

## **A Study on Analysing the Effects of Advertisements on Buying Behaviour of University Students**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In today's business sphere, advertising is a special marketing tool that provides information to its viewers and encourages them to take decisions regarding purchasing of any product. The present study seeks to examine how advertisements influence consumers to purchase different goods, services: how people perceive advertisements and consumers preference of different advertising media. A sample of 80 university students were taken and a self-explanatory questionnaire was used for collecting data. The study explored how advertisements influenced respondents to a large extent to purchase convenience goods (Mean Score = 65.51) and it had a minimal influence on their purchase of luxury goods (MS= 33.87). It also revealed that advertisements displayed over internet (MS= 72.06), on television (MS= 59.66) & outdoor displays are having more influence on consumers buying behaviour as compared to those broadcasted over radio (MS= 24.95). Besides these, along with the positive aspects of advertisements, respondents also perceived some negative effects like misleading consumers and creating unrealistic expectations. It can be concluded that advertisements specially related to foods and cosmetics on internet had significantly affected the buying behaviour of university students.

**Keywords:** Advertisements, advertising media, buying behaviour, consumers.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Twenty first century is the era of globalisation, digitization and technology boom where markets are changing rapidly and becoming more and more competitive all round the world. To make a win-win situation in this competitive markets companies are striving hard to make their products more profitable, more consumer oriented. Advertising has proved to be engine of development, a necessary input for economic change and dynamic aid for social usage that provides information to its viewers and encourages them to take decisions regarding purchasing of any product. Advertisement is a distinct type of communication which influences consumers to make certain choices regarding purchase of goods and serves as a prominent commercial tool for different companies (Ryans, 1996). Advertising is basically a remunerated form of promotion of products or services by some promoters using either traditional media like radio, television, newspapers etc. or modern media such as websites, blogs etc. (Ahmed & Ashfaq, 2013).

The main focus of advertising is to impact the buying behaviour of consumers. There are several factors which directly or indirectly influence the decision making and purchasing behaviour of consumers. Most of the time consumers buying behaviour is influenced by liking or disliking of consumer towards the advertisement of the product, advertised (Smith et al., 2006). Sathya and Indirajith (2018) explained that the consumer buying preferences are rapidly changing and moving towards high-end technology products with acculturation. Advertisement as a marketing tool also changes with changing markets, changing life styles, changing methods of distribution and changing pattern of consumption & thereby directly or indirectly affects consumers buying behaviours. AIDA behavioural model that has a purpose to make an advertisement raise awareness, stimulate interest, and leads the customer to desire and eventually action.

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The technology revolution of 21st century has reinvigorated youth with sufficient information. The advertisements directly or indirectly influence youth to look into upon certain agendas in such a mode in which it has been shown by the advertisement. The use of media in today's day-to-day life has increased to such extent that its impact on the users cannot be side lined. Today's youths are much more inclined towards internet and television as compared to those of conventional media like newspapers, radio etc. and therefore it becomes imperative that these youths get influenced by these advertising media (Vanishree & Vilas, 2014). Hence, there emerges a need to study the impact of advertisements on youths. With this background information, the present study was undertaken to assess the how advertisements influence the buying behaviour of university students and what students perceive regarding the positive and negative effects of advertisements.

### METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in Govind Ballabh Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar, Uttarakhand and respondents were university students. Now-a-days youths are tightly packed up with knowledge and information and the technology boom has brought about several changes in their life style. Several researches also revealed how modern advertisements leave their impacts directly or indirectly young minds to take any action. University students represent a portion of this young generation and hence they were chosen as respondents of the current study.

The *ex-post-facto* research design was used in the study, as the manifestation of the variables presumably had already occurred and there was no scope for further manipulation. Among different colleges in the university, College of Agriculture was purposively chosen. The respondents were students of under-graduate, post-graduate and doctoral degree students. Forty male students and forty female students were chosen randomly for data collection. Hence, the total sample size for the present study was (40+40) *i.e.* 80.

Primary data was collected through a semi-structured questionnaire. Preference of buying different consumer goods after viewing advertisements and preference of advertising medium was measured using Garrett Ranking technique. After thorough review of literature, a list of different consumer goods and different advertising medium was prepared and respondents were asked to rank each item on the basis of their preference. These orders of merit were transformed into units of scores by using the following formula

$$\text{Percent position} = \{100 * (R_{ij} - 0.5)\} / N_j$$

Where,  $R_{ij}$  = Rank given for  $i$ th factor by  $j$ th respondent

$N_j$  = Number of factors ranked by  $j$ th respondent

The percent position is converted into scores by referring to the table given by Garrett and Woodworth (1969). Then for each factor the scores of the individual respondents were added together and divided by the total number of respondents for whom scores were added. On the basis of the obtained mean scores, the items were ranked accordingly.

The perception of university students regarding positive and negative impacts of advertisements was measured on a Likert type scale having 5 point continuum with strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (U), disagree (D), and strongly disagree (SD). For this purpose, 8 statements were finally chosen and administered to the respondents to find out to what extent they agree or disagree to each item. Data analysis was done in Microsoft Excel and final results were presented in the form of frequency, percentage, and mean perception score (MPS) and standard deviation (sd). Mean perception scores were calculated by taking the averages of all the responses to a particular statement. SD denotes the level of variation of responses by the respondents on a particular statement.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1: Socio-economic profile of respondents**

n=80			
Profile variables	Particulars	No. of respondents ( <i>f</i> )	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	40	50
	Female	40	50
Background	Rural	47	58.75
	Urban	33	41.25
Annual family income	< 2 lakhs	18	22.5
	2-10 lakhs	52	65.0
	>10 lakhs	10	12.5
Educational qualification	UG	37	46.25
	PG	25	31.25
	PhD	18	22.50

Table 1 clearly depicts the socio-economic profile of the respondents. The number of male students and female students were equal, each counting to 40. Most of the respondents were belonging from rural background

(58.75%) whereas 41.25 percent of the respondents were having urban background. Since university students represented a section of young generation, their age was lying between 18 years to 27 years. Annual family income of majority of the students fell in middle income category i.e. from 2 to 10 lakhs per annum (65.00%). 22.5 percent respondents were categorized into low income group (less than 2 lakhs/ annum) and only 12.50 percent respondents belonged to higher income class (more than 10 lakhs/year). Out of total 80 respondents, 46.25 percent respondents were undergraduate students, 31.25 percent respondents were post graduate students and 22.50 percent respondents were doctoral students.

**Table 2: Ranking of different consumer goods according to their purchasing preference after viewing advertisementsn  
n= 80**

Different Categories of Consumer Goods	Total Score	Mean Score (MS)	Rank
Convenience Goods	5241	65.51	I
Shopping Goods	4365	54.56	II
Speciality Goods	2710	33.87	IV
Unsought Goods	3742	46.77	III

Table 2 presented the ranking of different consumer goods according to purchasing preference of the university students after viewing the advertisements. Consumer goods can be defined as the products bought by final consumers for personal consumption. In the present study, consumer goods are defined as the products which are finally purchased by the university students for their use. The broad head of consumer goods can again be categorized into four sub-groups.

A convenience product is a consumer product or service that students normally buy frequently, immediately and without great comparison or buying effort. Shopping products are a consumer product that the students usually compares on attributes such as quality, price and style in the process of selecting and purchasing. Speciality products are consumer products and services with unique characteristics or brand identification for which a significant group of students are willing to make a special purchase effort. Unsought products are those consumer products that students either does not know about or knows about but does not consider buying under normal conditions. The results portrays that advertisements had a major influence on students in purchasing their day-to-day needed convenience goods (Mean Score=65.51). Shopping goods (Mean Score=54.56) were ranked second and unsought products were ranked third (Mean Score=46.77) the purchasing preference after viewing the advertisements. Whereas

speciality product was ranked last (Mean Score=33.87) in this list. Advertisements strongly influence students in making buying decisions related to easily available daily needed goods, shopping goods as compared to luxury items and it helps consumers in comparing among different brands and make their final choice. Romaniuk and Sharp (2004) in their research stated that in different buying situations individual uses cues by recalling brand advertisements and thereby it leads to brand association with their shopping.

**Table 3: Ranking of different advertisement media using Garrett ranking  
n=80**

	Total Score	Mean Score (MS)	Rank
Newspaper	4358	54.47	III
Television	4773	59.66	II
Radio	1996	24.95	VI
Outdoor display	4042	50.52	IV
Magazine	3002	37.52	V
Internet	5765	72.06	I

Advertisement media can be operationalized as the different channels through which promoters communicate their advertisements to the ultimate consumers. This includes both traditional and modern media. In table 3, different advertisement media are ranked by the university students on the basis of their severity of influencing consumers by using Garrett Ranking Technique. The results revealed that that internet (Mean Score= 72.06) is the most influencing advertisement media. Television (Mean Score=59.66) has been ranked second followed by newspaper with a mean score of 54.47. Kotwal *et al.* (2008) insisted upon the fact that television and advertising have proved a great amalgamation together and are now considered as an crucial part of modern world.

The techno boom of 21st century has given immense opportunity to the young generation to get everything within their reach where internet serves as the best medium. The results of the present study are similar with the results of Deepa (2013) who reported that youths get maximum information regarding different products from television and newspaper advertisements since both are visual media.

Visual media are certainly advantageous over other media as people can see, compare and ultimately make their decision. Outdoor displays (Mean score=50.52) and magazine (Mean score= 37.52) were ranked third and fourth respectively. The least influencing advertising medium as ranked by the students was radio (Mean Score=24.95).

**Table 4: Perception of university students regarding impact of advertisements**

Statements	n=80						MPS	sd
	SA (f)	A (f)	U (f)	D (f)	SD (f)			
Advertisements provide information regarding products, services	40	34	6	0	0	4.43	0.63	
Advertisements help to make decisions for purchasing	38	28	12	0	2	4.25	0.89	
Sometimes advertisements mislead consumers through false images	0	10	29	23	18	2.38	0.97	
Advertisements are creating unrealistic expectations now-a-days.	2	20	16	29	13	2.61	1.11	
Advertisements hel in expansion of markets	46	28	6	0	0	4.50	0.63	
Advertisements directly or indirectly raises standard of living of consumers	12	22	29	12	5	3.30	1.09	
Advertising leads to capital investment	33	29	14	1	3	4.10	0.98	
Advertisements sometimes promotes harmful products	0	4	27	13	36	1.98	0.99	

(f= frequency, MPS= Mean Perception Score, sd= Standard Deviation)

Perception is defined as the awareness of the elements of environment through physical sensation. In this study, perception can be operationalized as the way university students feel that advertisements are having more positive or negative impacts on young generation as well as the society. The results explain the percentage of respondents agreeing or disagreeing with different statements and also the mean perception scores for each statement. A higher mean perception score (MPS) explains that respondents strongly perceive those facts regarding impact of advertisements.

The analysis is depicted in Table 4. The findings of the table suggest that majority of the respondents were strongly agreeing with the fact that advertisements helps in the expansion of markets (f=46) with a mean perception score of 4.50 followed by the fact that "Advertisements provides information regarding products and services" with a mean perception score of 4.43. This reveals that advertisements mainly act as a communication tool for the promoters whose ultimate aim is market creation and its expansion. The statement with third highest MPS(4.25) is "Advertisements helps to make decisions for purchasing". Thus advertisements directly or indirectly induce youth to think on any issue in the style in which it is portrayed through the advertisements which may lead to positive or a negative consequence in future. Most of the respondents also feel that advertisements leads to capital investment (MPS=4.10) and raises the standard of living (MPS=3.30). Along with the vast positive impacts, advertisements are also having some negative impact on

youths and the society. Respondents perceived that "Advertisements create unrealistic expectations now-a-days" (MPS=2.61). Most of the respondents (f=29) were undecided regarding the fact whether advertisements misleads consumers through false images (MPS= 2.38). Among the negative impacts of advertisements very few people agreed to the fact that "Advertisements sometimes promotes harmful products" (MPS=1.98).

Although advertisements are having more positive impact but its negative impacts cannot be ruled out. The results of the current study are in a line with the results of the study done by Pollay (1986). In his study he explained that advertisements provide potential buyers with information about a product or service that can eventually lead to the satisfaction of an important need for the consumer. The most basic function of the advertisement is to make an audience aware of and interested in a particular product. There is a broad point of view of many societal members, that advertising may have a negative, unintended or intended influence on consumers' buying trends (Verbeke, W. 1992). According to Schudson (1984), advertisements are having huge potential in affecting our buying behaviour as well as transforming the social values by influencing the cultural values. The most important goal of advertising is to introduce a new, creative, innovative product in a market or popularise already existing products, create a brand image of the products or services and thereby developing an emotional attachment with the consumers and ultimately persuading consumers to buy a product or access any service (Barbara, J. 1997). Aaker (1996) accused advertisements for exploiting the feelings and building of personal anxieties, over emphasizing the material side of life and distortion of human and ethical values in youths and children and also it distorts the socio-cultural values. The findings of another study coincide with the findings of the present study that sometimes consumers just avoid advertisements because those ads are annoying and misleading (Bishop, 1997).

## CONCLUSION

The results of the present study clearly reveal how advertisements affect our purchasing behaviour, what kind of goods young students mostly prefer to purchase after viewing advertisements and which kind of advertisement medium influence them most in developing buying decisions. Majority of the respondents preferred to buy convenience goods and shopping goods after viewing ads in different media. The modernization and technology advancements has made internet and television as the most influencing advertising media. Besides these, this study portrayed a clear picture of the

impacts of advertisement on young generation and the society. Advertisements are considered as the most effective sources for persuading or reaching to the ultimate consumers. Disagreements over the effect of advertising on the consumer's buying trends and behaviours has always been present. Sometimes the advertisement agencies over amplify the product's benefits in such a sensitive manner that consumer goes psychologically under the burden of advertising persuasiveness and the decision to purchase the product is made intentionally. Hence, it is obvious for the advertising agencies to practise proper code of ethics during their product promotion. The aim of the advertisements should be guiding the consumers rather than misleading consumers or creating unrealistic expectations. Proper and real advertisements will always help promoters or agencies to expand their market share along with improving the brand image.

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