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Priyanka Kardam
M. Sc. Student, Department of
Extension Education and
Communication Management,
I.C. College of Home Science,
Chaudhary Charan Singh
Haryana Agricultural
University, Hisar, Haryana,
India

Dr. Kavita Dua
Assistant Professor, Department
of Family Resource
Management, I.C. College of
Home Science, Chaudhary
Charan Singh Haryana
Agricultural University, Hisar,
Haryana, India

Corresponding Author:
Priyanka Kardam
M. Sc. Student, Department of
Extension Education and
Communication Management,
I.C. College of Home science,
Chaudhary Charan Singh
Haryana Agricultural
University, Hisar, Haryana,
India

Influence of advertising on consumer perception and buying practices

Priyanka Kardam and Dr. Kavita Dua

Abstract

Ever since its inception media has always been a powerful tool. From the time when newspapers and radio were the only media source to the present times where entire web is a largely connected media, not only has its form changed with time but its power has also increased manifold. In the age of digitalization, where every servicing aspect of society is developing itself on online platforms, media too is not left behind. Digitalization and technological advancements have an increased reach, which can be seen in the form of traditional media sources like newspapers too getting digitalized. Media be it any, is used by sellers to influence customers into purchasing their products. Not only large multinational companies, but also small sellers are now using new and previously unexplored media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, YouTube etc. to attract potential consumers to their products and services.

Keywords: advertisement, customers, media, brand

Introduction

In a competitive market, it is important for advertising managers to grab consumers' attention through advertisements and sales promotion. A sizable marketing budget is spent on advertising. The trend of using digital media platforms for advertisements is growing (Sama, 2019) [20]. As sales and the connection between customers and sales has direct impact on business survival, it is expedient for organizations to engage in programmes that can influence consumers' decision to purchase its products. This is where advertising and brand management are relevant. Advertising is a subset of promotion mix which is one of the 4ps in the marketing mix i.e. product, price, place and promotion. As a promotional strategy, advertising serve as a major tool in creating product awareness and condition the mind of a potential consumer to take eventual purchase decisions (Ayanwale *et al.*, 2005) [1]. The consumer expectations of information from various media such as TV, radio, newspapers, magazines and the Internet are entirely different. The characteristics of different media and its immediate and long-term effects on consumers are also varied (Doyle & Saunders, 1990) [3].

Broadcast media such as TV and radio are among the popular media in India because of its mass reach (Farooq & Latif, 2011) [4]. In India, newspapers play an important role as an effective medium of communication. This is due to its reach in almost every part of the country. India has the largest news- paper market in the world with over 330 million daily newspaper circulations (Jayaraj, 2011) [7]. Of the total advertisement spend, TV advertisement spend in India was 44.7 per cent and print advertisement spend was 29.8 per cent. The digital advertisement spend was the third largest with a growth rate of 15.5 per cent (Pahwa, 2017) [17]. This is because of the increasing number of Internet users after the entry of Reliance JIO in the Indian telecommunication market (Sama, 2019) [20].

The Internet is a more engaging medium than print because of its various levelled structure. Compared to a reader of newspapers and magazines, the Internet gives more control to users for watching the content of their choice (Bezjian *et al.*, 1998) [2]. The term 'internet' is an umbrella term and covers digital channels, namely, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, email etc. and other application running through internet that may promote advertising.

Importance of advertising for marketers

Advertisement refers to all the activities involved in presenting to a group, a non-personal oral

or visual, openly sponsored message regarding a product, service idea or organization is disseminated through one or more media and is paid for by an identified sponsor. Advertising consists of all the activities involved in presenting to an audience, a non-personal, sponsor identified paid for message about a product or organization as reviewed by Neupane, 2019)^[12].

Niazi and Hunjra (2012)^[13] defined that advertising is a way of communication to convince an audience for taking purchase decision about a product or service and delivering information to viewers. This paper examines the relationship between environmental response and emotional response which are independent variables with dependent variable i.e. consumer buying behavior.

It is believed that if a better product is produced, consumers will not necessarily take special pain of informing themselves of its existence, its worth, its satisfying qualities and where it can be purchased. Advertising provides information that facilitates the job of the seller, helps customer make quick decision, informs customer of the presence of a product, price which it is being sold and placement (where it is available) thereby giving room for economy of time, energy and money in trying to look for the product. It also announces a new product, indicates new uses of existing products, reminds customer of an existing product, about the desirable qualities, stimulates or generates enquires and builds corporate image to mention a few. The effectiveness of these is expected to result in increased sales and profit (Oyedokun *et al.*, 2019)^[16].

Influence of television and radio

Ranjbarian *et al.* (2011)^[19] established that TV advertisements affect attention, interest and desire. Nysveen and Breivik (2005)^[14] stated that the effects of radio advertisements are less on changing consumers' attitude and behaviour. Television has become a very effective media and the best possible media for mass communication which is being extensively used for business purpose, such as to communicate to the mass through the advertisement. Television has a significant role to play in the field of business as media for advertising. It is observed that advertising in newspaper transmitted through television is found to be most effective. It is due to the impact made by both audio and video and its wide coverage. The TV commercial is generally considered the most effective mass-market advertising format and this is reflected by the high prices TV networks charge for commercial airtime during popular TV events (Neupane, 2019)^[12].

Neupane, 2019^[12] revealed that under 15-25 age group, 9% choose newspaper/magazine, 82% choose television and 9% preferred other medium of advertisement (hoarding board, posters, pamphlets etc). Under 26-35 age group, 12% choose newspaper/magazines, 8% Radio, 72% television and remaining 8% other medium of advertisement (hoarding boards, posters, pamphlets et} Under 36-45 age group, 19% choose newspaper/magazines, 19% choose Radio and 62% choose television, likewise, under age group of above 45, 5% choose newspaper/magazines, 5% also choose radio., 40% choose television and 50% choose other media. The response under above 45 age group consider highest percentage of media selection is other media.

The gender group out of 67 males 12% selected newspaper/magazines, 6% radio, 76% television and 6% other means of advertisement. Among the 33 sample female respondents 12% selected newspaper/magazines, 9% radio, 73% television and 6 % other means of advertisement. While

the total result under gender categories shows that television is the most persuasive medium to attract the customer. It shows that television advertisement has its effects on both male and female viewers (Neupane, 2019)^[12].

Influence of social media on buying practices

In the light of the varied influence of different media platforms, Opeodu and Gbadebo (2017)^[15] indicated that an advertisement on various media platforms plays a vital role in influencing consumer's choice. Hence, wise choice of media platform for advertisements is key for the promotion of products and services (Singh, 2012). Advertisements are a widely accepted source of information among the consumers as compared to other sources, and hence, media mix decisions are crucial for advertisers (Shrivastava, 2014)^[22].

Social media can be defined as "consumer-generated media that covers a wide variety of new sources of online information, created and used by consumers intent on sharing information with others regarding any topic of interest" (Kohli *et al.*, 2014)^[9]. According to e-Marketer (2013), nearly one in four people worldwide use social network sites - a number of about 1.73 billion people. By 2017, the global social network audience is estimated to be around 2.55 billion people (Schivinski *et al.*, 2016)^[21]. When assessing social media as a marketing tool, most researchers include both mobile and web-based technologies that focus on ways that users "share, co-create, discuss and modify user-generated content" (Kohli *et al.*, 2014)^[9]. This is considered by most to be a paradigmatic shift in the way companies market their products, because companies are relying on consumers more than ever before to direct their marketing process and create the discourse around branding (Kohli *et al.*, 2014)^[9].

Positive comments in social media venues can have a positive impact, but negative comments can also be a part of the brand dialogue and may not be able to be controlled by the companies using social media for marketing (Ho-Dac *et al.*, 2013)^[5]. Of the three social media platforms identified as commonly used by companies to support marketing and branding (i.e. Twitter, YouTube and Facebook), Facebook is considered by some to be the "holy grail of marketers" because of its focus on the integration of advertising into participants social content. In the Facebook format, advertisers present their information about specific brands and products, Facebook users provide comments or "Like" content (showing approval of specific content), and this then drives additional similar content (Nelson-Field *et al.*, 2012)^[11].

Social media, then, has a significant impact on how marketers design their strategic approach, how they deliver brand information, and how they scale advertising to enhance consumer engagement (Putter, 2017)^[18]. Increasing use of social media worldwide has led to the belief that this is a valuable tool in supporting consumer engagement. Companies are continually looking to new methods for reaching consumers and for shaping consumer behaviours, including brand loyalty and intention to buy. The changing technological era has led to increased activity in social network platforms like Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, all of which have created mechanisms through which consumers can develop rapport and create interactions with brand-specific content (Putter, 2017)^[18].

Influence of media on brand perception

A brand can be defined as "a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of them which is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to

differentiate them from those of competitors" (Keller, 1993). Researchers have maintained that it is important that companies recognize that the process of introducing advertising and brand-related content in social media requires a close scrutiny of the content and a focus on brand-based community building (Laroche *et al.*, 2013) ^[10]. Mostly audience perceive the brand as depicted by the brand ambassadors. Products that undertake physical demonstration quickly forms the brand image in the subconscious mind of customer that they will also turn same as the demonstrative models in the advertisements.

The buying-selling paradigm of certain brands works on consumer insecurities. He media platforms works on the concept of magnifying the reach of such insecurities to the common people, at the same time providing a solution to overcome such insecurities in the form the particular brand product. Such phenomenon exponentially increases the product sales and demand.

Also, consumerism is promoted by the social media as people buys the good and materials in order to gain superiority over other being first purchaser of the item. Show-offs also leads to consumerism. And brand famous among top celebrities or known figures, eventually perceived as more reliable and classic.

Brand awareness and buying intention

The increasing use of social media has led to a major shift in the approach to pursuing consumer brand awareness and making connections between brand awareness and intention to buy (Putter, 2017) ^[18]. Adept companies recognize that consumers have countless brand opportunities and choices on a daily basis and social media impacts how they perceive different brands at the moment that they make buying decisions (Hutter *et al.*, 2013) ^[6]. Even in the presence of changing social media mechanisms and the increasing use of technology, consumers still go through a common set of steps in making decisions that impact purchasing selections (Hutter *et al.*, 2013) ^[6]. When determining what product to select, "the consumer first attains awareness and knowledge about a product, subsequently develops positive or negative feelings towards the product and finally acts by buying and using or by rejecting and avoiding the product" (Hutter *et al.*, 2013) ^[6]. Early involvement in a consumer's decision-making process can determine whether they continue to the next steps or not. This does not guarantee that early involvement will translate into purchasing intention but it does show that early involvement or early social recognition and brand awareness can ensure that the product remains in the loop of possible purchasing alternatives (Hutter *et al.*, 2013) ^[6]. As the consumer moves further along in the process, evaluative structures and decision-making strategies are more individualized and may take longer to play out. For example, if a consumer is looking at a high-end automobile, they may immediately rule out seven different brands for brand-specific, knowledge-based reasons. They may also rule out these brands because of social media representations of brands, consumer comments on specific brands, and social mechanisms that shape brand perceptions (Hutter *et al.*, 2013) ^[6]. Once the consumer moves on to the next stage where brand perception no longer immediately shapes their response, decisions may be based on another tier of perceptions that can be influenced by social media, including the consumer's needs, values, and interests, and the values and interests of those in their social collective (Hutter *et al.*, 2013; Yuksel *et al.*, 2014) ^[6, 24]. Decisions are not always as simple

as selecting a product or not; often consumers find themselves seeking better ways of evaluating a product and look to social networks for brand or product clues (Putter, 2017) ^[18].

Companies that are adept at integrating strategic approaches to the use of social network platforms are likely to be most successful in reaching, engaging, and maintaining a consumer base moving forward. Factors that influence brand perception and intention to buy include things like the social mechanism that drive consumer perspectives, and the views of others posted demonstrated in social media posts. An emerging strategic focus is on the use of user-generated content, content that is created by consumers in response to specific brands or brand requests and influences the perceptions of other consumers. This kind of strategic approach requires a high degree of maintenance and companies utilizing this method should be prepared to designate a marketing service to the management of online customer relationships (Putter, 2017) ^[18].

Conclusion

Media portrays a massive influence on the consumers subconscious mind. All the media have different types of effect. Television and social media like Instagram, Facebook, You tube etc lays more influence than print media as it is more preferable to psychological mind due to presence of both audio and video medium for carrying out the information, also it has become very relevant to the current regeneration. As we all know, the maximum amount of work that has to be done has become electronised, increasing our indulgence with the technological gadgets (mobile, laptops, tablet) which directly impact the urge of using the social media platforms.

Other than this, we also get lured in the media web due to celebrity influence as it creates as a sense of trust among the consumers. Mothers of age group 30-45 tend to purchase the same things as used by the television stars, in order to look like them or to depict their modern versions. In between media advertisements leads to unnecessary buying practice as the consumer get attracted by the discount technique or sometime doing it as a leisure activity. As every coin has two sides, similarly media platforms have positive as well as negative impact. It's on us to use this responsibly so as to derive preferable outcome which are beneficial or the individual as well as the society.

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