

## Impact of Newspaper Advertisement on Consumer Behavior

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### Abstract

The current study analyzes the psychological impact of the newspaper advertisement on a consumer and thus his assessment of the effectiveness of the advertisement. The study also compares human perception of a newspaper advertisement versus the intended perception of that advertisement. Psychological impact and perception are important aspects found to affect consumer behavior. The advertisements used for the study ranged from products to services. Resnik and Stern criteria were used to evaluate the level of advertising information provided in the newspaper advertisement. The study revealed that 40% advertisements were informative whereas only 26% percent were perceived to be informative by the common consumer in the year 2013. Similar comparisons were made on other characteristics of newspaper advertisement such as perception of product quality and performance, components/ contents and special offers.

**Keywords:** Consumer Behavior, Content Analysis, Impact of newspaper advertisement.

### 1. Background

Advertising is a big component in the market economy. It plays a significant role in motivating consumers to either use a particular brand or to increase their consumption of that brand. Newspaper forms an effective form of media in a developing country such as India where its reach is to almost every household. According to the 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Report of Registrar of Newspaper for India (RNI) in 2011 India leads the world in terms of newspaper circulation with nearly 330 million newspapers circulated daily and it grew at a rate of 6.25% over the previous year [6]. Similarly, according to the figures of Nielsen Company, expenditure in India on Newspaper advertisements was US\$ 4 billion in the year 2011 and is expected to grow at an impressive rate. Therefore the objective of this study is to find the role played by informative content in

affecting consumer behavior and thus influencing their perception and attitude towards that brand.

## **2. Literature Review**

Advertisements are defined into two basic categories such as informative and transformative advertisements. Informative advertisement is one which provides consumers with actual facts (i.e. price, quantity, etc) and other brand details in a logical manner such that a consumer can have greater confidence in assessing the merits of buying the brand. Transformative advertisement is one which uses various psychological characteristics to differentiate it from the experience of using other brand. [1]. Resnik and Stern in their study described 14 points on the basis of which a television advertisement can be concluded as informative [2]. Chan and Chan conducted a study in which they used television advertisements to find the informational content in it [3]. Kassanjian in his study has discussed content analysis as a scientific, objective, quantitative description of communications content and its impact on consumer behavior and marketing[4].

Holbrook in his review paper has focused on the role played by content analysis on the attitude, cognition and the purchasing behavior.[5]. Celsi in his study discussed the importance of felt involvement i.e the overall subjective feeling of personal relevance of a consumer[7]. Albernethy in his study showed that magazine advertisements contain more informational content than television advertisement [8]. Albernethy and Butler in his study showed that newspaper advertisement were more informational than magazine advertisements.[9]. Olson and Reynolds[10], Mitchell[11], Edell and Staelin[12], Khan, Azam and Khan[13] in their study have shown how advertising works and the role of advertising content.

## **3. Methodology**

Study was done by selecting 1017 different advertisements from English newspapers with adequate number of readers. Any duplicated advertisement was not selected for the study to eliminate any discrepancies in the result that may occur due to duplication. Advertisements selected for the study included durable products, health and cosmetic products, apparels and services as well. Any Government schemes and campaign promotional messages were excluded from the selected sample. The period of selecting the advertisements was kept for 6 weeks to include a wide variety of advertisements. Then after selecting the advertisements they were given a unique number so that they could be later identified and their respective measurements were noted down.

The selected sample was then analyzed twice using the Resnik and Stern criteria once by a graduate with an effective knowledge of this field and then by the author. The analysis was done independently and the inter code reliability level reached was .96 to 1. This reliability level was far more than 85% specified by Kassanjian [4]. While trying to find whether the advertisement was informative or not, emotional appeal was

also kept in mind. Then to find how many advertisements were perceived as informative by a consumer 5 recruits with no knowledge about the criteria were asked to comment on it and median of their result was taken as final result. In a simultaneous process 5 more recruits were asked to choose the advertisements that influenced them towards exploring the product and median of their result was taken as final result.

#### 4. Results

An analysis of the advertisement revealed the following data (Table 1) about the type of information present in newspaper advertisement. It was found that 77.58% of the advertisement contained information about the availability of product. It was also found that 93.58% advertisement contained at least one cue. It was found that 83.5% advertisements contained atleast 2 cues.

**Table 1:** Type of Information in Newspaper Advertisement.

Type of Information	No. of Commercial Ads Containing the Cue	% of Sample
Price or value	255	25.07%
Quality	512	50.34%
Performance	130	12.78%
Components and contents	412	40.51%
Availability	789	77.58%
Special Offers	310	30.48%
Taste	16	1.5%
Packaging or Shape	105	10.32%
Guarantees or Warrantees	130	12.78%
Safety	18	1.7%
Nutrition	15	1.47%
Independent Research	62	9.04%
Company Sponsored Research	11	1.08%
New Ideas	2	0.19%

An analysis of the sample (Table 2) found that 40% of the advertisements were informational as compared to 26% as perceived by a consumer. It was also found that correlation between advertisements influencing consumer behavior was highest for durables with 84.09%. It can be seen that informative content had an influential impact on consumer behavior.

**Table 2:** Impact of Informative advertisement on Consumer Behavior.

Category	Total no. of ads	No. of informative ads	No. of informative ads according to consumer	No. of Ads Influencing the consumer	No. of Informative ads Influencing the customer	Percentage correlation between influence and informative ads
Durables	360	220	145	255	185	84.09%
Pharma	25	17	12	21	14	82.3%
Foods and beverages	42	11	10	35	9	81.8%
Services	210	82	51	110	52	63.41%
Cosmetic apparels and footwear	280	44	28	195	12	27.3%
Miscellaneous	100	34	19	52	21	61.76%

## 5. Conclusion

The current study focuses on the impact of informational content on consumer behavior. Its impact can be assessed from the fact that advertisements with more informational content were found to influence more customers than advertisements with less informational content. The impact of informational content and its probability of being liked by a consumer were greatest for electronics and durable goods. It was found to be the least for apparels where people were more influenced by its emotional appeal. Advertisements were found to be quite informational with 2.7 cues per advertisement. The amount of information present was found to be independent of the size of the advertisement. It was found that advertisements related to electronic items were more factual than advertisements related to apparels that were mainly transformational. It can be understood that commercials of different products employ different strategy to influence their customers and such a data can be helpful in obtaining its impact on the customers not only for newspaper advertisement but for all other forms of advertisements.

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