are the supplementary factors that play a vital role in Von Restorff effect (Ang and Low, 2000).

**VRE and its vividness**

Vivid images of anything are better remembered than the inconspicuous ones. For this purpose, different techniques such as humorous statements or images can be used to make things more prominent and distinct than others. Hilarious statements, funny faces, cartoons are used to make the advertisements more prominent and eye catching. Overall learning may decrease by applying such techniques as one might give maximum attention to highly visible items in comparison to others; a reverse effect occurs due to the use of such methods. Isolation may be done by changing the nature of items or it may be done without changing the nature of items, by means of different fonts, color or background, for example, ABC DEF GHI JKL MNO **@ &\*** PQR STU and AA BB CC DD EE **FF**GG HH. It is obvious from an experiment that an isolated item was better learned by the learner in isolated list as compared to those items which were in homogenous or crowded list. As cleared from the above red word placed at 6th position facilitate the participant to recall. Same is the case with the advertisements as the warning part is not usually prominent in a cigarette ad while the adventure and lifestyle fashion is used to be more prominent.

**An Experimental Comparison between Incidental and Intentional Learning for Isolated and Crowded Objects and to Know about Meaningful Isolation**

To compare memory learning between incidental and intentional for “isolated” and “crowded” items, two experiments were carried out by Postman and Phillips (1954). In the first experiment, participants were exposed to the catalog of ten numbers (3 digit numbers) and ten syllables (3 letter syllables). By inserting a syllable in an identical sequence of numbers i.e. 3 digit numbers and 3 letter syllables, isolation was attained, and vice versa. Results revealed that experimental (incidental) group and the instructed (intentional) group recorded positive effect for isolation, but contrary to incidental learners, intentional learners retained the isolated objects better than crowded ones. The similar stimulus items were used in the second experiment, but to boost the amount of isolation of the significant items, syllables were highlighted black while numbers were painted red. The effects of isolation were examined for incidental and intentional learning; the result indicated that there was no significant effect of isolation even on the intentional learners. The color difference, in fact, was a cause of hindrance for the reason that the stimulus properties were unrelated to the learning mission, to which the learner responded. The result would have been fruitful if the isolated items in the first experiment were marked with a different/distinct color while keeping all the crowded items alike, as compared to the technique used in the 2nd experiment. From the second experiment, it is evident that if isolation, which is produced by stimulus features, is related to the learner's assignment, then it will result in retention to some extent and vice versa. Hence, it was concluded that distinctiveness alone is not purposeful as a total account of recall or memory phenomenon.

**Advertising and the Consumer’s Mind**

Sutherland and Sylvester (2000) stated that keeping all factors (price, quality, design, size, or power) equal for substitutes (two similar brands by the competitors or substitutes) in the market; slight effects of advertising can play key role in the selection of a brand. For example; if we look at the commercials of telecom industry in Pakistan, Ufone introduced quite distinctive ads having a flavor of humor which makes it distinctive than other brands. Conversely, they also stated that advertising is not magical when all is same. They also argued that advertising may largely fail to attract people to buy a product for the first time, however, when it is profoundly backed by promotions, free sampling, and discounts, it succeeds in attracting consumers to try the new brand. Moreover, for advertising to be effective it must stand out and for this purpose can use attention grabbing techniques. The best known attention grabbing techniques are sex and humor. Nevertheless, this technique has its limitation since it may make the people happy but does not directly address the brand attributes or usefulness. Product attributes recall will lead to attitude formation and positive evaluation, both are in turn affected by a brand’s advertising (Gardner, 1983).

**Creativity in advertising**

According to Getzels and Csikszent-mihalyi (1976) and MacKinnon (1962) creative people are those who produce ideas, inventions or products that are divergent and relevant, and are determined by the framework such as one set (e.g. Educated) might be receptive towards the ad and perceive it innovative but the same ad may not be perceived as creative by another group (e.g. illiterate). Findings suggest that there are three types of creativity involved in advertising; one is “personal creativity” second is “ad creativity” and the last one is “consumer creativity”. Ang and Low (2000) found that there are three dimensions to a creative ad that is unexpectedness or novelty, meaningful or relevant message and third is production of positive or affirmative feelings known as emotional contents. They examined that the effectiveness of an ad is determined with the help of above mentioned dimensions. The authors also found that the attitude towards the ad is positively influenced by innovation.

The creation of novel, publicly valued, and socially appreciated products is known to be creativity in the field of psychology. According to Smith and Yang (2004), there are two primary determinants of creativity. First, it must be unique, imaginative or different commonly regarded as ‘divergence’ and secondly, the divergent item must have some kind of ‘relevance’. The dimensions of ad creativity are explained by various authors as under.

***Novelty***

Numerous definitions of creativity have been offered by various disciplines, which encompasses a factor namely novelty (Ang and Low, 2000). Jackson and Messick (1967) stated that a creative product, regardless of what other positive qualities it might possess, novelty should be the first factor in determining its creativity. Moreover, according to Jewler and Drewniany (1998); Marra (1990), in advertising, a sense of humor, risk, novelty, and divergent thinking are well-known and captivating elements of creative advertisement. Heckler and Childers (1992) have shown that the construct of expectancy in advertising is similar to the novelty where expectancy is the composition brought to mind by the ad theme and the confirmation of information regarding that ad theme. A “novel ad” is defined by Stoltman (1991) as an ad that is not consistent with other ads or ideas of the same product category.

***Meaningfulness or Relevancy***

Ang and Low (2000) acknowledged that in the context of advertising, there are certain expectations on the part of consumers, which should be met, but not all forms of novelty or unexpectedness are necessarily considered to be creative, unless novel or unexpected ads carry some meaning for the consumers. This view is also replicated in the work of Jackson & Messick (1965); Ray & Myers (1986). They accentuated that novelty on its own is not enough; meaningfulness or sense must also be there in the novel constituent. Hence, for an ad to be creative, it should be novel as well as meaningful. Unexpectedness or novelty doesn’t make the ad truly and fairly creative unless it expresses some relevance or sense with reference to the advertised product (Haberland and Dacin 1992). Correspondingly, Coade (1997) suggested that creativity ought to engross turning a novel idea into somewhat valuable and real.

*Emotional Content*

In assessing whether an ad is creative or not, the content of an ad and its emotional direction must be considered important. People respond emotionally to an *‘out of the blue’* stimulus signifying that the emotional reactions drawn will out play any other characteristics. According to Ang and Low (2000), the contributions of ad creativity appear to be more apparent in Attitude towards ad (Aad) than in Attitude towards the brand (AB) and Purchase Intention (PI). Ads without novelty and relevancy (but with Positive-feelings) draw out analogous levels of assessments in terms of AB and PI compared to the unexpected-meaningful or relevant-positive feeling ads. To some extent, for positive feelings the other two can be sacrificed. When creating ads, positive feelings should be the keystone. The results advocate that Aad is influenced more easily than AB and (PI) by creative rudiments.

**Application of VRE in advertisements**

Consumers have a positive attitude towards an ad when it has something to talk about, and ultimately it comes to buying behavior when they like the ad, but it occurs after so many exposures to the advertisement. Entertaining element is more likeable in Asian countries (Gazley et al. 2012). Animations, symbols, lyrics, humor, pictures, color, situations, slogans, celebrities, magical tricks, atypical words, and images are examples of that novelty or isolation effect. Articulated isolation is more prolific than mere isolation.

Using information in advertisements in a unique way may increase recall for the ad as well as for the brand and may lead to the ultimate purchase of that brand. Indian advertising agencies applied Von Restorff effect in an effective manner using humor, emotions, adventure, and curiosity etc. Van Dam, Peeck, Brinkerink, and Gorter (1974) conducted two experiments on a sample of 120 undergraduates at the University of Utrecht. 120 subjects were divided into 4 groups, each group consisted of 30 subjects. The two experimental conditions were Recall and Recognition. For the test of recall a set of 15 Dutch five letter words were selected, which had a mean frequency of occurrence in the Dutch language of 21 per million. A slide was produced for each item which was then shown via Kodak Carousel projector. All the words were printed on a green background except for the isolated word which was printed on a red background which was positioned at serial 9. The groups saw the slides at a 2 second rate and were instructed to remember as many of the slides as possible. The groups didn’t have prior knowledge of the testing. Then each person in a group was given 10 minutes to complete as many series as possible on a paper with a series of numbers and letters. In the next stage a test of recognition was conducted, during which 55 slides at a rate of 6 seconds per item were successively presented. The respondents had to respond with yes or no based on the first experiment whether they recognized each item presented or not. The findings revealed that on a Recall test a strong “isolation effect” was obtained. It also revealed that isolated item in a bright red background and the non-isolated items in a green background are enough to produce an effect. However, no evidence of the effect on the neighboring serial position was noticed. Furthermore, recognition experiment shows quite different results. No isolation effect was discernible and the mean recognition scores of the experimental and control groups did not differ significantly.

Facial attractiveness is remembered and recalled more effectively and it plays a role of isolation on memory recall and purchase behavior (Chiu & Babcock, 2002). Correlation matrix was used and the results indicated that human resources management preferred to shortlist attractive females and males over the less attractive women and men of the same qualification and experience. It also showed that attractiveness biasness is not universal as beauty is a relative term.

Novelty in advertisement attracts the consumers (Mercanti-Guérin, 2008). The mean scores of the replies obtained from the experiment established the creative level of the five ads selected (average scores from 3.32 to 2.65 on a 5-point Likert scale). It indicates that creativity in advertisement played the role of isolation effect on the consumer's perception. Data was collected by using two techniques i.e. in-depth interviews and a scale was developed to measure perceived advertising creativity. In the experiment 72 individuals were shown in 5 ads and after that only one question was asked, whether the ads were creative. The responses were scored as high, average or low. It was observed that new-looking and stylish ads catch the attention of consumers since they are not monotonous. Bringing innovation in ads compels the consumers to purchase products readily.

Kozbelt (2003) in his study found that creativity in drawing plays the role of isolation in creating drawings. The purpose of the study was to examine artistic creation from a problem-solving perspective and to examine closely the strategies that distinguish artists with very creative work from those with less creative work. Similarly, Brenner (1973) found that Recall tended to be best for the words that the participants had read out themselves (the Von Restorff effect) and worst for the words immediately preceding the words that they had read out (the next-in-line effect). In the experiment 22 male participants sat at square tables taking turns reading words aloud, trying to remember as many words as possible. After going round the table several times, so that each participant had read out several words and there were many more read out by others to remember. The participants' recall was tested and was found that the effect was due to both, attention distraction and retrograde amnesia.

Novelty and divergence, the two important aspects of creativity, plays an important role of isolation in advertisements (Smith& Yang, 2004). The author reviewed the past literature of psychology and marketing in advertisement and developed a model that has creative ads as both divergent (i.e. novel or unusual) and relevant*.* The results indicated that the first and most fundamental characteristic of creativity is divergence, that is, the ad must seem to be new, different or unique to the consumers. Secondly, it must have relevance, such as it should be valuable and appropriate to the audience.

Garcea (2009) performed two experiments by using isolation technique to see the similarities and differences amongst items, and they found that an isolated item early in a list enhances memory to the same extent as isolating the item later in the list; they found no significant difference in isolation effect arising due to different positions of items in the list. In the experiment the subjects consisted of 28 introductory psychology students comprising of 25 female and 3 male students. The students were classified into two experimental groups, 15 of the students participated in control group and 13 participated in an experimental group. The experiment decryption was same for both groups. For hypothesis testing t-test was used. In the last hypothesis test, control group and experimental group were tested for recollection of unique word where control group saw it in black color and experimental group in red. Through Chi square test it was found that the isolation effect is influential. Among the control group only 5 participants remembered whereas in experimental group all the participants could recall.

According to Hunt (1995), Von Restorff reported an average correct recall of 0.70 for the isolated list and 0.40 for the control list. In replication, the correct proportion of the isolation list was 0.70 for an isolated syllable and 0.80 for an isolated digit. Von concluded that perceptual salience was not a necessary condition for the isolation effect. The author used the direct observation method and claimed that perceptual salience is not necessary for the isolation effect. Results indicated that distinctive events seem inherently more memorable than common everyday occurrences. In isolation effect, if one item in a list is similar on some dimensions with others, memory for the rest of the different item will be enhanced. The difference between the isolated and surrounding items is not sufficient to produce isolation effects but must be considered in the context of similarity.

Creativity plays an instrumental role in isolation effect (Mazursky, 2007). Creative things are conveniently recalled compared to conventional. Creativity encompasses techniques such as idea generation and brainstorming. Creativity-enhancement methods are numerous and diversified, which may include idea-generation, brainstorming, synectics, lateral thinking, and unbounded randomness. Exact science of creativity was made by chemical engineer Genrich Altschuller for successful creative ideas. For design structure of creativity and effective creative ideas rhetorical figures and creative templates are mostly used. Creativity cannot be programmed or regularized for developing winning ideas; ‘random process’ for creating new ideas is more appropriate and evidence suggests that it is more effective.

Schmidt (1991) emphasizes that the effects of distinctive processes on memory are found both, within and between subject designs, moreover, on both recall and recognition. The same has been explained and tested in different ways to assess the effect of distinctiveness on memory performance. Result of the study indicated that distinctiveness has different effects on memory performance, depending upon the nature of its application. It is now well established that distinctive events are more memorable than the common events, however, the need is to develop a unifying theory that explains why unusual materials are well remembered.

Similarly, it has also been found that ‘serial position’ has an influential effect on the individuals’ ability to recall (Terry, 2005). Serial position effect is the tendency of a person to recall the first and last items in a [series](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Special:Search/series) more than the items in the middle. Therefore, ‘primacy’ and ‘regency’ in recalling plays the role of isolation. To understand the effect of serial position, Terry (2005) performed two experiments. In the first experiment a series of commercials were run on television while in second experiment a list of words were shown to the participants to assess the effect of primacy, retention intervals, regency and serial position on memory. The findings revealed that items at the beginning (primacy) and the items at the end (regency) are more likely to be recalled than the items in the middle, hence, validating the effect of serial position.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Author** | **Methodology** | **Findings** |
| Chiu & Babcock (2002) | Correlation matrix was used. | The results indicated that it is usually preferred to shortlist attractive females and males over the less attractive women and men of the same qualification and experience. It also showed that attractiveness biasness is not universal as beauty is a relative term. |
| Mercanti-Guérin (2008) | Data was collected by using two techniques. (1) In-depth interviews and (2) a scale was developed to measure perceived advertising creativity. This experiment has been conducted where 72 individuals were shown 5 ads and after that only one question has been asked that the ads were creative and their responses were scored as High, average or low. | It has been observed that new-looking and stylish ads catch the attention of consumers. Bringing innovation in ads compel the consumers to purchase that product. |
| Kozbelt (2003) | 24 art students were videotaped as they individually created three drawings. The coding system recorded entire session. Each session was divided into five equal time intervals for analysis. | The purpose of this study was to examine artistic creation from a problem-solving perspective and to examine closely the strategies that distinguish artists who produce very creative work from those who produce less creative work. Leading artists used high opportunist’s problem solving strategies in creating drawings. Hence creativity in drawing plays the role of isolation in creating drawings. |
| Brenner(1973) | The 22 male participants sat in square tables taking turns reading words aloud, trying to remember as many words as possible. After going around the table several times, so that each participant had read out several words and there were many more read out by others to remember, the participants' recall was tested. 1 | Recall tended to be best for the words that the participants had read out themselves (the von Restorff effect) and worst for the words immediately preceding the words that they had read out (the next-in-line effect). The effect is believed to be due to both attention distraction and retrograde amnesia. |
| [Smith](http://mtq.sagepub.com/search?author1=Robert+E.+Smith&sortspec=date&submit=Submit)& [Yang](http://mtq.sagepub.com/search?author1=Xiaojing+Yang&sortspec=date&submit=Submit)(2004) | Creativity is considered an important element of advertisement. The author reviewed the past literature of Psychology and marketing in advertisement and developed a model that had creative ad as both divergent (i.e. novel or unusual) and relevant*.* | Novelty and divergence are the two important aspect of creativity that played the role of isolation effect in advertisement. The results indicated that the first and most fundamental characteristic of creativity is divergence (the ad must seem new, different or unique to the consumers). It should also catch the public's attention. Secondly, it must be relevant (valuable and appropriate to the audience). |
| Garcea  (2009) | The subjects comprised of 28, introductory psychology students, 25 female and 3 male. The students were classified into two experimental groups. 15 participated in control group and 13 in experimental group. Experiment decryption were same for both groups. For hypothesis testing T test was used. | It was found that isolating an item early in a list enhances memory to the same extent as isolating the item later in the list; they found no difference in the location of their isolated item. |
| Hunt  (1995 ) | Perceptual salience is not necessary for the isolation effect. The author used the direct observation method. | Distinctive events seem inherently more memorable than common everyday occurrences. In isolation effect if all but one item of a list are similar on some dimension, memory for the different item will be enhanced. The difference between the isolated and surrounding items is not sufficient to produce isolation effects but must be considered in the context of similarity. Von Restorff reported average correct recall of .70 for the isolation list and .40 for the control list. In our replication, the proportion correct for the isolation list was 70 for an isolated syllable and .80 for an isolated digit. And she concluded that perceptual salience was not a necessary condition for the isolation effect. |
| Goldenberg and Mazursky (2007) | For design structure of creativity and effective creative ideas rhetorical figures and creative templates are used for generation of creative ideas. | Creativity cannot be programmed or regularized. For developing winning ideas, 'Random process' for creating new idea is best and evidence suggests it is a random process. |
| Schmidt  (1991) | Many phenomena's have been explained to see the effect of distinctiveness on memory performance. | The effects of distinctive processes on memory? |
| Terry  (2005) | Experiment | Primacy and Regency in recalling is playing the role of isolation. |

**Methodology**

Research is qualitative in nature and five detailed interviews were conducted to check the VRE effect on recalling ability, purchase intention and behavior.

**Interviews Questions**

How isolation affects the purchase intention/behavior of consumer?

How the recalling ability of consumers is being affected by isolation?

How isolation methods can be used in ads to catch consumer attention?

How important physical appearance is, while hiring employees in your organization?

How celebrities can be endorsed in advertisements to attract consumer’s attention?

How novelty and relevancy can be employed to attract consumer's attention?

How creativity in advertising, affects consumer purchasing/recalling behavior?

How distinctiveness in ads affects recalling ability of consumers?

How can color isolate the consumer's attention towards a product?

How isolation in color or packing affects recalling ability of a consumer?

How a product can be isolated from competitor’s product?

How isolation can be effectively used in advertising?

How primacy and regency affects recalling ability of consumers?

How can consumers be motivated by using Von Restorff Effect?

**Transcription of Interviews**

Data was collected through semi structured interview. A total of 14 questions were asked from each respondent. The questions with their respective answers are given as under.

Syed Irfan, who was the franchised support officer in Ufone, when asked about how isolation affects the purchase intention/ behaviour of consumer, he responded that isolation has a positive impact on the consumer’s behaviour. While exemplifying his argument, he added that Ufone has gained isolation effect through different ways. Super card is one way of getting that unique position. He further added that in addition to super card, Ufone has also strived its best to keep its isolation position by offering different types of packages like:

* Daily Offer
* 24 hrs. offer (24 ghantay offer)
* Daily Chat and SMS offer
* Super Call Offer
* Location based offers and many more

Furthermore, Irfan said that in location based offer one can get connected with their friends and family members only on Rs 3.

Likewise, the marketing manager (Usman) of Telenor network was interviewed. Purpose of the interview was to see the effect of isolation on consumer. After a formal introduction the purpose of the interview was explained to the interviewee. He explained that Telenor has introduced different packages that catches consumer’s attention in the market, which includes three major product lines: the consumer packages, value added services, and corporate packages. Consumer packages include the post-paid and prepaid packages, the value added services provide entertainment and information, whereas corporate packages is for large businesses and corporate clients. He explained that brands attract customers by using various techniques. Different cellular networks have launched their distinctive products, which includes Ufone Super Card and Warid Poora Maheena Offer (means complete month offer). They have attracted a lot of customers through these products. For staying in competition we have launched Telenor easy card including following features.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Telenor Easy Card**  **For 30 Days** | **50 off-net Minutes** | **SMS: 500** | **500 MB**  **Internet** | **On-net 500 minutes to Telenor & PTCL** |

Zubair Ali, Senior Executive of Warid Telecom Company, was interviewed to see the different isolation methods used by Warid Company in order to attract customers and compete in the market. After a formal introduction Zubair Ali briefed that Warid offers sims with zero cost as sim is the main product. In order to compete and attract more customers Warid has divided its customers in three different categories, the youngsters, the old age, and the official or earning people. Warid’s main target is to touch the youngsters and the officials especially the army and doctors. To attract more customers, Warid Telecom Company provides free of cost sims to its business partners and they further sell those sims and are earning 50-60 rupees per sim. He further added that like other networks, Warid also provides billing and prepaid services for both, national and international calls, SMS, voice calls etc. Warid is attracting its users by providing lowest offers on voice balance or internet packages compared to its competitors. The internet bundles like the voice calls, video calls and Skype is available not only nationwide but also throughout the globe.

Zafar added that Warid has recently introduced a "North Bundle" compared to Ufone's Super card. Its price is Rs.330 and it offers:

* 150 minutes off –net (Warid to other networks)
* 150 minutes On-Net (Warid to Warid)
* 1000 MB Net
* 1000 SMS (to all network)

Marketing Manager (Siddiq Khattak) of Zong Company was interviewed to assess the different isolation methods used by Zong in order to attract customers. After a formal introduction Khattak briefed that ZONG is the first International brand of China Mobile being launched in Pakistan, Zong offers sims with zero cost as sim is the main product. Zong has divided its customers in three different categories, the youngsters, the old age and the official or earning people, in order to compete and attract customers. Zong main target is to touch the youngsters and the officials. To attract more customers Zong Telecom Company provides billing and prepaid services for both national and international calls, SMS, voice calls etc. Zong is attracting its users by providing lowest offers on internet packages compared to its competitors. The internet bundles like the Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Zee world, Social packages and add-ons are available not only nationwide but also throughout the globe. Khattak added that Zong has recently introduced a "Zong Super Load or Zong Super Card" as compared to Ufone Super card. Its price starts from Rs.30 to 500 and it offers:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bundle Type** | Price | On Net Minutes | Off net Minutes | SMS | Internet |
| **Daily Bundle** | 20 | 40 | 4 | 400 | 40mb |
| **Weekly** | 100 | 350 | 35 | 350 | 150mb |
| **Monthly** | 250 | 700 | 70 | 700 | 700mb |
| **Monthly (2)** | 500 | 1500 | 100 | 1500 | 1500mb |

Tahir Baig informed that Mobillink has introduced USP service that stands for Unique Selling Preposition. USP gives an edge in the market or in other words it gives offers which no one is offering in the market. Mobillink telecom is using both pushing and pulling strategies in marketing. For pushing strategy it has established franchises, retailers, and sales channels to push the products, services and concepts. At the moment there are five competitors in the market namely Warid, Mobilink, Ufone, Telenor, and Zong. Ufone and Zong has purchased the 4G while Warid already has LTE. Mobillink has invested a huge amount and purchased the Warid company and after six months there will be no Warid company in the market. Regarding isolation in pricing Tahir said that Zong is with much deeper pockets in the markets and with less amount of liabilities. They do not need to pay back to their banks. That is why they introduced different low price packages, which is a challenge for rest of the companies. However, by using USP, Mobillink has introduced a package for local Peshawar and the user can talk for whole day on 5 rupees only. Similarly, it introduced different Bundles offers. He added that Mobillink uses both electronic and print media for recalling effect. For this purpose, Mobillink branded items like wallets, key chains, and calendar etc., are given to its users. Regarding hiring of celebrities, Tahir informed that Shan is a Brand Ambassador (BA) for Mobilink Indigo, which means he has been hired to do different ads and is required to wear Mobilink branded shirts, shoes etc. to represent Mobillink unknowingly. While answering question 13, 14 and 15, Irfan further explained that Ufone does recalling by ads. He further added that Ufone is the only Pakistani company that has collaboration with PTCL. It is the only national company, which is why people trust it. He further said that Ufone has initiated customer feedback service not only nationwide but throughout the globe. This feedback service has received "service of the year award". There is a department that provides door step service 24/7 to the consumers. He further explained that priority service or doors step service has been working since 2010. Any customer, who is consuming thousand plus rupees, can become a priority service member. These people do not need to visit their franchise or service office for any problem such as losing a sim or any other network issue. He further added that, Telenor is imitating our innovation of doorstep services, but has not started yet. Irfan explained that Ufone management is always thinking of bringing changes in ads to get customers’ attention e.g. Ufone ads are funny, entertaining and focused on concept. For ads Ufone has already signed a contract with celebrities i.e. famous comedian of 3/3 comedy serial. Ufone management is focusing on how to catch consumer attention by ads and these ads are regularly on-air on different TV channels at peak timings. Ufone brings isolation in its ads by incorporating innovative ideas. It always tries to convey messages in a humorous way to relieve the viewers’ tension as well. Ufone value its customers opinion as in one Ufone ad mummy was shown and that ad was stopped as one of the customers complained that his children became frightened by watching mummies and management eventually banned that advertisement. With regard to the effect of color in isolating the product, Irfan briefed, that presently Ufone is using two color schemes, that is orange and green and the management is planning to add the silver color as well. It's the management that decides the brand color.

Viewing all the strategies combined with branding, color scheme and advertising appeals, Ufone has always tried to enhance isolation effect in order to modify customers’ perceptions about the brand. He explained the role of isolation in purchase intention/behaviour of consumer and the techniques usually used by Ufone. We attract customers through different techniques such as different cellular networks have launched Ufone super card and Warid Pora Maheena offer and they attracted a lot of customers’ attention toward this product so for staying in competition we have also launched Telenor easy card which has following features.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Telenor Easy Card**  **For 30 Days** | **and 50 off-net Minutes** | **SMS: 500** | **500 MB**  **internet** | **On net 500 minutes to Telenor & PTCL** |

Similarly, Usman from Telenor added that the pricing strategy of Telenor is simple. We have introduced Pora Maheena Offer and On-Net Voice Bundle of Rs 250, which is an example of even pricing and bundle pricing. In odd pricing we have introduced call offers like Prime Time Offer for Rs 3 and 50 minutes bundle for Rs 9 and Djuice Team Offer for Rs 6. He added that Telenor uses both electronic and print media for recalling effect. For this purpose, celebrities like Ali Zafar was hired as a brand ambassador of djuice and recently Mehwish Hayat and Asim Mehmood featured in new ad of Telenor talkshawk, which is a humorous ad and sends out the brand message creatively. Usman explained that every color has its own meaning. The logo is a symbol of balance, movement and change, which represents innovation. Blue color represents competence, intelligence, security and confidence, while white background represents perfection. He added that yes primacy and regency also effect recalling ability of consumers and mentioned that mostly our target timing is peak timing when most of audiences are watching their favorite TV serials and cricket matches. We present ads creatively and distinctively, like, recently we have shifted and promoted our ads in descriptive form, which is in shape of news item and we are also famous for mature moves and classical advertising. Regarding the product isolation compared to competitors he added that Mobillink is our main competitor and Mobillink is somehow the market leader but we are also the fastest growing mobile network in country. We are targeting many remote areas in Pakistan and launching different products for these areas as well. We are now the best operators in such areas because we are targeting hilly northern areas and deserts in which we are connecting the previously unconnected. Interview ended with vote of thanks from my side to Usman for his time and cooperation. While answering a question Zubair Ali said that Warid is trying to catch its consumer’s attention by using different techniques in advertisements. It has been observed that people living in rural areas prefer Zong network as their ads are reflecting the rural culture and environment, while Warid has been considered as a network for educated people. He added that strategy and planning department is working on advertisement to make it more simple, attractive, and memorable. Simple means that the promotional message must be convincing and run frequently enough to achieve the desired effects. Recalling is the most important factor and Warid do recalling by using both print and electronic media. In past, a specific group has been focused in ads but now the ads are prepared by keeping in view the local language, norms, and values. Messages like "new offer" or ads are communicated keeping in view the taste of people. Warid has hired Shahid Afridi the Cricket Super star and Fawad Khan as brand ambassadors for publicity. Shahid Afridi has been assigned for 4G network promotion while Fawad khan for new packages promotion like LTE (Long Term Evaluation). Warid is the first telecom company having LTE.

Regarding the role of color in attracting consumer's attention Zubair Ali informed that Warid is a Dubai based company and has close collaboration with Bank Alfalah and they selected two colors i.e., Red and Blue. Red color represents speed and blue represents the community. In short, Warid wants to ensure fast service to its community. In market there are many competitors and to meet the target and attract more consumers, Warid has introduced advanced technology. The 3G network of Warid is equal to 4G, while it has contracted the world expensive vendor that is Erickson to ensure internet fast speed. Due to high speed of internet, no voice call can be dropped or end. For isolation in advertisement, Warid ads are on air in peak timings that is from 6:00 pm to 11:00 pm and these are the most expensive timings. The reason behind it is that all people are at home and are watching TV. The ads that are on air in peak timing are more memorable than the usual timings.

Zubair informed while answering a question that facial attractiveness has its value but Warid gave priority to gender balance. If there is one male there must be one female staff. The logic behind this is that users are of both genders and if a female user comes to the office for any problem, she will be facilitated by female staff, since Warid telecom respects the cultural norms and values. User attention can be gained by providing low pricing for long duration. Regarding promotion Zubair explained that it has main role in public awareness. If people are aware of the product, they will use it, if not they will never go for it. Promotions are to inform consumers about price, product features, and outlets selling their products.

Warid usually offers odd prices like presently it has introduced a Pora Maheena Offer that costs Rs.499 and it offers 1500 On-net minutes, 1500 SMS, 1500 MBs LTE. Warid is successfully competing in the market. Nowadays youngsters and the officials are using internet. They interact via WhatsApp, Viber, and Skype etc. Warid has LTE while Zong has 4G but no LTE. The LTE is the latest technology providing fastest internet speed. Interview ended with vote of thanks from my side to Zubair for his time and cooperation. While answering a question Siddiq Khattak said that Zong is trying to catch its consumers’ attention by using different techniques. Its main focus is on advertisement. It has been observed that people living in rural areas prefer Zong network as their ads are reflecting the rural culture and environment. He added that the Strategy and Planning Department is working on advertisement to make it more simple, attractive, and memorable. Simple means that the promotional message must be convincing and run frequently enough to achieve the desired effects. Recalling is the most important factor and Zong does recalling by using both print and electronic media. Zong is very good in its ad campaigns. Features of Zong ad campaigns are given below:

* Criticism on other companies
* Low cost celebrities
* Good packages like break time offer
* Very attractive TVCs

Most of the companies are following the footsteps of Zong with simple TVCs. Regarding the role of color in attracting consumers’ attention Siddiq Khattak informed that Zong is a China based company. They selected two colors, Blue and Red. The Zong logo is clear with modern approach, it is simple and in italics to show that the company has a progressive and forward lookout, yet it comes out as composed and coherent. The blue background gives the brand a young and fresher look signifying success and security, whereas the red represents emotions like love and passion. Zong does isolation in advertisements at peak timings like the ads that are on air at peak timing are more memorable than in usual timings. Zong also gives value to facial attractiveness especially in ads but gives value to both genders by also hiring male in their ads. While setting a price, Zong uses different techniques like bundle odd even pricing system like economy packages with a price of Rs 5 and flutter packages of Rs 7. So, they use both odd even pricing and also bundle packages like Zong super card. Interview ended with vote of thanks from my side to Siddiq Khattak for his time and cooperation. Tahir from Mobilink, briefed that there was a time when Mobillink was considered as the network of executives and corporate sector. But now, Mobillink is trying to change its direction and address all class of people like youngsters, middle-aged people, and old-age people. For old age people Mobillink has introduced a daily 75 paisa package where they can easily talk to Mobillink users for whole day without extra deduction. Tahir explained that every color has its psyche and Mobillink has selected two colors that is Red and White. Red is considered a color of passion/energy, it's a color that alerts mind while white is a color that represents purity. So Red and White depicts that Mobillink is strong, unique but pure.

Regarding isolation in product, Tahir briefed that Mobilink offers exclusive & personalized tariff plans that empower customers and cater to the communication needs of a diverse group of people, from individuals to businessmen to corporate and multinationals. He added that under USP sims have been designed only for Afghan nationals and stated that Mobillink is the first cellular company who took this initiative for Afghan nationals. Similarly, for national and international remittance, it has introduced the "Mobicash" system. Now it just takes a few moments for you to transfer money to your family, friends or business partners using services of Mobicash. Any person in Pakistan or abroad with a need to send or receive money can use this service by visiting the nearest Mobicash Agent spread across Pakistan or through their own Mobile Account. As we know that mostly people of remote areas like Upper Dir, Battagram and Kohistan are in Saudi Arabia or in Dubai for earning income. Therefore, this facility was first time introduced by Mobillink. Moreover, Mobillink offers different low prices call offers to its users in Afghanistan, China, Dubai, and Saudi Arabia.

**Construct and Statement/Preposition:**

**Construct and Statement/Preposition of Ufone:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Construct** | **Statements /prepositions** |
| **Ufone** |  |
| **Price** | Besides daily, weekly and monthly packages, Ufone has introduced a Super Card for its prepaid customers which costs Rs.499 and it gives 1000 minutes to Ufone, PTCL and Vfone, 150 minutes to other local mobile networks, 1000 SMS to all local mobile networks and 1000 MB mobile Internet for all 2G and 3G customers. All this by loading one card and that too without any additional taxes or additional call charges, or the hassle of calculating rates. It can be availed through ULoad as well. It is a peace of mind for whole month. This is a unique offer which no other network is offering in the market till now. |
| **Color** | Orange is associated with meanings of joy, warmth, heat, sunshine, enthusiasm, creativity, success, and encouragement, while green is the color of life, renewal, nature, and energy. Hence, the combination of both colors, with a touch of silver attract consumers with enthusiasm. |
| **Product** | Ufone is a first Pakistani cellular company that focused on the people of Pakistan, empowering them with the most relevant communication modes and services that enable them to do a lot more than just talk, at a price that suits them the most. Along with the claim of lowest call rates, clear sound and best network, Ufone offers its customers simplified tariffs with no hidden charges. Ufone also offers attractive packages to both its prepaid and post-paid customers. To improve the quality of service Ufone is taking feedback from its customers and their suggestions and opinions are followed till the user's satisfaction is attained. |
| **Facial attractiveness/Celebrities** | Facial attractiveness has its value but the priority is to provide best services to its customers. To ensure best services Ufone provides equal opportunities to both male and female employees. For promotion Ufone has hired top actors and actresses to attract its customers. |
| **Creativity** | Ufone ads are unique, creative and humorous. With a strong and uniquely humorous communication direction that has now become Ufone's signature across all advertising media, Ufone gives its customers many reasons to smile. Ufone has also received "PAS Awards 2015" for best marketing and advertisement from Pakistan Advertising Society. |

**Construct and Statement/Preposition of Zong:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Construct** | **Statements /prepositions** |
| **Zong** |  |
| **Price** | While setting a price Zong uses different techniques like bundles and odd even pricing system. Bundle package includes Zong super card. Zong economy package which has a price of Rs 5 and Flutter package of Rs 7 uses odd pricing technique. |
| **Color** | Zong logo's font is clear with modern approach. The blue background gives the brand a young and fresher look. Red represents emotions for love and passion while blue is for success and security. |
| **Product** | To attract more customers Zong telecom company provides billing and prepaid services for both national and international calls, SMS, voice calls etc. Zong is attracting its users by providing lowest offers on internet packages. |
| **Facial attractiveness/Celebrities** | Zong hires both male and female employees. |
| **Creativity** | Zong is very good in its ad campaigns. Creative features of Zong ad campaigns are given below:   * Criticism on other companies * Low cost Celebrities * Good packages like break time offer * Very attractive TVCs |

**Construct and Statement/Preposition of Warid:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Construct** | **Statements /prepositions** |
| **Warid** |  |
| **Price** | Warid offers attractive prices to its customers. To compete the market it has introduced a new offer of North Bundle. Warid usually offers the odd prices like presently it has introduced a Pora Maheena offer that cost Rs. 330 and it offers 1500 On-Net minutes, 1500 SMS, 1500 MBs LTE. |
| **Color** | Red color represents the speed and blue the community. In short Warid wants to ensure fast service to its community. |
| **Product** | Warid is the first cellular brand that offers high quality 4G and LTE network due to which Mobillink Telecom wished to merge with Warid company to have a competitive position in the market. Warid mainly targets young age and officials. Warid has best technology of the world. Its 3G network is equal to 4G. |
| **Facial attractiveness/Celebrities** | Warid is a gender balance telecom company that believes equal employees opportunities to both genders. To catch users’ attention Warid have contracted with two super stars that is Shahid Afridi and Fawad Khan as a company brand ambassadors. |
| **Creativity** | Warid telecom is gaining its consumers attention by providing best technology services. Warid uses both electronic and print media for promotion of different packages. The ads are modern and made to catch the youngsters’ attention. |

**Construct and Statement/Preposition of Telenor:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Construct** | **Statements /prepositions** |
| **Telenor** |  |
| **Price** | Telenor has introduced Pora Maheena offer and On Net Voice Bundle of Rs 250 which is an example of even pricing and bundle pricing. In odd pricing they have introduced call offer like prime time offer for Rs 3, 50 minutes bundle for Rs 9 and djuice team offer for Rs 6. |
| **Color** | The logo is a symbol of balance, movement, change and innovation. The blue color represents competence, intelligence, security and confidence while the white background represents perfection. |
| **Product** | To attract more customers, Telenor is targeting many remote areas in Pakistan and launching different products for these areas as well. It is now the best operator in such areas as the company is targeting the hilly northern areas and deserts which previously had no such Telecom facilities. |
| **Facial attractiveness/Celebrities** | Previously Ali Zafar was brand ambassador of djuice whereas currently Mehwish Hayat and Asim Mehmood featured in new ad of Telenor talkshawk which is humours and sends out the brand message creatively. |
| **Creativity** | In creativity and distinctiveness in ads Telenor recently shifted to a different method of promotion which had ads in descriptive form like in shape of news item. The company is famous for mature moves and classical advertising. |

**Construct and Statement/Preposition of Mobillink:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Construct** | **Statements /prepositions** |
| **Mobillink** |  |
| **Price** | Mobillink introduced different low price packages for local and foreign users like Afghanistan, China and Saudi Arabia etc. Now Mobilink is targeting people of all class and age. Recently it has introduced a 75 paisa daily call offer for old age people where they can easily talk to Mobillink users for whole day with no hidden charges. |
| **Color** | Mobillink has selected two colors that is Red and White. Red is considered a color of passion/energy. It's a color that alerts mind while white represents purity. So Red and White depicts that Mobillink is strong, unique but pure. |
| **Product** | Mobillink has introduced a USP service (Unique Selling preposition) to compete the competitors. USP gives an edge in the market or in other words it gives offers which no one offering in the market. |
| **Facial attractiveness/Celebrities** | Film star Shan is a Brand Ambassador (BA) for Mobillink Indigo. In addition to appearing in commercials he will also wear Mobillink branded shirts, shoes etc. to represent Mobillink unknowingly. |
| **Creativity** | To provide best services to the end consumers Mobilink has decided to purchase latest technology of Warid Telecom. This acquisition will ensure availability of high-speed mobile telecommunications and will provide consumers and businesses with a best-in-class mobile network, more competitively priced services and wider access to enablement facilities such as mobile financial services. For national and international remittance Mobilink has introduced the "Mobicash" system. Now it just takes a few moments for you to transfer money to your family, friends or business partners using services of Mobicash. |

**New Construct and statement/preposition:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Construct** | **Statements /prepositions** |
| **Price** | Ufone super Card Rs 499  Warid North bundle 330 |
| **Color** | Mobillink Red and White Color depicts that Mobillink is strong, unique but pure. |
| **Product** | Mostly users like Ufone products as its Pakistan's first telecom company.  Warid is the first cellular brand that offers high quality 4G and LTE network |
| **Facial attractiveness/Celebrities** | Through Celebrities in advertisements Ufone gives its customers many reasons to smile. Ufone has also received "PAS Awards 2015" for best marketing and advertisement from Pakistan Advertising Society. |
| **Creativity/Innovation/Uniqueness** | Mobicash By Mobillink and Unique selling preposition strategy of Mobillink where they offer new packages which no one offer in the market e.g. SIMS for Afghan nationals.  Ufone smart card and humorous ads  Warid 4g LTE. |

**Discussions**

Mercanti-Guérin (2008) observed that new-looking and stylish ads catch the attention of consumers, who are not bored of watching it. Bringing innovation in ads compels the consumers to purchase a particular product. Smith and Yang (2004) argued that creativity is divergence i.e., the advertisement must seem new, different or unique to the consumers. He further argued that it must catch the publics’ attention. Secondly, it must have relevance i.e., valuable and appropriate to the audience. Goldenberg and Mazursky (2007) argued that there is a great role of creativity in isolation effect. Creative things are more remembered and recalled compared to usual things. With the aid of techniques like idea generation via brainstorming and other techniques organizations generate creative ideas. Terry (2005) said that serial position effect is the tendency of a person to recall the first and last items in a [series](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Special:Search/series) best, and the middle items worst. Therefore, primacy and regency in recalling plays the role of isolation. Stephen R. Schmidt (1991) further added that Von Restorff affects the distinctive events, which are more memorable than the common events. However, the need is to develop a unifying theory accentuating the fact that unusual materials are well remembered. Kotler advised ‘don’t make awful advertising but excellent advertising’. For companies to differentiate themselves advertisers have to play a more thoughtful role and they must come up with something exceptional every time. For this purpose, taking Von Restorff effect into consideration is imperative, since it highlights standing out in the competitive world. Colorful or vivid images are better remembered than the routine ones, which are not obvious and clear. For this purpose, different techniques such as funny statements, humorous images and any ridiculous stuff can be sometimes used in order to make things more vivid and differentiate them. Hilarious statements, funny faces, cartoons etc. are used to make the advertisements more prominent and eye catching. According to Getzels and Csikszent-mihalyi (1976) and MacKinnon (1962), creative people are those who produce ideas, inventions or products that are divergent and relevant, and which are determined by the framework. For instance, an ad may seem creative to one set (e.g. educated) but may not be perceived creative by another group (e.g. illiterate). Findings suggest that three types of creativity is involved in advertising; one is “personal creativity” second is “ad creativity” and the last one is “consumer creativity”

**Respondents’ views**

Interviews of the focal people serving in different telecom companies revealed that the telecom industry is trying to achieve customers’ trust and confidence by using multifarious isolation techniques. For instance, Ufone has introduced Super Card which is in an all-encompassing single scratch card that leaves its users without a worry in the world for the whole month. Similarly, Warid has recently introduced a "North Bundle" compared to Ufone Super card. With regard to isolation in Mobillink products, Tahir briefed that under USP some of the sims have been designed only for Afghan nationals. Mobillink is the first one who took this initiative for Afghan nationals. Similarly, for international remittance it has introduced the "Mobicash" system, which is a facility for all those users who are living in Saudi Arabia or Dubai.

Almost all telecom companies are using different promotion techniques. Ufone ads are unique and creative. There is also a sturdy role of creativity in isolation effect since creative things are more easily remembered and recalled compared to usual things. Mobillink uses both electronic and print media for recalling effect. Shan, the famous Pakistani film star is a Brand Ambassador (BA) for Mobilink Indigo, which means he has been hired to do different ads through covert advertisement strategy, for representing Mobilink unknowingly. Warid has hired Shahid Afridi, the cricket superstar, and Fawad Khan, the famous Pakistani actor, as brand ambassadors for publicity. Shahid Afridi endorses 4G network while Fawad Khan has been hired for new packages promotions like LTE (Long Term Evaluation). Warid is the first telecom company that has LTE. Telenor has also hired celebrities, previously Ali Zafar was brand ambassador of djuice. Currently Mehwish Hayat and Asim Mehmood (Pakistani TV actors) have been featured in a new Telenor talkshawk ad, which is humorous and sends out the brand message creatively.

In color isolation, Mobillink has selected two colors, red and white. Red color depicts passion/energy. It's a color that alerts mind while white represents purity. Hence, red and white signify that Mobillink is strong, unique, and pure. Ufone's Orange color is associated with meanings of joy, warmth, heat, sunshine, enthusiasm, creativity, success, encouragement, while green is the color of life, renewal, nature, and energy. The combination of both colors with a touch of silver attracts consumers with enthusiasm. Zong font style represents modern approach. The blue background gives the brand a young and fresher look. The red represents emotions like love and passion while blue is for success and security. Warid wants to ensure fast service to its community that is why red color represents the speed and blue the community. Telenor's logo is a symbol of balance, movement and change and it represents innovation while blue represents competence, intelligence, security, and confidence. The white background represents perfection. With regard to creativity, Zong is thriving in its ad campaigns. Following are creative features of Zong ad campaigns:

* Criticism on other companies
* Low cost celebrities
* Good packages like break time offer
* Very attractive TVCs

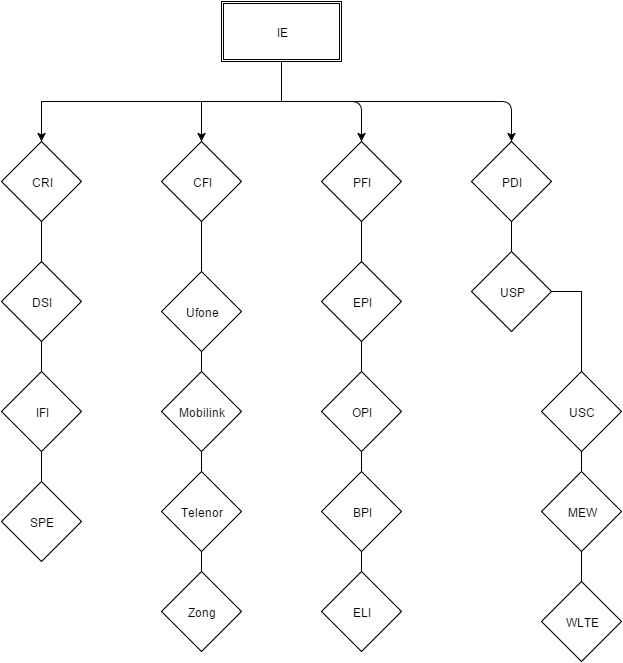
Ufone ads are unique, creative, and humorous. With a strong and uniquely humorous communication that has now become Ufone's signature across all advertising media, Ufone gives its customers many reasons to smile. Ufone has also received “PAS Awards 2015” for best marketing and advertisement from Pakistan Advertising Society. Telenor is using creative and distinctiveness in its ads. Recently they have shifted and promoted their ads in descriptive form, which is in shape of news item. Telenor is also famous for mature moves and classical advertising.

The overall data can be coded as following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Construct** | **Code** |
| Isolation Effect | IE |
| Creativity for Isolation | CRI |
| Distinctiveness for Isolation | DSI |
| Innovation for Isolation | IFI |
| Serial Position Effect | SPE |
| Color for Isolation | CFI |
| Pricing for Isolation | PFI |
| Even Pricing for Isolation | EPI |
| Odd Pricing for Isolation | OPI |
| Bundle Pricing for Isolation | BPI |
| Every Day Low Pricing for Isolation | ELI |
| Product for Isolation | PDI |
| Unique Selling Proposition | USP |
| Ufone Smart Card | USC |
| Mobilink Every where | MEW |
| Warid 4 G LTE | WLTE |

The coded data was then integrated which resulted in the following conceptual framework.

**Theoretical Framework**

**Discussion of Theoretical Framework**

**Color:** In order to understand the role of color as an isolation factor, the respondents were also asked whether they use it in the advertisements or not. Mobillink has selected two colors that is red and white. Red is considered a color of passion/energy and alerts mind while white represents purity. Telenor uses blue color in advertisements, which represents competence, intelligence, security, and confidence and with white background it represents perfection. Warid uses red and blue color representing speed and community, respectively. In short Warid wants to ensure fast service to its community. Orange color of Ufone is associated with joy, warmth, heat, sunshine, enthusiasm, creativity, success, encouragement, while green is the color of life, renewal, nature, and energy. Hence, the combination of both colors with a touch of silver attracts consumers with enthusiasm. Zong standard color is red, representing emotions for love and passion while blue is for the success and security. Almost all the cellular companies are trying to attract their customers by adopting different colors as an isolation strategy.

**Creativity:**

*Humour:* The role of creativity as an isolation technique has also been observed in the current study. The use of humor, which is an integral component of creativity, in the advertisements has been increased in the media including print and digital in the recent past. Ufone is also following the same strategy in the overall ads and communicate the message to the audiences in very unique way due to which the Pakistan Advertising Academy has awarded it PAS 2015 award. The first effort was made by Sternthal and Craig (1973) to show the effect of humor on the audiences in the form of a smile or laughter for giving them a particular message or content. Though it was little effort in this direction, however, it opened new avenues for the future researchers studying humor, as the results were quite positive and significant.

After Sternthal and Craig’s (1973) review, Murphy et al. (1979) examined recall and individual’s mood in the TV program and proved experimentally by placing two types of advertisement i.e. humorous and non-humorous in three prime time television shows. The first program was a documentary, second was comedy while the third was related to action and it was found that the humorous ads had higher recall than the non-humorous ads. Extensive studies have been performed by various researchers on the two variables i.e. humorous and non-humorous in catching the attention of the audience and viewers, the humorous ads had also a positive role in drawing attention in case of magazine ads on the readers (Madden and Weinberger1982-1984).

Gelb and Pickett (1983) and Spotts et. al. (1997) provided a theoretical base to show the effects of humorous advertisement on consumer minds. From their discussions it has been proved that humorous advertisement had a more profound effect on the mind of consumers (using the brand for which advertisement is made than the non-humorous. Gelb and Zinkhan (1985) also found that humor can significantly improve the effectiveness and usefulness of the advertisement however, with increased repetition of advertisement, the perceived humor considerably decreases.

Duncan and Nelson (1985) also found that advertisements based on humor reduce the irritability of the viewers/audience and increase their liking and attention towards the product or service, which is commercialized through such ads. However, it does not change the purchase intention of the consumers, though it does increase the awareness of the consumers about the product. The study of Du Plessis (1994) has also shown that liking towards the advertisements may increase its effectiveness in terms of its impact on the memory and promotion of products by such advertisements. Therefore, humorous advertisements which are mostly liked have positive role in promoting products.

*Technology:* Similarly, Warid is the only telecom company that is bringing innovation in the internet technology by introducing 4G LTE.

*Serial Position Effect:* During in-depth interviews it has been found that for recalling, telecom companies also utilize serial position effect (primacy and regency) strategy and show their ads in prime time such as from 6 pm to 11 pm. Moreover, they also show their promotion ads on special occasions like Eid, Pakistan cricket match where the focus is to air at the time when it is the start or end of the match, drama or celebration. Therefore, it is established from interviews that creativity, like distinctiveness, innovation and serial position, are some of the strategies that are usually used by telecom sector.

**Price:** In the first framework, the effect of isolation against price was tested. Odd pricing is quite attractive. Recently, Ufone has introduced super card costing Rs.499 which has attracted a lot of customers. Telenor has introduced Pora Maheena offer and On Net Voice Bundle of Rs 250 which is example of even pricing and bundle pricing. In odd pricing they have introduced call offer like prime time offer for Rs 9 and djuice team offer for Rs 6. Warid usually offers even prices. Presently it has introduced a Pora Maheena offer that cost Rs. 330 and it offers 1500 On-Net minutes, 1500 SMS, 1500 MBs LTE. This study will help the marketers of different companies to effectively take advantage of isolation in their pricing strategies and enable them to attract more customers.

**Product:** In the first framework, the effect of isolation against product was tested. Mobillink is doing isolation in its products and it has introduced a USP service (Unique Selling Preposition) to compete in the market. USP gives an edge in the market or in other words it gives offers which no one is offering in the market. Ufone is also following isolation technique in its products and besides daily, weekly and monthly packages, Ufone has introduced a Super Card for its prepaid customers, which costs only Rs.499, relieving its customers for the entire month. The offer is unique, which is not being adopted so far by any other network in the market. Similarly Warid is the first cellular brand that offers high quality 4G and LTE network. Warid has best technology of the world; its 3G network is equal to 4G.

**Conclusion**

All those objects that are in isolation are more conspicuous and can be recalled readily compared to the ordinary. Result of the study at hand indicates that Von Restorff has significant impact on the consumers’ purchase intention and behavior. Telecom industry is using distinctive techniques to capture customers’ attention. Thus, they are continuously bringing innovation in their products in order to be perceived unique and distinctive from their competitors.

Telecom companies are using VRE widely in advertising and branding their products in order to compete in the market and attract more consumers. They create unique ads and display unusual visuals on their billboards, usually aided by celebrity endorsement. Similarly, unique pricing strategies are used by companies to have VRE effect. Moreover, multifarious techniques are being used, which encompasses offering different packages at low prices (penetration as their strategy), for instance, Ufone Super card, Warid 4G LTE and Mobillink USP. All these techniques have captured customers’ attention to a great extent because of reasonable prices.

Originality plays a vital role in advertisements, which is evident from the study results, that novel and classy ads catch the attention of the consumers. Innovative ads compel the consumers to purchase a product. Additionally, advertisers operate more thoughtfully and endeavor to create something exceptional for companies, seeking differentiation and uniqueness. Likeability is imperative in marketing, the results revealed that Ufone ads are unique and humorous, making the company likeable. Companies can create their own identity by adopting isolation techniques in conformity with their goals. Hence, Von Restorff effect is one of the best recommendations for companies striving to excel, since it accentuates the subject of prominence in the competitive world.

**References**

Ang, S. H., & Low, S. Y. (2000). Exploring the dimensions of ad creativity. *Psychology & Marketing*, *17*(10), 835-854.

Brenner, M. (1973). The next-in-line effect. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior*, *12*(3), 320-323.

Chiu, R. K., & Babcock, R. D. (2002). The relative importance of facial attractiveness and gender in Hong Kong selection decisions. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *13*(1), 141-155.

Coade, N. (1997). *Be creative: The toolkit for business success*. Thomson Learning.

Duncan, C. P., & Nelson, J. E. (1985). Effects of humor in a radio advertising experiment. *Journal of Advertising*, *14*(2), 33-64.

Garcea, F. (2013). Serial Position and von Restorff Effect on Memory Recall. *Undergraduate Review: A Journal of Undergraduate Student Research*, *10*(1), 29-34.

Gardner, M. P. (1983). Advertising effects on attributes recalled and criteria used for brand evaluations. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 310-318.

Gardner, M. P. (1983). Advertising effects on attributes recalled and criteria used for brand evaluations. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 310-318.

Gazley, A., Krisjanous, J., Fam, K. S., &Grohs, R. (2012). Like it or not: differences in advertising likeability and dislike ability within Asia. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, *24*(1), 23-40.

Van Dam, G., Peeck, J., Brinkerink, M., &Gorter, U. (1974). The isolation effect in free recall and recognition. *The American Journal of Psychology*, 497-504.

Getzels, J. W., &Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1977). The creative vision: A longitudinal study of problem finding in art.

Haberland, G. S., &Dacin, P. A. (1992). The development of a measure to assess viewers' judgments of the creativity of an advertisement: A preliminary study. *Advances in consumer research*, *19*, 817-825.

Hunt, R. R. (1995). The subtlety of distinctiveness: What von Restorff really did. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, *2*(1), 105-112.

Jackson, P. W., &Messick, S. (1965). The person, the product, and the response: conceptual problems in the assessment of creativity1. *Journal of personality*, *33*(3), 309-329.

Jacob, G., & Mazursky, D. (2007). Creativity in advertising, in Handbook of advertising (ed, Gerard Tellis and Tim Ambler), Sage Publications, NY p. 283-99.

Jersild, A. (1929). Primacy, recency, frequency, and vividness. *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, *12*(1), 58.

Sarno, J. A., & Alley, T. R. (1997). Attractiveness and the memorability of faces: Only a matter of distinctiveness? *The American journal of psychology*, *110*(1), 81.

Madden, T. J., & Weinberger, M. G. (1984). Humor in Advertising-A Practitioner View. *Journal of advertising research*, *24*(4), 23-29.

Sutherland, M., & Sylvester, A. K. (2000). *Advertising and the mind of the consumer: what works, what doesn't and why*. Kogan Page Publishers.

Mercanti-Guérin, M. (2008). Consumers' perception of the creativity of advertisements: development of a valid measurement scale. *Rechercheet Applications en Marketing (English Edition)*, *23*(4), 97-118.

Murphy, J. H., Cunningham, I. C., & Wilcox, G. B. (1979). The impact of program environment on recall of humorous television commercials. *Journal of Advertising*, *8*(2), 17-21.

Kelley, M. R., &Nairne, J. S. (2001). Von Restorff revisited: Isolation, generation, and memory for order. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, *27*(1), 54.

Nelson, D. L. (1979). Remembering pictures and words: Appearance, significance and name. *Information Processing Research in Advertising*, 45-76.

Postman, L., & Phillips, L. W. (1954). Studies in incidental learning: The effects of crowding and isolation. *Journal of experimental psychology*, *48*(1), 48.

Sternthal, B., & Craig, C. S. (1973). Humor in advertising. *The Journal of Marketing*, 12-18.

Ang, S. H., & Low, S. Y. (2000). Exploring the dimensions of ad creativity. *Psychology & Marketing*, *17*(10), 835-854.

Taylor, S. E., & Fiske, S. T. (1978). Salience, attention, and attribution: Top of the head phenomena. *Advances in experimental social psychology*, *11*, 249-288.

Terry, W. S. (2005). Serial position effects in recall of television commercials. *The Journal of general psychology*, *132*(2), 151-164.

Smith, R. E., & Yang, X. (2004). Toward a general theory of creativity in advertising: Examining the role of divergence. Marketing Theory, 4(1-2), 31-58.

Schmidt, S. R. (1991). Can we have a distinctive theory of memory? Memory and Cognition, 19, 523–542.

DuPlessis, EC (1994). Understanding and Using Likeability. *Journal of Advertising Research*, vol.34 (5), p3–10.