

Affect of negative reinforcement on consumer behavior



Cigarette smoke contains more than 4,000 harmful chemicals including over 40 that are known causes of cancer. Smoking is a prime factor in heart attacks and causes cancer of the lungs, mouth and bladder. Passive smoking is the term used for exposure to tobacco smoke, or the chemicals in tobacco smoke, without actually smoking. That is even more dangerous for non-smokers. According to smokers, smoking is addictive, pleasurable, helps in reducing tension and gives relaxation to mind. These factors are just for time being but in the long run it is injurious to health. According to the global smoking statistic for 2002 “ Among young teens (aged 13 to 15), about one in five smokes worldwide”, which shows that among all smokers, this habit is mostly acquired by the young age children even though it is banned to sell anyone who is under the age of 18. Around the world, legislators are hard at work to make it more difficult for people to enjoy their worst habit of smoking. By placing heavy duties and taxes on cigarettes and with the help of other anti smoking campaigns, they are trying to degrade smokers to buy cigarettes. Still the major companies such as Pakistan Tobacco Company and Phillip Morris International are still generating their profits by selling cigarettes. And people are still attracted towards smoking.

Background Information:

According to archaeologists, the first known traces of tobacco come from around 6000 BC. Smoking is a practice in which a substance, most commonly tobacco is burned and the smoke inhaled. Earlier smoking was counted as a symbol of attraction and becomes a native culture. There was a time when the smoking advertisements became a viral campaign. Billboards were seen on every street. Clubs were filled with the smoke of cigarettes.

Smoking became a status symbol. Till early 60's the advertisements were on their peak, where smoking was appreciated. Advertisements played a major role in influencing the adults to smoke. In 1960's for the first time in the history doctors recognize the signs of smoking effects in building cancers.

Problem Development:

The ratio of smokers in the death rates increases more than the death with other means of diseases. Advertisements were banned on media. Billboard advertisements were shutdown. Increase the taxes on the prices of cigarettes. Place notes on cigarette packets against smoking from ministry of health. To make this campaign more affected, government forced all tobacco companies to have pictures of cancerous diseases on the smoking packets to de-motivate the smokers and the children who are at their early age of smoking. This results in decrease in smoking consumption on a lower level. But on a long run the effect was negligible. Consumption of cigarettes is kept on rising steeply. In my research I am going to find out whether there is any effective result of these negative reinforcements on the smokers as well as non-smokers on their buying behaviour. Does it really affect the people who are entering in smoking and the ones who are the active smokers? It is true that smoking consumption is decreased a little bit but it is due to the negative reinforcement or the buying power of the consumers decreases as in some countries like Pakistan, it is economically getting weak. As everyone is aware of its end result still smoking is so common. To find out the reasons that negative reinforcement is how far affective, my research includes the interviews with the smokers and non-smokers as well as the retailers of cigarettes.

Related Definitions

Consumer Behaviour

It is the study of when, why, how, and where people do or do not buy a product. It studies characteristics of individual consumers such as demographics and behavioural variables in an attempt to understand people's wants. It also tries to assess influences on the consumer from groups such as family, friends, reference groups, and society in general.

Price

Market value, or agreed exchange value, that will purchase a definite quantity, weight, or other measure of a good or service.

Education

Education is the wealth of knowledge acquired by an individual after studying particular subject matters or experiencing life lessons that provide an understanding of something.

Age

Age is the period of time that a person, animal, or plant has lived or is expected to live.

Gender

Gender is the division of people into two categories, "men" and "women." Through interaction with caretakers, socialization in childhood, peer pressure in adolescence, and gendered work and family roles women and men are socially constructed to be different in behaviour, attitudes, and emotions.

Media

In general, “ media” refers to various means of communication. For example, television, radio, and the newspaper are different types of media. The term can also be used as a collective noun for the press or news reporting agencies.

Health care

Health care is the prevention, treatment, and management of illness and the preservation of mental and physical well-being through the services offered by the medical and allied health professions.

Availability

Availability is the characteristic of a resource that is committable, operable, or usable upon demand to perform its designated or required function.

Literature Review

Smoking is the most widespread addictive behaviour in today’s society. (Chaloupka, 1991) used the theoretical model to understand the rational addictive behaviour of the smokers by implying the demand equation resulting through the maximum utilization. And the Cigarette consumption data used for the demand equation was taken from the National Health and nutrition examination Survey. Real prices were used in the theoretical model to get the exact result. Current consumption has been decreased due to the intensive increase in prices of cigarettes as compared to the prices of older times.

In 1968-70 there was a drastic reduction in the smoking consumption due to the anti-smoking ads on TV and radio. These ads were very effective in the short run but in the long run the success of the anti-smoking ads gave birth to more hard-core smokers (Warner, 1977). Further focus diverted to health educational programs, mainly focusing the adult smokers, pregnant women and children (Hu, Sung & Keeler, 1995). Cancer of mouth and lungs are most common in regular smokers. Male and female both are having approximately an equal share in the deaths through smoking. The average age of a smoker is between thirty-five to sixty-nine. Mouth cancer that is caused by the presence of 300 carcinogens in the tobacco smoke that are water soluble, mix with the saliva and ruptures the inner walls of the mouth (Johnson, 2001).

Smoking is becoming so common that even the underage children are getting into it. They can easily recognize the brand of the cigarettes. Prevention is more effective mean of reducing the consumption of tobacco smoke. It is easy to stop the adolescent smokers as they are not yet addictive to it at that early age. As if this step is not taken wisely, majority of them will continue smoking in the adult hood. So to make it worth, anti-smoking campaigns should be introduced in the schools and make children aware of smoking hazardous outcomes, initially by telling that smoking is bad for health. Instead of punishing the young smokers help them in getting out of this bad habit (Mermelstein, 2003). Another study design used to contrast the knowledge and the smoking behaviour of the students for three consecutive years where they were taught that smoking is injurious for health. The awareness they get through that time span was helpful, not just

to their own self but even to their families (Murray, Swan & Clarke, 1984). Researchers found that awareness among all brands advertising symbols is directly related to the age. Children are learning so fast in the case of cigarette smoking that they can easily differentiate between the brands of different cigarettes. (Henke, 1995) used chi-square test to check how age is related to awareness of brand advertising and a function of attention and memory.

Another factor that increased the consumption level in the adults is through internet cigarette purchasing. Smokers find it easy to deal on internet. While sitting at their homes cigarette packets are delivered to them. Buying through internet is attractive due to the less price of cigarette. It is due to the absence of such high taxes. As this selling and purchasing is done across the borders, smokers prefer it to buy from the country where the taxes are low. To discourage this, state and the federal government should try to identify the internet cigarette vendors and take serious actions against them (Hrywna, Delnevo & Staniewska, 2004).

Problem Definition:

To study the impact of price, education, age, gender, media, availability and health care on consumer behaviour.

Statement of study objectives:

Price

(Chaloupka, 1991)

Imposing tax

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Theoretical Framework Education

(Murray, Swan, Clarke, 1984)

Awareness

Literacy

Media

(Warner, 1977)

Internet

Anti campaigns through advertisements

Pictures

Age

(Henke, 1995)

Different impact on different age groups

Availability

(Hrywna, Delnevo, Staniewska, 2004)

In the reach of consumer

Health care

(Mermelstein, 2003)

Health conscious

Awareness

Gender

(Johnson, 2001)

constructed to be different in behaviour, attitudes, and emotions

Price

H0: Increase in price does not have a significant effect on consumer behaviour.

H1: Increase in price has a significant effect on consumer behaviour.

Education

H0: learning and awareness does not have a significant effect on consumer behaviour.

H1: learning and awareness has a significant effect on consumer behaviour.

Age

H0: Age has no significant effect on consumer behaviour.

H1: Age has a significant effect on consumer behaviour.

Gender

H0: Gender has no significant effect on consumer behaviour.

H1: Gender has a significant effect on consumer behaviour.

Media

H0: Advertisements, newspapers and internet have no significant effect on consumer behaviour.

H1: Advertisements, newspapers and internet have a significant effect on consumer behaviour.

Availability

H0: Availability has no significant effect on consumer behaviour.

H1: Availability has a significant effect on consumer behaviour.

Health care

H0: Health care has no significant effect on consumer behaviour.

H1: Health care has a significant effect on consumer behaviour.

Variable References List:

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Theoretical Justification

All the independent variables in the theoretical framework are supported and studied in previous studies. Media played a vital role in downsizing the consumption of cigarettes mainly through introducing pictures of cancerous diseases on the smoke packs. Educated ones are more concern with their health. Education helps in making consumers more aware of smoking's side effects instead of attraction. Smoking is common in both men and women but specifically men are more in smoking habit. . Consumption increases when cigarettes are easily available to the consumers. To degrade the

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consumers, government placed heavy taxes on cigarettes. Response towards smoking and the anti-campaigns differs between the age groups. Teenagers are more attractive towards this habit; on the other hand they are the ones who are more affected by anti campaigns.

Elements of Research Design:

Type of Research

Applied

Nature of Data

Primary data

Study Setting

Natural

Unit of Analysis

Regular smokers, non-smokers and the retailers.

Reference Period

November 2010 to April 2011

Survey Research

Questionnaire will be used to find the expected results.

I will use the multi regression method to see the relative effect of variables on the consumer behavior and which one is the most effective. And what could be the other steps that should be taken to improve the anti-smoking campaigns to discourage smoking.

Expected Nature of Findings

It is expected that anti smoking campaigns such as placing high rate of taxes, pictures on the cigarette packet to discourage smoking, are not playing an effective role.

Even so many anti campaigns are taking place the consumption graph of smoking is steeply raising.

To see what could be the reasons hidden behind these factors and which anti-smoking campaign factor is more affective on the long run.

Limitations:

Responses from the interviewer can be biased. They may not give the true response to the questions and fill the questionnaire randomly.

Time constrain could be another factor.