Abstract:
Consumer behavior is an important issue and vital subject in the brand design and marketing process. Marketers and advertisers experts always seek for innovative methods and smart tools, to attract the consumer. Subliminal messages can do a vital role in attracting the consumer in the world of brands. The research is considered as one of the few academic researches which deal with this topic. The research aims to clarify the subliminal messages concept, its types, and its role to enrich the aesthetic and functional values of brand design. The research explores the designer's awareness of subliminal messages, and its role to affect the consumer behavior in brand design.

Key word: brand design- subliminal messages-hidden message-positive subliminal form – negative subliminal form.

Introduction:
The consumer interacts with brands everywhere and every moment. He is being surrounded by logos, advertisements, and products. All was designed to make his life easier, but also to make a continuous feeling with brand and keeping on his loyalty. Some people don't care about brands, and they think that brands have a few positively impact on their life. So the consumer behavior is an important issue and vital subject in the brand design and marketing process.
Marketing and advertising experts always seek for creative methods and tools that make brand design look more innovative and clever to attract the consumer and affect his behavior.
In the world of brands, subliminal messages may do a vital role to attract the consumer, catch his mind, and leave an internal impression. Also it could improve the effectiveness of his loyalty toward the brand and its products.
The analytical study of research include two main parts: the first part aims to clarify the subliminal message concept in brand design, and its role to improve the aesthetic and functional values of brand design, through a practical observation of the most famous international brand of the world.
The second part explores the designers' awareness with subliminal message in brand design through an open questionnaire of random sample of 40 of brand design experts from Egypt.

Subliminal messages (SMsg) definition:
Subliminal perception is the unconscious awareness of stimulus. Technically, "subliminal" means beneath the absolute thresholds. Nevertheless, many subliminal messages are actually supraliminal, meaning they fall above the absolute thresholds, But are consciously repressed by recipient. In other word consumers don’t consciously engage these messages; they process them at subconscious level (Frank R&others, 2010)
The concept of subliminal message in advertising appeared in 1957 by James Vicary, he placed a briefly flashing hidden message "Drink Coca Cola - Eat Popcorn" in film frame at theater in a New Jersey, to increase popcorn sales by some 58% and Coke sales by some 18%. (Wayne Weiten,2010)
Subliminal message is any sensory stimuli below an individual's absolute threshold for conscious perception (http://en.wikipedia.org)
Subliminal messages are "messages that are delivered or accepted underneath the threshold of normal consciousness. Subliminal messages are hidden messages that are embedded in another medium to act consumer subconscious mind. They make consumer think or want to do something without he even don’t realizing it.

Subliminal Message types:
The researcher thinks that the subliminal messages include 3 types: visual, auditory, and combination subliminal messages.
Visual subliminal messages (VSMsg): Are designed to be unnoticeable by the
conscious mind, yet still perceived by the subconscious mind. They are not consciously recognized because either the subliminal messages are camouflaged or presented so quickly with insufficient time for them to be comprehended.

The purpose of using them is to bypass the conscious mind and submit messages directly to the subconscious mind. They influence the subconscious mind and introduce positive changes in a person’s beliefs and consequent behavior. Visual subliminal messages affect more people if the image is familiar to the individual or the image revokes an emotional response.

In addition to familiarity of the image, the simple image or words has a great effective. For example, visual subliminal messages that just contain a word are much better internalized and affect a person in comparison to visual subliminal messages that are an entire sentence. Visual Subliminal Messages includes Static and Dynamic messages:

- Dynamic visual subliminal messages are commonly presented as short text messages flashed at regular intervals on either a computer monitor or television screen. The messages are presented rapidly, repeatedly and their content based on a particular subject of interest. In most cases, display of the subliminal messages is controlled by a computer software program. The subliminal messages appear only for a fraction of a second so that the brain perceives them but there is no conscious awareness of them.

- Static visual subliminal message is usually embedded within an unchanging viewable image. In this case the messages are visually masked so that there is no awareness of them. These images may be presented on a display screen or even in printed media. (Dave Lakhani, 2008)

Auditory subliminal messages: are masked, or hidden behind music. They must be clear and easy to hear if the other sounds are removed. There are five ways to embed worded messages in music: First, the target words or messages are placed in the music below the auditory threshold and are, thus, masked by the music; second, it is possible to use words with an inverted time-structure (backward masked messages) above the perceptual threshold; third, backward-masked messages can also be used subliminally; fourth, highpass-filtered worded messages (containing frequencies above 15 kHz) can be used (silent-subliminal); finally, time-shrunken subliminal messages (played back twice as fast as recorded) can be hidden in the music. (Hauke Egermann, 2006).

Some studies suggest that auditory subliminal messages have been completely ineffective in influencing people. The media was a major contributor to the belief that songs had negative messages hidden inside of them and that if the song was played backwards its true meaning could be heard. Although it is agreed upon by psychologists that subliminal messages do not have a lasting impact upon a person, there is still some modern cases of subliminal messages being included in advertisements (http://trove.nla.gov.au)

Combination (Audio/visual) subliminal messages: it contains both visual and auditory message. It is more influential and effective because it addresses the subconscious through two senses

The power of subliminal message in brand design:

Every day consumer makes his purchasing decisions of brand based on unconscious beliefs. Marketing Experts know how to convince consumer to buy the brand even he doesn't know why? The ability to persuade consumer instantly is a powerful tool in marketing process, the subliminal persuasion can severely affects markets and control consumer's behavior, Subliminal Persuasion is what happens when science meets with seduction. (Johan C. Karremans, 2012) The subliminal message enriches the aesthetic and functional values of the brand .it make brand design look more innovative and smart to attract the
consumer, catch his mind and leave an internal impression. Also it could improve the effectiveness of his loyalty toward the brand and its products.

There is much controversy about the fact of the subliminal message, and its impact on consumer behavior.

The power of subliminal message and its impact on the consumer behavior appeared in 1957, when many advertisers and marketer were interested in Vicary's experiments. However, some scientific researchers, government officials, and consumers in general, felt that the use of subliminal messages was immoral and unacceptable.

In the 1970's, Wilson Bryan Key, a professor at the University of Western Ontario, conducted a great research on subliminal perception and discovered that subliminal messages were used in almost all advertisements. The most common types of hidden messages were either sex images, or images of violence and self-destruction.

Other studies showed that the mood of the individual also determined the effect of the subliminal message. For example, a thirsty person was more likely to be influenced by a specific brand message than a person who had just had a drink. (http://www.skepdic.com)

Some research has found that subliminal messages do not produce strong or lasting changes in behavior. But it may be able to evoke a response.

There is a widespread belief, not strongly supported by empirical research, that a person's behavior can be significantly affected by subliminal messages without being aware of its presence or content. (http://forum.prisonplanet.com)

However, a recent review of functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) studies shows that subliminal stimuli activate specific regions of the brain despite participants being unaware. Visual stimuli may be quickly flashed before an individual can process them, or flashed and then masked. (http://en.wikipedia.org)

In the 90's the types of hidden messages being used are different from Vicary's words flashing briefly on a screen or Key's pictures within a picture. Advertising was full of images, symbols, colors and words that send out hidden messages related to the consumers cultural background and personal experiences. (http://helpingpsychology.com)

A recent study by Lavie, found that the brain responded more positively to subliminal messages regarding dangerous situations than to neutral situations. This may be the result of a human’s psychological attempt at self-preservation and the need to recognize danger in the environment.

A positive consequence of Professor’s Lavie’s study may lead to road signs reading “Speed Kills” instead of “Drive Safely,” which may reduce accidents on roadways. The subliminal message on the first sign may be more readily perceived by passing drivers than the second message.

Advertisers have made use of the brain’s response to negative messages. For instance, studies have shown that advertisements filled with negative information about a competitor are more effective than advertisements making positive statements about the advertiser. (http://www.articlesbase.com)

The researcher thinks that the efficiency of subliminal messages depends on integrated factors:

- Simplicity.
- Familiarity.
- Conciseness (Very short): To be processed, subliminal messages have to consist of one or perhaps two words and not of whole sentences.\(^9\)
- The frequency of exposure.
- The exposure time
- Demographic characteristics of the targeted recipient.
- The individual mood.
- The subliminal message types.

The analytical study:

The analytical study includes two parts: the first part depends on practical observation of the most famous international brands in different fields, to explore the concept of subliminal message in brand design, and its role to improve the aesthetic and functional values of brand design.

The second part of the study explores the
awareness's extent of brand designers of importance to use subliminal messages in brand design, through an open questionnaire of random sample of 40 experts of brand design in Egypt

**Part1:** through practical observation of the most famous international brands in different fields, the researcher found that:

- The extent of using subliminal messages in brand design representing a small percentage.
- The researcher believes that the subliminal messages of the Brand may be classified to four types as following chart in Model (1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subliminal message of form (SMOF)</th>
<th>Subliminal message of brand name (SMOB)</th>
<th>Subliminal message of slogan (SMOS)</th>
<th>Subliminal message of color (SMOC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

SMOF has two types of subliminal form: positive form and negative form.
- **Positive subliminal form (+SMOF):**
  The subliminal message represented in the basic form or part of it in brand design. The following are two example of (+SMOF)
  Figure (1) shows the (+SMOF) in "BASKIN ROBBINS" brand design: The pink color in the BR reflects the 31 flavor of "BASKIN ROBBINS" ice cream
  
  **Figure (1)**

- **Negative subliminal form (-SMOF):**
  It formed by Negative space. It is the empty space between and around the brand design elements. It helps to bring a balance to the brand composition.
  Figure [3] represents (- SMOF) in "FEDEX" brand design: the arrow that’s formed by the space between letters E and X, symbolizes speed and precision which are the two major selling points of the company.
  
  **Figure (3)**

**2-Subliminal message of color (SMOC):**
Color offers an instantaneous method for conveying meaning and message in brand designs. It’s probably the most powerful non-verbal form of communication.

The subliminal message of color in brand design reflected from color psychology and its symbolism.

The color reflects the brand's objective and gives different subliminal message to different culture. For example, in British culture, pure white means freshness and cleanliness. However, it is the color of mourning in Japanese culture.

The best example of (SMOC) Represented in the color of "BASKIN ROBBINS" brand design: The pale purple and blue Colors reflect the sense of childhood

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Another example of (SMOC) is illustrated in LG brand design, the bright purple confirm Subliminal message of slogan "Life's is good" Figure (5)

3-Subliminal message of brand name (SMOB):
It is tracking from the meaning of its word. A good example of (SMOB) is "DOVE" and JAGUAR "brand name figure (6).

4-Subliminal message of the slogan (SMOS):
The slogan carried a hidden message from its meaning. The best example of (SMOS) is illustrated in" Nike" slogan "Just do it" figure (7). The phrase "Just do it" could have many meanings, depending on personal experience or cultural background of the consumer who communicate with it.

According to above, the researcher also found that:
• Most of famous international brands have subliminal message of color.
• Many of famous international brands have subliminal message of negative form more than positive subliminal form.

• Some of famous international brands have both subliminal message of form and color.
• A few of famous international brands have subliminal message of positive subliminal form.
• Rarely, the famous international brands have subliminal message of trade name and slogan.

Part 2: explores the brand designers' Awareness of The importance of subliminal message, through an open questionnaire of random sample of 40 experts from Egypt in brand design. The questionnaire included a range of the most famous international brands, which contain different types of subliminal messages, whether in form, color, logo, brand name or slogan.

The study found that:
• Many of Egyptian brand designers haven't enough awareness of subliminal messages and its role in enriching the aesthetic and functional values of the brand.
• The entire sample had been attracted with the brand that has subliminal messages of color and form.
• No one had been attracted with brand which contain subliminal message of brand name or slogan.

After explaining the subliminal messages of brand design, its impact on the subconscious mind of the consumer, and its importance in enriching the aesthetic and functional values, the 40 designer decided to take the advantage of subliminal messages in brand design process.

Referring to the analytical study:
• The researcher can define the subliminal messages in brand design as:
• "the visual or auditory hidden messages that embedded in design elements (form, color, brand name and slogan) that act with subconscious level of consumer to affect him.

The researcher can clarify the advantage of using subliminal messages in brand designs as follows:
• presenting information in a disguised manner and triggering emotions.
And influencing the formation of ideas Enrich the aesthetic and functional values of the brand design.

- Make brand design look more innovative and distinguish.
- Attract the consumer, catch his mind and leave an internal impression.
- Improve the image of the brand in markets
- Achieve a distinctive competitive position for the Brand Central rivals in the markets.
- Improve the effectiveness of consumer loyalty toward the brand and its products.

Conclusion and Results:
- Many brand designers haven't enough awareness of subliminal messages and its effect on consumer behavior.
- Subliminal messages can create familiarity with brand.
- The use of subliminal messages in brand design can leave a positive internal impression on the consumer.
- Subliminal messages enrich the aesthetic values of the brand.
- Subliminal messages enrich the communication and persuasion functions of brand design.
- The subliminal messages in brand design leave a different impression to the consumer as a result of subconscious influence of brand elements.

Recommendation:
The study recommends that
- The concept of subliminal message should be kept in mind in brand design process.
- The designers should be taking the advantages of subliminal message in brand design.
- Must consider the ethics of the profession and the consumer culture when using the subliminal message in brand design.
- Must conduct empirical studies for large samples of people in different countries and cultures to determine the impact of subliminal message in brand design.

Abbreviations:
- SMGs: subliminal message.
- SMOF subliminal message of the form.
- +SMOF positive subliminal message of the form.
- -SMOF negative subliminal message of the form.
- SMOB subliminal message of brand name.
- SMOC: subliminal message of color.
- SMOS: subliminal message of slogan.

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