



RESEARCH PAPER

Impact of Image Manipulation through Digital Software on Pakistani Advertising Design

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ABSTRACT

The significance of image in advertising design has led to advancement in technological development of images. This article aims to evaluate the aesthetics, function, and implications of image manipulation in Pakistani advertising design. From limited facilities to digital advancement, the history of Pakistani design reveals a creative evolution. The advent of digital software has enabled the manipulation of photographs to effectively convey the intended messages. The research emphasizes on the analysis of contemporary advertising design of Pakistan through qualitative method. It puts forth various image manipulation techniques which are employed in contemporary advertising design. The research reflects evolving digital trends in image manipulation, and emphasizes the captivating quality of these images in engaging and influencing the consumer, thereby bolstering brand promotion. The study underscores the effective role of image manipulation in Pakistani advertising. Furthermore, advertisers and designers are recommended to consider the ethical values regarding image manipulation to ensure progress in advertising practices.

KEYWORDS Advertising Design, Digital Software, Graphic Design, Image Manipulation, Photography

Introduction

Image has always been of remarkable significance in all the cultures. Image manipulation is characterized as the process to enhance or alter the digital images to achieve desired outcome, by optimizing the levels of modification and transformation of design elements. Image manipulation is an amalgam between the Graphic Design and Photography to transmute an image into a noteworthy one to carry realism into an illusory image. Modern requirement of digital images has introduced several technological tools to create and manipulate images.

Image manipulation consists of two main types i.e. technical retouching and creative retouching. The former is meant chiefly for the corrections in a photograph like enhancement or color adjustment. While the latter is a form of art with more advance approach, combining various different images together to form a unified whole image (Czerminski, 2023, para. 5). Creative retouching has provided the advertising industry with an effective solution for brand or product promotion. Innovative techniques of image manipulation have an interactive approach, which encourage the audience to receive the messages conveyed through the images and respond according to their respective perceptions.

The company's marketing and promotion policies align with the perspectives and opinions of the consumers, ensuring that they are in harmony with aims and objectives of the business (Khurram, 2018, section 1.1). The cultural nuances, preferences, and values of the local market are worth considering for a successful communication design. One of the most significant features of Pakistani advertising design is the usage of Urdu language and cultural perspective which allows a stronger association with the target audience, making it more relatable. The various elements interlinked within the image provide a substantial

information regarding the business. This research presents the impact of various image manipulation techniques on advertising design in Pakistan and presents an analysis of their aesthetics, function, and implications.

Literature Review

The image employed in an advertisement impacts the brand attitude. This impact is studied by Mitchell (1986), who mentions two aspects; first that consumer's presumptions shaped by the image can alter their perception about the advertised brand, and second that favorable or unfavorable evaluation can impact the brand advertisement (p. 12-24).

The research on advertisement images by Houston, Childers, & Heckler (1987) lays emphasis on two different aspects: the impact of the messages conveyed by the images on the memory, and the impact of images on attitudinal response of the consumers (p. 359-360). The importance of the investigation of attitudinal response lies in the fact that opinions of the consumers about certain advertisement are impacted by the images. Therefore, the images used for advertisement are aligned with the advancement in technology and visual communication approaches.

Images used in advertisement design hold a great significance in terms of what they depict, because it affects the attitude of the consumer. Singh, Lessig, Kim, Gupta, & Hocutt (2000) state that impact of images on attitudes is based on the influence images have on product-related perceptions (p. 11-27). Morris, Woo, Geason, & Kim (2002) mention attitude as a pervasive and long-lasting, favorable or unfavorable sentiment toward an individual, entity, or matter (p. 7-17).

The review of literature emphasizes the significance of image in advertisement design and in brand promotion. The role that image plays in communication is a pivotal one, which helps formulate consumer's perception. The constant evolution of the advertising design has necessitated it, for the practitioners and scholars alike, to understand the nuanced impact of images in visual communication for the successful running of advertising campaigns.

This literature review sets the stage for the empirical investigation regarding the image and its manipulation demanded by the market. In the light of the literature, the article studies the capability of the image to capture attention and to foster a strong connection between the consumer and the brand. The study is based on the present-day advertisement design in Pakistan, which is continuously evolving on the advance standards of international market.

Material and Methods

The data for this research is collected and analyzed through qualitative research method. The article has been written in the style of American Psychological Association (APA). The innovative digital images manipulated with distinctive approach, belonging to the advertising campaigns of various companies and brands of Pakistan, are presented in this research. The analysis of advertisement images is based on the relevance to contemporary advertising design and image making context.

Results and Discussion

Trends in image manipulation in print media present interactive designs to engage and impact the audience. The technical and unexpected juxtapositions of images come out to be an innovative and surprising digital creation, taking the audience in a surrealistic ambiance. In directive for the broad-spectrum community to understand the significance of image, it is intended to promote local culture. Such effective approaches are made possible

because of the advance software like Photoshop. The study aims to provide a strong framework for research in the field of advertising design and image manipulation with reference to the culture of Pakistan.

The historical study of advertising design in Pakistan, presented briefly in this research, not only traces the evolution of image manipulation in design, but also opens avenues for design practice for addition of a unique approach. Image manipulation in the start of advertising design in Pakistan (1947-1960) was illustration and photograph based. The emerging design industry in Pakistan at that time consisted of just a few capable designers. Print media served as a chief source of visual communication. The experimentation in design around 1961-1975 was limited because of limited facilities. Image manipulation was not highly skilled; however, there was a tendency towards advancement. Transition in print media is evident in the years 1976-1989, where photographs were used to create posters. Imagery started developing in refine form due to the usage of camera and digital photography. 1980s marks the start of image manipulation in the Western world which was later on adopted by Pakistani designers (Pettersson, 2002, p. 20-23).

1990s mark a revolution in the history of advertising design in Pakistan, as new digital technology was introduced. Photoshop emerged to provide new design concepts in digital medium. The digitalization of advertising industry initiated competition among various designers. The present-day modern technology has introduced various types of manipulation techniques, which are highly appreciable because of the easily accessible advance digital software.

The multifarious and crowded photo-manipulation technique in advertising design have gradually transformed into simple, elegant and minimalistic manner. Despite of the reduced photographs in the manipulated images, the designs successfully attract the consumers, reflecting the effective marketing strategy. Minimalistic designs smartly convey the messages as compared to the crowded designs.

Prevalent print mediums where we see inclusive usage of photo manipulation includes: posters, newspaper ads, booklets, magazine, hoardings and billboards. Poster design is one of the effective medium for advertisements and for other social goods and chattels. The vast variety in the mediums makes each one of them to proceed for contribution in graphic design and visual communication through the manipulation technique.

The various manipulation techniques are combined in diverse ways to achieve the desired outcome. Some of the prominent techniques, used most often in advertising, are presented as following.

- i. The technique of image cropping and resizing consists of eliminating unwanted portions of a photo or altering its dimensions to proportionally suit a particular purpose or composition.
- ii. Color correction and adjustment serves as a chief element in development of an effective ad. The colors, their tones, and contrast are adjusted according to different parts of the manipulated image to create a composite whole. Correcting the colors unify the incorporated parts to form a mature manipulated image, giving impression of the real.
- iii. Retouching and cloning technique aids in removing blemishes, wrinkles, flaws or imperfections, if any, in a photo. Cloning is also used to duplicate elements in an image.

- iv. Composite and blending technique is used to combine several images or elements from variety of sources in order to produce one complete image which appears seamlessly cohesive. Adding textures is one of the ways to create depth in the image while blending. This technique aims to achieve surrealistic or fantasized image.
- v. Shadows are incorporated to give a realistic visual effect where required.
- vi. To enhance the message and to create a visual impact text and typography are added to an image. The techniques of blending, warping, and layering help in integrating the text into the image cohesively.
- vii. Filters and effects are the techniques which dramatically modify the ambiance of an image and the feel that it delivers to the audience. Some examples of filters and effects are conversion to grey scale or in any other color, weather effects, adjustments of High Dynamic Range, other stylistic enhancements, and the like.
- viii. The technique of perspective and distortion adjustment is vastly used to correct distortion in perspective or to incorporate intentional distortions for aesthetic appeal. In this technique the perspective is manipulated in addition to the shape and form of compositional elements.
- ix. The technique of object removal and addition involves subtracting undesired elements or adding new object(s) within an image.
- x. Photo compositing is the technique to seamlessly combine elements from numerous photographs to create a new visual. It incorporates several other techniques adjusted in accordance with each other to create a unified image.
- xi. The techniques of digital painting and illustration are also used in image manipulation. For this purpose, digital brushes, layer blending modes, and numerous other digital painting tools are used to achieve advanced photo manipulation.

With a blend of all these techniques in different ways, photo manipulation in advertisement design has achieved a unique approach with aesthetically appealing outcomes. The contemporary advertisement design in Pakistan is in the progressive stage and has adopted an appealing approach, which is acquired through the innovative combination of various techniques. The significance of advertisement lies in its tendency to attract and persuade the consumers. The quality of the photographs to be used for design holds a great importance.

Advertisements cannot go deprived of striking, stunning and splendid images. Advertising companies and studios source out image. It is observed that most companies seek services from other companies which have vast and versatile expertise in advanced photo manipulation techniques. Marketing and advertising campaigns require only high-quality images which are characterized by controlled contrast, colors, hues and exposure. That is why advertising fraternity never compromise on the low-quality image manipulation, to avoid any risk in the campaign. For many advertisements background images are directly subscribed and bought from the image banks and then merged or combined into the photographs which have been taken exclusively for any product and brand in context of advertising.

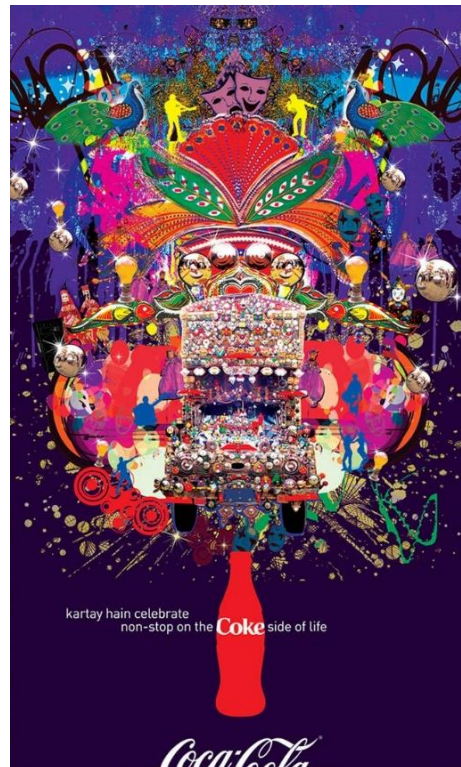


Figure 1. Coca-Cola, *Kartay hain celebrate, non-stop on the Coke side of life*, Soho Square, Lahore, Pakistan. (Source: Ads of the World, 2023, Soho Square, <https://www.adsoftheworld.com/campaigns/apni-pechaan>).

In the context of Pakistani advertisement design, the research presents some well-designed advertisements, to analyze the formal and technical aspects which contribute towards the evolution of advertisement design in Pakistan. Truck Art has its own pedigrees from the region with the aesthetic expression of the rich culture. This print advertisement is part of the advertising campaign with the professional manipulation, having the caption *Kartay hain celebrate, non-stop on the Coke side of life*. It is designed by the Soho Square advertising agency in June, 2008 for Coca-Cola in Pakistan to promote the local culture of the region, so wide-ranging commonalities can easily transmit to the value of Coca-Cola. The main idea of the campaign is to promote the local cultural aspect of the region through the high skilled manipulation technique. In this example, through the manipulation of several images a strong visual effect has been created and achieved. The contrasting and complementary colors used in this ad creates a visual appeal. The richness in Pakistani culture is embodied in the vibrancy of the colors. The bottle of silhouetted red coke bottle holds the central position, from which emerges the whole exuberance upwards. The truck seems to have released its colors and design motifs in the atmosphere, creating a sense of pleasure for the coke lovers.



Figure 2. J. Junaid Jamshed, *Summer Lawn prints*, 2015, digital image manipulation, Pakistan. (Source: Niazi, 2023, J. Junaid Jamshed, <https://www.hipinakistan.com/news/1151062>).

Despite the absence of models in this fashion brand of J., while using the image manipulation technique on the vintage cars the message is still conveyed very effectively with the cultural drapery covering the car. The execution not only showcases the summer lawn prints but the advertising campaign also becomes the viewpoint from the cluttered typical lawn advertising campaigns. The main notion was to portray the new class through photo manipulation in advertising campaign.



Figure 3. Tapal, *Gaming Hogi Nonstop*, 2012, digital image manipulation, Pakistan. (Source: Khan, 2012, Corporate Campaign, Tapal Tea, <https://www.behance.net/gallery/3365221/Tapal-Tea-Corporate-Campaign>).

In another example the impression of emotionalism is added in the advertisement of “Tapal” that reflects the cultural aspect of having the meals together in the holy month. Color grading and texture in the photographs is handled nicely and professionally keeping in view the light, composition and synchronization.

Images can be analyzed with reference to their morphometric aspects and densitometry terms in order to identify the location of the item within the image. Modifying the digital images, crafting the perspective and depth to the visual presence depending on the visual effect that user desires to develop and executes pleasantly with aesthetics which ads sense to the overall design. To achieve this two-dimensional image breakdown to meet requirements is the most widely functional medium and technique. Direct mapping between a given input and output color involves the spatial filters in two dimensional images so that the image manipulation processes can easily be articulated in the fragment processing.



Figure 4. PIA, *Discover a New Destination Every Day*, 2015, digital image manipulation, Pakistan. (Source: Saleem, 2015, PIA, <https://dribbble.com/shots/4192306-Advertisement-of-Pakistan-International-Airline>).

Minimalism is a universal notion related to the existence of lifestyle, integrity, marketing and aesthetics. This concept likely to be believe in the scope of “Less is More”. It means with scarce resources more meaning has been added in the advertisement. Application of this minimalistic concept has been adopted by advertising agencies for the promotion of their products. Minimalistic advertising has become very popular and prevalent technique in the advertising of Pakistan. Minimalist concept has been introduced in this ad and playing a vital role in today’s advertising. The advertisement of PIA is reflecting the use of two images which have been manipulated in such manners that it is giving the imagery of a single image very nicely with the unique selling point of discovering the new destinations with PIA. The ad is showing simplicity with the centralized composition which shows utility and elegance. Unnecessary elements are not encouraged and integrated in this ad. It’s better to say here about this ad “Less is More”.

Minimalism states to the premeditated and strategic usage of white background with high aesthetics values with the minimum content, images and graphic elements and showing the resistance in the direction of anything. Minimalistic advertising concept in the ad shows the essence of the main product in one image instead of going in a length. Here the brand is providing the information with very minimum resources to the users. Usually, this minimalistic ad is very artistic, creative, powerful, influential and innovative.



Figure 5. Red Communication Arts, Pel, *Change your life*, 2015, digital image manipulation, Pakistan. (Source: Red Communication Arts, 2015, Pel, <http://red.com.pk/projects/pel-corporate-2015/>).

Several kinds of photographs are integrated to create an effective visual impact. The products of Pel, like refrigerators and ACs are overlapped with the figures of magicians, showing how magical these products function to change our lives. The change that the company promises in the life is the unique selling point of its products. The centrally composed image is asymmetrically arranged which engages the viewer. The techniques of cropping, resizing and color correction play a vital role in the development of the ad. The overall image is soaked in the tones of grey for a seamless visual appeal.



Figure 6. Ufone, *Gaming Hogi Nonstop*, 2023, digital image manipulation, Pakistan. (Source: Ufone_official, 2023, Ufone, <https://www.instagram.com/p/CrImR0UKusU/?igshid=MTc4MmM1YmI2Ng%3D%3D>).

A special type of visual impact is created which interacts with the viewer. The cropping and resizing techniques are used to give the impression of character emerging out of the mobile. The hands holding the mobile are in turn adjusted in size to fit according to the image. Creative handling of the gaming character shows that the interactive segment has been depicted by the manipulator regarding creation of the Ufone ad. Minimalistic impact has been created through the setting and adjustment of two photographs, that are of gaming character and mobile phone which has been open-handed the refined form and manipulation. The emotional impact has been created and emphasized that benefits the target audience through the imagery.

Linkages of effectiveness, cogency and persuasiveness of this ad is identical closed. This effective ad is telling the story to engage audience or to develop connection with the customers and users to classify the character's dilemma in the ad. The medium of message and visual is expounding the clarity and impact through design, color scheme, lightning and expressions.



Figure 7. PTCL & Ufone, *Connections that make Pakistan Strong*, 2023, digital image manipulation, Pakistan. (Source: Ufone 4G, 2023, Ufone, PTCL, <https://web.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=626593299496210&set=pb.100064366376735.-2207520000.&type=3>).

Figure 7 shows various cityscapes and landscapes of industrial areas, northern areas and urban areas, which are merged together within the map of Pakistan. The ad very well delivers the ideas of connection. The telecommunication service PTCL and Ufone connect the whole Pakistan, thus accessing the cultures and trends of different regions to promote unity. The images are blended into each other with merging hues and tonal gradations to form a cohesive whole. To signify the connection that the company provides, different regions in the image are linked with arcs.



Figure 8. PTCL & Ufone, 1st May Labour Day, 2023, digital image manipulation, Pakistan. (Source: Ufone 4G, 2023, Ufone, PTCL, <https://web.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=616542307167976&set=pb.100064366376735.-2207520000.&type=3>).

Labour Day on the 1st of May every year marks the gratitude to the working class. The ad is a composite of various figures photographed separately, and then combined in grey scale to form a unified cohesive whole. Composed with in the number one, these figures create dynamism by breaking the boundary of number one. The text in complementary colors of green and orange is used on the gray scale image which apart from amplifying the impact of the image, signify the logo colors of PTCL and Ufone respectively.



Figure 9. Red Communication Arts, Nestlé Pure Life, Hydration & Health, 2006, digital image manipulation, Pakistan. (Source: Red Communication Arts, 2006, Nestlé, <http://red.com.pk/projects/nestle-purelife-hydrationandhealth/>).

The diagonal composition in the ad of Nestlé water bottle has a dynamic and exciting appeal. The water spilling out of the bottle is given the form of waterfall with some figures being taken away with the water flow. The technique of perspective is used in the figures, making the distant figure smaller and gradually increasing the figure size towards the foreground. The flowing figures being moved with the pressure of water seem to almost break the foreground parameter, giving an impression as if the figures are going to come out of the image into reality. The mountains behind with pure water lake shows the source of Nestlé water. This ad is one of the finest examples of dynamism achieved through digital image manipulation.

Conclusion

Digital advertisement serves as enticing tools to attract consumers and bridge the gap between purchase, demand, and procurement. The advocators of photo manipulation claim that altering images in various forms digitally is akin to the art of sculpture and paintings. Consequently, the responsibility for the traditional use of digital retouching components and tools in advertisements falls upon the promoters and advertisers, as they seek to promote any brand.

The digital image manipulation in advertising design in Pakistan has reached a dynamic and interactive approach. These ads not only appeal the customers but also are setting a legacy in the field of advertisement design. The digital software has proved to be a great success in communicating the message to the audience in most effective ways. The utilization of image manipulation in advertisement designs has not only been instrumental in promoting Pakistani brands, but has also garnered the attention of foreign advertisers, who now actively seek out Pakistani design companies. This recognition and interest from international advertisers signify the substantial impact and appeal of Pakistani advertisement design, solidifying its position in the global market. Furthermore, by keeping in consideration the ethical values surrounding image manipulation, the advertisers and designers can prudently ensure the flourishing in advertising practices.

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