Aristotle’s Rhetorical Triangle as Applied to Advertisements: Its Impact to Saudi Arabian College Student Consumers

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**ABSTRACT**

This study aims to assess the effectiveness and impact of Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle—ethos, pathos, and logos—on the behavior of consumers, focusing particularly on consumer product. Quantitative and qualitative methods including descriptive research design were used. Two hundred respondents from different specialization and year levels participated in the study. Results show that age influences respondent preference of Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals. However, specialization has no influence on respondents’ behavior towards Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals. Fifty-seven percent of the respondents perceived ethos appeal as the most effective appeal of persuasion. This finding could be due to culture, since Saudis value trust and credibility. Entities that might be affected directly or indirectly by the findings will give them an idea of how to reach and persuade the target audiences. The classical Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle is the ancient art of persuasion and remains useful and applicable for communication.

**KEYWORDS**

Advertising, Aristotle’s Rhetorical Triangle, Communication, Consumer Behavior, Ethos-Pathos-Logos, Marketing, Persuasion Principles

**1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

In communication, it is very important to know our audience. By knowing them, the communicator or sender of message can craft a message that can appropriately persuade them. We use persuasion to motivate someone to do something or believe something that he or she would not otherwise have done or believed. Almost everyday we are all bombarded with persuasive message: companies advertise their products in social media, television, etc.; friends and co-workers convince us to do something or ask favors; teachers encourage students to learn new concepts - are only few of the examples. In order to be successful in persuading someone, we need to start with analyzing our audience.

Aristotle identified three methods in which people can be persuaded: ethos – an appeal based on credibility; pathos – an appeal based on emotions; and logos – an appeal based on logic. As part
of the process of analyzing the audience, it is very important to consider these methods – or what combination – will work best to persuade each person or group (Newman, 2015). Aristotle’s rhetorical appeal also known as “Rhetorical Triangle” is a tool that helps us formulate our thoughts so that we can clearly present our position in a persuasive way. The concepts of the Rhetorical Triangle were first described by Aristotle in one of the first great books about rhetoric, surprisingly enough titled “Rhetoric”, which was written in the 4th century B.C (The Rhetorical Triangle, n.d.).

One of the areas that greatly applies Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle is advertising. Advertising is a form of persuasive and non-personal communication which is generally paid to encourage products and services by means of diverse media. Though the first advertising evidence was found dates back to 3000s BC. But, “the first advertisement in English went into print in 1472, in order to sell a prayer book. The profession of advertising begun in the United States in 1841” (Hayko, 2010, p. 79). In advertising, persuasion has been immense ongoing mysteries of rhetoric and interrelated to various discipline (Sloane, 2001). Advertisement is always expected to establish connectivity between communicators and receivers. These receivers as consumers are geographically scattered in different locations but the advertisement goes there through different mass media to manipulate them. Materialistic public are basically manipulated by advertisement in manipulating people’s strongest needs and greatest terror to persuade them to buy the favored goods and services in this capitalistic world (Kanner & Soule, 2004). In this way, any market capitalizes everything and transfers people to consumer only.

According to Ashley (2016), advertisers who want persuade their customers to buy their product applies the Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle. An advertisement using pathos will attempt to evoke an emotional response in the consumer. Sometimes, it is a positive emotion such as happiness: an image of people enjoying drinking Pepsi. Other times, advertisers will use negative emotions such as pain: a person having back problems after buying the “wrong” mattress. Pathos can also include emotions such as fear and guilt: images of a starving child persuading you to send money. An advertisement using logos will give you the evidence and statistics you need to fully understand what the product does. The logos of an advertisement will be the “straight facts” about the product: One glass of Florida orange juice contains 75% of your daily Vitamin C needs. An advertisement using ethos will try to convince you that the company is more reliable, honest, and credible; therefore, you should buy its product. Ethos often involves statistics from reliable experts, such as nine out of ten dentists agree that Crest is the better than any other brand or Americas dieters choose Lean Cuisine.

Advertising, being a form of marketing communication, always persuades its consumers to use the products and services negatively or positively. “The manipulation in marketing has become an issue which accompanies the daily life the consumers” (Danciu, 2014, p. 31). Advertisements are intended to draw attention, alter manner and to rule our behavior (Pollay, 1986). While evaluating the overall transforming process to consumer from business perspective, advertising includes extremely positive result which strengthens the economy despite the fact that in any advertising every person is converted to consumer (Kanner & Soule, 2004). In the world of economy it is also defined as a catalyst for business (Coker & One, 2012). In some cases related to social advertising “a properly designed social advertisement could have important effects on disseminating useful information, changing or preventing unhealthy habits and adopting good practices in children” (Nicolini, Cassia, & Bellotto, 2017, p.261).Thus, in this transforming process, advertisement creates positive effects by shaping and molding attitude of consumers to fortify economy. From the beginning of the rhetorical study, underlining philosophy of persuasion has been a focus of consideration (Sloane, 2001). According to Kotler & Keller, this advertising “aims to create liking, preference, conviction, and purchase of a product or service. Some persuasive advertising uses comparative advertising, which makes an explicit comparison of the attributes of two or more brands” (2009, p. 505). In order to effectively convey the message to the audience, the sender should start with analyzing his or her audience. According to Newman (2015), the first step is to consider the audience for the message. An audience analysis will help us understand our message from the receiver’s perspective. This process will give us a sense of audience’s potential mental filters and how to adjust our message accordingly. By analyzing who
they are, our relationship with them, their possible reaction on our message, and knowing what is unique about them – it helps us to persuade them. This concept is true in all types of communication, especially in advertising – persuading the consumers to buy our product.

Consumer behavior is influenced by many things, including environmental and marketing factors, the situation, personal and psychological factors, family, and culture. Businesses try to figure out trends so they can reach the people most likely to buy their products in the most cost-effective way possible. Businesses often try to influence a consumer’s behavior with things they can control such as the layout of a store, music, grouping and availability of products, pricing, and advertising (Principles of Marketing, n.d.).

The purpose of this paper is to assess the effectiveness and impact of Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle – ethos, pathos, and logos – to the behavior of consumers, focusing particularly on consumer product. Through this study, the research will endeavor to understand how Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle correlates with other variables. As the researcher unpack the influence of Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle’s influence to the respondents, it will provide a clear insight for those involved in communication and advertising. It will also try to unveil any tendency how Saudi Arabian consumers respond to certain advertisement that used Aristotle’s rhetoric triangle in order to understand if there is a need to adapt advertising strategies considering their culture.

1.1 Conceptual Paradigm

In this study, cause-and-effect diagram was applied to show what maybe causing or contributing to a particular event. The researcher assumes that Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle can affect the consumer behavior. Variables of demographics are also assumed to have a direct or indirect effect on the influence of Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle. Through survey, rhetorical triangle’s influence can be revealed. Upon determining the effect of rhetorical triangle and identifying the variables that may have direct or indirect effect on consumers’ behavior, researcher can recommend measures that may be applied to communicating with consumers.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study aims to assess the effectiveness and impact of Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle – ethos, pathos, and logos – to behavior of consumers, focusing particularly on consumer product. Specifically, it sought to answer the following:

Figure 1. Paradigm of the Study
1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of the following variables:
   a. Year level;
   b. Specializations;
   c. Preferred Aristotle’s appeal.
2. Is year-level can influence respondents’ behavior towards Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals?
3. Is specialization can influence respondents’ behavior towards Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals?
4. What are the implications of respondents’ preferred Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals to the concerned entities?

1.3 Objective and Hypotheses
The present study aims and presupposes the following:

1. To identify the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of their specialization, year-level, and preferred Aristotle’s rhetorical appeal.
2. H₀₁: Year-level has no influence on respondents’ behavior towards Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals.
3. Hₐ₂: Specialization has no influence on respondents’ behavior towards Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals.
4. To identify the implication of respondents’ preferred Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals to concerned entities.

1.4 Scope and Delimitation
This study was conducted to assess the effectiveness and impact of Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle – ethos, pathos, and logos – to the behavior of consumers. Respondents were surveyed by presenting three consumer product advertisement, a toothpaste advertisement. They were asked which among the three toothpaste advertisements will likely convince them to buy the product. The toothpaste advertisements used the Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle respectively (refer to the Appendix). Demographic profile of respondents was also asked to determine the relationship of these variables to their perceived effective Aristotle’s rhetoric.

Students enrolled in two classes for the second semester of academic year 2019-2020 are the respondents of the study. Out of 244 students with different program of specializations, 200 of them participated, thus 82% response rate.

1.5 Significance of the Study
By investigating the influence of Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle from this perspective, the researcher believe that this inquiry will be important to marketing, advertising, communicators, and educational or training institutions. This research will help firms to better understand the importance of Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle in advertisement. It will also enable them structure their advertisements and brands to make them more appealing in order to influence consumers buying behavior. Additionally, this study will give the researcher an opportunity to explore and gain new knowledge. Finally, it can be utilized for future study and can serve as reference.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW
This part presents the related literature and studies which may have direct or indirect significance with the study.

2.1 Related Literatures
• Social Psychology: According to psychologist Gordon Allport, social psychology uses scientific methods “to understand and explain how the thoughts, feelings, and behavior of individuals
are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied the presence of other human beings.” The people around us shape our thoughts, feelings, moods, attitudes, and perceptions (Cherry, 2020, Powell, 2007). Social psychology is an empirical science that attempts to answer a variety of questions about human behavior by testing hypotheses, both in the laboratory and in the field (iresearchnet.com, n.d.)

- **Rhetorical Persuasion in Advertising:** Persuasion is a fundamental human process that affects almost all aspects of social interaction. It is concerned with changing the attitudes and consequently the behavior of people in a context of relative freedom (Perloff, 2013). In advertising, persuasion has been immense ongoing mysteries of rhetoric and interrelated to various discipline (Sloane, 2001). Advertisement is always expected to establish connectivity between communicators and receivers (Kanner & Soule, 2004). Tom & Eves (1999, p. 42) concluded that “the advertisements that incorporate rhetorical devices perform better than advertisements that do not for both measurements of recall and persuasion”. Advertising is helping us to buy more than just products or experiences, and helping us to buy more than just consumption (Wills, 2011).

- **Psychology of Advertising:** A basic advertisement involves the basic principles of psychology to generate a desired reaction or response. The use of emotions, persuasion and authority, memories, and colors are a few of the more common ones (Glint Advertising, 2017). Advertising explores the art of influencing human behavior to make certain purchase decisions while psychology explores human nature and why people behave the way they do (Dekrey, 2020). One of the current views on effective advertising is psychological approach (World Supporter, 2014).

According to O’Regan (2019), there are two basic models that explain how people process information - thinking and feeling models. Thinking approaches of advertisements allow consumers to use logic and reason to buy the product based on features or solving a problem. Feeling approaches use emotion to capture consumer behavior. Feeling approach leverage some type of emotion (humor, fear, love, etc.) that will lead a consumer to buy your product, also known as pathos.

- **Advertising in Saudi Arabia:** The bulk of Saudi Arabia’s population belongs in the Gen Z category (people born around 1995). This is a major advantage for the Kingdom as it means its population can adapt to newer trends faster. Overall, Saudi citizens believe in technology and have faith in their rulers, thus helping advance the Kingdom’s goal of diversification faster (Al-Sudairi, 2021). Due to CoViD-19 pandemic, many consumers, and therefore businesses and marketers, to go online, resulting in digital advertising making up for more than 50 percent of all advertising (Lakhpatwala, 2020). According to the latest survey of McKinsey & Company, Saudi consumer optimism has remained steady throughout the Covid-19 crisis, even if more than half of consumers have seen a decline in income savings. Most Saudi shoppers go to shopping centres for food, clothing and electronics. More generally, Saudis prefer quality over quantity (66% of consumers value quality over price) and are attracted by international brands, especially luxury brands. However, in recent years there has been a change in the behaviour of consumers in the Arab world in general, and Saudi Arabia in particular. They pay more attention to prices and are therefore less loyal to brands. Some 52% of Saudi Arabian consumers are becoming more mindful of how they spend their money (Export Enterprise, 2021). Saudi is a very conservative society rooted deep in the religious traditions of Islam and the teachings of the Koran. Though this may present some challenges for some types of marketers, those that are sensitive to culture can see many opportunities in finding unique ways to reach this audience (Istizada, 2020). In markets such as Saudi Arabia, which has some of the most affluent consumers, omnichannel strategies (any time, any place) are vital for companies to craft a user experience that cuts across online shopping, social media, mobile apps and conventional stores (Al-Mayman, 2021).
2.2 Related Studies

The study of Lee & Heere (2018) suggested that emotional advertising led to a higher attitude toward the advertisement, brand attitude, purchase intention, and merchandise consumption than both rational and combination advertising. According to Lee, Hosanagar, Kartik, & Harikesh (2017), directly informative content is associated with lower levels of engagement when included in messages in isolation, but higher engagement levels when provided in combination with brand personality–related attributes. Rahman & Pail (2019), concluded that most of the customers are influenced by both emotional and rational advertising appeals. They further concluded that age group ‘less than 30 years’ and the ‘students’ are more influenced by emotional than from rational appeals. In 2016, Hornik, Ofir, & Rachamim, found out that emotional appeals, led by sex and humor, appear to be more effective than fear and rational appeals. According to Romanova & Smirnova (2019) to achieve the desirable effect in advertising it is necessary to employ combinations of persuasive techniques to maintain a balance between the ethos, logos or pathos components of argumentation. Torto (2020) concluded that it is the language of the advertisement that enables consumers to identify a product and remember it. Doan (2017), found out rhetoric methods can influence the emotions of consumers. Advertising that uses rhetorical persuasion technique can psychologically influence viewers. Based on the study of Enschot, Hoeken, & Van Mulken (2010) attitude towards advertisement with visual tropes or metaphors is higher than towards ads without a rhetorical figure. Agwu, et. al (2014), found that when an advertisement suggests that the product is relevant to consumers’ need, such advertisement is more likely to attract consumer’s curiosity to know more about the products and a subsequent purchase of the product.

Saudi Arabia is the largest country in the Gulf region with a population of 33 million, and the largest economy in the Arab World with a GDP of $ 782 billion (export.gov, 2020). Over 50% of the population is under 25 years old, and the youth of KSA are particularly susceptible to Western consumer trends (FoodEx Saudi, 2020). Saudi Arabia is the only market in the Gulf region that can realistically provide investors with substantial long-term growth prospects. A proof that Saudi Arabia is a promising market for businesses.

Akram (2015) concluded that there are several factors to be considered when developing advertising messages and content for the conservative segment of Islam. The considerations are as follows: avoidance of Islamic creedal taboos and displays of immorality; avoiding usage of musical instruments and taboo entertainment; women must be dressed appropriately, and gender roles must be in conjunction with Islamic texts; and avoiding deceptive marketing, defaming competition, and ambiguous transactions. According to Bahaddad, Houghton, and Drew (2013), traditional & cultural factors in Saudi Arabia are considered to be major challenges for SMEs, and represent a significant factor in attracting the consumer.

AlDossry (2012) concluded that the younger generation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is more likely to adopt consumerism than older generations. Thus, he suggested that leaders’, intellectuals’, and famous people’s opinion can be effectively used to encourage families to rationalize consumption. The result of the study of Rahman & Naaz (2019) shows that there are positive and significant impacts of an advertisement on Saudi consumers. It also influences the purchase decision of Saudi consumers.

3. METHODOLOGY

This part presents the methodology used. Discussed here are research design, sources of data that includes the locale of the study and research population, instrumentation and the data collection, and tools used for data analysis.

In this study quantitative and qualitative methods were used. Descriptive research design was used to validate the influence of Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle – ethos, pathos, and logos – to the behavior of consumers. Descriptive research may be characterized as simply the attempt to determine, describe,
or identify what is (Ethridge, 2004). It also aimed at casting light on current issues or problems through a process of data collection that enables them to describe the situation (Fox & Bayat, 2007).

3.1 Sources of Data
To determine the appropriate sample size, Slovin’s formula was used (Ellen, 2017). Slovin’s formula is written as:

\[ n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2} \]

where:

- \( n \) = number of samples
- \( N \) = total population
- \( e \) = error tolerance (0.03)

thus:

\[ n = \frac{244}{1 + 244 \times ((0.03)^2)} \]

\[ = \frac{244}{1.23} \]

\[ = 200.065 \approx 200 \]

The respondents of the study are the two-hundred (200) students enrolled in ‘Business Communication’ and ‘Business Research Methods’ classes for the second semester of academic year 2019-2020. There are 244 students in both classes with different program of specializations. Using the Slovin’s formula with 0.03 error-of-margin and 97% confidence level, the researcher computed that two-hundred (200) respondents are appropriate. These 200 respondents were randomly selected from the 244 group of students.

3.2 Instrumentation, Data Collection and Tools for Analysis
To gather the data needed, the researcher used survey. This method involves the collection of the opinion of the respondents on their perception of the influence of advertising campaigns on their behavior that would influence them to buy or not the product. Thus, survey questionnaires were used as instruments to gather data for the study.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents

| Program of Specialization                  | Total Number of Students | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Accounting (ACCT)                         | 33                       | 21                 | 64%        |
| Business Administration (BUS)             | 26                       | 19                 | 73%        |
| Civil Engineering (CE)                    | 20                       | 20                 | 100%       |
| Computer Science (CS)                     | 20                       | 16                 | 80%        |
| Logistic & Supply Chain Mgt. (LSCM)       | 35                       | 26                 | 74%        |
| Mechanical Engineering (ME)               | 67                       | 67                 | 100%       |
| Management Information System (MIS)       | 43                       | 31                 | 72%        |
| **Total**                                 | **244**                  | **200**            | **82%**    |
To answer the four research questions posted, statistical tools were identified. For the first question - mode, mean and ANOVA were used. For the second inquiry, Eta-square ($\eta^2$) was utilized to measure association of nominal and scale variable (Grande, 2016). For the third inquiry, chi-square was used to test the relationships between categorical variables (Statistics Solution, n.d.). Lastly, for the fourth inquiry, literature review was used.

4. RESULT ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This section presented the data gathered, the analysis, and their interpretation relative to the questions raised in the study.

4.1 The Demographic Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Specialization, Year-Level, and Preferred Aristotle’s Rhetorical Appeal

In order for advertisement to be effective, the first thing that needs to be done is to gather data by analyzing the target society, its people, their habits, their dreams and aspiration. The goal, of course, is to sell as much as possible and the mission, consequently is to identify the need of the target consumer. Combining the product with existing cultural symbols to which the consumer can identify itself.

Saudi Arabia is one of the largest advertising markets in the middle east, accounting for 40% of all advertising expenditures in the Gulf alone. The Saudis, with their high per-capita income and market-oriented economy, have become the prime target of producers of consumer goods and thus, the prime targets of the best international advertising firms. Print media assumes the most important part of advertising expenditures in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with newspapers accounting for 61% of the spending, magazines 23% and television just 16% (Philippe, 2009).

To determine the demographic profile of the respondents, the researcher used survey in the form of ‘data sheet’ (refer to the Appendix). Respondents filled-up the data sheet form. Each of the respondent’s answers were tabulated. Table 2 shows the profile of respondents in terms of their specialization and year-level. ME, MIS, and LSCM dominated the number of respondents with 67, 31, & 26 respectively. Majority of respondents’ year-level in these groups are already 3rd and 4th year. To test if there are significant differences in each group, ANOVA was applied. Table 3 shows the analysis of variance (ANOVA) of respondents’ choice of Aristotle’s Rhetorical Appeal in terms of year-level. Table 3 shows the $p$-value is 0.284, therefore there is no significant differences in the year level each group. Table 4 shows a $p$-value of 0.942, therefore it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in the specialization of each group. Figure 2 shows the preferred Aristotle’s rhetorical appeal. 113 (57%) of the respondents perceived the ethos appeal as the most effective appeal of persuasion. 62 (31%) of them perceived logos appeal as the most effective. And 25 (13%) perceived pathos appeal as most effective. Succeeding sections, further discussed the relationships of demographic variables to respondents’ choice of Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals.

4.2 Year-Level as Influencer on Respondents’ Behavior Towards Aristotelian Appeals

Consumer behavior can be affected by several factors. It can be different from person to person based on his age, income, sex, education and marital status. Age is an important demographic factor that affects consumer behavior. Age brings changes to people’s lifestyle and with it their needs and personal values are also affected (Pratap, 2019). In this study, respondents’ ages were assume based on their year-level and categorized as follows: 1st year (20-21 years old), 2nd year (21-22 years old), 3rd year (22-23 years old), and 4th year (24 years old and above).

While emotions have been shown to be better controlled by older individuals, emotions are also found to be highly influential in commercial advertisements. (Hettich, Hattula, & Bornemann, 2018). Cognitive age is a significant predictor of consumer behaviors, including people’s dining out,
Table 2. Profile of respondents in terms of specialization and year-level

| Program of Specialization          | Year Level | No. of Respondents per year level | Percentage per year level | Percentage per specialization |
|-----------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Accounting (ACCT)                 | 1<sup>st</sup> | 1                                 |                           |                              |
|                                   | 2<sup>nd</sup> | 3                                 |                           |                              |
|                                   | 3<sup>rd</sup> | 8                                 |                           |                              |
|                                   | 4<sup>th</sup> | 9                                 |                           |                              |
| Total                             |             | 21                                |                           | 11%                          |
| Business Administration (BUS)     | 1<sup>st</sup> | 2                                 |                           |                              |
|                                   | 2<sup>nd</sup> | 1                                 |                           |                              |
|                                   | 3<sup>rd</sup> | 3                                 |                           |                              |
|                                   | 4<sup>th</sup> | 13                                |                           |                              |
| Total                             |             | 19                                |                           | 10%                          |
| Civil Engineering (CE)            | 1<sup>st</sup> | 0                                 |                           |                              |
|                                   | 2<sup>nd</sup> | 0                                 |                           |                              |
|                                   | 3<sup>rd</sup> | 0                                 |                           |                              |
|                                   | 4<sup>th</sup> | 20                                |                           |                              |
| Total                             |             | 20                                |                           | 10%                          |
| Computer Science (CS)             | 1<sup>st</sup> | 1                                 |                           |                              |
|                                   | 2<sup>nd</sup> | 2                                 |                           |                              |
|                                   | 3<sup>rd</sup> | 1                                 |                           |                              |
|                                   | 4<sup>th</sup> | 12                                |                           |                              |
| Total                             |             | 16                                |                           | 8%                           |
| Logistic & Supply Chain Mgt.      | 1<sup>st</sup> | 0                                 |                           |                              |
| (LSCM)                            | 2<sup>nd</sup> | 5                                 |                           |                              |
|                                   | 3<sup>rd</sup> | 19                                |                           |                              |
|                                   | 4<sup>th</sup> | 2                                 |                           |                              |
| Total                             |             | 26                                |                           | 13%                          |
| Mechanical Engineering (ME)       | 1<sup>st</sup> | 0                                 |                           |                              |
|                                   | 2<sup>nd</sup> | 1                                 |                           |                              |
|                                   | 3<sup>rd</sup> | 6                                 |                           |                              |
|                                   | 4<sup>th</sup> | 60                                |                           |                              |
| Total                             |             | 67                                |                           | 34%                          |
| Management Information System     | 1<sup>st</sup> | 0                                 |                           |                              |
| (MIS)                             | 2<sup>nd</sup> | 1                                 |                           |                              |
|                                   | 3<sup>rd</sup> | 6                                 |                           |                              |
|                                   | 4<sup>th</sup> | 24                                |                           |                              |
| Total                             |             | 31                                |                           | 16%                          |
watching television, going to bars and dance clubs, playing computer games, and shopping (Barak & Gould, 1985).

To determine the relationship between year-level and influence of Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle, eta-square (\(\eta^2\)) was used. Table 5 and 6 shows the results. The eta value 0.186 on table 6 was squared and gained 0.0190. Thus, eta-square (\(\eta^2\)) 0.0190 has a small effect. Therefore, \(H_0\): Year-level has no influence on respondents’ behavior towards Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals, is rejected. It can be concluded that year-level or age of respondents at some point is correlated to their behavior towards Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals. This mean that year-level or age has impact to influence respondent’s preference of Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals/triangle. Barak & Gould (1985), noted that cognitive age is a significant predictor of consumer behaviors.

Table 3. ANOVA of Respondents’ choice of Aristotle’s Rhetorical Appeal in terms of year-level

|                      | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F    | Sig. |
|----------------------|----------------|----|-------------|------|------|
| Between Groups       | 3.083          | 3  | 1.028       | 1.276| 0.284|
| Within Groups        | 157.872        | 196| 0.805       |      |      |
| Total                | 160.955        | 199|             |      |      |

Table 4. ANOVA of Respondents’ choice of Aristotle’s Rhetorical Appeal in terms of specialization

|                      | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F    | Sig. |
|----------------------|----------------|----|-------------|------|------|
| Between Groups       | 1.425          | 6  | 0.237       | 0.287| 0.942|
| Within Groups        | 159.530        | 193| 0.827       |      |      |
| Total                | 160.955        | 199|             |      |      |

Figure 2. Aristotle’s Rhetorical Triangle preference of respondents

To determine the relationship between year-level and influence of Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle, eta-square (\(\eta^2\)) was used. Table 5 and 6 shows the results. The eta value 0.186 on table 6 was squared and gained 0.0190. Thus, eta-square (\(\eta^2\)) 0.0190 has a small effect. Therefore, \(H_0\): Year-level has no influence on respondents’ behavior towards Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals, is rejected. It can be concluded that year-level or age of respondents at some point is correlated to their behavior towards Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals. This mean that year-level or age has impact to influence respondent’s preference of Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals/triangle. Barak & Gould (1985), noted that cognitive age is a significant predictor of consumer behaviors.
4.3 Specialization as Influencer on Respondents’ Behavior Towards Aristotelian Appeals

As noted earlier, consumer behavior can be affected by several factors. It can be different from person to person based on his age, income, sex, education and marital status. Education affects how people view things around them. It affects the level of discretion they employ while making purchases. People’s preferences can change with education. If observed carefully, education’s effect can easily be seen on consumer behavior (Pratap, 2019).

To determine if respondent’s specialization can influence their behavior towards Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals, chi-square was used to test the relationships between the categorical variables. Table 7 and 8 shows the results. The \( p \)-value of 0.306 in table 8, proved that there is no association between respondent’s specialization and their preferred Aristotle’s rhetorical appeal. Therefore, \( H_{02} \): Specialization has no influence on respondents’ behavior towards Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals, is accepted. It can be concluded that respondent’s specialization cannot be considered as predictor and cannot influence their preference of Aristotle’s rhetorical appeal.

4.4 The Implication of Respondents’ Preferred Aristotle’s Rhetorical Appeals to Concerned Entities

Figure 2 shows the respondents’ preferred Aristotle’s rhetorical appeal. 113 (57%) of the respondents perceived the ethos appeal as the most effective appeal of persuasion. 62 (31%) of them perceived logos appeal as the most effective. And 25 (13%) perceived pathos appeal as most effective. To determine the implication of respondents’ preferred Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals to concerned entities, literatures were reviewed.

| Table 5. Year Level * Aristotle’s Rhetorical Triangle Crosstabulation |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Year Level | Aristotle’s Rhetorical Triangle | Ethos | Pathos | Logos | Total |
| 1st year | Count | 0 | 4 | 1 | 5 |
| | Expected Count | 2.8 | .6 | 1.5 | 5.0 |
| 2nd year | Count | 9 | 1 | 2 | 12 |
| | Expected Count | 6.8 | 1.5 | 3.7 | 12.0 |
| 3rd year | Count | 22 | 5 | 16 | 43 |
| | Expected Count | 24.5 | 5.4 | 13.1 | 43.0 |
| 4th year | Count | 83 | 15 | 42 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 79.8 | 17.5 | 42.7 | 140.0 |
| Total | Count | 114 | 25 | 61 | 200 |
| | Expected Count | 114.0 | 25.0 | 61.0 | 200.0 |

| Table 6. Year Level * Directional Measures using Eta |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Nominal by Interval | Eta | Value |
| Year Level Dependent | .186 |
| Aristotelian Appeal Dependent | .138 |

As noted earlier, consumer behavior can be affected by several factors. It can be different from person to person based on his age, income, sex, education and marital status. Education affects how people view things around them. It affects the level of discretion they employ while making purchases. People’s preferences can change with education. If observed carefully, education’s effect can easily be seen on consumer behavior (Pratap, 2019).

To determine if respondent’s specialization can influence their behavior towards Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals, chi-square was used to test the relationships between the categorical variables. Table 7 and 8 shows the results. The \( p \)-value of 0.306 in table 8, proved that there is no association between respondent’s specialization and their preferred Aristotle’s rhetorical appeal. Therefore, \( H_{02} \): Specialization has no influence on respondents’ behavior towards Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals, is accepted. It can be concluded that respondent’s specialization cannot be considered as predictor and cannot influence their preference of Aristotle’s rhetorical appeal.

4.4 The Implication of Respondents’ Preferred Aristotle’s Rhetorical Appeals to Concerned Entities

Figure 2 shows the respondents’ preferred Aristotle’s rhetorical appeal. 113 (57%) of the respondents perceived the ethos appeal as the most effective appeal of persuasion. 62 (31%) of them perceived logos appeal as the most effective. And 25 (13%) perceived pathos appeal as most effective. To determine the implication of respondents’ preferred Aristotle’s rhetorical appeals to concerned entities, literatures were reviewed.
Saudi Arabians prefer doing business with those they know and trust. They are generally relationship oriented and, as trust is a fundamental principle, it is important to take sufficient time and effort to build a personal relation before starting a business relationship (Santander Market Trade, n.d.).

The linguistic aspect in advertising is an aspect of the most important because it reflects the link of advertising with the audience you want to reach and the product (Philippe, 2009).

In the contemporary globalized markets opinion leaders play a vital role in the process of the purchasing decision-making of consumers. Specific knowledge or their personality, opinion leaders have a direct or indirect influence on the attitudes and decisions of consumers (Žák, Š., Hasprová, M., 2020).

Ethos attempts to persuade by calling attention for the character of the speaker/writer and focusing on their attractiveness and authority inspired by them. It does not concern about the veracity of the argument, but for its appeal. The persuasive ethos works because audience tends to put trust in people

### Table 7. Specialization * Aristotelian Appeal Crosstabulation

| Specialization | Ethos | Pathos | Logos | Total |
|----------------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| ACCT           | Count | 12     | 2     | 7     | 21    |
|                | Expected Count | 12.0 | 2.6 | 6.4 | 21.0 |
| BUS            | Count | 8      | 4     | 7     | 19    |
|                | Expected Count | 10.8 | 2.4 | 5.8 | 19.0 |
| CE             | Count | 10     | 5     | 5     | 20    |
|                | Expected Count | 11.4 | 2.5 | 6.1 | 20.0 |
| CS             | Count | 9      | 5     | 2     | 16    |
|                | Expected Count | 9.1  | 2.0 | 4.9 | 16.0 |
| LSCM           | Count | 16     | 2     | 8     | 26    |
|                | Expected Count | 14.8 | 3.2 | 7.9 | 26.0 |
| ME             | Count | 41     | 4     | 22    | 67    |
|                | Expected Count | 38.2 | 8.4 | 20.4 | 67.0 |
| MIS            | Count | 18     | 3     | 10    | 31    |
|                | Expected Count | 17.7 | 3.9 | 9.5 | 31.0 |
| **Total**      | Count | 114    | 25    | 61    | 200   |
|                | Expected Count | 114.0 | 25.0 | 61.0 | 200.0 |

### Table 8. Specialization * Chi-Square Tests

|                      | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|----------------------|-------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square    | 14.800a | 12 | .253                  |
| Likelihood Ratio      | 13.923 | 12 | .306                  |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | .272 | 1  | .602                  |
| N of Valid Cases      | 200   |    |                       |

a. 7 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.00.
perceived to have an appropriate, trustworthy character and we “seek individuals with superior knowledge or ability and frequently give them authority in our lives” (Hauser, 2002). Celebrity in an advertisement is considered as application of ethos appeal. According to Lawan (2016), celebrity in advertisement increases the recognition and recall rate of the endorsed product. Overall, it is believed that celebrity endorsements are more attractive, and effective at influencing consumer buying behavior. According to Amah, et. al (2017), the consistent use of ethos appeals such as celebrity endorsement is a good marketing strategy to be adopted in creating a message for the target audience.

Summing-up all the findings above, majority of the respondents preferred the ethos appeal. Fifty-seven percent (57%) of them perceived the ethos appeal as the most effective appeal of persuasion. This finding could be due to culture, as noted in the article of Santander Market Trade (n.d.) that Saudis prefer doing business with those they know and trust. In the study of Abbad, et. al. (2019), they found out that if the speaker or sender of the message, for example, mentions their professional affiliation or status. The more similarities the author has with the recipient (social group membership, and being consonant in terms of beliefs, preferences and values), the more credible they are to the audience. Qabur (2013), found out that Saudis who have college education were influenced by celebrity endorsement on brand recognition more than Saudis who have school level education.

In this study, concerned entities that might be affected directly or indirectly are marketing, advertising, communicators, and educational or training institutions. Having a glimpse of the target audiences’ profile will give them an idea how to reach and persuade the audiences to buy – for marketers & advertisers; to motivate the audience to listen and study – for educational or training institutions, specifically in teaching; and to influence the audiences’ behavior to believe in the message – for communicators in general.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

In reference to the findings, the followings conclusions were drawn.

The aim of every advertising strategy is to instigate the actual behavior of the targeted audience, whether purchase intention or actual consumption. Understanding the cultural background of the target audience is very crucial in persuasion. Saudi Arabia, being one of the largest advertising markets in the middle east and promising target market for business. The Saudis can be considered as the prime target of producers of consumer. In persuading Arab nation, such as Saudi Arabia, Muslim beliefs and Arab cultures should be critically studied and considered. According to data gathered, Saudi Arabians prefer doing business with those they know and trust. They are generally relationship oriented and trust is a fundamental principle, it is important to take sufficient time and effort to build a personal relation before starting a business relationship – thus ethos appeal in combination with other appeal might be an effective persuasion principle that can be applied by advertisers to Saudis. A glimpse of the target audiences’ profile, the Saudis, will give the advertiser an idea how to reach and persuade them effectively.

Persuasion is everywhere. From the content made by advertisers to the communication made by normal people that aim to convince other peers explicitly or consciously. The classical Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle is the ancient art of persuasion that remains useful and applicable for the communication.

Academically, this research work will be helpful in understanding the perception and behavior of respondents towards Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle which revealed some interesting insights and directions for future research. It is also believed that conducting this research work will enhance the valuable personal knowledge of the researcher about the subject and experience for future career applications.
5.2 Recommendations

In relation to the findings and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are hereby offered:

1. Advertisers should consider demographic profiles of target audience to be able determines the appropriate message for them. The advertisement should be encoded according to audiences’ cultural context.

2. Educators must consider analyzing their audiences, the students, to be able to design and adjust learning pedagogy that will fit the audiences’ need.

3. A further study is recommended to specifically examine the interaction of multiple variables that might affect respondents’ behavior.

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APPENDIX

Survey Form

**Direction:** Kindly fill-up the necessary data.

Student I.D.: ______________________

Name (optional): ________________________________________________________________

Specialization / Major (please check):
- [ ] ACCT (Accounting)
- [ ] BUS (Business Administration)
- [ ] CE (Civil Engineering)
- [ ] Computer Science
- [ ] L SCM (Logistic & Supply Chain)
- [ ] Mechanical Engineering
- [ ] MIS (Management Information System)

Year Level (please check):
- [ ] Freshman (1st year level)
- [ ] Sophomore (2nd year level)
- [ ] Junior (3rd year level)
- [ ] Senior (4th year level)

Which of the advertisements below is most appealing or the advertisement that can convince to buy and why?

| _______________________________________________________________________________ |
| _______________________________________________________________________________ |
| _______________________________________________________________________________ |
| _______________________________________________________________________________ |
| _______________________________________________________________________________ |
| _______________________________________________________________________________ |
| _______________________________________________________________________________ |

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