

## **The Impact of Ambient Communication on the Consumer Behavior**

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### **Abstract**

As consumers are avoiding the traditional advertising due to advertising clutter in the media, it has become crucial for companies to differentiate their marketing approach. One way of doing this is to use ambient communication, which is untraditional, innovative and creates a surprise effect. The purpose of this paper is to explore how the use of ambient communication affects consumer's behavior in terms of brand attitude and purchase behavior. The effect on consumer brand engagement will be explored. This study is a correlation research and the chosen method is quantitative data collection. Data was retrieved using questionnaires. The findings indicate that ambient communication grabs consumers' attention and creates consumer brand engagement resulting in positive attitude towards the brand and intention to buy the advertised product.

Keywords: ambient media, ambient advertising, ambient communication, guerilla marketing, consumer behavior, brand engagement, purchase behavior, buying behavior, brand attitude.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The everyday lives of consumers are filled with advertising (Dahlen&Edenius, 2007). Every single day consumers are exposed to around 3,000 advertising messages trying to gain their attention (Hutter, 2014). There is an increased advertising clutter in the traditional media such as TV and newspapers (Dahlen & Edenius, 2007). This massive clutter leads to an information overload (Hutter, 2014), resulting in a negative attitude of consumers towards advertising (Dahlen & Edenius, 2007) by avoiding exposure to advertisements and their content (Romonti-Maniu & Zaharie, 2014). Therefore traditional forms of advertising are losing their power to gain consumers' attention (Hutter, 2014).

To overcome these problems, advertisers are trying to find new ways to reach consumers (Dahlen & Edenius, 2007). There is a strong need to search for totally new promotional tools that can attract customers in adventurous ways and have a more direct focus on targeted segments (Alena, 2012). The development of new advertising formats could be digital or alternative media (Romonti-Maniu & Zaharie, 2014). Digital and alternative media share of total advertising and marketing revenues worldwide reached 22.9% in 2012, up from 13.3% in 2007. In addition, traditional media share shows a decrease of 9.4% from 2007 to 2012 (Romonti-Maniu & Zaharie, 2014).

Alternative out-of-home advertising is becoming of increased importance nowadays through reinventing itself by embracing new technology (Wilson, Baack& Till, 2008). This study will focus on the alternative out-of-home media which is referred to ambient communication or advertising.

It is believed that consumers pay more attention to the advertisement when it is placed in an unconventional medium and the attitude and credibility toward advertising are more favorable. Therefore, consumers' response to ambient advertising is an effective one in terms of increasing attention, brand recall, positive attitudes or a higher credibility of both the advertisement and the brand (Romonti-Maniu&Zaharie, 2014).

The purpose of this study is to examine the field of ambient advertising from the standpoint that the development of new, unconventional advertising formats is highly effective in grabbing consumers' attention and engagement resulting in positive attitude towards the brand and intention to buy. The research aims to study the effect of alternative out-of-home media on consumers' behavior towards brands that use ambient communication as an advertising tool.

The article is structured as follows. The next section presents the literature review which includes ambient advertising, guerilla marketing, and consumer behavior. This is followed by the study's objectives and hypotheses. Afterwards, the methodology and results are explained. The following section presents the discussion and finally, the conclusion is provided with limitations and future research directions.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Ambient Advertising*

The term "ambient media" appeared in British media jargon around 1999 and was later established as a standard term in the advertising industry. It is the name given to a new breed of out-of-home products and services described by some as non-traditional or alternate media (Pogorelc at al., 2012).According to Gambetti (2010, p.1), ambient communication is defined as "a complex form of corporate communication that uses elements of the environment, including nearly every available physical surface, to convey messages that elicit customer engagement". Ambient stems from the word *ambience* meaning 'surrounding' and ambient advertising creates messages by using elements of the environment(Romonti-Maniu&Zaharie, 2014) creating a surprise effect (Hutter, 2014). It is more cost-efficient than traditional advertising media (Gambetti, 2010). Out-of-home media has become one of the fastest growing advertising mediums over the last decade. This is due to its key advantages which include; high engagement targeting options, proximity to point of sale, measurable impact, cost effectiveness, and ability of higher exposure and recall as individuals spend more time walking in urban areas and shopping at retail outlets (Gambetti, 2010; Romonti-Maniu&Zaharie, 2014).

Ambient media consists of three conditions: temporal, unexpected execution and unusual location (Hutter, 2014). The temporal condition is to elicit a surprise effect, which is one of the main objectives of ambient advertising in order to gain consumer's attention. Marketers make use of this surprise effect and create humor, absurdity, and shocking messages in the advertisement (Alena, 2012). As a result, a surprised person is highly aware of the stimulus, is much more likely to process the intended advertising message

(Alena, 2012) and is more likely to elaborate and memorize it more deeply (Hutter, 2014). This creates the level of brand engagement required to influence decision-making (Gambetti, Graffigna & Biraghi, 2012).

The execution of ambient advertising involves the individual by offering interactive elements. The execution of the advertisement contains visual aspects such as size, material, and color. Ambient advertising uses unexpected visuals, unconventionally sized elements (usually oversized), and unusual material and/or extraordinary colors to trigger a surprise effect (Hutter, 2014). Finally, awakening the consumer's attention is also done by implementing advertising campaigns at different and unusual locations using unfamiliar means of media and promotion techniques (Alena, 2012).

#### *Guerilla Marketing*

One of the mostly used form of ambient communication is guerilla advertising (Gambetti, 2010). It is basically the usage of untraditional activities that help companies to weaken the rivals and stay successful in the market even with limited sources. The characteristics of guerilla phenomenon include being untraditional, creative, surprising, and efficient. The concept of guerilla approach is based on effective money spending on product promotions and increasing the company's profits by creating a different perception of the product in the consumer's mind; therefore, managers invest time, effort, and creativity instead of money (Alena, 2012). The main benefit guerrilla advertising beholds for its campaigners is brand awareness (Wanner, 2011) which is achieved by its previously stated characteristics (Alena, 2012). Hence, this type of marketing is suitable for small, unknown brands. It gives the brand the opportunity to make a strong and positive reputation for itself in a memorable personal communication message (Wanner, 2011).

Guerrilla marketing gives the brand the energy that traditional media cannot offer (Wanner, 2011). Guerilla marketing, unlike the traditional media, does not target the passive mass audience, but it targets groups of active people that can be more easily engaged in specific places (Gambetti, 2010).

#### *Consumer Behavior*

The topic of consumer behavior in marketing is relatively very new (Jeddi, Atefi, Jalali, Poureisa&Haghi, 2013). Scholars refers to consumer behavior as the selection, purchasing and consumption of goods and services for the satisfaction of consumer's wants (Rani, 2014). Such behavior includes mental, emotional, and physical activities that individuals use during the process (Jeddi et al., 2013).

Consumer behavior and the resulting purchasing decision is influenced by external factors such as culture, and social, personal, and psychological characteristics. Marketers should understand the influence of these factors to be able to develop suitable marketing mixes that appeal to the target audience (Rani, 2014). All consumers have differences in terms of thoughts, feelings, and decisions (Jeddi et al., 2013). In this study, researchers aimed to study consumer behavior in terms of brand attitude and purchase intention.

Brand attitude is a consistent evaluation that an individual has of a brand depending on the perception the consumer has towards that brand. It turn, such perception affects the behavior of the consumer towards the brand (Belić&Jönsson, 2012). A strong attitude towards a brand affects brand consideration, purchase intention and brand choice (Park, MacInnis, Priester, Eisingerich&Iacobucci, 2010). Brand attitude is one of the important indicators in consumer behavior as it plays a large role in how consumers will behave either by purchasing the brand or avoiding it (Belić&Jönsson, 2012).

Consumer purchase intention is constructed from his/her attitude (Chi, Yeh& Tsai, 2011).Factors influencing the intention to purchase are perceived risk by purchasing, consumer knowledge of the product or brand and how satisfied the consumer has been with products bought previously (Belić&Jönsson, 2012).

Purchase intention can measure the possibility of a consumer to buy a product. The higher the purchase intention is, the higher the consumer's willingness to buy a product is. It is believed that consumers will follow their attitude, beliefs, emotions (Belić&Jönsson, 2012), experience, preference, and external environment to collect information, evaluate alternatives, and make purchase decision (Chi et al, 2011).Therefore, it is important to be aware of the consumers' attitude towards the brand and how these attitudes can be strengthened in a positive direction (Belić&Jönsson, 2012).

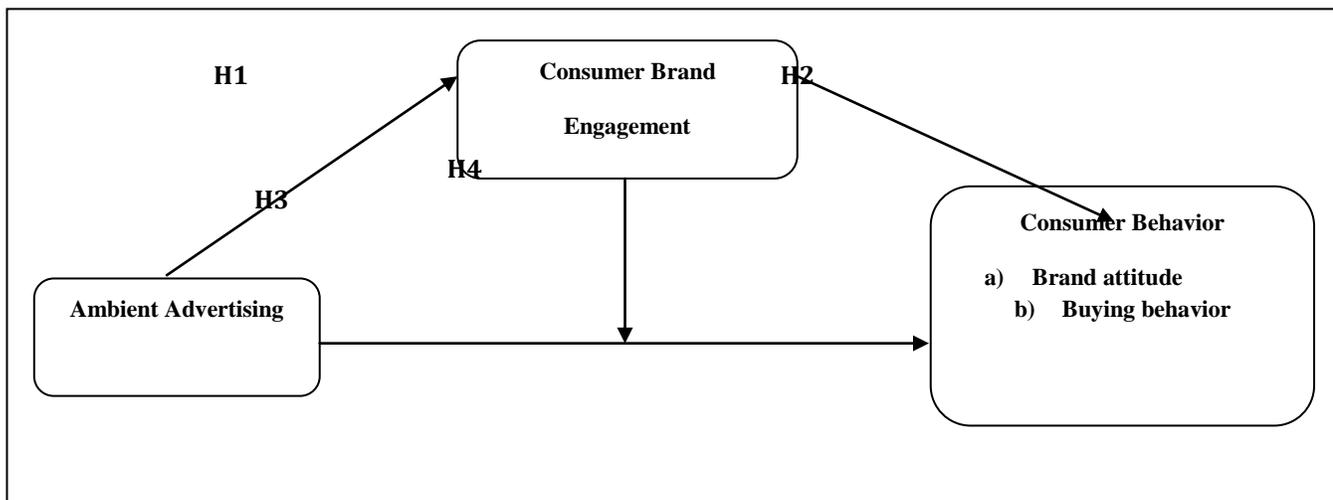
#### *Objectives of the Paper and Hypotheses*

Previous literature revealed that there is a relationship between ambient advertising and brand engagement. It is claimed that ambient communication can elicit consumer brand engagement (Gambetti,

2010). Consumer brand engagement establishes a strong and enduring bond between the brand and the consumer by activating his/her interaction, shared values, experiential contents, and rewards (Gambetti et. al, 2012). Ambient advertising is highly effective in grabbing consumer's attention, trust (Romonti-Maniu&Zaharie, 2014) and raising advertising effectiveness (Hutter, 2014).

The present research aimed at empirically exploring the strength and direction of the relationships that may exist between the three variables (ambient advertising, consumer brand engagement, and consumer behavior) and to study the moderating effect of consumer brand engagement on the relationship between ambient advertising and consumer behavior (Figure 1). Hypotheses are provided below the figure.

**Figure 1: Conceptual framework**



**H1:** There is positive relationship between ambient advertising and consumer brand engagement.

**H2:** There is positive relationship between consumer brand engagement and consumer behavior.

**H2<sub>A</sub>:** There is positive relationship between consumer brand engagement and consumer brand attitude.

**H2<sub>B</sub>:** There is positive relationship between consumer brand engagement and consumer buying behavior.

**H3:** There is positive relationship between ambient advertising and consumer behavior.

**H3<sub>A</sub>:** There is positive relationship between ambient advertising and consumer brand attitude.

**H3<sub>B</sub>:** There is positive relationship between ambient advertising and consumer buying behavior.

**H4:** Consumer brand engagement moderates the relationship between ambient advertising and consumer behavior so that the higher the consumer engagement, the stronger the relationship between ambient advertising and consumer behavior.

**H4<sub>A</sub>:** Consumer brand engagement moderates the relationship between ambient advertising and consumer brand attitude.

**H4<sub>B</sub>:** Consumer brand engagement moderates the relationship between ambient advertising and consumer buying behavior.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted in a non-contrived natural environment with minimal researcher interference to ensure objectivity. Cross sectional design was applied using individuals as unit of analysis. To test the above hypotheses, the researchers used the quantitative approach by conducting a survey with consumers including closed ended questions and some open ended points.

### *Sampling*

The population considered this survey was general consumers who go to hyper-markets and malls who are exposed to ambient advertising through in-store activities. A determination of a target group that should preferably answer the questionnaire is difficult because every product targets different groups. However, the survey was not about a specific product or its advertising, but about ambient advertising and its effect on consumer attitude and behavior. Hence, a non-probability convenience sampling design was used. The selected sample was youth and middle aged individuals. The survey was distributed to general consumers who are available online and can be easily accessed.

### *Procedure*

The survey was prepared electronically on Google documents and distributed online using e-mail and social media. Respondents were informed that this was an informal survey for academic purposes and that total confidentiality would be ensured throughout the process. 300 surveys were distributed; only 150 surveys were returned completed correctly during the time frame. The data was present on Google documents and then was entered on SPSS software for statistical analysis.

### *Measuring Instruments*

For the purpose of the study the following instruments were used to measure the relationship between the three variables. The two adapted questionnaires were extracted from the following research papers: "How and by whom are the evolved success factors of the Guerilla Marketing philosophy from the 1980's used today and do they stand a chance in the business future?" by Anna Drüing and Katharina Fahrenholz (2008) to measure consumers exposure and recognition of ambient media, consumer engagement, brand attitude and purchase behavior, and "Guerilla marketing and its effects on consumer behavior" by Sandra Belić and EmelieJönsson (2012) to measure consumer's attitude towards the brand.

The questionnaire was comprised of three partitions: 1. Three brands with their ambient advertising pictures so that respondents get introduced to the concept of ambient advertising (in-store advertisements) including specific questions about the brands. 2. General questions about ambient advertising. 3. Demographic information of respondents.

## **4. RESULTS**

This research aimed to study the strength and the direction of the relationship between the three variables: ambient advertising, consumer brand engagement, and consumer behavior. It also addressed the significance of the moderating effect of consumer brand engagement on ambient advertising and consumer behavior.

### *Overview of the Sample*

The total number of participants in this survey was 150 respondents comprised of 69 males (46%) and 81 females (51%). The age range of the participants varied from 18 years old up to 45+ years old. The distribution of ages of respondents indicated that the majority 58.7% are youth, falling between the ages of 18 to 29 years old. 35.3% are from 30 to 44 years old and only 6% are 45 years and above. The sample was redeemed age diverse. The entire sample was well educated: 15.3% had high school degree, 61.3% had bachelor degree, 22.7% had master's degree and 0.7% had doctoral degree. As for the employment status of the respondents; 82.7% were employed and 17.3% were unemployed. The marital status of the sample reflected that 66% of the sample was single and 34% was married. The last demographic variable is the places the participants of the sample visit. All the participants of the sample were outgoing and they visit the places of ambient advertising occasionally.

### *Survey Responses*

98.6% of participants recognized in-store activities where 59.3% recognize them usually and 39.3% recognize them sometimes. Only 1.3% never recognize this type of advertising. In addition, 38% of respondents participate in "in-store activities" (ambient advertising), 32% most probably participate and 30% do not participate. Therefore 70% participate in "in-store activities" to some extent.

Most of the participants liked in-store activities; 38.7% believe in-store activities are very good, 52.7% see them as good, 8.7% see them as fair, and none of the participants see this kind of advertising as bad or very bad. 64.7% of the respondents believed that in-store activities are entertaining, 30% believed

they are informative, only 1.3% saw it as annoying, and 4% mentioned other comments such as “all of the above,” “some are entertaining and some are informative,” “unique,” and “normal.”

45.3% of the respondents said that they tend to buy products because of in-store activities and promotions (ambient advertising), 38% perhaps buy products because of ambient advertising and 16.7% said no. Therefore 83.3% buy products because of in-store activities and promotions to some extent.

*Hypothesis Testing*

All relationships between variables are tested using Cramer's V as most of the variables are nominal. Cramer's V is the most popular form of the chi-square-based measures of nominal association because it gives good norming from 0 to 1 regardless of the table size, when row marginals equal column marginals.

Hypothesis One assessed the existence of relationship between ambient advertising and consumer brand engagement.

*Table 1. Ambient advertising and consumer brand engagement (including “never*

		Do you recognize in-store advertisements in general?			Total
		Yes, usually	Sometimes	Never	
Do you participate in "in-store activities"?	Yes	46 51.70%	11 18.60%	0 0.00%	57 38.00%
	No	18 20.20%	26 44.10%	1 50.00%	45 30.00%
	Perhaps	25 28.10%	22 37.30%	1 50.00%	48 32.00%
<b>Total</b>		<b>89</b> <b>100.00%</b>	<b>59</b> <b>100.00%</b>	<b>2</b> <b>100.00%</b>	<b>150</b> <b>100.00%</b>

The above table shows the relationship between ambient advertising recognition and consumer brand engagement. As shown, (79.8%) of those who recognized in-store advertisements participate in “in-store activities” to some extent.

The total number of those who always participate in advertising activities is 57, 46 participants see the advertisements usually, and 11 participants see them sometimes then  $(46/57*100)$  80.7% see advertisements usually and  $(11/57*100)$  19.3% perhaps see the advertisements. Never recognizing advertising activities represents only a very small percentage that cannot be remarked as part of the study. Therefore the analysis was done twice: once with “never” and once without.

The results indicated the existence of highly statistically significant positive, yet weak, relationship between ambient advertising and consumer brand engagement (0.252,  $p < 0.001$ ).

Table 2. The relationship between ambient communication and consumer brand engagement. (Without “never”)

		Do you recognize in-store advertisements in general?		Total
		Yes, usually	Sometimes	
Do you participate in "i-store activities"?	Yes	46 51.7%	11 18.6%	57 38.5%
	No	18 20.2%	26 44.1%	44 9.7%
	Perhaps	25 28.1%	22 37.3%	47 31.8%
<b>Total</b>		<b>89</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>59</b> <b>100.0%</b>	<b>148</b> <b>100.0%</b>

There is significant relationship as  $p$  is less than 0.001 and the value of Cramer’s V is higher than 0.347. Then the results indicated the existence of highly statistically significant positive, yet weak, relationship between ambient advertising and consumer brand engagement (0.347,  $p < 0.001$ ). Accordingly, the first hypothesis could not be rejected. Therefore, it was deduced that the higher the recognition of ambient advertising, the higher the consumers will participate in advertising activities.

Hypothesis Two assessed the existence of a relationship between consumer brand engagement and consumer behavior including brand attitude and purchase behavior.

Table 3. The relationship between consumer brand engagement and consumer brand attitude

How do you like in-store advertisements and activities in general? * Do you participate in "in-store activities"? Cross tabulation					
		Do you participate in "in-store activities"?			Total
		Yes	No	Perhaps	
How do you like in-store advertisements and activities in general?	Very good	38 66.70%	9 20.00%	11 22.90%	58 8.70%
	Good	19 33.30%	29 64.40%	31 64.60%	79 2.70%
	Fair	0 0.00%	7 15.60%	6 12.50%	13 0.70%
<b>Total</b>		<b>57</b> <b>100.00%</b>	<b>45</b> <b>100.00%</b>	<b>48</b> <b>100.00%</b>	<b>50</b> <b>100.00%</b>

The total number of those who saw “in-store activities” as very good is 58, 38 respondents participate in advertising activities, and 11 respondents most probably participate.  $(38/58 \times 100)$  65.5 % who participated in “in-store activities” had positive attitudes toward ambient advertising and  $(11/58 \times 100)$  19% had moderate feelings about it.

The results indicated the existence of highly statistically significant positive but weak relationship between consumer brand engagement and brand attitude (Cramer’s V value was 0.334,  $p < 0.001$ ). Accordingly, the second hypothesis could not be rejected. Therefore, it was deduced that the higher the consumer brand engagement is, the higher is the consumer’s positive attitude towards the brand.

Table 4. The relationship between consumer brand engagement and consumer buying behavior

<b>Do you buy products because of in-store activities and promotions? * Do you participate in "in-store activities"? Cross tabulation</b>					
		Do you participate in "in-store activities"?			Total
		Yes	No	Perhaps	
Do you buy products because of in-store activities and promotions?	Yes	43 75.40%	19 42.20%	6 12.50%	68 45.30%
	No	3 5.30%	11 24.40%	11 22.90%	25 16.70%
	Perhaps	11 19.30%	15 33.30%	31 64.60%	57 38.00%
<b>Total</b>		<b>57</b> <b>100.00%</b>	<b>45</b> <b>100.00%</b>	<b>48</b> <b>100.00%</b>	<b>150</b> <b>100.00%</b>

The total number of those who buy products because of “in-store activities” is 68 and, 43 respondents participate in advertising activities then  $(43/68 \times 100)$  (63.2%) who buy products because of “in-store activities” participate in the advertising activities.

Results indicated the existence of highly statistically significant positive moderate relationship between ambient communication and consumer buying behavior (0.385,  $p < 0.001$ ). Therefore, it was deduced that the higher the consumer brand engagement is, the higher is the intention to buy.

Based on the above findings, there is a positive relationship between consumer brand engagement and brand attitude and buying behavior, individually. Then, the second hypothesis could not be rejected; there is a positive relationship between consumer brand engagement and consumer behavior.

Hypothesis three assessed the existence of a relationship between ambient advertising and consumer behavior including brand attitude and buying behavior.

Table 5. The relationship between ambient advertising and consumer brand attitude (including “never”)

<b>How do you like in-store advertisements and activities in general? * Do you recognize in-store advertisements in general? Cross tabulation</b>					
		Do you recognize “in-store advertisements” in general?			Total
		Yes, usually	Sometimes	Never	
How do you like in-store advertisements and activities in general?	Very good	45 50.60%	13 22.00%	0 0%	58 38.70%
	Good	41 46.10%	38 64.40%	0 0.00%	79 52.70%
	Fair	3 3.40%	8 13.60%	2 100.00%	13 8.70%
<b>Total</b>		<b>89</b> <b>100.00%</b>	<b>59</b> <b>100.00%</b>	<b>2</b> <b>100.00%</b>	<b>150</b> <b>100.00%</b>

The above table shows the relationship between ambient advertising recognition and consumer attitude towards the brand. Those who usually recognize in-store advertisements (50.6%) see in-store advertising as very good, (46.1%) see them as good, and only (3.4%) see them as fair. Those who recognize sometimes (22%) see such advertisements as very good, (64.4%) see them as good and (13.6%) as fair.

The total number of those who see in-store activities as very good is 58, 45 participants recognize them usually and 13 participants see them sometimes; then  $(45/58*100)$  (77.6%) usually see the advertisements and  $(13/58*100)$  (22.4%) sometimes see them. Never recognizing advertising activities represents only a very small percentage that cannot be remarked as part of the study. Therefore the study was done twice: once with “never” and once without.

When the analysis was done including “never”, the results indicated the existence of highly statistically significant positive but weak relationship between ambient advertising and consumer brand attitude (0.343,  $p < 0.001$ ).

When the analysis was done without “never”, results indicated the existence of significant positive weak relationship between ambient advertising and consumer brand attitude (0.314,  $p < 0.001$ ). Accordingly, the third hypothesis could not be rejected. Therefore, it was deduced that the higher the consumer recognition of ambient advertising, the more positive the consumer’s attitude towards ambient advertising is.

Table 6. The relationship between ambient advertising and consumer buying behavior (including “never”)

Do you buy products because of in-store activities and promotions? * Do you recognize in-store advertisements in general? Cross tabulation					
		Do you recognize in-store advertisements in general?			Total
		Yes, usually	Sometimes	Never	
Do you buy products because of in-store activities and promotions?	Yes	50 56.20%	18 30.50%	0 0%	68 45.30%
	No	12 13.50%	11 18.60%	2 0.00%	25 16.70%
	Perhaps	27 30.30%	30 50.80%	0 0.00%	57 38.00%
<b>Total</b>		<b>89</b> <b>100.00%</b>	<b>59</b> <b>100.00%</b>	<b>2</b> <b>100.00%</b>	<b>150</b> <b>100.00%</b>

The above table shows the relationship between ambient advertising recognition and buying behavior. Those who usually recognize in-store advertisements (56.2%) buy products because of “in-store activities” and (30.3%) perhaps buy them; then (86.5%) of those who usually recognize in-store advertisements buy products because of “in-store activities” to some extent.

The total number of those who buy products because of in-store activities is 68, 50 participants recognize them usually, and 18 participants sometimes see them; then  $(50/68*100)$  (73.5%) usually see the advertisements and  $(18/68*100)$  (26.5%) perhaps see the advertisements. Never recognizing advertising activities represents only a very small percentage that cannot be remarked as part of the study. Therefore, the study was done twice: once with “never” and once without.

Including never, results indicated the existence of highly statistically significant positive weak relationship between ambient advertising and consumer buying behavior (0.257,  $p < 0.001$ ).

By not including never, the results indicated the existence of significant positive weak relationship between ambient advertising and consumer buying behavior (0.254,  $p < 0.001$ ). Accordingly, the third hypothesis could not be rejected. It was deduced that the higher consumer recognition of ambient advertising, the higher the consumer’s chances to buy the product because of “in-store activities.”

Hypothesis four assessed the moderating effect of consumer brand engagement on the relationship between ambient advertising and consumer behavior. Two alternatives were considered of the moderator to see if the relation on the two variables (ambient advertising and consumer behavior including brand attitude and consumer buying behavior) remains the same or there is an interaction. The group saying “No” was

considered in one category and all the others (saying “Yes” or “Perhaps”) in another one. Therefore, the analysis was done based on “No” and “Not No” for participating in the advertising activities.

Table 7. The moderating effect of consumer brand engagement on ambient advertising and consumer brand attitude (Not No)

Do you participate in "in-store activities" (Not No (Yes or Perhaps))				
How do you like in-store advertisements and activities in general? * Do you recognize in-store advertisements in general? Cross tabulation				
		Do you recognize in-store advertisements in general?		Total
		Yes, usually	Sometimes	
How do you like in-store advertisements and activities in general?	Very good	41 57.70%	8 24.20%	49 47.10%
	Good	28 39.40%	22 66.70%	50 48.10%
	Fair	2 2.80%	3 9.10%	5 4.80%
Total		71 100.00%	33 100.00%	104 100.00%

Chi-squared	Df	Probability
10.690	2	.005

Symmetric measures

	Value	Probability
Cramer's V	.321	.005

Table 8. The moderating effect of consumer brand engagement on ambient advertising and consumer brand attitude (No)

Do you participate in "in-store activities" ( No)				
How do you like in-store advertisements and activities in general? * Do you recognize in-store advertisements in general? Cross tabulation				
		Do you recognize in-store advertisements in general?		Total
		Yes, usually	Sometimes	
How do you like in-store advertisements and activities in general?	Very good	4 22.20%	5 19.20%	9 20.50%
	Good	13 72.20%	16 61.50%	29 65.90%
	Fair	1 5.60%	5 19.20%	6 13.60%
Total		18 100.00%	26 100.00%	44 100.00%

Chi-squared	Df	Probability
1.690	2	.430

**Symmetric measures**

	Value	Probability
Cramer's V	0.196	0.43

The chi-square was highly significant in the case of "Not No" (Yes and Perhaps) and insignificant in the case of "No." Also, Cramer's V was highly significant in one case and totally insignificant in the other. This indicated a large moderating effect. Therefore, consumer brand engagement moderated the relationship between ambient advertising and consumer brand attitude.

*Table 9. The moderating effect of consumer brand engagement on ambient advertising and consumer buying behavior (Not No)*

Do you participate in "in-store activities" (Not No (Yes or Perhaps))				
Do you buy products because of in-store activities and promotions? * Do you recognize in-store advertisements in general? Cross tabulation				
		Do you recognize in-store advertisements in general?		Total
		Yes, usually	Sometimes	
Do you buy products because of in-store activities and promotions?	Yes	39 54.90%	10 30.30%	49 47.10%
	No	8 11.30%	5 15.20%	13 12.50%
	Perhaps	24 33.80%	18 54.50%	42 40.40%
Total		71 100.00%	33 100.00%	104 100.00%

Chi-squared	Df	Probability
5.570	2	.062

**Symmetric Measures**

	Value	Probability
Cramer's V	0.231	0.062

Table 10. The moderating effect of consumer brand engagement on ambient advertising and consumer buying behavior (No)

Do you participate in "in-store activities" (NO)				
Do you buy products because of in-store activities and promotions? * Do you recognize in-store advertisements in general? Cross tabulation				
		Do you recognize in-store advertisements in general?		Total
		Yes, usually	Sometimes	
Do you buy products because of in-store activities and promotions?	Yes	11 61.10%	8 30.80%	19 43.20%
	No	4 22.20%	6 23.10%	10 22.70%
	Perhaps	3 16.70%	12 46.20%	15 34.10%
Total		18 100.00%	26 100.00%	44 100.00%
Chi-squared		Df	Probability	
4.98		2	0.083	

**Symmetric measures**

	Value	Probability
Cramer's V	0.337	0.083

The chi-square was insignificant in both cases. Also Cramer's V was insignificant in both cases. Hence, the moderating effect of consumer brand engagement on the relationship between ambient advertising and consumer buying behavior was not pronounced. Hypothesis four was partially supported.

**5. DISCUSSION**

The aim of this study was to analyze the relationships between ambient advertising, brand engagement and consumer behavior. Research hypothesis one studied the relationship between ambient advertising and consumer brand engagement. The results indicate the existence of highly statistically significant positive relationship between ambient advertising and consumer brand engagement. Using these results to reflect on the literature, we find that studies have indicated that ambient advertising is known for its ability to elicit consumer brand engagement, focusing on "engagement" as the new effectiveness parameter for innovative brand communication (Gambetti, 2010). Ambient advertising's main benefit is brand awareness (Wanner, 2011). This is done by drawing a long lasting attention of people which is achieved by evoking a surprise effect and a diffusion effect (Alena, 2012). As a result of the ongoing efforts of ambient advertising for the brand, consumers are engaged through interaction, shared values, experiential contents, and rewards which results in establishing a strong and enduring bond between brand and consumers (Gambetti et. al, 2012)

Research hypothesis two studied the relationship between consumer brand engagement and consumer behavior. Consumer behavior includes brand attitude and consumer buying behavior; therefore, the hypothesis is studied twice; once for brand attitude and once for buying behavior. For the relationship between consumer brand engagement and consumer brand attitude, the results indicate the existence of a highly statistically significant positive relationship between consumer brand engagement and consumer brand attitude. Reflecting on the literature, it is noted that brand attitude is a consistent evaluation that an

individual has of a brand depending on the perception the consumer has towards the brand which affects the behavior the consumer shows towards the brand (Belić&Jönsson, 2012). Ambient advertising intrigue, amuse, and activate consumers by using the features of urban environment in a creative way and promoting products using promoters which behave in out-of-the-ordinary ways (Gambetti, 2010) which results in creating consumer brand engagement.

For the relationship between consumer brand engagement and consumer buying behavior, the results indicate the existence of a highly statistically significant positive relationship between consumer brand engagement and consumer buying behavior. Based on the literature, ambient advertising has the key trend of high engagement targeting options, proximity to point of sale, and measurable impact (Gambetti, 2010). Purchase intention can measure the possibility of a consumer to buy a product. The higher the purchase intention is, the higher the consumer's willingness to buy a product (Belić&Jönsson, 2012). Consumers make their purchase decision based on experiences, preferences, and external environment (Chi et. al, 2011).

According to Levy and Gendel-Guterman (2012, p. 90), "*Theory and empirical research on consumers' affective response behavior clearly indicates that positive thoughts concerning advertising can affect attitudes towards a product or brand, and eventually influence the consumer's willingness to purchase that product or brand*" (mentioned in Belić&Jönsson, 2012). Consumer purchase intention is constructed from consumer's attitude, assessment, and external factors, which is a critical factor to predict consumer behavior (Chi et. al, 2011)

For the relationship between ambient advertising and consumer brand attitude, the results indicate the existence of a highly statistically significant positive relationship between ambient advertising and consumer brand attitude. Based on the results of the study along with various previous researches, we find that ambient advertising is highly effective in grabbing consumers' attention and trust (Romanti-Maniu&Zaharie, 2014) and raising advertising effectiveness (Hutter, 2014). Results indicate that most of the sample view ambient advertising as entertaining and informative. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the consumers' attitude towards the brand and how these attitudes can be strengthened (Belić&Jönsson, 2012). It is obvious that consumer knowledge of the product or brand is one of the main factors influencing the purchase intention (Belić&Jönsson, 2012; Park et. al, 2010).

As a result of the analysis, consumer brand engagement moderates the relationship between ambient advertising and consumer behavior in the case of consumer brand attitude and does not have a moderating effect on ambient advertising and consumer behavior in case of consumer buying behavior. Despite the lack of studies on the relationship, the literature review revealed that it is believed that consumers will follow their attitude, beliefs, emotions (Belić&Jönsson, 2012), experience, preference, and external environment to collect information, evaluate alternatives, and make purchase decision (Chi et. al, 2011). Therefore, it is important to be aware of the consumers' attitude towards the brand and how these attitudes can be strengthened (Belić&Jönsson, 2012). However other studies mentioned that knowledge of a person's attitude is not a very good predictor of behavior, and previous studies have obtained a very low correlation between people's reported attitude towards something and their actual behavior toward it (Solomon, Bamossy, Askeggard & Hogg, 2006). Hence, the research on this relationship is still considered a gap.

## 6. CONCLUSION

There is an increased advertising clutter in the traditional media such as TV and newspapers which results in a negative attitude of consumers towards advertisements by avoiding exposure to advertisements and their content. Therefore, traditional forms of advertising are losing their power to gain consumers' attention.

To overcome these problems, advertisers are trying to find new ways to reach consumers. Ambient advertising is becoming of increased importance nowadays. It is believed that consumers pay more attention to the advertising when it is placed in an unconventional medium and the attitude and credibility towards advertising are more favorable. Therefore, consumers' response to ambient media is an effective one in terms of increasing attention, brand recall, positive attitudes, or a higher credibility of both the advertisement and the brand.

The current study brings to light the importance and impact of ambient advertising on consumer brand engagement and consumer behavior. Through the positive and highly statistically significant

relationships shared between the three variables, it was deduced that ambient advertising recognition and consumer brand engagement are from the important factors that impact consumer behavior including brand attitude and buying behavior. Although there are positive relationships between the three variables, most of the relationships are weak.

Based on the research results, consumer brand engagement has a moderating effect on ambient advertising and consumer behavior in case of brand attitude but has no moderating effect on ambient advertising and consumer behavior in case of consumer buying behavior.

The results indicate that, of the 150 respondents surveyed, (98.6%) of the participants recognize in-store activities and only (1.3%) never recognizes this type of advertising. (68%) of the respondents participate in "in-store activities" to some extent. In addition, most of the participants like in-store activities; (38.7%) believe in-store activities are very good, (52.7%) see them as good, (8.7%) see them as fair, and none of the participants see this kind of advertising activity as bad or very bad.

These results indicate the importance of new marketing tools (ambient advertising); therefore this would require the marketing managers to monitor and evaluate ambient advertising effects and to include consumer brand engagement in the ambient advertising campaigns to gain consumers' attention and result in positive attitude towards the brand.

#### *Limitations and Recommendations for Further Research*

Due to several fruitful avenues, the results may stimulate further research for several reasons. Further research can focus on other forms of ambient advertising such as the ones in the streets or road shows (campaigns with cars or trucks revolving in the streets). The three brands used in the questionnaire are well-known brands of multinational corporations, to make sure that the brands can be recognized by everyone; then, further research can include brands that are not known and measure the effect of ambient advertising on the new brands' impact on consumers. The sample was chosen based on availability as a non-probability convenience sampling method is selected. The study is a correlation research, therefore, another study is recommended to study the causal effect of ambient advertising on consumer behavior using experiment. The study was done using a questionnaire for quantitative analysis; therefore further research can include in-store observation as qualitative analysis to measure the effect of ambient media on consumer behavior.

Future research should study the new ways of advertising that can break through in the future. Further researches can also include comparison between the effects of traditional advertising versus ambient advertising and measure the effectiveness of creativity on the ambient advertising success.

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