

A study on the Influence and Impact of Advertising to Consumer Purchase Motive among student teachers

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Abstract: *The study aims to investigate and evaluate the impact of advertising on the consumer preferences and loyalty in regards to the product/service promotion of different products among student teachers of Kerala. This study is significant in promoting advertising awareness among the future citizens through teachers of tomorrow. Survey method was used for the study which is supported by interview on a sample of 200 student teachers selected from two colleges in rural and urban based. The study reveals that the level of awareness of the effect of advertisement is comparatively better than expected among the student teachers. Many of them are active listeners of the media for gathering information regarding the new products, trend in the market and make a comparison with the products of other firms. The consumer culture is more prevalent in rural students than in urban students. Majority of female students are interested in cosmetics and jewellery while the male students are more concerned with automobiles and electronic equipments.*

Key words: *Consumer preferences, Purchase motive, Loyalty, Advertising awareness.*

I. Introduction

Advertising is a form of communication intended to persuade an audience (viewers, readers or listeners) to purchase or take some action upon products, ideals, or services. It includes the name of a product or service and how that product or service could benefit the consumer, to persuade a target market to purchase or to consume that particular brand. These brands are usually paid for or identified through sponsors and viewed via various media. Advertising can also serve to communicate an idea to a mass amount of people in an attempt to convince them to take a certain action, such as encouraging 'environmentally friendly' behaviors, and even unhealthy behaviors through food consumption, video game and television viewing promotion, and a "lazy man" routine through a loss of exercise. Modern advertising developed with the rise of mass production in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Mass media can be defined as any media meant to reach a mass amount of people. Several types of mass media are television, internet, radio, news programs, and published pictures and articles.

Advertisements have become one of the crucial factors that determines the style and functioning of one's life in different contexts. For some years some subtle changes in the practice of advertising have been reshaping the society people live in. The force of advertising reaches out and touches everyone living and working in the modern world today. Advertising is claimed by its practitioners to be largely responsible for the good things in life and is criticized by its opponents as the cause of unpleasant things (Lee & Johnson, 1999).

The impact of advertising on the society is a fiercely debated topic, and has been ever since the conception of advertising in its most basic form. There are negative and positive social impacts upon society from advertising in its various forms.

Kerala is assumed to be a consumer state and the life and culture is influenced by the nature and type of marketing in every sphere of life. Today's market is characterised by highly competitive organisations which are all vying for consumer's loyalty. Firms are faced with the challenge to maintain their own competitive edge to be able to survive and be successful. Strategies are carefully planned and executed to gain the ultimate goal of all: company growth. However, external factors are not the only elements which influence growth. There are also internal factors, components working within the organisation which shape the direction of the company.

Advertising has positive as well as negative, social and economic impacts on our society. Considering advertising as a public welfare is a positive social impact whereas exposing women as a sex tool comes at the negative side. As far as economic factors are concerned, funding for the media and stimulating an active and competitive economy, are the major examples.

Assorted techniques are enforced for persuading consumers that they want the product which is being advertised. These techniques usually give attention to the benefits that would be brought to the consumers rather than focusing on the actual products. For instance, an automobile advertisement advertising the mechanical attributes of a vehicle, most likely concentrates the exhilaration, reputation and social progression it may bring to the buyer. This swarming advancement is habitually sexual, or involving the opposite gender to attract the consumers with the glamorous women/men's fancy car.

There are various blames that advertising is causing a negative social impact on the lives. The chief unfavourable judgment for advertising is that it hales the public to buy things that they are not their real want. It

is arrogated that advertising plays with emotions and encourages people to think that buying and depleting are the activities of life.

According to advertisers, they state that people are capable enough to set their mind and no one can force them to buy anything which they dislike or which they think is not a necessity. Advertisers also think that there are positive impacts of advertising on our society and culture. For example, it can be used to generate awareness among the public that which product is OK or to which they should say NO. In other words, advertising also acts as an educator in the sense that it educates people what is good and what is bad for them and puts a ceiling on the harmful products like smoking and drinking etc.

There are not only social benefits of advertising, but it also has some economic advantages. Without advertising, the media, including newspapers, television and radio would never be much strong. Advertising provides revenue for commercial mediums which would otherwise need to be funded by the actual consumer of these mediums. So, we can see a major economic infrastructure based around advertising, in which the big companies fund and subsidize the commercial media by the way of advertisements.

The major economic negative aspect of advertising is that it boosts the price of goods and services. The source of this contention is that, when organizations subsidize the mass media with advertising, we, the purchaser, subsidize advertising by compensating a grossly increased price for heavily advertised goods and services. An easy example of this is that a packet of washing powder generally costs around fifty to sixty rupees while the market price of the product would be ninety to hundred rupees. The fact behind this is that the remaining proportion goes in heavy advertising in television and print media.

So, the impact of advertising on our society is in a jumble form, depending on the functions and implementations of numerous campaigns. Our society and the marketing of products depend very badly upon advertising. The companies have become much dependent of advertising that even its negative impacts can never outweigh the many positive social and economic effects.

The most important element of advertising is not information but suggestion more or less making use of associations, emotions (appeal to emotion) and drives dormant in the subconscious of people, such as sex drive, herd instinct; of desires, such as happiness, health, fitness, appearance, self-esteem, reputation, belonging, social status, identity, adventure, distraction, reward; of fears (appeal to fear), such as illness, weaknesses, loneliness, need, uncertainty, security or of prejudices, learned opinions and comforts. "All human needs, relationships, and fears – the deepest recesses of the human psyche – become mere means for the expansion of the commodity universe under the force of modern marketing. With the rise to prominence of modern marketing, commercialism – the translation of human relations into commodity relations – although a phenomenon intrinsic to capitalism, has expanded exponentially." 'Cause-related marketing' in which advertisers link their product to some worthy social cause has boomed over the past decade.

II. Review of Related Literature

Some researchers have hypothesised that consumer's personality profiles affect decision making in their assessments of credibility in advertising content. As a result, consumers are more responsive to advertising claims tailored to a specific personality profile in product ads than to advertising claims not tailored to a specific personality profile. Therefore, the research explores consumers' response tendencies to advertising claims when the source of such claims is identified as tailored to a specific personality profile or not tailored to a specific personality profile. Research also examines the relative impact of tailoring the advertisement to a specific personality profile on consumers' assessments of credibility in advertising content. This can be accomplished by examining whether consumers' beliefs, competency, or perceived goodwill are affected by credibility information when advertisements are tailored to a specific personality profile versus advertisements not tailored to a specific personality profile. Accordingly, advertising claims whose credibility has been challenged by governmental or by consumer groups are more likely to affect consumers' action than are unchallenged advertising claims. The findings have implications for understanding the role of personality profiles in shaping visual imagery and message content of advertising claims.

In the field of advertising research, as it applies to exploratory correlation between personality and advertising message response, there is no dearth of literature and we have a long history surrounding the myriad of topics associated with this concept (Plummer, 2000). However there is an absence of consensus in both theories and frameworks that address much of the often conflicting reasons of advertising's interaction in consumer decision-making. Accordingly, there have been weak empirical relationships found between prediction of product use or choice with personality behaviour. (Lastovicka, JL., Erich A., & Joachimsthaler, 1988)

Some researchers have, however, demonstrated and analysed brand personality to the extent that effective designs can aid in their influence (Aaker, 1997; Greengrove, 2002; Neal and Wurst, 2001). Attempts at segmenting markets on the basis of personality similarities and differences have not achieved researchers' desired results. The main reason for disappointing results is that research efforts have primarily focused on profiling exercises rather than putting their endeavours into theories based on consumer personalities (Plummer,

2000). Accordingly, empirical personality work has tended to be weak because trait measures often have questionable reliability, validity, and the traits investigated lacked the conceptual relevance to the behaviour being studied (Lastovicka, John L., Erich A., Joachimsthaler, 1988). Accordingly, there has been ample research on source effects that concentrated on the impact of the competence, believability, and trustworthiness of the spokesperson in the fields of psychology, advertising, and communication literature (Bush, Moncrief, and Ziethaml 1987). There is, however, little research on relative impact of personality profiles on consumers' assessments of credibility in advertising content.

According to Low and Mohr: "To be sure, advertising is vital to brand equity. However, advertising, per se, is not a sacred cow that should necessarily be part of every year's marketing allocation. Monies should be allocated to advertising only if it has a clearly defined role within that year's strategy for meeting a brand's goals" (1999, p. 72). They reached this conclusion via a qualitative study using 21 in-depth interviews. Our review of the literature indicates that previous research has not specifically measured the impacts of advertising and brand value, and their joint effect, on firm performance. By examining the effects of advertising and brand value, our work contributes to the existing literature.

There have been numerous studies, however, on the individual effect of advertising on the persistence of profits (e.g., Mueller 1990), implying that excess returns erode more slowly for firms that advertise heavily.

For example, Chauvin and Hirschey (1993) provide evidence that advertising expense has a positive influence on the market value of the firm. They suggest that spending on advertising can be viewed as a form of investment in intangible assets with positive effects on future cash flows. When Erickson and Jacobson (1992) control for the endogeneity between discretionary expenditures and profitability, however, they find that advertising generates substantially lower accounting and stock market returns than indicated in previous research. In a recent study, Chu and Keh (2006) investigate the effects of advertising, promotion, and R&D expenses on brand value creation. They find that these lagged expenses yield diminishing returns to brand value.

III. Significance of the study

This study will be a significant endeavour in promoting advertising awareness among the future citizens through teachers of tomorrow. This study will be beneficial to the consumers and business industries particularly in product/service promotion. By understanding the needs of the consumers and the benefits of effective advertisement, these business industries will be assured of a competitive advantage. Moreover, this study may equip students to be aware of the ill effects of advertisements and act as responsible citizens.

Hypotheses

Considering the objectives of the study, it is hypothesised as:

1. The level of awareness of advertised products among student teachers is average.
2. There is no significant difference in the purchasing motive, preferences and loyalty with reference to locality.

Objectives

This study investigates and evaluates the impact of advertising on the consumer preferences and loyalty in regards to the product/service promotion of different products among student teachers of Kerala. Essentially, this research aspires to study the topic through reviewing related articles and also by getting the perceptions of knowledgeable individuals regarding the topic through surveys. These individuals are the consumers/customers of different products/services offered by different business organisations worldwide.

The major objective of this study is to observe and determine the impact of advertising to the purchasing motive, loyalty and preferences of consumers. Moreover, this study will focus on the following objectives:

1. To examine the awareness of the student teachers about advertised products.
2. To study the significant difference if any in the purchasing motive, preferences and loyalty with reference to locality.

IV. Methodology and Design

Survey method was used for the study which is supported by interview on a sample of 200 student teachers selected from two colleges in rural and urban based. The questionnaire is prepared which consists of four sections comprising: basic characteristics of the respondents for their identification; the perceived methods that the product uses for addressing the needs of their target consumers; the consumers' preferences and loyalty with regards to information on the product; and the effects of the product's advertisements to the consumers.

The method of analysis is based on the gathered information that provides the characteristics and the consumer behaviours especially based on the media that presents the product. Since the products are being advertised using several media that is included in this study, limited however to television and magazine advertisements, these will be used to evaluate how products will impact the different classes. The primary

method of analysis for this study was focused on the information gathered from the respondents. The data was analysed using statistical methods.

V. Results and discussion

Table 1 Level of awareness about consumer products among Student Teachers

Sl. No.	Variables	Number	Level of awareness in %		
			Great	Average	Low
1	Male	30	22	32	46
2	Female	170	46.5	36.5	17
3	Rural	100	39.5	34	26.5
4	Urban	100	52.5	35	12.5

Table 1 shows that among the 30 male student teachers 22% have great, 32% have average and 46% have low awareness regarding the advertisements. In the case of female students, 46.5% shows great, 36.55% shows average and 17% shows low scores. Meanwhile among the rural sample 39.5% have great, 34% have average and 26.5% have low awareness. 52.5% have high, 35% have average and 12.5% have low awareness among the urban sample.

Table 2 Comparison of the effects of advertisements to motive, preference and loyalty with reference to locality

Variables		Number	Mean	S.D	Critical Ratio
Motive	Rural	100	29.83	4.56	2.51*
	Urban	100	31.26	3.42	
Preference	Rural	100	23.12	4.65	2.09*
	Urban	100	24.44	4.28	
Loyalty	Rural	100	20.97	4.41	2.39*
	Urban	100	22.4	4.29	

* Significant at 0.05 level

From Table 3 it is found that the three variables such as motive, preference and loyalty of student teachers differ significantly at 0.05 level of significance with respect to locality. It shows that there is significant difference in the effect of advertisement among the rural and urban students.

VI. Findings and implications

The study reveals that the level of awareness of the effect of advertisement is comparatively better than expected among the student teachers. Many of them are active listeners of the media for gathering information regarding the new products, trend in the market and make a comparison with the products of other firms. The consumer culture is more prevalent in rural students than in urban students. Majority of female students are interested in cosmetics and jewellery while the male students are more concerned with automobiles and electronic equipments.

While advertisements often include information that cross cut all personality profiles, some consumers ignore some of this information and rely primarily on advertising claims and on personal experience in forming judgments about advertised products. On the other hand, some consumers defer decisions until the advertising claims have some credibility behind them before making product purchase decisions.

There are distinct processing differences between dominant, influencing, steadiness and conscientiousness individuals. These differences should affect how consumers perceive and evaluate information provided by advertising message and imagery. The basic hypothesis is that advertisements containing ad content that is consistent with subjects' perceiving/type behaviour preferences will be viewed as believable compared to advertisements that contain ad content that is inconsistent with their perceiving-type preferences.

The study implies the need for exposure and education to students so as to make them socially awakened and personally responsible citizens who are independent decision makers also.

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