TESTING CASC SCALE FOR MEASURING EMOTIONAL AND RATIONAL ADVERTISING AND MEDIA EFFECTS

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Abstract

Researching effects of media and advertising demands a search for a cost efficient, quick and verified method of testing the its emotional as well as rational effects on consumers. Thus a CASC (Communication Analytic and Syncretic Cognitions) scale was developed to meassure advertising effects and was selected for testing. In an extended research presented in this paper and based on 988 respondents evaluating 15 different ads we provided evidence that verify this scale on four different groups of ad motives. In addition we have tested individual ads and their complience with the suggested motives based on the theory and the four separate components (rational component, primary emotions, pro-social emotions and individualistic emotions). The findings confirm that CASC scale is able to detect differences between different motives and is thus an effective tool for measuring advertising effects.

Keywords: media, advertising, CASC scale, rational, emotional

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Introduction

Measuring advertising and media effects is getting more and more difficult as in the 21st century advertisers and media owners aim to evoke emotional as well as rational response in consumers. In addition with new technologies, like e.g. internet, advertising is not only getting more complicated to comprehend but also more interdisciplinary. In the future we expect an increase not only in advertising from companies but also in governmental and electoral campaign budgets (Pinterič, 2006). This is making the measurement of advertising and media effectiveness of great interest for many disciplines ranging from sociology, psychology to economy. It is due to this interdisciplinarity approach that we are witnessing an explosion of academic literature[3]. Because of the importance of having a tool for measuring there are now thousands of scales claiming to effectively measure the advertising effect. Unfortunately most of these scales were never tested in academic literature. We have to agree with Poels and Dewitte (2006: 19) that " … to date, advertising literature is not straightforward on what instrument provides the most valid emotion measurement". A construct of how to measure advertising effectiveness has no "perfect" solution and the focus of the academic achievement should thus be to test and reverify scales and not only to develop new ones. This is especially important for scales that aim to measure not only rational but also the emotional component of advertising effect.

Emotions in advertising

The most important change in modern advertising that puts in question traditional scales like recall or likeability of an ad is the increased usage of emotional content in advertising. Half a century ago emotional content in advertising was seen as an exception. Now there is no academic researcher or practitioner who would not agree that emotions play an important role in advertising. This trend to move towards emotional advertising is analyzed in many academic review articles. Pieters and Klerk-Warmerdam (1996: 105–112) have thus discovered that unpleasant and less intensive emotions influence attitude towards an ad. On the basis of emotional valence and power they presented a structure of emotions. There is also an increase of emotional advertising from econometric studies. Chandy, Tellis, Macinnis and Thaivanich (2001:

[3] Keyword "Measure advertising effects" has more than 1 mio hits in Google in 2013.

408) thus provide evidence that consumers are already educated about the rational value of products and services as consumer markets are getting "older". In these markets argument based ads are likely to become less effective. On the other hand, emotion-based ads become more effective as markets get older. To express the importance of emotional value in the future of advertising Pawle and Cooper (2006: 39) introduced a new term "love marks" defining brands that involved the emotion (love of the product) as an incorporated value. Trying to answer the question whether emotions are effective also for advertising services Mattila (1999: 300–301) showed statically significant differences in advertising with or without emotional component. He also noted that ads that focus primarily on rational component do not effect on mood change, whereas those with mainly emotional component stimulate feelings as happiness and interest (1999: 301–302). Heath (2007a: 28–31) argues that the majority of ads are processed through passive and automated learning and new neuron connections are established in our brain. Emotions thus subconsciously (without conscious awareness) influence purchasing decisions (see also Heath and Hyder, 2005: 474–475) and can be described as "any stimulation of the feelings, at any level that is capable of stimulating the feelings of the viewer" (Heath, 2007: 3). Using this definition, emotional content does not have to produce an overt "emotional" response by the consumer and is compliant with The Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology where "emotions, including the most important for social processes, are experienced below the threshold of awareness." As in Young (2004b: 202) the issue is not "whether emotions in advertising matter, the problem is how to measure it".

The selection of a scale to test advertising and media content effects (CASC scale)

In his article on Measuring the Power of Communications, Hall (2004: 2) introduced two main issues in measurement: "one is whether the ad works, and the other is how it works." As he explains "the most contentious controversies have revolved around the former issue, rather than the latter." To get a deeper overview on emotions that are evoked by a certain ad Buck, Anderson, Chaudhuri and Ray, (2004: 650) have developed a CASC scale (Communication Analytic and Syncretic Cognitions) based on MacLean's "triune" theory of the brain. This scale can measure the effects regarding the four components (rational and three emotive). Although generally emotive advertisements aim to evoke positive emotions, different motives evoke different emotions. This is the reason why it is important to be able to measure emotions separately. Besides academics measuring different emotions is also of particular

interest for advertisers to know what motives they should use to maximize the particular desired effect.

The CASC scale consists of four subscales that investigate rational and emotional responses elicited by advertising. The first subscale contains rational items, while the other three subscales ask for emotional responses:

- rational - argument based ad (suggested purely information themed ad)
- primary, reptilian - involving "raw" sex and aggression and consisting of eroticism, power (suggested sexual themed ad)
- pro-social - involving species preservation and consisting of love, caring, intimacy as well as embarrassment, guilt and shame (suggested family themed ad)
- individualistic - involving self- preservation and consisting of anger, fear as well as curiosity, surprise, interest, boredom, confidence, security and satisfaction (suggested make-a-difference themed ad)

Each of the three dimensions of emotions is processed in a different subcortical part of the brain and can be effectively measured using this scale.

Testing CASC scale for separate components

The selected CASC scale has been validated in a number of studies with consumers and advertisements as the unit of analysis. Reliabilities and dimensions were replicated across different subjects, ads, and media, and using both individuals and advertisements as the units of analysis with reported alpha 0.952 (Chaudhuri, 2006: 19).

There is however no academic research that has validated CASC scale under the hypotheses of each individual (four) component of CASC scale. If individual components of CASC scale can identify the typical motives that should evoke those responses we could use this scale in a much more effective manner. It will allow us to pre-select the ads according to different emotions they should evoke and thus create four different categories. Advertisers namely besides maximizing total response are interested to especially evoke only one component of emotions. For example advertisers that have products or services for families may want to evoke prosocial emotions. In addition researchers by knowing the values on individual components can improve individual component evaluations (and thus also total effect) by adding typical motives to their ads. Finally this analysis will also allow us to measure

and compare the effectiveness of different media (television, radio, print, online, outdoor) in producing certain emotions and not only emotional effect as a whole.

Research questions and hypothesis

The aim of this article is to show whether or not we can identify the four components in different types of ads. When statistically achieving this result this would add substantial value to the scale and to understanding of advertising effects in general.

In accordance to the research question we will test the following two hypotheses for four components:

- H1 a,b,c,d: verifying the CASC scale as a scale with which we can identify separate components (a)rational, (b)primary, (c)social and (d)individualistic; based on MacLean theory.
- H2 a,b,c,d: verifying the CASC scale on the analysis of individual ads components (a)rational, (b)primary, (c)social and (d)individualistic as to how they belong to each logical group of ads.

Research method

A professional designer has created 18 fictitious ads for the same product group (milk) which were different only in the presented themes and content. In testing we wanted to avoid the usage of a certain brand as advised by Baird, Wahlers in Cooper (2007: 49–52). They suggest that the influence of a brand name is so important that it is very difficult to control its influence. As certain brands correlate with certain feelings this could affect the evaluations of emotional components. We have also taken into account the results of the research by Poncin, Pieters, Ambaye (2006). Authors suggested that the sequence of evaluation can have a major effect on evaluations. Considering this we have executed our research with random interchanging order of evaluated ads.

All ads were printed in photo gloss print (height=72 cm, width=56 cm). The slogan was the same and positioned similarly in all created ads to assure that all ads were equal in this aspect. The need for such controlling factor was identified in Ketelaar, Gisbergen, Bosman and Beentjes (2008: 22) where the authors pointed out that the location of slogans can influence the ad likeability. 15 ads were accepted in the final evaluation representing best the four 4 categories. All 15 ads were numbered randomly from 1 to 15.

These 15 ads formed four groups according to proposed motives (Chaudhuri, 2006: 17): (a)rational, (b)primary, (c)social and (d)individualistic:

- rational – ads numbered: 9, 10, 11 – rational information only motive (no emotive content).
- primary – ads numbered: 2, 3, 5, 7 – "sex appeal" motive
- social – ads numbered: 1, 4, 6 – "family" motive
- individualistic – ads numbered: 8, 12, 13, 14, 15 – "you can do it" motive

It is important to understand that the motive selection will only provide ads that fit "best" into each category not in absolute but in relative terms. We expect that in all ads some elements of each category will be present. The selection procedure was based on a criteria of maximum mean value received in a certain category. The nature of the research also allowed us to operate in relative and not absolute terms, meaning that we were able to focus on the best fit and not necessarily the most effective ad.

Sampling, dependent and independent variables and the method of analysis

The sample for each of the evaluated ads was between 50 and 75 evaluations on the CASC scale. A total of 988 respondents have been verbally questioned thus creating 988 full evaluations (answering all 16 question of the CASC scale). Only consumers aged 16 or more were interviewed. Interviewing was conducted in shopping centers or nearby. On all locations there was a substantive flow of consumers. We controlled demographic variables gender and age to achieve best overall population sample. We controlled the number of evaluations in respect to each ad on a certain location. Finally we also controlled variable wearing correction eyewear to be similar for all evaluated ads. Dependent variables [4] were the four components and the average of all 16 questions of CASC scale. The unit of analysis was one printed advertising ad. Independent variable was the motive of an ad (one of four groups) [5] and separate ads for individual ad testing. To achieve area representation this research was conducted on 9 different locations in Slovenia from which seven were urban and two were in rural environment.

[4] The translation of CASC scale and the devision of questions for certain categories can be seen in the attachement 1.3.

[5] Used only for testing of CASC scale on the basis of suggested motives

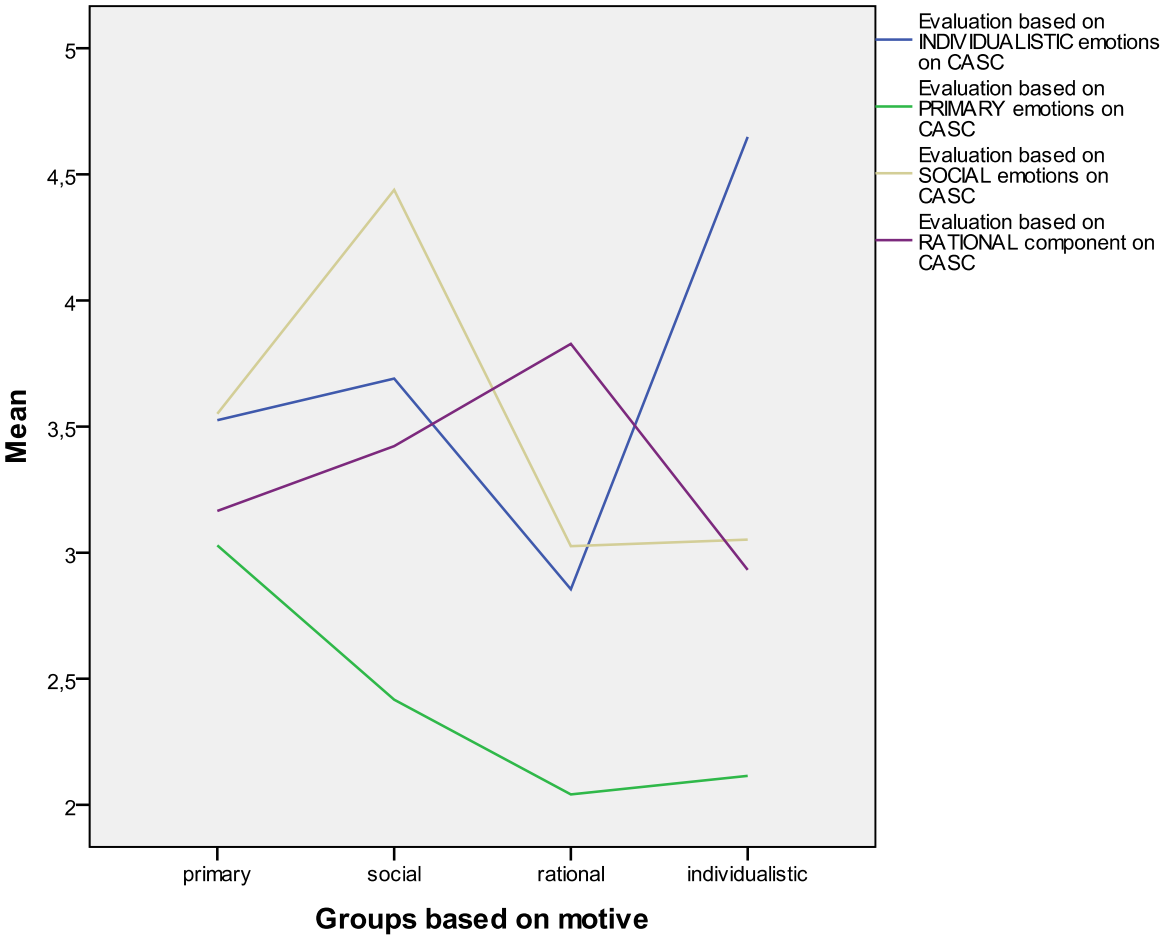
Results

Our research consisted of 39.5% male and 60.5% female respondents (attachment 3). The average age of a respondent was 42.73 years ± 10.32 years (average ± std. dev.). Calculated crombach alpha of the scale was 0.84.

We tested the hypothesis (H1) suggested by Chaudhuri (2006) that specific motives will evoke distinct emotional responses measured on the four components of CASC scale. Thus we tested four motive groups to all four categories of CASC scale to see whether or not they match achieving the highest group means. As suggested by Chaudhuri (2006) components for primary emotions and rational component are calculated as an average of four questions. The components for individualistic emotions and prosocial emotions are based on a single question. The separation is clearly visible in attachment 1.

The results from the analysis ANOVA (one-way) indicate that the evaluation of the rational component of CASC scale shows significant differences between groups of ads with $F(3, 984) = 24.17$ and $p< 0.00$. A group with rational motives scored best on the rational component among all groups of ads with an average 3.84. Although differences between groups are small (0.40 in 0.89 points on 9-point Liker scale) Multiple Comparisons Post Hoc Scheffé test showed significant differences to all the other three groups with $p< 0.00$. Thus we can accept the hypothesis H1 (a).

Figure 1: Average evaluations on different components of CCASC scale for all four ad groups



Source: own research

Similarly we proved the differences for the other three components of CASC scale. This can clearly be seen on chart 1.

The evaluation of primary emotions component measured with CASC scale (attachment 6) showed significant differences between groups of ads $F(3, 984) = 41.21$ with $p < 0.00$. A group of ads with primary motives had the highest average (3.03). Statistically significant differences to other groups could be found for all other groups ($p < 0.00$). The differences between averages were small: only 0.62 to 0.98 on a 9-point scale. Thus H1 (b) is confirmed.

The evaluation of prosocial emotions component measured with CASC scale (attachment 7) showed significant differences between groups of ads $F(3, 984) = 25.72$ with $p < 0.00$. A group of ads with prosocial motives had the highest average 4.44. Statistically significant differences to other groups could be found for all other groups ($p < 0.00$.) The differences between averages were small: only 0.88 to 1.41 (compared to the rational ad) on a 9-point scale. Thus H1 (c) is confirmed.
The evaluation of individualistic emotions component measured with CASC scale (attachment 8) showed significant differences between groups of ads $F(3, 984) = 37.01$ with $p < 0.00$. A group of ads with individualistic motives had the highest average (4.65). Statistically significant differences to other groups could be found for all other groups ($p < 0.00$.) The differences between averages were substantial amounting from 0.95 to 1.79 on a 9-point scale. Thus H1 (d) is confirmed.

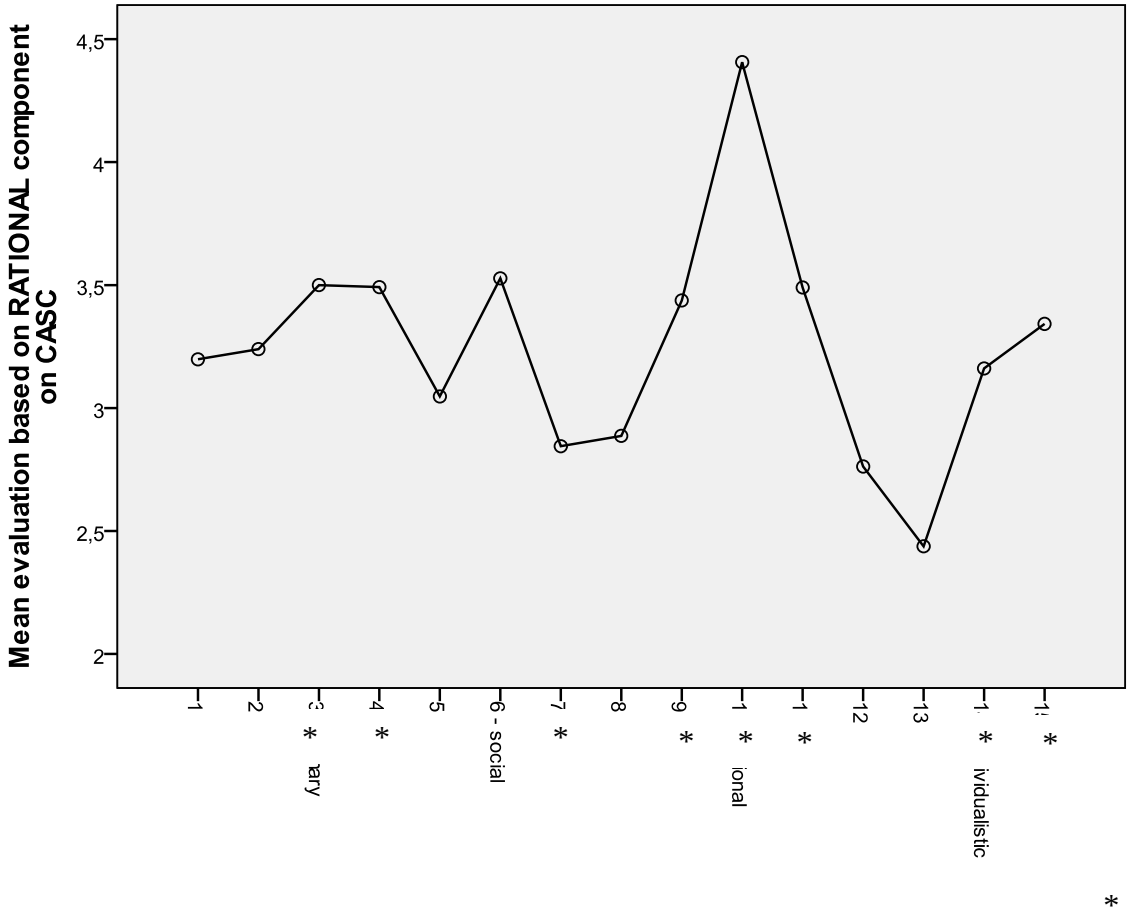
Overall results testing hypothesis H1 show the power CASC scale has in identifying the suggested "best fit" motives of ads. All differences for ad groups and components were significant.

Individual ads testing (testing H2)

After successfully matching groups of ads with similar motives we analyzed separate ads to find the motives that achieve the highest evaluation on separate four categories of CASC scale. Thus we analyzed all 15 ads individually using one-way ANOVA and post hoc comparison with Scheefe test. Ad with the best score in a certain category was marked on figures and tables as "rational", "individualistic", "prosocial" and "primary".

H2 (a): The results of one-way ANOVA show that there are statistically significant differences between ads measured with the rational component of CASC scale $F(14, 973) = 10.10$ with $p<0.00$. The best evaluation achieved an average of 4.41 (Figure 2). Post hoc comparison with Scheefe test showed significant differences for 10 out of total 14 comparisons (significant differences to the best scored ad are marked with * on the figure 2). Thus H2 (a) could be confirmed in the part that the rational component of CASC scale can identify the ads with suggested motive.

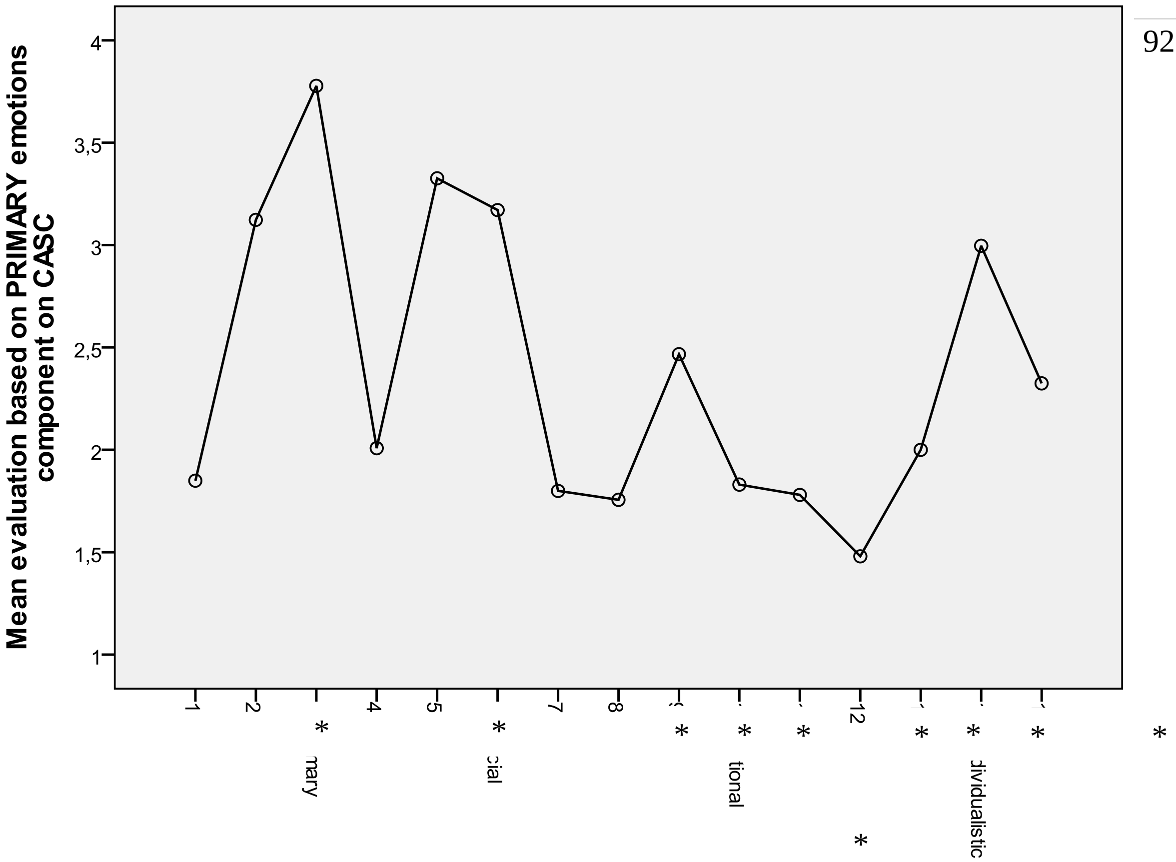
Figure 1: Average evaluations of tested ads using the rational component of CASC scale.



Source: own research (significant differences to best scored ad are on figure 2 marked with *

Similarly to the rational component's results from one-way ANOVA show that there are statistically significant differences between ads measured on the other three components. The results shoved that H2 (b) with the primary component of CASC scale $F(14, 973) = 35.88$ with $p<0.00$. The best average 4.41. Significant differences for 10 out of total 14 comparisons (see Figure 2).

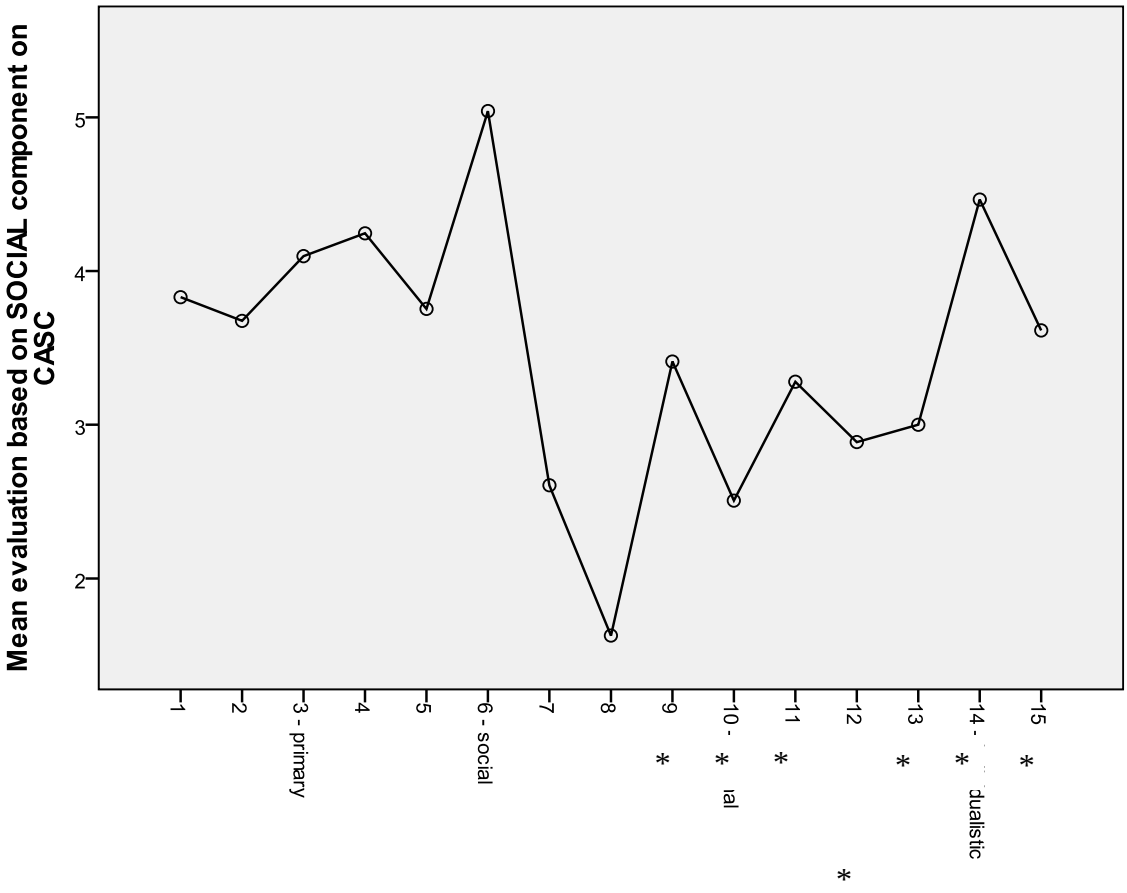
Figure 1: Average evaluations of tested ads using the primary component of CASC scale.



Source: own research (significant differences to the best scored ad are marked with * on the figure 2)

H2 (c): The prosocial component of CASC scale F (14.973) = 18.23 with p< 0.00. The best average was 5.04. Significant differences for 7 out of total 14 comparisons.

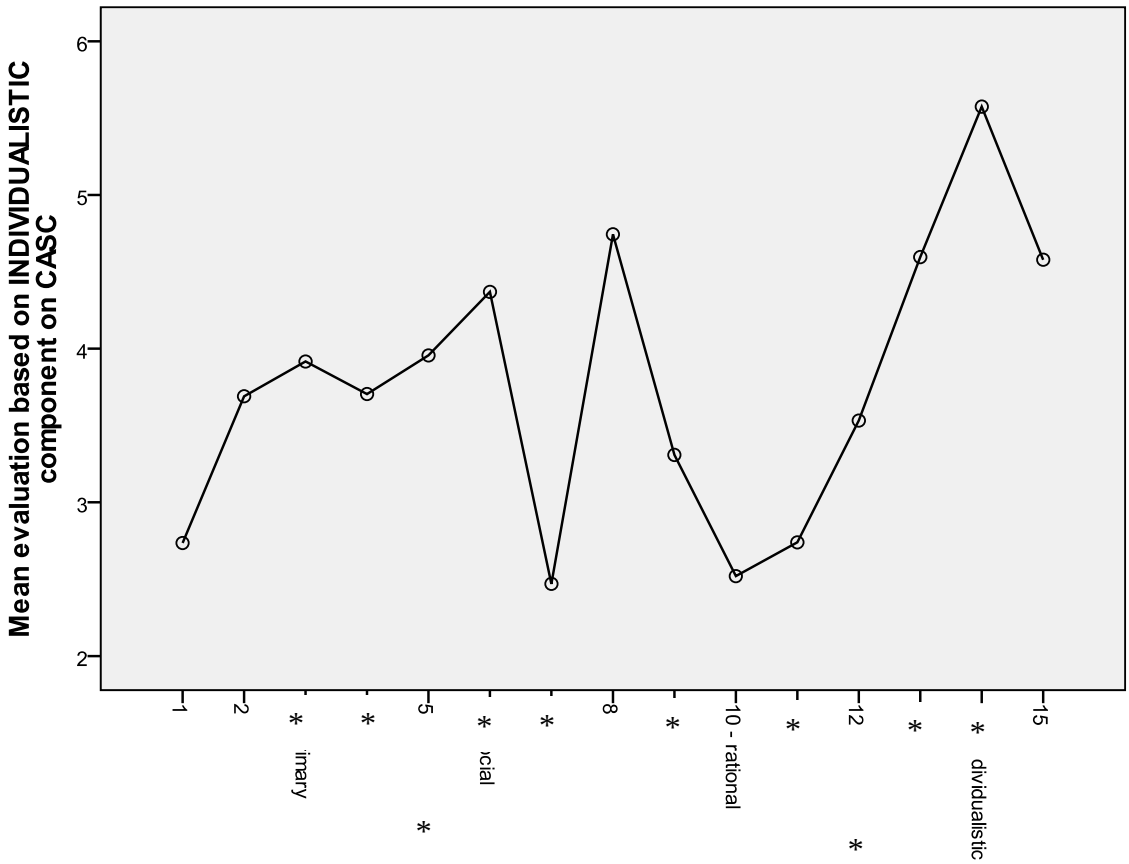
Figure 1: Average evaluations of tested ads using the prosocial component of CASC scale.



Source: own research (significant differences to the best scored ad are marked with * on the figure 2)

H2 (d): with the individualistic component of CASC scale F(14, 973) = 18.23 with p< 0.00. The best average was 5.04. Significant differences for 7 out of total 14 comparisons.

Figure 1: Average evaluations of tested ads using the individualistic component of CASC scale.



Source: own research (significant differences to best scored ad are marked with * on the figure 2)

The main reason why statistical differences of the best evaluated ad in a certain component could not be proven to all other analyzed ads lies in the fact that there were many similar ads with similar motives as described in the previous chapter. H2 is thus accepted since in all four categories the best ad was the ad with the motive that should evoke the corresponding effects.

Research limitations, considerations and further research

First, CASC scale is like other verbal self-report scale and verbal measures do not always provide understanding of consumer responses when advertising is not predominantly verbal in nature (Zambardino and Goodfellow, 2007; Shapiro, MacInnis and Heckler, 1998; Vakratsas and Ambler, 1999; Hall, 2001). In addition as Braun and Zaltman (2006: 61) argue, because participants are "aware that the researcher is interested in assessing their attitude changes based on the advertising exposure, some may overestimate the impact of advertising by indicating more favorable attitudes; others may do the reverse and underestimate, because they do not want to believe that the advertising had an impact on their beliefs." Thirdly as Young suggests (2009: 42) "if an ad does not leave some kind of lasting trace behind in the long-term memory of a consumer, it is difficult to argue that it had any kind of effect." In this respect CASC scale does not (yet) provide a correlation between evaluation and long-term effects of advertising with that ad.

Besides limitations of CASC scale we acknowledge the considerations of this study. First among these is the fact that due to the limitation of the research volume we are conducting a research in only one product group. Secondly, our research basic principle to avoid the above mentioned limitations of other similar studies is the creation of unknown ads and testing of unknown brands. The complexity of the consumer brain might react differently with well established brands, where influences of the experience are strong and where advertising serves primarily to enhance this experience. Finally, despite the fact that consumers should emotionally react similarly in different cultures the research will only be conducted among Slovenian population.

On the other hand these considerations can easily be overcome by conducting more research on the same design in the future. The suggested research design is set on the basis of maximum comparability and repeatability and although the results of this study bring important contribution to measuring advertising effects additional research with similar methodology is necessary to verify the results. Future research is especially recommended for new technologies and new media that are seeking to find their way in advertising

Conclusion

In this paper distinctive differences in four components of CASC scale were successfully measured with CASC scale. These results are compliant with suggestions from the academic literature. We found that CASC scale could indeed identify successfully four different components

of advertising response. This makes CASC scale a very effective tool for analyzing not only the total consumer response to a certain ad but also the values of a certain component. Thus we understand not only if but also how a certain ad has an effect on consumers. Having a scale that is not only verified as a whole but also as a group of four components on which it is based will provide marketers and practitioners a valuable research method. We advise the usage of CASC scale for all testing as it has proved to be a logical and cost effective measurement tool.

Acknowledgement: This research was part financed by the EU – Investing in your future – OPERATION PART FINANCED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION, EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND.

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Attachment 1: CASC scale and ITS TESTED components

Nr.	CASC scale	CASC component
1	Did the ad make you feel happy?	D
2	Did the ad make you think of real differences between the brand and its competitors?	B
3	Did the ad make you feel sexy?	A
4	Did the ad make you feel afraid?	C
5	Did the ad make you think of the pros or cons of the brand?	B
6	Did the ad make you feel hopeful?	D
7	Did the ad make you feel angry?	C
8	Did the ad make you think of arguments for using or not using the brand?	B
9	Did the ad make you feel disgusted?	C
10	Did the ad make you feel a sense of power?	A
11	Did the ad make you think of facts about the brand?	B
12	Did the ad make you feel envious?	A
13	Did the ad make you feel a sense of affiliation?	D, E
14	Did the ad make you feel aggressive?	A
15	Did the ad make you feel irritated?	C
16	Did the ad make you feel proud?	D, F

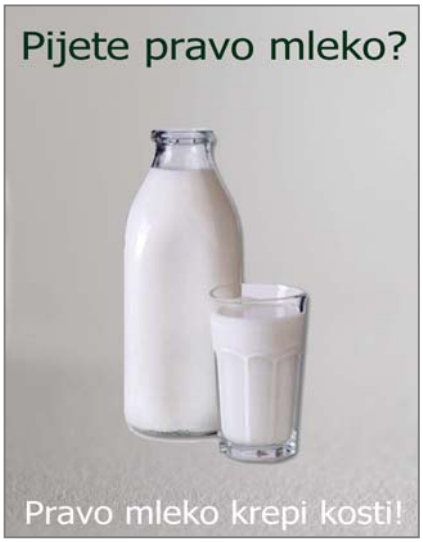
A – primary emotions
B – rational component
C – negative emotions *
D – positive emotions *
E – social emotions
F – individualistic emotions

* these components were not tested in this paper

BEST evaluated ads in certain components
Pijete pravo mleko – English translation: Are you drinking real milk?
Pravo mleko krepi kosti - English translation: Real milk strengtens your bones?

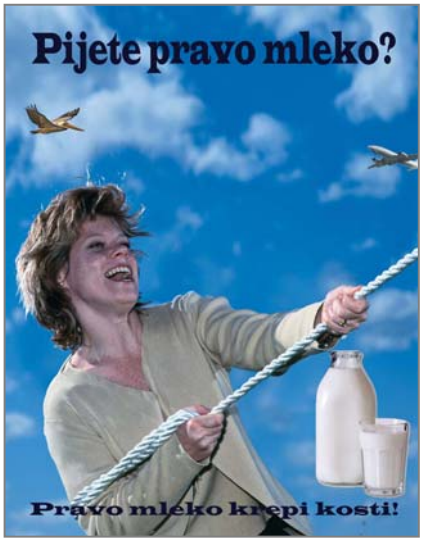
Primary emotions ad motive

Rational ad motive



Prosocial ad motive

Individulistic ad motive



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IIASS has started as a SIdip – Slovenian Association for Innovative Political Science journal and is now being published by CEOs d.o.o. (Slovenia) in association with the Institute for Social Change Research at the School of Advanced Social Studies (SASS) and the Faculty for Media (FAM) Slovenia.

Editor in chief: Albin Panič

Typeset
This journal was typeset in 11 pt. Arial, Italic, Bold, and Bold Italic; the headlines were typeset in 14 pt. Arial, Bold

Abstracting and Indexing services
COBISS, International Political Science Abstracts, CSA Worldwide Political Science Abstracts, CSA Sociological Abstracts, PAIS International, DOAJ.

Publication Data:
CEOs d.o.o.

Innovative issues and approaches in social sciences, 2013, vol. 6, no. 2

ISSN 1855-0541

Additional information: www.iiass.com

Innovative Issues and Approaches in Social Sciences (IIASS)

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