

**The Effect of Consumer Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence as a Moderator on the Response of Young Adults to Anti-Marijuana Fear Appeal Advertisements.**

Nana Afua Kumiwaa Asante\* and Marlize Terblanche-Smit<sup>b</sup>

*<sup>a</sup>Stellenbosch Business School, Stellenbosch University, Cape Town, South Africa;*

*<sup>b</sup>Stellenbosch Business School, Stellenbosch University, Cape Town, South Africa;*

Email Address: nana@sun.ac.za \*corresponding author

# **The Effect of Consumer Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence as a Moderator on the Response of Young Adults to Anti-Marijuana Fear Appeal Advertisements.**

This paper is the second phase in an exploratory sequential mixed methods design study which explores how testimonial fear appeal ads in the form of film and animation, and type of threat would influence behavioural intention regarding marijuana consumption among young adults. The effects of fear on attitude towards the advertisement, and on behavioural intention are of interest. The moderating roles of normative and informational influence were investigated as well.

The study was conducted as a 2 x 2 (animation/film x social threat/ health threat) between-subjects factorial experimental design. Data was analysed via PLS-SEM using R. It was revealed that the effectiveness of fear appeal ads in film, depicting a social threat, is diminished in young adults who are susceptible to interpersonal influence. The study also contributes, via the Revised Protection Motivation Model, to the literature on the utilization of fear appeals in the prevention of recreational marijuana consumption among young adults in South Africa.

*Keywords: social marketing; recreational marijuana; fear appeal advertisements; revised protection motivation model; consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence*

## **Introduction**

According to a report by the South African Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (SACENDU), the most prevalent primary substance of use among all ages in the Northern Region and Gauteng Province was marijuana at 36% and 34%, respectively (Hornsby, Erasmus, Harker, Johnson, Moletsane & Parry 2024). The same report reveals that in the Western Cape, approximately 23% of patients of specialist treatment centres reported marijuana to be their main substance of use with it being the main substance of use for 81% of patients under the age of 19 years. The prevalence of marijuana abuse in South Africa may be attributed to a number of macro and micro factors. On the macro level, legislation pertaining to decriminalisation of marijuana for personal use, South Africa being the third largest producer of illicit cannabis in the world, and the history of apartheid and its resulting generational impoverishment have been linked to the sustained use of marijuana (Lubaale & Mavundla, 2019; Ramlagan et al., 2021; UNODC, 2020). On a micro level, family, friends, personality, lifestyle and physical and mental illness have been attributed to the onset of marijuana consumption among young adults (Dugas, Sylvestre, Ewusi-Boisvert, Chaiton, Montreuil and Loughlin, 2019).

As a result of its pervasiveness and associated negative consequences worldwide, the issue of substance abuse is being addressed by the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and social marketers are urged to aid in their advancement through our skills and resources (Truong & Saunders, 2022; UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2015).

For this reason, with the Revised Protection Motivation Model (RPPM) proposed by Arthur and Quester (2004) as the main underlying theory, this study sought to investigate the effectiveness of fear appeal advertisements, as utilized by social

marketers towards the prevention of marijuana use in young adults. In this model, rational processes occur in an individual such that upon exposure to a fear appeal ad, threat appraisal processes ensue (perceived severity of threat and susceptibility of threat) and when high, are posited to increase perceived fear which, in turn, has a positive effect on behavioural intention (BI). Further, efficacy appraisal processes (self-efficacy and response efficacy) which occur will also serve as moderating variables on the relationship between fear and behaviour. It is also important for individual characteristics to be taken into consideration in relation to this model to increase model parsimony and aid in segmentation in order to provide the right interventions for the target audience.

With the increasing acceptance and prevalence of recreational marijuana use as a social drug among young adults, the influence of one's susceptibility to interpersonal influence, as an individual characteristic, was investigated as a negative moderator on the proposed theoretical model. According to Bearden, Netemeyer and Teel (1989) consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence, which is made up of two subthemes namely normative and informational influence is "the need to identify with or enhance one's image in the opinion of significant others through the acquisition and use of products and brands, the willingness to conform to the expectations of others regarding purchase decisions, and/or the tendency to learn about products and services by observing others or seeking information from others" (p.473).

Due to the detrimental social and physical effects of marijuana consumption among young adults, it is important to understand, from a social marketing perspective, how fear appeal advertisements impact behavioural intention to seek professional psychological help in relation to problems associated with marijuana consumption. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the effectiveness of message format

and type of threat on attitudes toward the advertisement and behavioural intention among young adults in South Africa; and the effects of normative and informational influence on the effectiveness of the ads.

## **Objectives**

The main objective of the research study is to investigate what relationships exist between threat appraisal variables, perceived fear, attitudes towards the ad and behavioural intention; and the moderating effects that normative and informational influence have on the relationship between attitude towards the ad and BI. Additionally, the paper seeks to ascertain significant differences in the effects that ad exposure conditions (relating to message format and type of threat) have on attitude towards the ad and behavioural intention among young adults. Hypotheses 1 to 7 have been illustrated in the proposed theoretical model in Figure 1. The last hypothesis, **H<sub>8</sub>**, which is not represented in the model states that, “There are significant differences in the model’s structural paths’ relationships between groups based on type of threat (ie. health threat and social threat groups).

## **Research Methodology**

### ***Experimental Stimuli***

Four low to moderate- threat fear appeal advertisements in film and animation depicting either a social or health threat associated with marijuana use, were used in this experimental study. These ads were developed, tested and selected based on perceived effectiveness in Phase 1 of the study. The ads were created, taking the structural, stylistic, and extra-message features of fear appeal as proposed by Witte (1993) into consideration. Importantly, the ads were created using pre-existing information in

literature and were also similar and varied only on message format. A process called ‘rotoscopy’ was used to transform film ads into animation (See Figure 2).

All four ads were centred around a twenty-six-year old fictional character named Noah who was a white former athlete who used marijuana to stay popular among his circle of friends. In the health threat ad, he described how he became addicted leading to cognitive impairment, where he would forget things all the time and struggle to make sound decisions. In the social threat ads, he described how he eventually got involved, while under the influence of marijuana, in a car accident by driving into someone and served some jail time as a result. In both ads, Noah talked about how seeking professional psychological help aided in him quitting and brought about an improvement in the quality of his life. At the end of both ads, the susceptibility of young adults to the negative health or social consequences were stated and viewers were asked to call a number linked with a Counselling Centre if they felt they or anyone else they knew may be struggling with substance abuse.

### ***Process***

To test the hypotheses stemming from the theoretical model, the post-test only 2 x 2 factorial between-subjects experimental design was utilized in this study (see Table 1). First, ethical clearance was obtained prior to data collection from the Universities of interest. Then through a convenience sampling, 6000 emails, divided among four experimental groups, were sent to prospective respondents. The groups were classified as the film-health-threat group (Group 1), film-social-threat group (Group 2), animation-health-threat group (Group 3) and the animation-social threat group (Group 4). The sample consisted of English-speaking university students who were 18 years old and above. However, students who had participated in Phase 1 were excluded from

participating in this Phase and were not sent email invitations. 430 responses were received; however, only 294 were complete and thus usable in the data analysis process.

Data was collected via an online cross-sectional survey divided into three sections. Nonetheless, subjects were unable to proceed with answering the questionnaire without digitally giving informed consent. Once consent had been given, subjects gained access to the survey. First, subjects answered questions relating to age, gender, study level, primary level and previous use of recreational and medicinal marijuana, and questions relating to normative and informational influence. In the next stage, subjects were rerouted to a webpage hosting one of four ads, which served as the experimental conditions. Lastly, after watching, subjects returned to the survey and answered post-treatment questions regarding their responses to the ad such as perceived fear, attitude towards the ad, perceived susceptibility of threat, perceived severity of threat, perceived self-efficacy, perceived response efficacy, and behavioural intention.

### ***Measurement***

Data was collected via a 45-item questionnaire made up of previously validated scales measuring eight constructs. Two questions measured previous recreational and medicinal marijuana use and were measured on a seven-point Likert Scale ranging from “*Yes, daily*” to “*No, and I have never and will never try*”. All other constructs were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1, for “strongly disagree” to 5, for “strongly agree”. Perceived fear was measured using the Fear Response Scale by Witte (1994) scale consisting of six items. To measure attitude towards the ad, six items from the Attitude towards the Advertisement Scale was used (Latour and Rotfeld, 1997; LaTour and Tanner, 2003). All threat and efficacy appraisal variables were measured using an adapted scale from the Risk Behaviour Diagnosis Scale (RBDS) and were

consisted of three scale items each (Gore & Bracken, 2005; Witte et al., 1996) To measure behavioural intention, three items adapted from the Purchase Intention Scale were used (Kees et al., 2010; Zhu & Kanjanamekanant, 2021).

## **Findings**

### ***Demographics***

A majority (154, 52%) of the respondents had English as their primary language spoken. Females made up a majority in terms of gender and were 184 (63%) in all. 3 people opted not share their gender and the rest were males. With regards to age, 251 of respondents were within the ages of 18 and 24 years old, making up the majority at 85%. Alternatively, 3% of the respondents were 32 years and above with the rest of the respondents falling within the ages of 25 and 31 years old. Lastly, 196 (67%) out of 294 respondents confirmed to have previously used recreational marijuana at least once in the past.

### ***Preliminary Reliability Analysis***

First, the degree of consistence of all scale items, known as reliability, was measured and found to be reliable. The measure used in the determination of reliability is the Cronbach's alpha and an acceptable value is one above 0.7 (Cronbach, 1951). In this study, all construct measures were found to be above 0.7. The scale with the highest Cronbach's alpha value was behavioural intention (0.89) while perceived severity of threat had the lowest Cronbach's alpha value at 0.74.

### ***Partial Least Squares- Structural Equation Modeling***

Partial least squares- structural equation modelling which is a "causal modeling

approach aimed at maximizing the explained variance of the dependent latent constructs which is an alternative method to the historically more commonly used covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) PLS-SEM (Hair & Alamer, 2022; Hair, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2011) was used in this study and analysed via the SEMinR package (Smith et al., 2015). Hence, in order to explore the hypothesized relationships as proposed in the theoretical model, a PLS-SEM analysis will be performed.

According to Hair et al., (2019), PLS-SEM analysis must be done in two stages in which an assessment of the measurement and structural model are performed. Depending on the type of model (reflective or formative) being analysed, different tests will be performed and analysed. Once the findings in stage one satisfies all assumptions, the next stage which assesses the structural model can proceed.

#### *Assessment of Measurement Model*

As a study investigating a reflective model, the set of analysis to be included were items loadings, composite reliability, average variance extracted, and discriminant validity were conducted. Per the results obtained, reliability and validity were confirmed with values within the rules of thumb. Due to the satisfaction of findings obtained in this stage, an assessment of the structural model was done. Item reliability (inter-item loadings), composite reliability (internal consistency reliability), convergent validity (AVE), and discriminant validity HTMT ratio were also satisfied and well within the required limits (see Tables 2 and 3).

#### *Assessment of Structural Model*

In assessing the structural model, collinearity among predictor variables were examined for all groups and the variance inflation factor (VIF) values were found to be acceptable for perceived susceptibility of threat, perceived severity of threat, perceived fear.

attitude towards the ad, normative influence and informational influence. VIF values over 3 indicate collinearity problems among predictor constructs (Hair, Hult, Ringle, Sarstedt, Danks & Ray, 2021) and in this study values were acceptable and ranged from 1.0 to 1.27. Next, variance for endogenous variables, which shows in-sample predictive power, were assessed; and the closer to 1 and  $R^2$  value is, the greater the explanatory power of a model.  $R^2$  values ranged from 0.01 to 0.46 and the highest value was under behavioural intention in the film-social-threat group (Group 2) which suggested the ability to the constructs in the model to predict 46% of behavioural intention (see Table 4).

Lastly, bootstrapping was performed to determine how statistically significant and relevant the path coefficients of the hypothesized relationships are. Per the results, it is revealed that out of 28 stated hypotheses, 12 were supported. For direct relationships, the same hypotheses were supported and not supported for different groups which viewed ads with the same type of threat. For instance, groups 1 and 3, which viewed health threat ads in film and animation format, respectively, hypotheses 4 and 5 were significantly supported. Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 were not supported. Additionally, the groups which were exposed to the social threats of using marijuana, Group 2 and 4, all had hypotheses 2, 3 and 5 supported with hypotheses 1 and 4 not supported. Further details may be found in Table 5.

The aforementioned pattern was not observed for hypotheses 6 and 7, the moderating effects of normative and informational influence, respectively. These hypotheses were not supported in Groups 1, 3 and 4; however, they were supported in Group 2, the film-social-threat group. In Group 2,  $H_6$  indicated a statistically significant negative moderating effect on the relationship between attitude towards the ad and behavioural intention at a 0.1 level of significance ( $\beta=-0.15$ ,  $p= 0.087$ ). A negative and

statistically significant moderating effect was also observed for H<sub>7</sub> at a 0.1 level of significance ( $\beta=-0.19$ ,  $p=0.082$ ).

Lastly, group comparisons were performed via partial least squares structural equation modelling to determine whether significant differences exist in the structural paths of the model in two main groups, based on type of threat, namely Health Threat and Social Threat. Significant differences were observed for H<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>3</sub>, H<sub>4</sub>, and H<sub>5</sub>. The path coefficients for both groups in relation to H<sub>1</sub>, H<sub>6</sub> and H<sub>7</sub> were not found to be significantly different. Further details may be found in Table 6.

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

The main objective of this research study was to determine the impact of anti-marijuana fear appeal ads on behavioural intention and the moderating effect of normative and informational influence on this impact among South African young adults. With the RPMM as the theoretical framework, a post-test only 2 x 2 factorial between-subjects experimental design was conducted and analysed via partial least squares- structural equation modelling to investigate the objectives. PLS-SEM was used to analyse the relationships between perceived susceptibility of threat, perceived severity of threat, perceived fear, attitude towards the ad, behavioural intention and the moderating effect of normative and informational influence. In order to determine the most effective fear appeal ad, the model was tested under the four different experimental conditions used in the study. The study yields some implications for social marketing researchers and practitioners alike.

The findings in this study reiterate the importance of the depiction of threat appraisal variables in fear appeal ads towards the arousal of fear toward the facilitation of behavioural intention to seek professional psychological help in relation to

difficulties associated with marijuana consumption. The overall effectiveness of social threats associated with marijuana use and the importance of film over animation format was also observed.

Notably, the relevance of message content, specifically, type of threat, contrary to message format, comes to the forefront. This shows that for young adults living in South Africa, information is much more important than aesthetics and as such, social marketers need to be thorough with what messages they seek to highlight in fear appeal ads. It is important for social marketing researchers and practitioners to undergo preliminary research to understand their target audience better in relation to their attitudes, behaviour, and pre-existing knowledge surrounding recreational marijuana consumption in order to develop anti-marijuana fear appeal advertisements or interventions.

Next, the moderating role of consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence on the effectiveness of fear appeal ads towards behavioural intention revealed its significance in reducing the impact of the effect of attitude towards the ad on behavioural intention. What this study shows is that a fear appeal ad showcasing a social threat of using marijuana recreational is less effective among respondents susceptible to social influence under prevailing social norms. In developing fear appeal ads, it will be important to utilize a combination of different types of threats rather than a single social threat in promotional messages aimed at eliciting fear and subsequent behavioural intention among young adults.

Additionally, efforts should be made to change prevailing negative values and to develop self-esteem in vulnerable young adults so as to not to conform to maladaptive group norms to feel accepted by others Kropp, Lavack and Silvera (2005). In order to empower young adults and influence behaviour, it is important for prevalent social

norms as well as those susceptible to social influence to be identified with the purpose of dispelling myths and misinformation surrounding marijuana consumption. Insights into existing social norms and the effect of susceptibility to interpersonal influence can also be incorporated into the creation of anti-marijuana fear appeal ads and programs aimed at marijuana use prevention in young adults.

Nevertheless, this study is not without its limitations and a key one observed in this study is the fact that it is cross-sectional in nature and thus only measures behavioural intention. It is recommended that a longitudinal study be conducted with the aim of determining the effectiveness of anti-marijuana fear appeal ads on actual behaviour.

In a nutshell, this study highlights the importance of the use of fear appeal ads in film format, depicting social threats associated with marijuana use, as well as the creation of anti-marijuana fear appeal ads which are theory-based tailored towards young adults.

## References

- Arthur, D., & Quester, P. (2004). Who's afraid of that ad? Applying segmentation to the protection motivation model. *Psychology and Marketing, 21*(9), 671–696.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.20024>
- Bearden, W. O., Netemeyer, R. G., & Teel, J. E. (1989). Measurement of Consumer Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence. *Journal of Consumer Research, 15*(4), 473. <https://doi.org/10.1086/209186>
- Cronbach, L. J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests\*. *Psychometrika, 16*(3), 297–334.
- Dugas, E. N., Sylvestre, M. P., Ewusi-Boisvert, E., Chaiton, M., Montreuil, A., & O'Loughlin, J. (2019). Early Risk Factors for Daily Cannabis Use in Young Adults. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, 64*(5), 329–337.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0706743718804541>
- Gore, T. D., & Bracken, C. C. (2005). Testing the theoretical design of a health risk message: Reexamining the major tenets of the extended parallel process model. *Health Education and Behavior, 32*(1), 27–41.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1090198104266901>
- Hair, J., & Alamer, A. (2022). Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) in second language and education research: Guidelines using an applied example. *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics, 1*(3), 100027.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rmal.2022.100027>
- Hair, Joe F., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2011). PLS-SEM: Indeed a silver bullet. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 19*(2), 139–152.  
<https://doi.org/10.2753/MTP1069-6679190202>
- Hair, Joseph .F., Hult, T. . M. G., Ringle, C. M., Sarstedt, Danks, N. P., & Ray, S.

- (2021). An introduction to structural equation modeling. Partial least squares structural equation modeling with R. In *Practical Assessment, Research and Evaluation* (Vol. 21, Issue 1).
- Hornsby, N., Erasmus, J., Harker, N., Johnson, K., Moletsane, M. K., Parry, C., & Lucas, W. (2024). *Monitoring Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Use Trends (South Africa): January- June 2023* (Issue February).
- Kees, J., Burton, S., Craig Andrews, J., & Kozup, J. (2010). Understanding how graphic pictorial warnings work on cigarette packaging. *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing*, 29(2), 265–276. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jppm.29.2.265>
- Kropp, F., Lavack, A. M., & Silvera, D. H. (2005). Values and collective self-esteem as predictors of consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence among university students. *International Marketing Review*, 22(1), 7–33. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02651330510581154>
- Latour, M. S., & Rotfeld, H. J. (1997). There are threats and (maybe) fear-caused arousal: Theory and confusions of appeals to fear and fear arousal itself. *Journal of Advertising*, 26(3), 45–59. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.1997.10673528>
- LaTour, M. S., & Tanner, J. F. (2003). Radon: Appealing to Our Fears. *Psychology and Marketing*, 20(5), 377–394. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.10078>
- Lubaale, E. C., & Mavundla, S. D. (2019). Decriminalisation of cannabis for personal use in South Africa. *African Human Rights Law Journal*, 19(2), 819–842. <https://doi.org/10.17159/1996-2096/2019/v19n2a13>
- Ramlagan, S., Peltzer, K., & Pengpid, S. (2021). Prevalence and correlates of non-daily and daily cannabis use among persons 15 years and older in South Africa: results of a national survey in 2017. *Substance Abuse: Treatment, Prevention, and Policy*, 16(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13011-021-00364-z>

- Smith, R. K., Martin, C. A., & Clark, P. W. (2015). Attitude toward advertising: Race and gender differences. In M. Moore & R. Moore (Eds.), *New Meanings for Marketing in a New Millennium. Developments in Marketing Science: Proceedings of the Academy of Marketing Science* (pp. 104–110). Springer Cham.  
[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-11927-4\\_33](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-11927-4_33)
- Truong, V. D., & Saunders, S. G. (2022). Guest editorial. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 12(1), 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSOCM-12-2021-246>
- UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2015). *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs: Sustainable Development: <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>
- UNODC. (2020). Drug Market Trends : Cannabis and Opioids. In *World Drug Report 2022*.  
[https://www.unodc.org/res/wdr2021/field/WDR21\\_Booklet\\_4.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/res/wdr2021/field/WDR21_Booklet_4.pdf)  
[https://www.unodc.org/res/wdr2021/field/WDR21\\_Booklet\\_3.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/res/wdr2021/field/WDR21_Booklet_3.pdf)  
[https://www.unodc.org/res/wdr2021/field/WDR21\\_Booklet\\_4.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/res/wdr2021/field/WDR21_Booklet_4.pdf)  
[https://www.unodc.org/res/wdr2021/field/WDR21\\_Booklet\\_3.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/res/wdr2021/field/WDR21_Booklet_3.pdf)
- Witte, K. (1993). Message and conceptual confounds in fear appeals: The role of threat, fear, and efficacy. *Southern Communication Journal*, 58(2), 147–155.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10417949309372896>
- Witte, K. (1994). Fear control and danger control: A test of the extended parallel process model (EPPM). *Communication Monographs*, 61(2), 113–134.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03637759409376328>
- Witte, K., Cameron, K. A., McKeon, J. K., & Berkowitz, J. M. (1996). Predicting risk behaviors: Development and validation of a diagnostic scale. *Journal of Health Communication*, 1(4), 317–341. <https://doi.org/10.1080/108107396127988>

Zhu, Y. Q., & Kanjanamekanant, K. (2021). No trespassing: exploring privacy boundaries in personalized advertisement and its effects on ad attitude and purchase intentions on social media. *Information and Management*, 58(2), 103314. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.im.2020.103314>

## Tables and Figures

Figure 1: Proposed Theoretical Framework

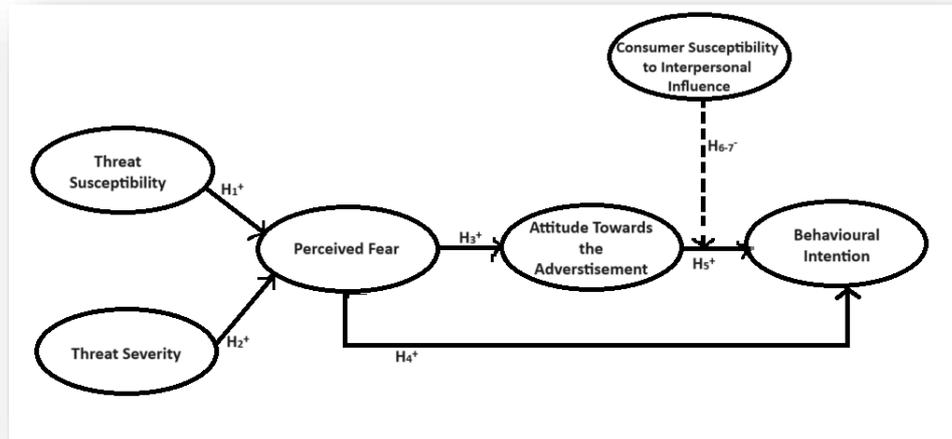


Figure 2: Image from Advertisements Featuring Noah



*Film*



*Animation*

Table 1: Between-Subjects Post-Test Only 2x2 Factorial Design

		Type of Threat	
		<i>Health Threat</i>	<i>Social Threat</i>
Message	<i>Film</i>	Experimental Group 1 (82)	Experimental Group 2 (73)
Format	<i>Animation</i>	Experimental Group 3 (68)	Experimental Group 4 (71)

Table 2: Assessment of Measurement Model: Loading, CR, and AVE

RPM	Average Item				Composite				AVE			
	Loadings				Reliability							
	G1	G2	G3	G4	G1	G2	G3	G4	G1	G2	G3	G4
Fear	0.78	0.7	0.7	0.78	0.91	0.87	0.88	0.91	0.62	0.55	0.55	0.63
Attitude toward the Ad	0.61	0.7	0.64	0.68	0.79	0.86	0.81	0.84	0.38	0.51	0.44	0.48
Susceptibility of Threat	0.88	0.85	0.89	0.83	0.91	0.89	0.92	0.88	0.78	0.74	0.8	0.72
Severity of Threat	0.78	0.82	0.85	0.82	0.82	0.86	0.89	0.87	0.61	0.68	0.73	0.68
Behavioural Intention	0.9	0.89	0.91	0.92	0.93	0.92	0.93	0.94	0.81	0.8	0.82	0.85

Self-Efficacy	0.79	0.78	0.76	0.72	0.83	0.82	0.8	0.76	0.63	0.62	0.58	0.52
Response Efficacy	0.84	0.83	0.89	0.83	0.88	0.87	0.92	0.87	0.72	0.69	0.79	0.69

Table 3: Measurement Model Assessment: Discriminant Validity

Data Set	Construct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Group 1, n = 82								
	1. Fear							
	2. Attitude toward the Ad	0.27						
	3. Susceptibility of Threat	0.16	0.13					
	4. Severity of Threat	0.25	0.59	0.25				
	5. Behavioural Intention	0.28	0.58	0.45	0.66			
	6. Normative Influence	0.24	0.29	0.2	0.21	0.1		
	7. Informational Influence	0.16	0.21	0.12	0.13	0.16		
Group 2, n = 73								
	1. Fear							
	2. Attitude toward the Ad	0.43						
	3. Susceptibility of Threat	0.16	0.28					
	4. Severity of Threat	0.48	0.67	0.23				
	5. Behavioural Intention	0.33	0.78	0.44	0.62			
	6. Normative Influence	0.3	0.18	0.22	0.27	0.11		

7. Informational

Influence

Group 3, n = 68

1. Fear					
2. Attitude toward the Ad	0.27				
3. Susceptibility of Threat	0.17	0.31			
4. Severity of Threat	0.15	0.44	0.53		
5. Behavioural Intention	0.36	0.59	0.47	0.7	
6. Normative Influence	0.17	0.21	0.09	0.15	0.1
7. Informational Influence	0.19	0.19	0.24	0.13	0.15

Group 4, n = 71

1. Fear					
2. Attitude toward the Ad	0.37				
3. Susceptibility of Threat	0.19	0.5			
4. Severity of Threat	0.36	0.63	0.49		
5. Behavioural Intention	0.32	0.71	0.49	0.83	
6. Normative Influence	0.32	0.2	0.14	0.19	0.24
7. Informational Influence	0.14	0.23	0.21	0.25	0.16

---

Table 4: Assessment of Structural Model: (R-squared)

RPMM Construct	Group 1		Group 2		Group 3		Group 4	
	R <sup>2</sup>	adjusted R <sup>2</sup>						
Fear	<b>0.02</b>	-0.01	0.16	0.13	0.01	-0.02	0.11	0.08
Attitude toward the Ad	<b>0.02</b>	0	0.12	0.11	0.02	0.01	0.09	0.07
Behavioural Intention	0.24	0.22	<b>0.46</b>	0.45	0.32	0.3	0.39	0.37

Table 5: Assessment of Structural Model: Tests for Multicollinearity, and Path Coefficients

Data Set	Relationship	Path Coefficient	95% lower	95% upper	T Statistic	p-value	Decision	VIF
Group 1, n = 82	H1: Susceptibility of Threat -> Fear	0.1	-0.11	0.33	0.84	0.398	Not supported	1.03
(FHT)	H2: Severity of Threat -> Fear	0.1	-0.16	0.34	0.81	0.419	Not supported	1.03
	H3: Fear -> Attitude towards the Ad	0.13	-0.14	0.37	1	0.318	Not supported	1.03
	H4: Fear -> Behavioural Intention	0.2	0	0.37	2.16	0.031	Supported	1.02
	H5: Attitude towards the Ad -> Behavioural Intention	0.43	0.22	0.61	4.28	<0.001	Supported	1.02

	H6: Attitude towards the Ad*Normative Influence -> Behavioural Intention	0.08	-0.11	0.27	0.82	0.411	Not supported	1.12
	H7: Attitude towards the Ad*Informational Influence -> Behavioural Intention	-0.1	-0.29	0.16	-0.91	0.362	Not supported	1.14
Group								
2, n = 73	H1: Susceptibility of Threat -> Fear	0.07	-0.18	0.3	0.57	0.567	Not supported	1.01
(FST)	H2: Severity of Threat -> Fear	0.4	0.15	0.62	3.24	0.001	Supported	1.01
	H3: Fear -> Attitude towards the Ad	0.35	0.03	0.59	2.46	0.014	Supported	1
	H4: Fear -> Behavioural Intention	0.04	-0.18	0.2	0.39	0.7	Not supported	1.14
	H5: Attitude towards the Ad -> Behavioural Intention	0.67	0.54	0.82	8.96	<0.001	Supported	1.14
	H6: Attitude towards the Ad*Normative Influence -> Behavioural Intention	-0.15	0.31	0.04	-1.71	0.087	Supported	1.07
	H7: Attitude towards the Ad*Informational Influence -> Behavioural Intention	-0.19	-0.4	0.04	-1.74	0.082	Supported	1.27
Group								
3, n = 68	H1: Susceptibility of Threat -> Fear	0.08	-0.2	0.41	0.5	0.618	Not supported	1.26
(AHT)	H2: Severity of Threat -> Fear	0.12	-0.19	0.41	0.8	0.423	Not supported	1.26
	H3: Fear -> Attitude towards the Ad	0.14	-0.1	0.35	1.26	0.21	Not supported	1.01

	H4: Fear -> Behavioural Intention	0.26	0	0.49	2.07	0.039	Supported	1.02
	H5: Attitude towards the Ad -> Behavioural Intention	0.47	0.22	0.69	3.91	<0.001	Supported	1.02
	H6: Attitude towards the Ad*Normative Influence -> Behavioural Intention	-0.14	-0.35	0.03	-1.54	0.123	Not supported	1.04
	H7: Attitude towards the Ad*Informational Influence -> Behavioural Intention	0.03	-0.2	0.26	0.22	0.828	Not supported	1.04
Group								
4, n = 71	H1: Susceptibility of Threat -> Fear	0.13	-0.14	0.38	1	0.317	Not supported	1.13
(AST)	H2: Severity of Threat -> Fear	0.35	0.09	0.57	2.82	0.005	Supported	1.13
	H3: Fear -> Attitude towards the Ad	0.29	0.01	0.53	2.15	0.032	Supported	1.13
	H4: Fear -> Behavioural Intention	0.13	-0.11	0.35	1.09	0.274	Not supported	1.09
	H5: Attitude towards the Ad -> Behavioural Intention	0.57	0.41	0.74	7.01	<0.001	Supported	1.09
	H6: Attitude towards the Ad*Normative Influence -> Behavioural Intention	-0.1	-0.32	0.18	-0.79	0.428	Not supported	1.12
	H7: Attitude towards the Ad*Informational Influence -> Behavioural Intention	-0.19	-0.55	0.2	-1.37	0.172	Not supported	1.15

\*\*\* Significant when  $p < .001$ ;

\*\* Significant when  $p < 0.05$ ;

\* Significant when  $p < 0.1$

**Table 6: Assessment of Structural Model: Model Comparisons**

Note that the p-value column is a two-sided test. At 5% $p > 0.95$ is also significant.							
Comparison Group		Source	Target	Beta		p-val	Abs diff p-val
				HT	ST		
HT vs ST	H <sub>1</sub>	Susceptibility of Threat	Fear	0.08	0.1	0.56	0.854
	H <sub>2</sub>	Severity of Threat	Fear	0.09	0.36	0.989	0.032
	H <sub>3</sub>	Fear	Attitude towards the Ad	0.13	0.28	0.909	0.184
	H <sub>4</sub>	Attitude towards the Ad	Behavioural Intention	0.43	0.63	0.977	0.163
	H <sub>5</sub>	Fear	Behavioural Intention	0.22	0.07	0.083	0.03
	H <sub>6</sub>	Attitude towards the Ad*Normative Influence	Behavioural Intention	-0.06	-0.12	0.259	0.489
	H <sub>7</sub>	Attitude towards the Ad*Informational Influence	Behavioural Intention	-0.01	-0.13	0.15	0.278