

Women's attitude towards mass media advertisement

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Abstract

Advertising and society both are inter-related and affect each other in many ways. Sometimes the content of advertisements is guided by society and sometimes advertisements have dominance over society. Even though an advertisement is not meant to be a moral guide, it is also true that it has certain responsibilities towards the society simply because it reaches millions of homes and influences people, directly or indirectly. The mass media are essential not only in promotion and propagation of innovative ideas but also in transformation of the society. Advertisement affects and changes the behavior, thinking, perception and ideas of people often. As an effective audio-visual media, advertising has tremendous impact on rural Nepalese society where majority of population is illiterate. Advertisements have numerous social, cultural and economic impacts upon the viewers. Advertising is a very effective tool of communication to sensitize the people in a developing country like Nepal. It has the responsibility to play an important role in the empowerment of the women particularly regarding their rights, privileges and other facilities. In this paper attempt has been done to understand the women's attitude towards mass media advertisement particularly comprehensive, useful, influence and change in behaviour.

Keywords: Comprehensive, Useful, Influence, Behaviour and Attitude

1. Introduction

Advertising is a specific form of communication, a unique industry, and an important institution in Nepalese society. Advancement in communication technology has opened up new possibilities in marketing communication and advertising industry has become more creative, rewarding and challenging.

As a means of mass communication, innovative methods of advertising are being tried to win the consumers and to keep them. But the impact of mass media advertisements on consumer behaviour is subject to continuous discussion and debate (Alice, 2008).

Advertising is addressed to millions of people daily through different forms of mass communication media. Consumers' exposure to advertisements is increasing day by day. As consumers have easy access to mass media like Television, Newspapers, magazines, postures etc., they are constantly exposed to new ideas, products and advertisements.

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Advertising is an integral aspect of the mass media and so such an important form of communication. It not only affects consumer preferences but ends to have repercussion on the whole spectrum of human attitudes. The main function of advertising, whether made explicit or kept implicit, is to stimulate the psychological needs and desires of audiences. Stimulation of desires per se may not be that undesirable but given the context of the economy in most Third World societies, the question needs careful examination (Yadav, 1990).

There is a universal assumption that media advertisements influence the behaviour of the consumer. Assumptions of the theories behaviour and advertising suggest that the mass media advertisements can influence the consumer at different stages of the decision process. Through many researches have been conducted, there is no definite answer as to the extent of influence of media advertisements on consumer behaviour. In spite of the progress that advertising has made over the years, no improvement has happened in the measurement and evaluation of its effectiveness. Mass media advertising is subject to great deal of criticism with respect to the increasing amount spent on the same on one hand and its effectiveness on the other hand. Hence an issue arises as to whether an increase in the advertisement expenditure results in increased advertisement impact on consumers (Alice, 2008).

According to Wells (1964) the recall method of testing advertising must be designed to answer two basic questions: how many consumers remembered the advertisement and what did they remember about it. Wells conducted a series of studies development and use of advertising rating scales. A Reaction Profile Scale was developed by him to measure the emotional appeal of the advertisement. He concluded that an analysis of Reaction Profile scores in conjunction with recall scores produced evidence that both measure are related to advertising in an understandable way. Some of the reaction profile scales included semantic differential scales such as 'attractive-unattractive,' 'meaningful-meaningless,' 'convincing-unconvincing,' 'believable-unbelievable,' 'interesting-uninteresting,' 'easy to understand-hard to understand,' 'exciting- unexciting,' 'appealing unappealing,' 'worth remembering-not worth remembering' etc.

Achenbaum (1972) in his study on the 'Advertising doesn't manipulate consumers,' concluded that consumers are knowledgeable and experienced buyers. They seek information given in a persuasive context. But they do not rely only on what they hear or see. Information alone has no apparent effect on consumer attitude or behaviour. Product experience is also an important influencing factor for future purchase.

A series of studies have attempted to develop sets of perceptual scales in connection with television advertising (Schlinger, 1979); Aaker et. al. (1981). Aaker and Stayman (1990) conducted studies measuring audience perceptions of commercials and related them to advertisement impact. The first objective of the study was to explore methodological issues in assessing the underlying dimensions in audience perceptions. The second study objective was to relate those dimensions to measures of commercial effectiveness. The commercial effectiveness was measured mainly by 'liking of the advertisement.' It was revealed that being informative was the most useful predictors of 'liking of the advertisement' and ad effectiveness.

Woodruff (1972) suggested that various sources of information have different effects upon attitudes. Capon et. al. (1979) found that people with higher socio-economic status were more efficient processors of information in the task of durable purchases.

The effect of attitude towards advertisement on purchase behaviour was investigated by Shimp et. al. (1980). Two experiments were conducted by them under simulated marketing conditions. Results from both the experiments indicated clearly that subjects attitudes towards the experimental advertisements were more important determinant of their purchase behaviour than other factors. It was revealed that the more favourable their evaluation of the advertisement the more positive their rating of the brand and the greater their frequency of purchasing the advertised brand.

2. Objectives

The broad objective of the study is to investigate the women's attitude towards mass media advertisement in the study area. For this comprehensive, useful to people, useful to respondent, influence through advertisement and respondent's change on behaviour through advertisement were analysed.

3. Methodology

This work has adopted descriptive as well as analytical research design. The study area was identified using multistage sampling method and purposive sampling technique adopted for selecting the sample. The research included women of different ecological region (Mountain, Hill and Tarai), different development regions (Eastern Development, Central Development, Western Development, Mid-Western Development and Far-Western Development) and on the basis of rural and urban residence of Nepal. This study was conducted in 5 districts (Jhapa, Kavrepalanchwok, Palpa, Dolpa and Kailali) of Nepal which included 200 women for the study. Nature of the data is qualitative as well as quantitative

and primary sources were used for data collection. Interview, observation and case studies also used to collect primary data and information.

4. Results

4.1 Attitude towards Advertisement

To find out the respondents on perceptions and influences of media's advertisements, respondents were asked the question related to the comprehensive of advertisements, usefulness of advertisements to the people, usefulness of advertisements to the respondents, influence by advertisements through media and changes behaviour by advertisements of media. The details of the classification of the respondents according to the comprehensive, usefulness to people, usefulness to the respondents, influence and change in behaviour shown in the following table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents by perceptions and influence of media advertisements

Variables	Classification	Number	Percentage
Comprehensive	Comprehensive	145	72.5
	Not comprehensive	55	27.5
	Total	200	100.0
Useful to people	Useful	91	45.5
	Somewhat useful	91	45.5
	Not useful	18	9.0
	Total	200	100.0
Useful to you	Useful	152	76.0
	Not useful	48	24.0
	Total	200	100.0
Influence	Influenced	122	61.0
	Not influenced	78	39.0
	Total	200	100.0

Source- Field Survey 2013

Comprehension

Above table shows that majority of the respondents 72.5 percent reported that they considered that advertisement through media's are comprehensive. Only 27.5 Percent respondents reported that advertisement through media's are not comprehensive.

Respondents were further asked what types of advertisement affected you. Maximum of them mentioned that public service advertisement and commercial product advertisement. Few of respondents mentioned that commercial service advertisement affected to them.

Respondents were again asked whether they are remembering those advertisements. Maximum of them remembered public service advertisement and commercial product advertisement. Only few remembered commercial product advertisement. Few respondents didn't remember any advertisement.

Usefulness

On the basis of data received it can be said that 45.5 percent respondents reported that advertisements through media is useful to the people. 45.5 percent respondents reported that advertisements through media are somewhat useful to the people and only 9.0 percent respondents reported that advertisements through media are not useful to the people.

The above table 1 discloses that the majority of the respondents 76 percent responses that advertisements through media are useful to them. Only 24 percent respondents reported that advertisements through media are not useful to them.

Influence

It is clear from the above table relating to the influence by advertisement through media, that maximum 61 percent respondents responses that they are influenced by the advertisements given through media while only 39 percent respondents reported that they are not influenced by the advertisements given through media.

Change in Behaviour

Respondents were asked have you experienced any change in behaviour or habit due to influence by advertisement. Maximum respondents mentioned that they started healthy habit, started behaviour helping community and starting use new technologies/ knowledge. Few respondents mentioned that they stopped unhealthy habit, started treating male/female equally and started advocacy discrimination against girls. Few of them reported that there is no change in behaviour and habit by the advertisement.

5. Findings

- Nearly three-fourth of the respondents (72.5%) considered advertisements on media were comprehensive. Only 27.5 percent respondents considered advertisements on media were not comprehensive.
- Around 46 percent respondents felt advertisements on media were useful to the people. 45.5 percent respondents felt advertisements on media were somewhat useful to the people and only 9 percent respondents felt advertisements on media were not useful to the people.
- More than three quarters of the respondents (76%) felt advertisements on media were useful to them. Remaining 24 percent respondents felt advertisements on media were not useful to them.

- Majority of the respondents (61%) were influenced by the advertisements on media while 39 percent respondents were not influenced by the advertisements.
- Respondents experienced change in behaviour or habit due to influence by advertisements on media. Majority of respondents mentioned that they started healthy habit, behaviour helping community and using new technologies/ knowledge. A few respondents mentioned that they stopped unhealthy habit, started treating male/female equally and advocating discrimination against girls. A few also reported that there was no change in their behaviour or habit due to the advertisements.

6. Conclusion

The relation between attitude change and behaviour is the subject of several articles. Changing consumer attitude is a frequent business objective. Some consumer behaviorists believe that a necessary connection between attitude change and behaviour change exist, another group which holds the proposition that an attitude change is not necessary for behaviour to change.

Comprehensive and valid models of consumer behaviour are essential tools for anyone trying to understand the effectiveness of advertisements. Consumer behaviour may be defined as the decision process and physical activity individuals engage in when evaluating, acquiring, using or disposing of goods and services.

The investigation revealed a significant relationship between respondents' overall attitude towards advertisements and their perception of advertisement's influence on the consumer behaviour. It was observed that no significant variance in the information search pattern and the behavioural responses to advertisement were present across the different socio-economic segments. This highlights the importance of behavioural segmentation in developing promotion strategies.

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