

Effect of negative emotional advertising appeals



Advertisements are used to create image and symbolic appeal for a company's product or service brand. Different appeals help to enhance effectiveness of advertisements that evokes some emotional reaction in viewer's mind. Advertisers often believe that positive emotional message directly stimulates the customer toward the use of the brand while negative emotional message will give the same result by an alternative route. It is often discussed that up to what extent this negative emotional message are stimulating the customers to buy a brand. Even though it works, its impact is always questioned on the basis of nature of customer and the type of product category for which it has been used. The authors have tried to measure the effect of some selected commonly used negative emotional messages in context of its application in selected FMCG product's advertisements.

Introduction

The advertising field is much broader and diverse. Advertisements are for two basic purposes, that are to inform and to influence. Advertisements are made by using different appeals to create brand image, for selling products and services that are difficult to differentiate on functional attributes. The word advertising comes from the Latin word 'advertere' meaning 'to turn the mind toward'. The word advertisement first appears around 1665 A. D. it was used as a heading for commercial information by storekeepers.

[i]Advertising is defined as any paid form of non personal communication about an organization, product, service, or idea by an identified sponsor.[ii]

Advertising affects consumer preference and tastes, changes the product attributes, and offerings. It informs consumers about product attributes.

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[iii]As advertisers increasingly seek greater communication effectiveness, more careful consideration needs to be given to the selection of the type of advertising appeal used for each target group.[iv]The decade of the 1980's has witnessed a significant increase in the attention advertising and consumer researchers have devoted to the role of emotion in advertising appeals.[v]

Emotional Appeals relate to the customers' social and/or psychological needs for purchasing a product or service. Many consumers' motives for their purchase decisions are emotional, and their feelings about a brand can be more important than knowledge of its features.[vi]Fear is an emotional response to a threat that expresses, or at least implies, some sort of danger. Ads sometimes use fear appeals to evoke this emotional response and arouse individuals to take steps to remove the threat.[vii]The fear appeal in advertisement is negative emotional appeal to arouse and remove threat of an individual.

One of the researches has demonstrated that experimentally induced negative moods or feelings such as fear, guilt, sadness and empathy[viii]and the ' blunter is better' approach can have a strong influence on creating a positive attitude toward advertisement.[ix]The consumer undergoes a typical response processing style while executing advertisements. This response processing style of executing advertisement forms attitude towards product and indirectly influencing the purchase intentions. Our objective is to illustrate how advertising effectiveness, in terms of attitudes and intentions, is affected by the consumer's processing style. The ad makers have rightly noticed the growing importance of women in the process of buying decisions

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and as in the needs.[x]Our objective is to illustrate how advertising is effective, in terms of purchasing intentions of housewives for FMCG products. The main contribution of this paper lies in the analysis of the interactive affect-cognition relationship (i. e., thinking-feeling processing style) effects on advertising effectiveness across different executions of advertising stimuli.

In the next sections we review the literature on negative emotional advertising appeals, cognitive processing styles and cognitive response model, and present our research hypothesis followed by a detailed description of the methodology. Analysis and discussion are presented at the end of the paper.

Negative Emotional Appeals and Cognitive Processing Style

Negative campaigning, also known more colloquially as “ mudslinging”, is trying to win an advantage by referring to negative aspects of an opponent or of a policy rather than emphasizing one’s own positive attributes or preferred policies. Negative campaigning can be found in most marketplaces where ideas are contested. In U. S. politics, “ mudslinging” has been called “ as American as Mississippi mud”. Some research suggests negative campaigning is the norm in all political venues, mitigated only by the dynamics of a particular contest.

Appeal to emotion is a potential fallacy which uses the manipulation of the recipient’s emotions, rather than valid logic, to win an argument. Also this kind of thinking may be evident in one who lets emotions and/or other subjective considerations influence one’s reasoning process. This kind of

appeal to emotion is a type of red herring and encompasses several logical fallacies, including: Appeal to consequences, appeal to fear, appeal to flattery, appeal to pity, appeal to ridicule, appeal to spite, wishful thinking.

Figure 1: Cognitive Response Model[xi]

1

One of the most widely used methods for examining consumer's cognitive processing of advertising message is assessment of their cognitive responses, the thought that occur to them while reading, viewing, and/or hearing a communication. Its focus has been determining the types of response evoked by an advertising message and these responses relate to attitudes toward the ad, brand attitudes, and purchase intention.

Product/Message Thoughts: – The thoughts create two types of arguments (1) Counter argument (2) Support Arguments. Counter arguments are thoughts the recipient had that are opposed to the position taken in the message. Support arguments are thoughts that affirm the claims made in the message. Source-Oriented Thoughts: – One of the most important types of response in this category is Source Derogation or negative thoughts about the spoke person making claims. Receivers who react favorably towards thoughts are source bolsters. Ad Execution Thoughts: – The Ad execution thoughts consist of thoughts about the ad itself. Many of thoughts receivers have when reading or viewing an ad do not concern the product and/or message claims directly. They are important because of their effect on attitude toward the advertisement as well as brand.

Advertisers are interested in consumer's reaction to the ad because they know that affective reactions are an important determinant of advertising effectiveness, since these reactions may be transferred to the brand itself or directly influence the purchase intentions.

Research Papers Reviewed

Advertising attitude did consist of believability, trust and control dimensions.

[xii]

Advertisements including source are always associated with higher level of attitude toward advertisement than those including only information.[xiii]

Emotional Advertising Appeals have a bigger impact on explicit memory performance than implicit memory performance.[xiv]

The amount of emotional content in advertisement affect the viewers' opinion of the product, high level had a positive effect and low level had no effect.[xv]

Advertisers employ sensational negative emotional ad message such as those used by FMCG manufacturers exploiting consumers' fear.[xvi]

The advertisers frequently used the dramatic emotional ad messages design to " Shock the Emotion and Brain Itch" to make advertisement more distinctive and effective.[xvii]

Fear appeals are useful to get individual to think or act in a certain way. Fear appears to be a great motivator as long as individual believe they are able to protect themselves.[xviii]

Methodology

The objectives of the research was to study the effect of Negative emotional advertisement on Housewife, to know cognitive processing style of Indian consumer towards negative appeal advertisements and to know the impact of negative emotional advertisement towards consumers' buying decision. The research design used here is a post test only quasi experimental (XO1) design. The data were collected from housewives through personal interview after execution of advertisement. Questionnaire was structured with Close ended questions. The questionnaire is based on the cognitive response model.[xix]

Total three advertisements have been shown randomly to nullify the ordering effect. All the three advertisements were T. V. advertisements for the products namely Saffola, Rexona and AFL[2]. In all three advertisements popular faces were not used as a source. The brief description of advertisements is as under.

Sr. No.

Name of Product

Name of Brand

Duration of Advertisement

Description

1

Edible Oil

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Saffola

47

The Ad appeals the threat towards increasing obesity problem and thus by providing Saffola oil as the solution the ad ends.

2

Deodorant

Rexona

23

The Ad appeals the threat of perspiration can sometimes disgrace the individual and thus remembering of Rexona the ad ends.

3

Fairness Cream

AFL

59

The Ad appeals the threat of affront and thus taking as challenge with the help of AFL becomes one of the recognized person.

As according to Cognitive response model the sentences for questionnaire were formed. For product related thought - The type of product used will control cholesterol levels.[3]The message thought - The message deliver

through this ad is genuine. The source oriented thought - The characters used in ad are perfectly matching with the advertisement. The characters used for ad generates positive attitude towards the brand. The ad execution thought - I like to view this advertisement. Attitude towards the brand - This product brand should be used. Attitude towards the Ad - The ad is able to convince the customer to use the product. Purchase intention - I would like to buy the product. These sentences were measured on the five point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Our universe is area of Ahmedabad city. The sample is size is ninety six.[4]

The data was collected through questionnaire. The questionnaire with different scale used, helped in analyzing purpose. In order to examine the various objectives of the study all conventional, mathematical and statistical tools have been used. To know the reliability Cronbach's alpha test has been applied. To find out the effect of negative emotional appeal advertisement through cognitive processing style on housewife for FMCG[5]products, hypothesis test and one way ANOVA[6]has been applied.

There were several limitations throughout our research. The first limitation of the research is restriction to Ahmedabad city only; and due to vast population of India, the sample size is very small in front of whole population. The second limitation is the time constraints. As we are pursuing MBA, the efficient time was not available so we could survey only ninety six respondents. Another limitation that impediment to our research was, our survey took around twenty - twenty five minutes per respondent and so the respondent while attempting may give sometime biased answers.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Cronbach's alpha[7]xx

Table 1: Cronbach's alpha for each of the three advertisements

Advertisement

Cronbach's Alpha

Saffola

0. 672

Rexona

0. 656

AFL

0. 662

No. of statements for each advertisement were 8

Table 2: Cronbach's alpha for all the three advertisements combine

Cronbach's Alpha

No. of statements

0. 696

24

From the above mentioned table conclusion derived is that all statements used for measuring the effect of negative emotional appeal in advertisement

are reliable towards cognitive response model because in all cases

Cronbach's alpha is greater than 0.6.[xxi]

Emotions used in advertisement affect

Table 3: Affection of emotions used in advertisement

Extremely Affecting

Affecting

Moderate Effect

Not Affecting

Extremely not Affecting

6. 25%

54. 17%

28. 13%

7. 29%

4. 17%

The advertisements use varied of emotions which affect directly or indirectly to target audience. The table concludes that majority of respondents agree, that emotions used in advertisements affect them.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation for each of the advertisements

Saffola

i

ii

iii

iv

v

vi

vii

viii

Mean

1. 61

1. 51

2. 33

1. 49

2. 42

2. 57

1. 46

1. 50

Std. Deviation

. 605

. 562

. 660

. 649

. 574

. 628

. 560

. 725

Rexona

i

ii

iii

iv

v

vi

vii

viii

Mean

3. 93

3. 85

3. 27

3. 18

3. 28

4. 13

3. 88

3. 14

Std. Deviation

1. 059

. 665

. 688

. 632

1. 053

. 886

. 798

1. 111

AFL

i

ii

iii

iv

v

vi

vii

viii

Mean

4. 21

3. 88

3. 38

2. 64

2. 52

3. 57

2. 45

2. 77

Std. Deviation

. 951

. 743

. 811

. 884

. 754

1. 074

. 869

1. 425

Table 5: Mean of all advertisements according to cognitive response model

Saffola

Rexona

AFL

All Advertisement

Cognitive Response

1. 87

3. 5

3. 32

2. 89

Attitude Formation

2. 015

4

3. 01

3. 00

Purchase Intention

1. 5

3. 13

2. 77

2. 47

Based on descriptive statistics for the dependent variables are indicated in tables. For the table the inference were drawn as follows:

As according to the model the researchers' applied, cognitive response model, in the table 4 the first five columns are indicating cognitive response mean, sixth and seventh indicates attitude formation and eighth column indicates purchase intention. As according to our scale used (mean value less than 2. 5 means positive contribution of advertisement) the exposure of Saffola advertisement to the responses of the respondents is quiet positive. Respondents strongly agreed to the statements i, ii, iv, vii, viii and agreed to the remaining statements iii, v, and vi. For the Saffola advertisements none

of the respondents are having disagreement towards any statements. This shows that the appeal in Saffola advertisement was very effective to the respondents. The exposure of Rexona advertisement to the responses of the respondents is quiet negative. Respondents disagreed to the statements i, ii, vi, and vii and have indifferent (mean value more than 2.5 and less than 3.5) view to the remaining statements iii, iv, v, and viii. For the Rexona advertisements none of the respondents are having agreement towards any statements. This shows that the appeal in Rexona advertisement is having negative effect to the respondents. The exposure of AFL advertisement to the responses of the respondents is quiet indifferent. Respondents agreed to the statements vi and vii, indifferent view to the statements iii, iv, vi, and viii and disagreed to the remaining statements i, and ii. For the AFL advertisement the respondents are having different view towards all statements. This shows that the appeal in AFL advertisement is having moderate effect to the respondents.

The table 5 depicts the cognitive response model in three different steps showing for each advertisement and also combining of the three advertisements. The cognitive response step bring to light that all the advertisements together have positive effect that is, negative appeal used in advertisements have impact on individual and thus there is cognitive response. But if the individual advertisements are taken into consideration then it reveals that Saffola is having the highest impact on individual's cognitive process than the other two advertisements. The Attitude formation step bring to light that all the advertisements together have moderate effect that is, negative appeal used in advertisements have moderate impact on

individual's attitude. But if the individual advertisements are taken into consideration then it reveals that Saffola build up the positive attitude and AFL build up moderate attitude while Rexona forms the negative attitude towards the advertisements. The Purchase intention step bring to light that all the advertisements together have positive effect that is, negative appeal used in advertisements have positive impact on individual's decision to buy the product. But if the individual advertisements are taken into consideration then it reveals that Saffola have positive impact towards the buying decision and AFL has moderate impact towards the buying decision while Rexona have negative impact towards the buying decision. Thus overall impact of the exposure of all advertisement is indifferent. The results obtained through the means were not sufficient enough to come to any conclusion so researchers applied hypothesis testing.

Hypothesis Testing

The measuring power of hypothesis test was based on z score.

[xxii]Hypothesis test was carried out at significance level ($\hat{I}\pm$) 10% i. e. 0. 10.

At $\hat{I}\pm = 0. 10$, the table value of z is 1. 28. On the basis of one tailed test of proportion, the calculated value[8]was derived.

Ho: Negative emotional advertising appeal does not makes the cognitive response positive.

Table 6: Comparison between Calculated and Table value

Calculated Value

Table Value

Results

1. 529

1. 28

Ho is not accepted

Since the calculated value 1. 529 is greater than table value 1. 28. The null hypothesis is not accepted. Hence it can be concluded that negative emotional advertising appeal makes the cognitive response positive.

Ho: Negative emotional advertising appeal doesn't helps to form the positive attitude.

Table 7: Comparison between Calculated and Table value

Calculated Value

Table Value

Results

1. 96

1. 28

Ho is not accepted

The calculated value 1. 96 is more than table value 1. 28. The null hypothesis is not accepted. Hence the driven conclusion is that the negative emotional advertising appeal will help to form positive attitude.

Ho: Negative emotional advertising appeal increases the customer intention to buy

Table 8: Comparison between Calculated and Table value

Calculated Value

Table Value

Results

-0.16

1.28

Ho is accepted

Since the calculated value -0.16 is less than table value 1.28. The null hypothesis is accepted. Hence it can be concluded that negative emotional advertising appeal increase the customer's intention to buy the product.

One Way ANOVA Testing[9]xxiii**Ho: Different advertising themes have no difference in their effect on individual perceptions.**

Table 9: ANOVA output table

Source Variance**Sum of Squares(SS)****Degree of Freedom(df)****Mean Square****F ratio**

SSC[10]

4.85

2.00

2.43

21.57

SSE[11]

0.67

6.00

0.11

SST[12]

5.52

Critical table value of F at $\hat{\alpha} \pm 0.1$ ($n_1 = \text{df for numerator} = 2$ and $n_2 = \text{df for denominator} = 6$) is equal to 3.46. Calculated F > Table F, $21.57 > 3.46$.

46[xxiv], so H_0 is not accepted. Thus the conclusion is that the different advertising themes have difference in their effect on individual perceptions.

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Findings

Emotions used in advertisements have a great affect on customer was agreed by 54 percent of respondents. The findings from descriptive statistics were Saffola oil product statements', were strongly agreed by majority of respondents, while Rexona deodorant product statements', were having disagreement and AFL fairness cream product statements', were having indifferent view. This derived that after viewing advertisement many respondents were positive towards Saffola and AFL brand but were negative towards Rexona brand. Through varied hypothesis developed by us, the findings were negative emotional advertising appeal makes the cognitive response positive, helps to form positive attitude and this increases the customer intention to buy the brand. The different advertising themes have difference in their effect on individual perception. The study reveals that if in negative emotional appeal advertisements the intensity of negativity is high then it impacts on cognitive processing style and affect individual perception thus effects purchase intention of consumers.

Conclusions

The negative emotional appeal advertisements play important role in cognitive processing styles of housewives. The emotional appeal advertisements are having high impact on consumers' cognitive message processing style which influences their purchase intention. The level of negativity used in advertisements has an impact on individual's perception. The high level of negativity creates ignorance towards advertisement and thus it has negative effect on purchase intentions. The moderate or low level of negativity creates high impact on individual's perception towards

advertisement and thus it has positive effect on purchase intentions. Further the research can be carried to study what level of negativity is affecting positively to individual's cognitive processing style as negative appeals have impact on individual's perception.