

Print ISSN: 2288-4637 / Online ISSN 2288-4645  
doi:10.13106/jafeb.2021.vol8.no4.0917

## The Impact of Guerrilla Marketing on Brand Image: Evidence from Millennial Consumers in Pakistan

Yasir Ali SOOMRO<sup>1</sup>, Yasser BAESHEN<sup>2</sup>, Fozan ALFARSHOUTY<sup>3</sup>,  
Sana Abbas KAIMKHANI<sup>4</sup>, Muhammad Yaseen BHUTTO<sup>5</sup>

Received: December 15, 2020 Revised: March 06, 2021 Accepted: March 15, 2021

### Abstract

This study is an empirical investigation of the effectiveness of guerrilla-marketing techniques in creating a positive brand image among generation Y (millennial) consumers. Five guerrilla techniques practiced by companies—such as viral marketing (EWOM), stealth marketing, ambush, graffiti, and clickbait ads—were studied, and hypotheses were proposed. This study adopted a quantitative approach and a questionnaire using the non-probability sampling technique was developed to collect data and self-administered to 248 millennial respondents on various university campuses. The data collected were analyzed through structured modeling on AMOS. The findings of this research revealed that guerrilla marketing affects symbolic and experiential brand image. Further, the results revealed that stealth marketing, graffiti, and click bait advertising were found to be influential on both symbolic and experiential brand images. As an exception, the hypotheses for ambush marketing were found to have no significant influence on the brand image (symbolic and experiential). Moreover, ambush technique in campaigns may have a negative impact on the brand image. Conversely, the study found that clickbait ads had a significantly negative influence on experiential brand image. Consequently, the results of this study strengthen past findings and concluded that guerrilla marketing techniques are beneficial communication tools in the limited marketing budgets.

**Keywords:** Guerrilla Marketing, Stealth Marketing, Ambush Marketing, Clickbait Ads, Pakistan

**JEL Classification Code:** M31, M37, O30

### 1. Introduction

The media has experienced an enormous revolution over the last decade (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2016).

TV channels, billboards, and radio channels have become filled with commercial advertisements, which results in advertisement clutter (Milak & Dobrinić, 2017). Since advertising space is in great demand as it allows businesses to benefit, companies are trying to promote themselves in a variety of ways. Eventually, the level of ads goes off scale, overwhelms and annoys customers, and becomes clutter (Rotfeld, 2006; Obermiller et al., 2005). Hence, traditional communication media have become ineffective. Few firms have adopted the use of unconventional methods, such as guerrilla marketing to grab the attention of the audience. Hutter and Hoffmann (2011) found that not only SME-adopted, innovative, and low-budget marketing campaigns but also economic uncertainties and fluctuations contributed by power shifts signal an alarm that has led to larger companies and multinational corporations considering low-budget marketing media as well. Levinson (1984) presented the guerrilla marketing concept, which uses off-the-wall, unconventional methods of conducting and the execution of promotional and marketing activities with a very low advertising budget. Guerrilla marketing is an

<sup>1</sup>First Author and Corresponding Author. Associate Professor, Department of Marketing, Faculty of Economics and Administration, King AbdulAziz University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia [Postal Address: Jeddah, 21589, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia] Email: ysomro@kau.edu.sa

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Marketing, King AbdulAziz University Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.  
Email: ybaeshen@kau.edu.sa

<sup>3</sup>Lecturer, Department of Marketing, King AbdulAziz University Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Email: falfarshouty@kau.edu.sa

<sup>4</sup>Ph.D. Candidate and Visiting Lecturer, Department of Business Administration, Iqra University, Pakistan.  
Email: sanakaimkhani@gmail.com

<sup>5</sup>Ph.D. Candidate, Economics and Management School, Wuhan University, China. Email: yaseen\_bhutto@whu.edu.cn

© Copyright: The Author(s)  
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>) which permits unrestricted non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

advertisement strategy in which a company uses surprise and/or unconventional interactions to promote a product or service (Hutter & Hoffmann, 2011).

In recent studies, different aspects of guerrilla marketing research have been examined. Isaac (2014) revealed that guerrilla marketing if integrated with traditional marketing methods in the hotel industry, improved the productivity of organizational marketing. A study by Kelly (2015) found that guerrilla marketing techniques affect consumption behavior for Generation Y consumers, but not every person in the Generation Y age group knew or understood what guerrilla marketing was or how it affects their choice or purchasing decision. Contrary to the findings of Kelly (2015), Dempsey (2016) conducted semi-structured interviews with young, millennial Irish males and revealed that brand engagement is encouraged by guerrilla marketing campaigns with humor, design, and creativity being the influencing factors. The campaigns increased the participants' purchase intention and all participants claimed they would partake in word-of-mouth advertising after being exposed to the campaigns. Guerrilla marketing campaigns are memorable and unconventional by nature and show the ability to leave a lasting impression on consumers. With a successful campaign, buyers are left amazed, impressed, and wanting to learn more about the product and/or service. This marketing strategy helps with brand recall (Ahmed et al., 2020).

Generation Y has been raised within a time where they have constant access to technology. Computers, mobile phones, the Internet were all accessible and part of their youth" (Kelly, 2015). The millennials are also known as Generation Y consumers (Kim & Yang, 2020) and some studies referred to them as Generation C which means connected consumers (Truong, 2018). Generation Y consumers have high expectations because in the world they grew up in, technology has always delivered more for less, often free, and they can have access anytime, anywhere (Vega, 2016). Millennials are success-driven, goal-oriented, determined, self-confident, techno-dependent, interdependent, and optimistic. All are excellent qualities but as customers, it makes them very demanding: they expect it now; they like it short and simple because they are always multi-tasking: they are bored quickly; they are driven by convenience, and they always want feedback. (Expósito, 2017). Generation Y consumers are connected and well informed. Thus, for marketers, it is much more difficult to persuade Generation Y consumers to buy a certain product. Therefore, marketers must adopt social media and guerrilla marketing strategies to persuade these consumers (Kelly, 2015). According to findings from the Publicis agency, millennials' attention span lasts approximately 12 seconds. By 2030, Pakistan's population will reach 245 million people, and nearly three-quarters of the population will be 40 years old or younger.

Therefore, understanding young millennial and centennial consumers is highly important for marketing firms and practitioners.

The significance of guerrilla marketing research is increasing daily. However, very few substantial research studies can be found in the Asian context, especially in Pakistan, where this research can fill the gap in the literature. This research will overlay the foundation for future guerrilla marketing research. Additionally, two major contributions of this research are the presentation of the conceptual framework of guerrilla marketing and brand image and the establishment of the connection between graffiti art and advertising. Finally, this research contributes an empirically tested model of guerrilla marketing with constructs and scales that can be used in the future to revalidate in other markets and sectors.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Guerrilla Marketing

The term "guerrilla marketing" is derived from a combat-related base word, "guerrilla", which is a member of a band of unorthodox soldiers that employs guerrilla warfare on their opposition through surprise raids (Ries & Trout, 1986). A popular book explained guerrilla marketing as similar to marketing warfare (Ries & Trout, 1986). The major objective of using guerrilla marketing is to increase interaction through grassroots, experiential, stunt, graffiti, and ambient marketing, which results in positive feelings among consumers that will reflect on company sales (Ay & Unal, 2002). Unlike viral marketing or word-of-mouth marketing, street marketing is poorly conceptualized, its scope is unclear, and its advantages and benefits have yet to be discovered (Saucet & Cova, 2015). Guerrilla marketing uses unconventional activities to produce effective results at less cost compared to conventional marketing campaigns (Ay et al., 2010).

Dinh and Mai (2015) researched three variables of guerrilla marketing, creativity, clarity, and surprise, using the dependent variable word of mouth (WOM). Additionally, Dinh and Mai (2015) added a mediating variable: credibility. They adopted four types of credibility from different papers, such as source credibility (Housholder & LaMarre, 2014), the credibility of the medium (Zhang et al., 2014), and the credibility of the advertisement and its content.

Guerrilla marketing not only includes viral marketing or blog marketing on social networks but also ambient, grassroots marketing, buzz marketing, undercover/secret, or stealth marketing. Nufer (2016) mentioned three guerrilla marketing categories: Infection, Surprise, and Ambush marketing.

## 2.2. Brand Image

Companies implement branding and positioning strategies to create a favorable image in the consumers' minds, whereas consumers tend to evaluate the brand image through their understanding, attitude, and perception. In simple terms, brand image is the perception of the brand in the mind of the customer. It is an aggregate of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a customer holds regarding the brand (Das et al., 2016). Previous empirical studies have revealed that brand image boosts consumer confidence (Zeng et al., 2019). Bhat and Reddy (1998) and Simms and Trott (2006) categorized brand image into two main constructs: functional image and symbolic image. Later, Wu and Wang (2014) added the third construct of "experiential image". Currently, brand image is divided into the following three constructs:

1. **Functional image:** The feeling that the functions of a product can help solve consumers' issues and problems.
2. **Symbolic image:** The brand features and attributes satisfy consumers' internal desires and help enhance self-prestige and recognition, social status, etc.
3. **Experiential image:** The brand satisfies consumers so that they receive experiential pleasure.

In earlier studies, researchers have examined different advertising methods, such as endorsement of celebrity (Chan et al., 2013), and sponsoring an event and product placement on TV shows (Van Reijmersdal et al., 2007). All these methods have a significant effect on brand image. However, the authors focused on the effect of guerrilla marketing on symbolic and experiential brand image in this study.

## 2.3. Viral Marketing (Electronic Word of Mouth) and Brand Image

Viral marketing is a strategy used to generate discussion about a certain brand or product by leveraging word-of-mouth marketing. Word-of-mouth (WOM) communication is widely accepted as a critical factor in building marketing strategies and communications. The invention of the Internet and the proliferation of social media have added a new electronic dimension to traditional WOM, thereby converting it into electronic WOM (eWOM) (Aprilia & Kusumawati, 2021). Hence, some changes have been made to traditional modes of marketing and brand endorsement, as influencers choose an electronic medium to communicate (Holland, 2016). EWOM can be expressed in different forms such as opinions, online ratings, online feedback, reviews, comments, and experience sharing on the Internet. It utilizes online communication channels, for example, blogs, review sites, discussion forums, online e retailers, the firm's

own brand and product sites, and social networking sites (Al Mana & Mirza, 2013).

The current trend shows that companies that have been spending significant amounts of money on traditional advertising campaigns are now chasing social media to receive word-of-mouth endorsements and attention (Sass, 2013). With the help of EWOM, it is far more efficient, productive, economical, and credible for users to share information themselves (Torlak et al., 2014). Yet, the information shared on social media does not have the same effect on users (Erkan & Evans, 2016). Consumers evaluate the quality, reliability, and usefulness of the information and then accept it on the condition they find it to be significant (Watts & Zhang, 2008). Gökerik et al. (2018) found that adoption leads to purchase intention. However, there is a positive effect of WOM on both purchase intention and brand image (Torlak et al., 2014; Al Halbusi & Tehseen, 2018; Gilitwala & Nag, 2021). The effective utilization of EWOM at a low cost can create a credible image among consumers. Thus, the following hypothesis was formed:

**H1:** *Viral marketing through EWOM is significantly related to the symbolic brand image (a) and experiential brand image (b).*

## 2.4. Stealth Marketing and Brand Image

Stealth marketing has received substantial attention as an unconventional marketing strategy in literature during the past few decades (Roy & Chattopadhyay, 2010). A stealth marketing campaign helps marketers cut through the clutter of traditional advertising (Kaikati & Kaikati, 2004; Rotfeld, 2008). Stealth marketing is also known as covert, masked, or undercover marketing, and it is a component of viral marketing or a subset of covert marketing (Kaikati & Kaikati, 2004). Still, confusion exists, and no conclusive agreement has been reached over the name for or definition of stealth/covert marketing (Skiba et al., 2019). An example of stealth marketing is covert product placement in popular television shows or movies in which the background wall has a brand name or actors visibly use a brand-name product to subconsciously increase awareness for that brand or product.

It is evident from studies that consumers become skeptical if they recognize advertised content that hints towards sales messages (Kaikati & Kaikati, 2004; Homer, 2009). A study found that the content of viral stealth videos (VSVs) was positively perceived more often than the company's direct advertising video that used a budget (PAV) (Wendt et al., 2016). Ashley and Leonard (2009) established that using stealth marketing significantly decreases trust and commitment towards the brand. Additionally, it is revealed that when a consumer recognizes a covert marketing message, his or her purchase likelihood is decreased, trust

is significantly lowered, and long-term relationship with the brand and the company decreases (Milne et al., 2009). In contrast, Boyer et al. (2015) revealed that consumers are likely to accept hidden or embedded messages in the advertisement when they have used the product and enjoy it. Considering the literature, the following hypotheses are proposed to assess the effect of stealth marketing on brand image.

**H2:** *Stealth marketing is significantly related to the symbolic brand image (a) and experiential brand image (b).*

## 2.5. Graffiti Advertising and Brand Image

Graffiti advertising is wall painting or impressions and is generally considered an illegal form of guerrilla marketing. Nevertheless, legal graffiti advertising is a growing concept, which is a unique, attention-grabbing, and modern way of using an out-of-home advertising campaign to impress the audience (Marketing Minefield, 2017).

Graffiti has been a fundamental part of the urban landscape of the Middle East for thousands of years. Today's graffiti has undergone a radical transformation thanks to the introduction of modern art techniques, such as using spray paint, collages, and stencils. In its modern incarnation, graffiti first appeared on the walls of New York City's marginalized black neighborhoods during the 1970s (Brotherton & Kontos, 2008). Street art graffiti and its enormous visual impact have created opportunities for advertisers and creative media people to explore the medium's impact by testing how advertising agencies can combine the power of graffiti and mural art with brand advertising to reach the public (Bourke, 2016).

Graffiti Advertising is a great way of delivering your brand message to a younger audience in a more entertaining and engaging way than simply broadcasting with a billboard. The graffiti campaigns are also effective at delivering free media coverage and social media attention. However, ethical problems are associated with graffiti guerrilla marketing include overstepping on private property or grounds, disfiguring private or government property, and not obtaining a permit from landholders. Posting company stickers or posters on the buses highlighting TV program schedules or show store locations could possibly be an act of vandalism (Zuo & Veil, 2006). Similarly, marketing agency clients can be exposed to the potential risk of legal entanglements. In contrast, Khoshnava and Naseri (2017) stated that if an unconventional advertisement is used as warning media, its content can be beneficial in raising awareness among people and also used to promote public culture.

Commercially advertised media includes painted walls, street furniture, shopping carts, bus station benches, human billboards, and ads on the sides of buses (Bennett, 2010).

To determine the impact on and relationship of graffiti with the brand image, the following two hypotheses are proposed:

**H3:** *Street graffiti is significantly related to the symbolic brand image (a) and experiential brand image (b).*

## 2.6. Ambush Marketing and Brand Image

Ambush marketing, or parasitic marketing, is a term that first appeared in the early 90s (Meenaghan, 1994). Ambush marketing is considered an increasingly prevalent practice in the field of corporate sponsorship. Ambush marketing by unofficially associating a company with an event and takes mileage from that event. Ambush marketing is the practice of hijacking or co-opting another advertiser's campaign to raise awareness of another company or brand, often in the context of event sponsorships. Through this approach, the company saves significant sponsorship costs and tries to grab the audience's attention for itself affecting the official sponsor. Ambush marketing has primarily been implemented in sporting events. While ambush marketing is not a new concept, it has been widely practiced in recent years (Nufer, 2016). Findings have since revealed that promotional ads and a variety of activities from brands do affect an image in consumers' minds (Gökerik et al., 2018). Based on the unconventional and innovative nature of ambush marketing activities, the following hypotheses are proposed:

**H4:** *Ambush marketing (event sponsorship) is significantly related to the symbolic brand image (a) and experiential brand image (b).*

## 2.7. Clickbait Advertising and Brand Image

Clickbait is a type of teaser message embedded in the form of a headline, whose author/creator intends to attract as many readers as possible to a web page, ignoring the content's target audience. The use of the term clickbait is prevalent with digital content creators and journalists (Bazaco, 2019). Clickbait headlines appeal to a reader's "curiosity gap". Clickbait appears to be a strategy that has been widely employed by many Twitter and Facebook advertisers, as well as media reporters, bloggers, and marketers (Hurst, 2016). Clickbait advertising attracts readers to messages by grabbing their attention and urging them to click a link for the full story or more information. Elliss (2014) explained that clickbait is a type of content marketing created in sensational and eye-catching headlines that are unclear, yet attention-grabbing enough to get readers to click the link in the headline, rerouting users from their Facebook or Twitter timelines to the company's webpage. The growing use and practice of clickbait on social media and internet websites as a



content generation strategy for increasing page views in the extremely competitive media industry (Rony et al., 2017). Clickbait is a text or a thumbnail link that is designed to attract attention and to entice users to follow that link and read view or listen to the linked piece of online content, with a defining characteristic of being deceptive, typically sensationalized, or misleading. (Palau-Sampio, 2015). With the intent to fill the gap in the literature, the present study assesses the impact of clickbait as a guerrilla strategy on brand image. However, there is a negative perception of clickbait as a content marketing strategy (Hurst, 2016), which makes users' trust in media susceptible (Rony et al., 2017). Thus, the authors propose H5 to assess the impact of clickbait ads on symbolic and experiential brand image for users.

**H5:** Clickbait advertisement is significantly related to the symbolic brand image (a) and experiential brand image (b).

## 2.8. Conceptual Framework

The modified conceptual framework was developed based on the available literature (Hutter & Hoffmann, 2011; Ahmed et al., 2020). For improved reliability and validity of the current study, seven constructs were utilized: viral marketing (EWOM), stealth marketing (SM), graffiti advertising (GA), ambush marketing (AM), and clickbait advertising (CbA), as predicting variables and symbolic

brand image (SBI) and experiential brand image (EBI) as outcome variables.

## 3. Research Methodology

The research participants included university students, as generation Y consumers can be found very easily at universities. Therefore, university campuses were selected, and as the target sample was available, a self-constructed questionnaire was distributed among millennial respondents (aged 19 to 29) at various private and public university campuses in Pakistan. Data collection went smoothly, and most of the questionnaires made it possible to conduct data analysis after accounting for outliers and reverse coding. The non-probability sampling technique was used to gather a large set of data for the research, and the aim was to include many people with different demographic factors. The targeted respondents were manually sub-divided into campuses based on age, gender, and income groups to access the maximum demographic factors to make the data and observations more effective. A total of 248 respondents were considered sufficient for data analysis. See Table 1 for the demographic analysis. The items for the constructs were adopted and modified from various studies to fill the objectives of this study. All the items used a five-point Likert scale in the questionnaire to collect responses.

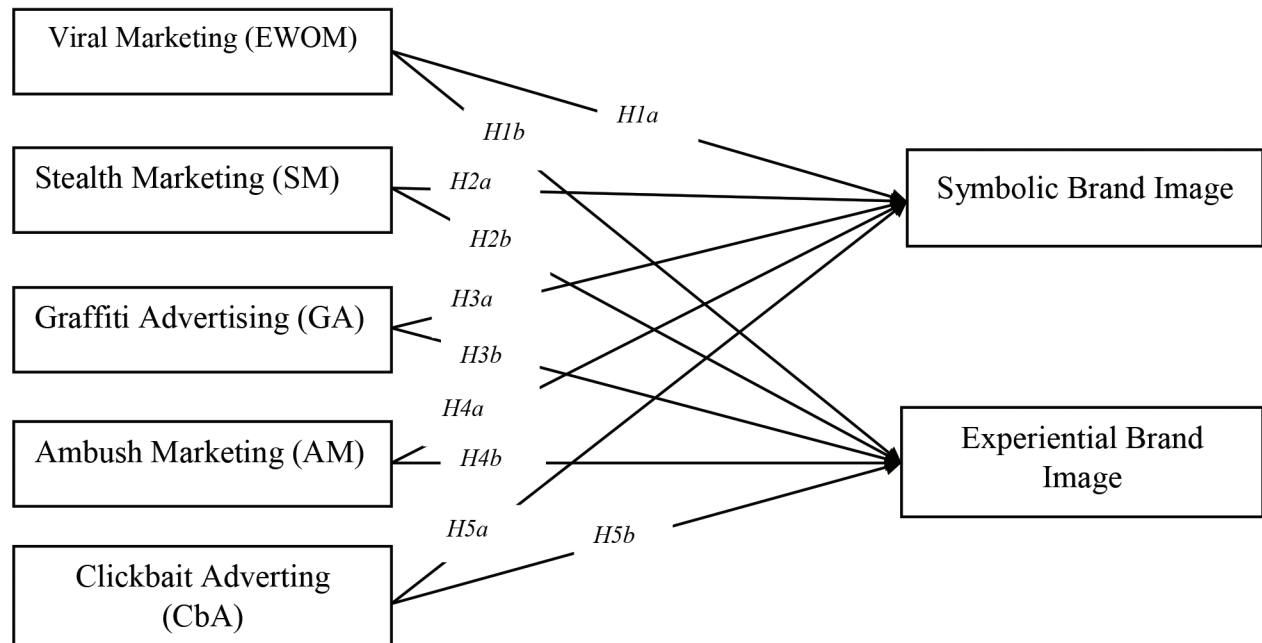


Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Framework

**Table 1:** Demographic Distribution of the Sample (Percentage of *n*)

Gender	Percentage	Age group	Percentage
Male	60.9	<18	19.2
Females	39.1	18–22	30.9
		23–27	20.8
		28–32	18.8
		33–37	6.3
		>38	4
Income Level (Pak Rupees.)	Percentage	Education	Percentage
<25000	25.5	High school or less	23.2
25100–50000	38.5	University Degree and higher	76.8
50100–75000	14.8		
75100–100,000	12.4		
>100,100	8.8		

Note: Sample (*n*) = 248.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Manipulation Check for Validation and Model Evaluation

For our predictive model, a structural equation modeling technique is appropriate (Bentler & Chou, 1987). AMOS software was used to test the research model. First, construct reliability and validity were evaluated (refer to Table 2) for each item, and all the items showed strong reliability, as Cronbach's alpha had a score of more than 0.7. Likewise, a correlation and manipulation check (refer to Table 3) was also conducted to ensure the reliability of the data for further data analysis. Thus, the results can be generalized. For convergent validity of the measurements, composite reliability was calculated ( $CR > 0.70$ ), as suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981), and the average variance was extracted ( $AVE > 0.50$ ) for all the variables. Table 2 presents the values of constructs, which were above the minimum threshold of CR and AVE. Additionally, all the variables had an acceptable level of factor loading ( $FL > 0.70$ ). The discriminant validity was also measured (refer to Table 3) and supported as the square root of AVE for every variable was greater than its joint variance with another construct (Hair et al., 2010).

### 4.2. Structural Model Evaluation

To test all the hypothesized relationships, a structural regression model was used. The goodness-of-fit indices were in an acceptable range for model 1, as per the criteria

suggested by Hair et al. (2010). Table 4 shows both the model-fit indices of the structural model and the outcomes of the hypotheses testing. In Table 4, except for both hypotheses regarding ambush marketing (H4a and H4b), all other proposed relationships were found to be significant. Ambush marketing was not found to have a significant effect on creating either a symbolic brand image or an experiential brand image, and H4a ( $\beta = 0.320$ ) and H4b ( $\beta = 0.124$ ) were not supported. EWOM had a significant positive influence on symbolic and experiential brand images, thus, H1a and H1b were supported at a significance level of 0.05 and 0.01, respectively. Moreover, the results revealed that stealth marketing, graffiti, and clickbait advertising were found to be influential on both symbolic and experiential brand images; consequently, H2a, H2b, H3a, H3b, H5a, and H5b were all supported.

## 5. Discussion

This research was conducted to understand the effectiveness of guerrilla marketing techniques on brand image among generation Y consumers in the context of a developing economy, such as Pakistan. The results show that guerrilla marketing has a significant impact on brand image. The findings revealed that using graffiti ads, stealth marketing, EWOM, and clickbait ads were considered to be favorable guerrilla marketing techniques for companies. However, ambush marketing as a guerrilla technique was neither considered positively nor had any positive influence on consumers. Moreover, as per the literature available on ambush marketing, sponsors have moral concerns and

**Table 2:** Measures and Constructs Reliability

Variable and Source	Item	FL	CR	AVE	CA
Electronic Word of Mouth (Bambauer-Sachse & Mangold, 2011)			0.854	0.747	0.806
	EWOM1	0.952			
	EWOM2	0.767			
	EWOM3	0.851			
	EWOM4	0.858			
Stealth Marketing (Hutter & Hoffmann, 2014; modified items)			0.734	0.516	0.815
	SM1	0.775			
	SM2	0.797			
Graffiti Advertising (Self-developed items)			0.845	0.646	0.771
	GA1	0.797			
	GA2	0.833			
	GA3	0.720			
	GA4	0.768			
Ambush Marketing (Meenaghan, 1994; modified items)			0.865	0.762	0.779
	AM1	0.714			
	AM2	0.709			
Clickbait Adverting (self-developed items)			0.842	0.641	0.734
	CbA1	0.748			
	CbA2	0.708			
Symbolic brand image (Wu & Wang, 2014)			0.792	0.559	0.834
	SBI1	0.720			
	SBI2	0.767			
	SBI3	0.843			
	SBI4	0.952			
Experiential brand Image (Wu & Wang, 2014)			0.739	0.632	0.744
	EBI1	0.867			
	EBI2	0.751			
	EBI3	0.858			
	EBI4	0.952			

Note: FL = Factor Loadings, CA = Cronbach's Alpha, CR = Composite Reliability and AVE = Average Variance Extracted.

associate the technique with a negative image (Burton & Chadwick, 2009). Further, the results of this study show that EWOM affects the symbolic and experiential brand image of consumers. Managers can be advised to direct their efforts on encouraging consumers to disseminate positive EWOM communication about products, services, and brands. This can be achieved by requesting customers to write reviews on various online platforms, in return providing economic incentives like discount codes or free shipping for future purchases. Besides, the company should provide a variety

of communication channels, where consumers can share negative feedback directly with the concerned people in the company, and quickly respond to and resolve these complaints.

It is imperative to understand the theoretical and practical implications of Guerrilla in the Asian context as the findings revealed that the perception of the EU consumers varies partly from that of Asian consumers regarding guerrilla marketing (Vasileva & Angelina, 2017). Many marketers are not aware of the power and effect of guerrilla marketing

**Table 3:** Descriptive and Correlation Statistics of Constructs of the Calibration Sample

Constructs	Means	SD	EWOM	SM	GA	AM	CbA	SBI	EBI
EWOM	3.85	1.68	0.864	0.412*	0.454*	0.312*	0.213*	0.245*	0.567*
SM	3.32	0.95		0.718	0.031*	0.432*	0.344*	0.321*	0.451*
GA	4.24	1.32			0.803	0.311*	0.412*	0.463*	0.554*
AM	3.61	1.48				0.872	0.451*	0.490*	0.211*
CbA	3.79	1.09					0.800	0.541*	0.342*
SBI	3.56	1.64						0.747	0.544*
EBI	3.98	1.38							0.794

Notes: \*Correlation significance at the level 0.01 (two-tailed). Diagonal highlighted figures denote the square root of the AVE between two constructs. To get discriminant validity, diagonal elements must be greater than off-diagonal elements.

**Table 4:** Hypothesized Direct Relationship and Structural Model Fit Indices

Relationship (regression path)	Estimates	CR	p-value	Decision
H1a: EWOM → Symbolic brand image	0.741	4.289	***	Supported
H1b: EWOM → Experiential brand image	0.754	3.785	**	Supported
H2a: Stealth marketing → Symbolic brand image	0.669	4.256	**	Supported
H2b: Stealth marketing → Experiential brand image	0.543	2.785	**	Supported
H3a: Graffiti advertising → Symbolic brand image	0.342	2.467	***	Supported
H3b: Graffiti advertising → Experiential brand image	0.246	1.956	**	Supported
H4a: Ambush marketing → Symbolic brand image	0.320	0.625	0.562	Not supported
H4b: Ambush marketing → Experiential brand image	0.124	0.498	0.734	Not supported
H5a: Clickbait advertising → Symbolic brand image	0.450	1.989	**	Supported
H5b: Clickbait advertising → Experiential brand image	−0.322	2.384	**	Supported
Goodness-of-fit Indices	Criteria		Measurement Model	Structural Model
$\chi^2/df$			2.164	1.914
Goodness-of-fit index (GFI)	>0.95		0.912	0.934
Adjusted GFI (AGFI)	>0.80		0.821	0.860
Comparative fit index (CFI)	≥0.95		0.945	0.955
Normed Fixed index (NFI)	>0.90		0.956	0.913
RMSEA	≤0.05		0.048	0.039
PCLOSE	>0.50		0.512	0.605

Notes: CR, critical ratio. \*\*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , remaining all other path analysis are insignificant.

campaigns on the image and success of new product launches. In emerging markets of Asian countries with dwindling consumer-buying power and the limited marketing budgets of SMEs force marketing managers to opt for creative, cost-effective marketing campaigns (Gkarane et al., 2019). This research was carried out to fill the gap in this unconventional method of marketing. As mentioned earlier, Asian countries

have a higher percentage of millennial consumers, therefore the findings of this research have revealed several practical implications for business operators. First, companies with limited budgets for advertising and promotion can utilize one of the five guerrilla techniques like viral marketing (EWOM), stealth marketing, ambush, graffiti, and clickbait ads. Especially, stealth marketing, graffiti ads, and clickbait



ads may be used by SMEs to compete against the giants in the market. Many people in Pakistan and India have the habit of reading newspapers and magazines, therefore, advertisers can smartly make use of clickbait ads to divert the traffic to their desire blog or website to maximize viewership. Street graffiti is a common practice and a norm for small businesses in Asian countries namely Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bhutan, and Thailand. Companies and organizations can use street graffiti for the beautification of the city and show it as CSR activity by the company and smartly incorporate their brand name into the graffiti art, which can yield a favorable image in the minds of consumers.

Consumerism is increasing in Asian countries and consumers lately have witnessed ad wars in Pakistan among companies in the Telecom, Banking, and Food sector. As per the findings of this research study, advertising and PR companies can suggest their clients to add one of the guerrilla marketing techniques along with the conventional campaign to show innovativeness of the company to enhance the symbolic and experiential brand image among the consumers. TV shows and movies are both very popular sources of entertainment watched by the audience in Cinemas and digital platforms (such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, etc.). Companies can utilize these popular mediums and covertly place their products and brand to subconsciously increase awareness to achieve the desired image in the market.

Previous studies show the effect of Ambush marketing in other countries. But in the Pakistani context, marketers should be careful in using ambush techniques for campaigns as they may lead to a negative impact on the brand image. The companies should rather become official sponsors or co-sponsor of the event to gain favorable symbolic and experiential brand image. The findings of this research facilitate entrepreneurs and managers of SMEs to gain valuable insights about the localization process by designing marketing campaigns through guerrilla marketing aimed at the cross-cultural target market. One of the significant contributions of this study is the conceptualization of guerrilla marketing and the brand image model into a measurable empirical phenomenon, including scales that other researchers can use in future studies.

## 6. Conclusion

It can be inferred and concluded from the results and the hypotheses assessment summary (refer to Table 4) that consumers' interest was inclined to unusual advertising in the most probable creative manner. The authors further observed from the survey results that consumers were more interested in ideas that were novel and out of the box. From these findings, it seems visual attractiveness and creativity are cherished by generation Y consumers in the marketplace. The guerrilla marketing strategy is cost-effective compared

to a mainstream medium of communication, and it affects consumer purchase intention (Ahmed et al, 2020; Iqbal & Lohdi, 2015). The outcomes of the existing study contribute and support the scarce existing literature that non-traditional guerrilla marketing strategies may be a competent way of discovering consumers' soft points. The final results contrast with the idea that guerrilla marketing communication techniques should be especially advantageous to small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

During this research, the authors observed that viewers were keen to witness unusual advertising. Guerrilla marketing is a growing concept that many scholars around the world are testing. Hutter and Hoffmann (2011) have suggested moderating variables, such as a high-tech company vs. a food company. Guerrilla marketing technique can also be tested on online buying behavior, similar to when Fong and Yazdanifard (2014) conducted a study on how guerrilla marketing affects online shopping behavior. Caldwell et al. (2015) also suggested that GRT (Guerrilla Research Tactics) for mobile and cloud-based digital technology have proven to be effective in architecture or urban design and thus could be applied to other disciplines. Damar-Ladkoo (2016) examined guerrilla marketing in marketing fresh organic agricultural merchandise in Mauritius. Researchers have only analyzed direct path relationships. In future studies, authors can take into account more variables suggested by Ahmed et al. (2020), like brand awareness and technology as the mediator and moderator variables, respectively, between guerrilla marketing activities and consumers' purchase decision.

## References

- Ahmed, R. R., Qureshi, J. A., Štreimikienė, D., Vveinhardt, J., & Soomro, R. H. (2020). Guerrilla marketing trends for sustainable solutions: Evidence from SEM-based multivariate and conditional process approaches. *Journal of Business Economics and Management*, 21(3), 851–871. <https://doi.org/10.3846/jbem.2020.10730>
- Al Halbusi, H., & Tehseen, S. (2018). The effect of electronic word-of-mouth (EWOM) on brand image and purchase intention: A conceptual paper. *Socioeconomic Challenges*, 2(3), 83–94. [https://doi.org/10.21272/sec.3\(2\).83-94.2018](https://doi.org/10.21272/sec.3(2).83-94.2018)
- Al Mana, A. M., & Mirza, A. A. (2013). The impact of electronic word of mouth on consumers' purchasing decisions. *International Journal of Computer Applications*, 82(9), 23–31. <https://doi.org/10.5120/14145-2286>
- Aprilia, F., & Kusumawati, A. (2021). Influence of electronic word of mouth on visitor's interest in tourism destinations. *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics, and Business*, 8(2), 993–1003. <https://doi.org/10.13106/jafeb.2021.vol8.no2.0993>
- Ashley, C., & Leonard, H. A. (2009). Betrayed by the buzz? Covert content and consumer–brand relationships. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 28(2), 212–220. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jppm.28.2.212>

- Ay, C., Aytakin, P., & Nardali, S. (2010). Guerrilla marketing communication tools and ethical problems in guerilla advertising. *American Journal of Economics and Business Administration*, 2(3), 280–286. <https://doi.org/10.3844/ajebsp.2010.280.286>
- Ay, C., & Unal, A. (2002). New marketing approach for SMEs: Guerilla marketing. *Journal of Management and Economics*, 9, 75–85. [http://www.bayar.edu.tr/~iibf/dergi/pdf/C9S1\\_220](http://www.bayar.edu.tr/~iibf/dergi/pdf/C9S1_220)
- Bambauer-Sachse, S., & Mangold, S. (2011). Brand equity dilution through negative online word-of-mouth communication. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 18(1), 38–45. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2010.09.003>
- Bazaco, A. (2019). Clickbait as a strategy of viral journalism: Conceptualisation and methods. *Revista Latina de Comunicacion Social*, 74, 94–115. <https://doi.org/10.4185/RLCS-2018-1323en>
- Bazzo, S., Black, D., Mitchell, K., Marini, F., Moino, G., Riscica, P., & Fattori, G. (2017). Too young to drink'. An international communication campaign to raise public awareness of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders. *Public Health*, 142, 111–5. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhe.2016.08.001>
- Bennett, A. G. (2010). *The big book of marketing*. New York: Tata McGraw-Hill Education.
- Bentler, P. M., & Chou, C. P. (1987). Practical issues in structural modeling. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 16(1), 78–117.
- Bhat, S., & Reddy, S. K. (1998). Symbolic and functional positioning of brands. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 15(1), 32–43. <https://doi.org/10.1108/07363769810202664>
- Brotherton, D., & Kontos, L. (2008). *Encyclopedia of gangs*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.
- Bourke, R. (2016). *A medium Corporation*. <https://medium.com/@BlueBite/from-art-to-advertising-graffitis-influence-37a29f102556#.9y8iywqlz>
- Boyer, S. L., Edmondson, D. R., Baker, B., & Solomon, P. (2015). Word-of-mouth, traditional and covert marketing: Comparative studies. *Academy of Marketing Studies Journal*, 19(1), 102–119.
- Burton, N., & Chadwick, S. (2009). Ambush marketing in sport: An analysis of sponsorship protection means and counter-ambush measures. *Journal of Sponsorship*, 2(4), 303–315. <https://web.a.ebscohost.com/abstract?>
- Caldwell, G. A., Osborne, L., Mewburn, I., & Crowther, P. (2015). Guerrillas in the [urban] midst: Developing and using creative research methods—Guerrilla research tactics. *Journal of Urban Technology*, 22(3), 21–36. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10630732.2015.1040288>
- Chan, K., Ng, Y. L., & Luk, E. K. (2013). Impact of celebrity endorsement in advertising on brand image among Chinese adolescents. *Young Consumers*, 14(2), 167–179. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17473611311325564>
- Damar-Ladkoo, A. (2016). Guerilla marketing of fresh organic agricultural products. *Theoretical Economics Letters*, 6(2), 246–255. <https://doi.org/10.4236/tel.2016.62027>
- Das, J. K., Prakash, O., & Khattri, V. (2016). Brand image mapping: A study on bathing soaps. *Global Business Review*, 17(4), 870–885. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0972150916645683>
- Dempsey, E. (2016). *Betting on guerrilla marketing: An investigation of the impact of outdoor guerrilla advertising by paddy power on the brand engagement of Irish male millennials*. Doctoral dissertation, Dublin, National College of Ireland. <http://norma.ncirl.ie/2297/>
- Dinh, T. D., & Mai, K. N. (2015). Guerrilla marketing's effects on Gen Y's word-of-mouth intention—a mediation of credibility. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 28(1), 4–22. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-06-2015-0102>
- Elliss, H. (2014). *The dirty secrets of clickbait. This post will blow your mind!*. <https://econsultancy.com/blog/64399-the-dirty-secrets-of-clickbait-this-post-will-blow-your-mind/>
- Erkan, I., & Evans, C. (2016). The influence of eWOM in social media on consumers' purchase intentions: An extended approach to information adoption. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 61, 47–55. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.03.003>
- Expósito, I. C. (2017). *Centennials: The generation that has never known a world without the Internet*. <https://www.bbva.com/en/centennials-generation-never-known-world-internet/>
- Fong, K., & Yazdanifard, R. (2014). The review of the two latest marketing techniques; viral marketing and guerrilla marketing which influence online consumer behavior. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research*, 14(2), 1–4. [https://globaljournals.org/GJMBR\\_Volume14/1-The-Review-of-the-Two-Latest.pdf](https://globaljournals.org/GJMBR_Volume14/1-The-Review-of-the-Two-Latest.pdf)
- Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39–50. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3151312>
- Gilitwala, B., & Nag, A. K. (2021). Factors influencing youngsters' consumption behavior on high-end cosmetics in China. *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics, and Business*, 8(1), 443–450. <https://doi.org/10.13106/jafeb.2021.vol8.no1.443>
- Gkarane, S., Efstratios-Marinos, L., Vassiliadis, C. A., & Vassiliadis, Y. (2019). *Combining traditional and digital tools in developing an international guerilla marketing strategy*. Cham: Springer.
- Gökerik, M., Gürbüz, A., Erkan, I., Mogaji, E., & Sap, S. (2018). Surprise me with your ads! The impacts of guerrilla marketing in social media on brand image. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 30(5), 1222–1238. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-10-2017-0257>
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., Anderson, R. E., & Tatham, R. L. (2010). *Multivariate data analysis* (7<sup>th</sup> ed). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Holland, D. (2016 April 26). *Word of mouth marketing association*. <https://womma.org/social-media-marketing-word-mouth-marketing/>
- Homer, P. M. (2009). Product placements. *Journal of Advertising*, 38(3), 21–32. <https://doi.org/10.2753/JOA0091-3367380302>

- Housholder, E. E., & LaMarre, H. L. (2014). Facebook politics: Toward a process model for achieving political source credibility through social media. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*, 11(4), 368–382. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19331681.2014.951753>
- Hurst, N. (2016). *To clickbait or not to clickbait? An examination of clickbait headline effects on source credibility*. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Missouri—Columbia. <https://mospace.umsystem.edu/xmlui/handle/10355/56080>
- Hutter, K., & Hoffmann, S. (2011). Guerrilla marketing: The nature of the concept and propositions for further research. *Asian Journal of Marketing*, 5(2), 39. <https://doi.org/10.3923/ajm.2011.39.54>
- Hutter, K., & Hoffmann, S. (2014). Surprise, surprise. Ambient media as a promotion tool for retailers. *Journal of Retailing*, 90(1), 93–110. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretai.2013.08.001>
- Iqbal, S., & Lohdi, S. (2015). The impacts of guerrilla marketing on consumers' buying behavior: A case of beverage industry of Karachi. *The International Journal of Business & Management*, 3(11), 120. <https://doi.org/10.4172/2223-5833.1000184>
- Isaac, A. A. (2014). Analysis of guerrilla and traditional marketing interface in improving the productivity of organizational marketing in small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. *Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship Development*, 2(1), 175–190. [http://jsbednet.com/journals/jsbed/Vol\\_2\\_No\\_1\\_March\\_2014/10.pdf](http://jsbednet.com/journals/jsbed/Vol_2_No_1_March_2014/10.pdf)
- Kaikati, A. M., & Kaikati, J. G. (2004). Stealth marketing: How to reach consumers surreptitiously. *California management review*, 46(4), 6–22. <https://doi.org/10.2307/41166272>
- Kelly, C. (2015). *To explore if guerrilla marketing campaigns affect consumption behavior on consumers between the ages of 18–29, Generation Y*. [https://esource.dbs.ie/bitstream/handle/10788/2891/ba\\_kelly\\_c\\_2015.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://esource.dbs.ie/bitstream/handle/10788/2891/ba_kelly_c_2015.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)
- Khoshnava, F. M., & Naseri, M. (2017). Studying the effect of unconventional advertisement in promoting the level of public culture. *Researchers World*, 8(3), 20. <http://www.researchersworld.com/index.php/rworld/article/view/135>
- Kim, Y. E., & Yang, H. C. (2020). The effects of perceived satisfaction level of high-involvement product choice attribute of the millennial generation on repurchase intention: Moderating effect of gender difference. *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics, and Business*, 7(1), 131–140. <https://doi.org/10.13106/jafeb.2020.vol7.no1.131>
- Levinson, C. J. (1984). *Guerrilla marketing: secrets of making a big profit from your small business* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Marketing Minefield. (2017). *Graffiti advertising*. <https://www.marketingminefield.co.uk/graffiti-advertising/>
- Meenaghan, T. (1994). Point of view: ambush marketing: immoral or imaginative practice? *Journal of Advertising Research*, 34(5), 77–89. [https://www.warc.com/content/paywall/article/point\\_of\\_view\\_ambush\\_marketing\\_immoral\\_or\\_imaginative\\_practice/6307](https://www.warc.com/content/paywall/article/point_of_view_ambush_marketing_immoral_or_imaginative_practice/6307)
- Milak, A., & Dobrinić, D. (2017). Customer perception of guerilla marketing. *International journal of multidisciplinary in business and science*, 3(4), 18–24. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/205678>
- Milne, G. R., Rohm, A., & Bahl, S. (2009). If it's legal, is it acceptable? *Journal of Advertising*, 38(4), 107–122. <https://doi.org/10.2753/JOA0091-3367380408>
- Nufer, G. (2016). Ambush marketing in sports: An attack on sponsorship or innovative marketing?. *Sport, Business and Management: An International Journal*, 6(4), 476–495. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SBM-05-2013-0008>
- Obermiller, C., Spangenberg, E., & MacLachlan, D. L. (2005). Ad skepticism: The consequences of disbelief. *Journal of Advertising*, 34(3), 7–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2005.10639199>
- Palau-Sampio, D. (2016). Reference press metamorphosis in the digital context: Clickbait and tabloid strategies in Elpais. *Communication & Society*, 29(2), 63–79. <https://doi.org/10.15581/003.29.2.63-79>
- Ries, A., & Trout, J. (1986). Marketing warfare. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 3(4), 77–82. <https://doi.org/10.1108/eb008182>
- Rony, M. M. U., Hassan, N., & Yousuf, M. (2017, July). Diving deep into clickbaits: Who uses them to what extents in which topics with what effects?. *Proceedings of the 2017 IEEE/ACM international conference on advances in social networks analysis and mining 2017*, Sydney, Australia, July 17 (pp. 232–239). <https://doi.org/10.1145/3110025.3110054>
- Rotfeld, H. J. (2006). Understanding advertising clutter and the real solution to declining audience attention to mass media commercial messages. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 23, 180–181. <https://doi.org/10.1108/07363760610674301>
- Rotfeld, H. J. (2008). The stealth influence of covert marketing and much ado about what may be nothing. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 27(1), 63–68. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jppm.27.1.63>
- Roy, A., & Chattopadhyay, S. P. (2010). Stealth marketing as a strategy. *Business Horizons*, 53(1), 69–79. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2009.09.004>
- Sass, E. (2013). *Social media affects purchase decisions, ARF finds*. <http://www.mediapost.com/publications/article/191791/social-media-affects-purchase-decisions-arf-finds.html#axzz2JmPOED3r>
- Saucet, M., & Cova, B. (2015). The secret lives of unconventional campaigns: Street marketing on the fringe. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 21(1), 65–77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2014.970820>
- Schivinski, B., & Dabrowski, D. (2016). The effect of social media communication on consumer perceptions of brands. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 22(2), 189–214. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2013.871323>
- Simms, C. D., & Trott, P. (2006). The perceptions of the BMW mini brand: The importance of historical associations and the development of a model. *Journal of Product &*

- Brand Management*, 15(4), 228–238. <https://doi.org/10.1108/10610420610679593>
- Skiba, J., Petty, R. D., & Carlson, L. (2019). Beyond deception: Potential unfair consumer injury from various types of covert marketing. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 53(4), 1573–1601. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joca.12284>
- Torlak, O., Ozkara, B. Y., Tiltay, M. A., Cengiz, H., & Dulger, M. F. (2014). The effect of electronic word of mouth on brand image and purchase intention: An application concerning cell phone brands for youth consumers in Turkey. *Journal of Marketing Development and Competitiveness*, 8(2), 61. [http://www.na-businesspress.com/JMDC/TiltayMA\\_Web8\\_2\\_.pdf](http://www.na-businesspress.com/JMDC/TiltayMA_Web8_2_.pdf)
- Truong, N. X. (2018). The impact of Hallyu 4.0 and social media on Korean product purchase decision of Generation C in Vietnam. *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics, and Business*, 5(3), 81–93. <https://doi.org/10.13106/jafeb.2018.vol5.no3.81>
- Van Reijmersdal, E., Smit, E., & Neijens, P. (2010). How media factors affect audience responses to brand placement. *International Journal of Advertising*, 29(2), 279–301. <https://doi.org/10.2501/S0265048710201154>
- Vasileva, M., & Angelina, R. (2017). *European and Asian customers' perceptiveness towards guerrilla marketing* [Master Thesis, Uppsala University]. <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1105929/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- Vega, M. A. (2016). *The 'millennials' and the 'centennials', two generations that are worth 19 billion*. Spain: Elpais News.
- Watts, S. A., & Zhang, W. (2008). Capitalizing on content: Information adoption in two online communities. *Journal of the Association for Information Systems*, 9(2), 73–94. <https://doi.org/10.17705/1jais.00149>
- Wendt, L. M., Griesbaum, J., & Kölle, R. (2016). Product advertising and viral stealth marketing in online videos: A description and comparison of comments on YouTube. *Aslib Journal of Information Management*, 4(3), 68. <https://doi.org/10.1108/AJIM-11-2015-0174>
- Wu, S. I., & Wang, W. H. (2014). Impact of CSR perception on brand image, brand attitude and buying willingness: A study of a global café. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 6(6), 43. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijms.v6n6p43>
- Zeng, F., Bhutto, M. Y., & Soomro, Y. A. (2019). Chinese smartphone brands: Gender, consumers behavioral and attitudinal loyalty. *Marketing and Management of Innovations*, 1(2), 83–98. <https://doi.org/10.21272/mmi.2019.2-08>
- Zhang, H., Zhou, S., & Shen, B. (2014). Public trust: A comprehensive investigation on perceived media credibility in China. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 24(2), 158–172. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01292986.2013.856452>
- Zuo, L., & Veil, S. (2006). Guerilla marketing and the aqua teen hunger force fiasco. *Public Relations Quarterly*, 51(4), 8–11. <https://search.proquest.com/openview/e0368289596b0e2fc21f7f037edec7f2/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=49209>