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Current Indian Economy: Challenges, Opportunities and Policies



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Indian Economy

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Improving Internal Communication In Retail

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ABSTRACT :

Effective internal communication is essential in every industry. However, it is especially important in a retail environment. Retail employees work without email, computers, desks, and other tools available to office employees. Their work requires employees to spread out across the store, making it challenging to catch managers and ask questions. To make matters even more confusing, retail employees work shift schedules. This means that holding regular staff meetings with everyone present is almost impossible.

Key word :- Consumer Behaviour, Advertisement, Communication, Spending, Social Imaging.

Introduction :

Advertising is a way of communication to encourage an audience for making purchase decision about a product or service and conveying information to viewers. It is considered as a vital and essential element for the economic growth of the marketers and businesses (Ryans, 1996). Advertising is usually a paid form of exposure or promotion by some sponsor that reaches through various traditional media such as television, newspaper, commercial radio advertisement, magazine mail, outdoor advertising or modern media such as blogs, websites and text messages (Ahmed & Ashfaq, 2013).

Marketers have always adapted to changing business demands when it comes to creating new advertisements. The use of advertisements has significantly increased in the 20th Century as industrialization expanded the supply of manufactured products. However, not many businesses practiced advertising at the time. During the late 80s advertisements were fairly limited to television, radio, billboards and newspapers. In the modern times, businesses are leaning towards Digital Advertising. Companies are so focused in social media and mobile advertisements that they may take over Television advertisement very soon. In Bangladesh, the trend of Digital Marketing is just on the bloom. Most large local and multinational giant companies are now practicing digital marketing in full swing.

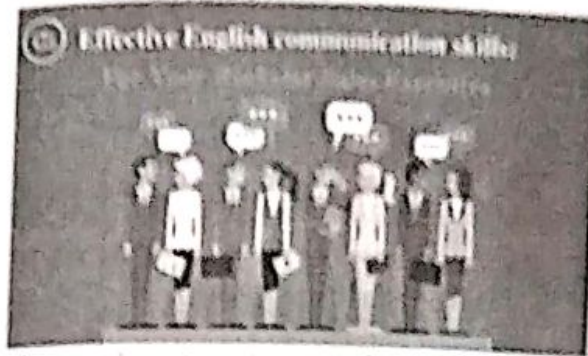
The major aim of advertising is to impact on buying behaviour; however, this impact about brand is changed or strengthened frequently through people's memories. Memories about the brand



are formed by associations that are related to brand name in consumer mind (Khan, Siddiqui, Shah & Hunjra, 2012). These brands continuously influence consideration, evaluation and finally purchases (Romaniuk & Sharp, 2004). Consumers buying behaviour has always been given so much importance and space in the literature study of impact of advertising regarding its effectiveness (Ajzen, 2002).

Most of the time consumers buying behaviour depends on liking or disliking of consumer towards the advertisement of the product advertised (Smith et al., 2006). A good quality advertisement is likely to influence consumers into buying that product while a poor quality advertisement will do the opposite.

Previous studies have been conducted on effectiveness of advertisement and on advertisement's impact on consumer buying behaviour which depicted positive relationships. However, in this paper we have introduced a combination of different variables and attempted to examine their influence on consumer behaviour. This paper aims to determine which of these



variables carries the most importance in terms of effecting consumer behaviour and which of these variables carries less significant impact. This will help marketers to focus on the right factors and achieve maximum benefit from their advertisement.

We believe that the study will offer useful insights for both advertising scholars and executives to understand the ins and outs of advertising and to assist marketers in introducing better approaches to advertising.

5 Strategies For Improving Internal Retail Communication

1: Personalized Pre-Meetings

Holding quick pre-work meetings with employees is a great way to start out a shift. Pre-meetings give store leaders an opportunity to update employees on changes and assign specific tasks. Pre-meetings should never take longer than three or four minutes. These meetings will orient employees and prepare everyone for a successful day. Whenever possible, make your pre-meetings one-on-one, or in a large retail environment, no more than five employees. This ensures leaders and staff can have a real conversation where workers are able to ask questions, clarify concerns, and bring up any of their own issues. Personalized pre-meetings also assure leaders that everyone has heard and understood important information.

2: Put Updates In Writing

While it's important for pre-meetings to happen in person, leaders should also include workplace changes, promotions, and any other news in a written form. Introducing information verbally is a great way to get people excited and gives them a chance to ask questions, but people will always forget details over time. Employees can reference a written document later on, ensuring information is not forgotten. Written statements also give store policies a greater sense of authority when employees are working with difficult customers. Collaboration tools like MangoApps are the perfect place to keep written reminders, giving employees immediate access right from their mobile device. However you decide to share written announcements, be sure they are easily accessible to all affected employees. These written documents are just another small step that can be taken towards improving retail communication.

3: Implement Technology

Collaboration and communication tools are a fantastic way to streamline company announcements and resources. Unlike the traditional office workplace, retail employees are generally spread out and working on the go. This makes sending information much more difficult, especially when changes happen in the middle of a shift or require private communication. Without easy access to a computer, employees struggle to keep each other informed about concerns throughout the store. Not to mention, they are unable to access important resources. Collaboration tools provide employees with a constant connection. This makes accessing work schedules, posting questions, finding details for customers, or anything else, an effortless experience.

**4: Actually Be Available**

Employees can't communicate with leaders if they are never available. This is especially true in retail, where without emails and water cooler conversations, talking to a manager can literally take days. Retail employers need to keep these constraints in mind and make an effort to be easily available. When employees have to give up breaks or go out of their way to address issues, communication becomes much less likely. As a manager, it is your responsibility to make sure employees can easily communicate concerns. This means paying attention to workers who are unable to leave their workstation.

5: Consistent Communication

Consistency is the key to clarity, and one of the best strategies for improving retail communication is simply to keep it the same. This doesn't mean of course that communication methods should never change or that bad habits can be justified. It means that leaders need to establish a regular and reliable system. When communication is distributed in a consistent way, employees can gain a strong understanding of the communication process and know what to expect day to day. One great way to create dependable communication is by assigning a single point person to employees. This means that employees will only receive updates and new information from one specific individual. A single point person gives employees someone to regularly rely on and turn to with clarifications or questions and ensures employees aren't receiving contradictory instructions.

Background Of The Study

Following are the review of major research work on the topic which is related to the present study:

Maheshwari, Seth & Gupta (2016) in their article "An empirical approach to consumer buying behaviour in Indian automobile sector" has concluded that advertisement effectiveness positively influences consumer buying behaviour.

Ha, John, Swinder & Muthaly (2011), in their research paper "The effects of advertising spending on brand loyalty in services" have discovered that advertising spending has impact on consumer's perceived quality of the product, consumer's loyalty and satisfaction level.

Kumar & Raju (2013) in their paper "The Role of Advertising in Consumer Decision Making" have found that advertisements are able to change the consumer's opinion about a particular product.

Advertising has always known to be one of the key factors that affect consumer's decision making process. In this paper, we have attempted to combine different sets of variables from these previous studies to test and analyse how they impact consumer's buying intention.

Review Of Literature**Entertainment**

Entertainment has been one of the primary criteria for creating an advertisement. Entertainment is used as a tool to gain attention of customers. An interesting and entertaining ad is more likely to be remembered by consumers rather than a boring one. Therefore, it can be said that entertainment increases the effectiveness of advertising. That is why many companies are investing a lot of money to make advertisements that are humorous (Mandan, Hossein & Furuzandeh, 2013).

Former studies suggest that entertainment in advertising generates customer satisfaction (Chang, 2006). This claim was tested by later empirical studies. For instance, Duncan and Nelson (1985) conducted a research on how entertainment in advertisement affects consumers. They analysed 157 responses towards advertising and found that entertaining advertisements can influence consumers. It influences consumers into accepting and consuming the product (Duncan & Nelson, 1985). In a similar way, Chang (2006) investigated about entertaining advertisements and its influence on consumer satisfaction and leave impact on their behavioural intentions. Based on his research on 152 participants, he found that entertaining advertising can positively increase consumers' satisfaction, thus influencing consumer buying behaviour.



Although use of humour in advertisements can be risky at times as a large number of people may not be entertained by the same concept. Gulas and Weinberger in their book say that a failed attempt to entertaining ads is a lost opportunity to connect with consumers. It may even offend consumers and drive them away. They have exemplified this risk with a 1999 Super Bowl advertisement for 'Just for Feet'. It showed a group of white men tracking a barefoot, black Kenyan runner who was later drugged and forced against his will to wear a pair of running shoes (p. 174). The advertisement was met with massive outrage (Gulas & Weinberg, 2006).

However, entertaining advertisements do not necessarily mean humorous ads. Thrilling, full of suspense advertisements can also be counted as entertaining. One of the biggest examples of all time is the Apple super bowl commercial "1984". It left people awestruck and it was immediately able to get attention of people. It was very effective in terms of spreading news about a new era of computers. It also had a huge part in generating sales for the company.

Harvard professor Teixeira has conducted an interesting study on this regard and wrote a paper "Why, When and How much to entertain consumers in advertisements?" The study is based on a facial tracking study (software used to track the facial emotions) in response to the TVCs. This is a first of its kind study and is the latest (Teixeira, Picard & Kaliouby, 2013).

Teixeira found that entertainment plays both a co-operating and a conflicting role, depending on its type (i.e., location in the ad). Entertainment that is associated with the brand is co-operating, as it acts as a persuasion device both in the interest and purchase stages. Entertainment that is not associated with the brand acts predominantly as an attraction device at the interest stage, thus indirectly cooperating but also directly conflicting with the ultimate goal of the ad.

The previous research as provided us with diverse information about the impact of entertainment on consumers. It is seen to influence consumers in a positive way by grabbing their attention and creating a lasting impression. However, in some cases the impact was negative. In this research we will attempt to find out if these varied impressions about entertaining advertisements really have any impact on consumer's buying intention.

Social Imaging

Advertisements generally have influence on how we perceive things around us. Through various types of advertisements, especially TVCs portray how a user of a certain product is or should be. It sometimes shows the social class the user of a product belong to, their lifestyle and attitudes.

In cases of beauty product this concept is highly applicable. In a research conducted in 2009 it was observed that one of most influential ideas spread by the media is society's perception of beauty and attractiveness. The thin beautiful woman and the handsome muscular men are seen everywhere. And as the influence of media increases, the pressure to hold on to these ideals increases (Russello, 2009).

In 2008, the YWCA USA published a report, Beauty at Any Cost, which highlighted the consequences of the beauty obsession on women and girls in America through media. This feeling of insecurity and obsession is very much likely to trigger purchase of beauty products (Britton, 2012).

The mass media is the most powerful way to spread these images that represent sociocultural ideals (Tiggemann, 2003). Advertising promote social messages and life style by illustrating the position of ideal consumer and stimulates consumer's willingness to purchase (Pollay & Mittal, 1993).

Apart from the beauty industry, another great example of social image that is solely created by advertisement is the brand "Rolex". It is not necessarily the best product in the market nor does it add a lot of usefulness to one's life in this day of cell phones. But through its careful ad placements they have gained the attraction of millions. They have targeted sports and club members of the elite and portrayed them in their advertisements. They have identified how the lifestyle of an ideal customer of their product is, where they live, where they hang out, etc. In a way they have sent a



subliminal message to the people that 'Rolex' is only for the rich and sophisticated, it is what sets a person apart from the ordinary. Rolex is now more of a social status rather than a time tracking device. As a result, a person who has suddenly become rich would want to buy a Rolex just to have a sense of belonging in that 'elite' class.

Even the smart watch by Apple that offers a great functionality failed to compete with Rolex as it was reported by Tech Times:

"Apple may be the numero uno smart watch seller in the world and while it can revel in the fact that it thwarts its wearable rivals such as Samsung, Sony and LG in this sphere, the Cupertino-based company is still not a shine on Swiss watchmaker Rolex, which is synonymous with luxury".

Prior studies have shown that stereotyping and classification of a certain gender or group of people has a huge impact on mass population. People feel pressurized to look a certain way to get a feeling of belonging. This may have both positive and negative impact on the society. But in this research, we will focus on finding out if 'social imaging' in an advertisement is successful in persuading people to purchase a product by inducing their desire to belong in a certain social class.

Spending

Advertising spending can have an effect in the buying behaviour of people in a sense that the more money spent can be linked with the quality of advertisement and the frequency of advertisement. It may result in creating a lasting impression in consumer's mind. Advertising is an important extrinsic cue signalling product quality (Milgrom & Roberts, 1986). Heavy advertising spending shows that the firm is investing in the brand, which means the organization has a huge investment and thus implies that they might have a better quality of product (Kirmani & Wright, 1989). In addition, advertising spending levels are good indicators of not only high quality but also good buys (Archibald, Haulman & Moody, 1983).

Yoo, Donthu & Lee (2000) examined the impact of the marketing mix variables on consumer behaviour. The approach focuses on the indirect effect of these determinants on brand loyalty. Since advertising spending affects expectations of product or service quality in consumer's mind (Kirmani & Wright, 1989; Yoo, Donthu & Lee, 2000; Moorthy & Zhao, 2000), its role should be indirectly linked to brand loyalty implying that rather than the advertisement itself, it is how advertising affects customer perception of the firm that is more critical in impacting consumer buying behaviour (Ha, Janda & Muthaly, 2011).

The earlier studies have concluded that when a huge sum is spent on advertisements and other marketing campaigns consumers began to expect more from that particular brand. It creates an illusion of better quality of product or service from that brand. In this study, we will try to find out that how these associations that consumers make with 'Advertisement Spending' and the 'Brand' effect their purchase decision. In other words, we will attempt to find out how consumers perceive advertisement spending and if it ultimately influences them to purchase the product.

Consumer Buying Behaviour

Consumer buying behaviour refers to the methods involved when individuals or groups choose, buy, utilize or dispose of products, services, concepts or experiences to suit their needs and desires (Solomon, 1995). A behaviour that consumers display in searching for, paying for, using, evaluating and disposing of products and services that they think will satisfy their needs (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007). It is a convergence of three fields of social science, they are, individual psychology, societal psychology and cultural anthropology (Ramachander, 1988). A theory that answers what, why, how, when and where an individual makes purchase (Green, 1992); it is particularly important to study the subject of consumer buying behaviour as it facilitates firms to plan and execute superior business strategies (Khaniwale, 2015).



In this research we will attempt to find what factors effect consumer buying behaviour. In previous studies certain variables were found to have an impact in consumers. This is briefly discussed below:

Familiarity created by advertisement for a certain brand is also an important factor that affects consumer buying behaviour. Macinnis and Park (1991) carried out a study with consumers to investigate the effects of familiar songs in advertising and consumer behaviour. In their research, consumers depicted satisfaction for products with familiar songs and a significant relationship was confirmed between the level of familiarity of the songs in the advertising and its amiability.

Social role and image reflects that ads influence individual life style and the extent to which an individual seeks to present him or herself in a socially acceptable manner. In addition to selling products and services, ads sell image and life style. Consumers learn about new life style, image and trend through ads (Pollay & Mittal, 1993; Burns, 2003). Advertising promote social messages and life style through illustrating the position of ideal consumer and stimulate social action toward purchase of that product.

Advertising spending also creates positive impression about a brand in the minds of the consumers. Aaker and Jacobson (1994) also find a positive relationship between advertising and perceived quality. Hence, advertising spending is positively related to perceived quality, which leads to greater amount of purchase from that brand as consumers generally prefer to purchase from a well know brand in order to avoid disappointments over quality.

Conclusion

This research was a study on the impact of advertisement on consumer buying behaviour. For this purpose four independent variables, Entertainment in Advertisement, Familiarity of Advertisement, Social Imaging in Advertisement and Advertisement Spending were considered. Based on the analysis it can be concluded that advertisement has significant impact on consumer buying behaviour. This study can be helpful for marketers to understand what triggers a consumer's intention to purchase. They can determine which element in advertising is most effective and which has comparatively lower impact. Although this research can make significant contribution to literature but for future study qualitative data can be used. Qualitative data will provide further insight into the relationship among these variables.

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