

Effects of Television Commercials on the Literate and Illiterate People of Pakistan (A Case Study of Gujarat City)

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Abstract

This study "Effects of Television Commercials on the Literate and Illiterate People of Pakistan" revolves around the phenomenon that how television advertisement influences an illiterate and literate person, or what effects do television advertisements have on illiterate and literate people. Especially, to know the change in the behavior of an illiterate customer about the product that is commercialized in television, in comparison to a literate customer. To know, how well the viewers have understood the message given in a television commercial. This study will focus on the psychological effects on the mind of illiterate and literate customer that how does it urge him to buy that particular product after watching it in a television commercial. It will also see for the behavioral change in illiterate and literate persons after watching television commercials. Survey method is used for this study and the Elaboration Likelihood Model and Social Learning theory are used for this study. The study shows that a viewer of television commercial will learn about a product through television commercials. This can alter his behavior about the product.

Keywords: Literate; Illiterate; Commercials; Television

Introduction

This study focus on the phenomenon that how television advertisement influences an illiterate and literate person, or what effect does television advertisements have on illiterate and literate people. Especially, to know the change in the behavior of an illiterate customer about the product that is commercialized in television, in comparison to a literate customer. To know, how well the spectators have understood the message given in a television commercial. This study will focus on the psychological effects on the mind of illiterate and literate customer that how does it urge him to buy that particular product after watching it in a television commercial. It will also see for the behavioral change in illiterate and literate persons after watching television commercials. In this study there are two variables "advertisement" and "effects on audience" that is illiterate and literate people.

Advertisements are independent variable in this research. There is no manipulation over commercials for this study. The primary purpose is to know only the effects of commercials on illiterate and literate subjects and do a comparison between them. But before a personal interview the respondent is asked about his favorite television channel that he/she watches more. For this research all kinds of television commercials are concerned. The main idea is to find out, after watching at least one hour of television either literate are more influenced or illiterate. There is no distinction among commercials regarding different products. A commercial of soap is as much as concerned as a commercial of cell phone.

According to the constitution of Pakistan, a literate person is capable of reading newspapers and writing a simple letter in any language. This also defines the limitations for selecting research respondents. According to a recent analysis 58% of Pakistan's population is illiterate. Our subjects for the research are selected on these bases. Normally, a person who has studied up to fifth class is capable of reading newspapers and writing a simple letter.

According to analysts, 42 percent of the Pakistani population is illiterate, and most of them are females. According to the constitution of Pakistan, a literate person is capable of reading newspapers and writing a simple letter in any language. This high ratio of illiteracy is not ignorable. This tends about the effects of advertisement on illiterate person. Advertising is not just limited to creating awareness

of your product. It is beyond the boundaries of awareness. It evolves persuasion in it. The advertiser's priority is to urge the people to buy his product. So the barrier of illiteracy should be eliminated for better persuasion. Watching effects of advertisement on illiterate will help to solve this puzzle.

It is already mentioned that most of the illiterate population in Pakistan is of women. In the country like Pakistan where most of the women are house hold and those who stay at home and have more time to watch television and most of whom are illiterate. According to analysts, only 45% of women are literate in Pakistan. So how can we ignore an audience that is 55% in the country, stays at home and watches more television than any other? They have more exposure to television and have more touch with television. This bond of women with television is much important to be focused. So it would be helpful to study effects of advertisement on illiterate domestic women of Pakistan.

The primary importance in advertising is given to the consumer psychological behavior. As advertising is a complete process of communication, a careful and sensitive study of the audience before communication, makes it easier to communicate effectively. The psychological and behavioral study of audience helps in planning the message for any type of communication. Similarly this study will help in the planning of an advertisement message. And a message against or irrelevant to the psyche and behavior of the audience may not have desired response. This is another reason that urged the researcher to conduct this study. This makes research in hand more valuable that it attempts to know what kind advertisement may have more psychological and behavioral influences over illiterate people. Illiteracy

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is also a barrier in communication. Advertising depends upon a well planned communication done through an effective medium. The element of literacy has its great importance in this concern.

The effects of advertisement may be psychological and behavioral. They are psychological in the way that they inform or they create appeals in the mind of the customer and they behave in a way that they tend the consumer to buy the things. These effects may stand at four levels, information about the product, a complete awareness about the product, customer adopts of the product and fourthly it continues to buy the product. First two, information and awareness, are psychological effects of the advertisement while the last two are behavioral effects. As we see the first effect of advertisement that is to inform the people about the product it is psychological. This is the first function of advertisement to inform the audience about the existence of the product. This creates a psychological effect on the mind of the customer and work as a tiny force in the favor of the product. To create awareness about the product that what benefits do these products have for the customers. Also, the awareness about the product, that what are some main features of the product? This also creates a psychological effect on the customer. He/she might psychologically agree or disagree with the awareness that is given to him/her. Its effect on the customer may appear in this way that whenever it goes to market he may buy that product because of its features. Or a customer might prefer this product on any other because he/she knows its entire features.

Hypotheses

This study has following hypotheses

- Illiterates have better exposure to television commercials than literates do.
- Literates have better exposure of television commercials than Illiterates do.
- Television commercials, is the way for literate to know about new products.
- Television commercials, is the way for illiterate to know about new products.
- Illiterates have more psychological and behavioral effects of advertisements.
- Literates have more psychological and behavioral effects of advertisements.

Literature Review

This literature review based research is enough relevant to this research in case that it deals with the effect measurement of advertisement. It has divided the effects in two basic categories processing measure and effectiveness measures. This also debate on the issue of methodology of the research in order to measure the effects of advertisements and gives contradictory views about different methods. This research concludes its findings on the basis of older performed research on the effects of advertisements.

Ever since the children were recognized as a consumer market, the topic of advertising and children has been the subject of considerable debate [1]. Critics of child-directed advertising, such as policy makers, parents, and consumer advocates, assume that children are less able to defend themselves against advertising than adults because they lack the cognitive skills to understand the nature and intent of advertising [2,1].

Vivian [3] says that advertising is very wide field in real world some of the advertisements could be more important for people on one hand and some of them on the other hand could be humorous for us where as some advertisings could be very harmful for children because being not

very mature children perceive the things different as adults perceive, he argues that after having just one exposure to a commercial, children can have the ability recall the advertisement's content and have a desire for that particular product.

Advertising and its effects are under discussion since very long even decades are passed on the way that advertising and marketing activities influence both the children and adolescents [4]. These debates are of very important concerns regarding the threats that are on the way for the betterment of children from the exposure to advertising. According to [5] there is a tremendous increase in the quantity of the advertising to children has been experienced.

This research is intended to know how male and female response to advertisements, either male responds more positively of female. While at an overall level, men and women give similar ratings to ads, they respond differently to individual ads. Men are more likely to enjoy ads featuring humor, distinctive creative styles, and sexual imagery, while women are more likely to enjoy ads featuring children or a slice of life. Overall, ratings are similar at an overall level, we observe little difference in the way men and women respond to advertising.

Augustin [6] is of the view that he stopped watching television when he started to guess for himself that how detrimental the television was for his health. He argues that television advertisements have intense control on human psyche, he says that if the advertisements did not affect the human brains then why different companies spend huge amounts on advertising their products, he concludes that the advertisements do brainwash the viewers.

Theoretical framework

Elaboration likelihood model: The elaboration likelihood model of persuasion is actually a dual process theory that debates about how attitudes of people regarding different things are formed and changed [7].

There are two ways we make decisions and hence are persuaded when we are motivated and able to pay attention, we take a logical, conscious thinking, central route to decision-making. This can lead to permanent change in our attitude as we adopt and elaborate upon the speaker's arguments. In other cases, we take the peripheral route. Here we do not pay attention to persuasive arguments but are swayed instead by surface characteristics such as whether we like the speaker. In this case, although we do change, it is only temporary. One of the best ways motivating people to take the central route is to make the message personally relevant to them. Fear can also be effective in making them pay attention, but only if it is moderate and a solution is also offered. Strong fear will just lead to Tablet-or-flight reactions.

In case of this study, it is supposed that educated people might adopt central route to satisfy their needs. They might pay full attention to a television commercial and might change their attitude toward products. On the other hand, an illiterate person may not pay attention to a commercial and may adopt peripheral route, so he might be concentrating on the presentation of advertisements, that's why may not follow advertising trends; purchasing.

Social learning theory: Social learning theory is a phenomenon that addresses that people learn things within a social context and this is facilitated through different concepts such as modeling and observational learning [8].

Bandura [9] states that in a social learning perspective, behavior is mostly learnt by the environment through observational learning process. He argues that children observe the people around them and behave in different ways. This thing was demonstrated during the

“Bobo Doll experiment” that was especially for the children [10]. Social learning theory focuses on the learning that occurs within a social context. It considers that people learn from one another, including such concepts as observational learning, imitation, and modeling. Among others, Albert Bandura, is considered as the leading proponent of this theory. People can learn by observing the behavior is of others and the outcomes of those behaviors. There are different types of models. There is the live model, and the actual person demonstrating the behavior. There can also be a symbolic model, which can be a person or action portrayed in some other medium, such as television, videotape, computer programs. Many behaviors can be learned, at least partly, through modeling. Examples that can be cited are, students can watch parents read, students can watch the demonstrations of mathematics problems, or seen someone acting bravely and a fearful situation.

Methodology

Survey research

Survey research is the research method that is often used to assess the thoughts, opinions, and feelings. Shaughnessy et al. [11]. Survey research is one of the most important areas of measurement in applied social research. The broad area of survey research encompasses any measurement procedures that involve asking questions of respondents. This study is an analysis of advertisements' effect on illiterate and literate. It measures how is advertisement different for a literate on an illiterate person.

Population

The population in this study is the people who belong to Gujrat City.

Sample

People from Gujarat City are the sample for this study.

Sample size

200 people, both male and female are the sample size.

Data collection

The convenience method for data collection was used for the study. Questionnaire was used for asking questions from the respondents.

It was tried to address the following research questions.

1. How much television exposure does literates have?
2. How much television exposure does illiterates have?
3. How much commercial exposure do literates have?
4. How much commercial exposure do literates have?
5. Who like more advertisements either literates or illiterates?

Major concepts and conceptualization

Exposure to television: First major concept of the study is to know how well a respondent has exposure to television. This a primary need of the research that a respondent must have the habit of watching television for one hour at least. His TV watching habit ensures that he can respond to questions about commercial.

Exposure to television commercials: Exposure to television commercials is quite necessary to measure that whole research is based on it. This ensures how well a respondent have know how of commercials. What does he think of the commercial either an information source or not.

Liking and disliking commercials: Liking and disliking of commercials leads researcher to know their attitude toward television commercials. It helps to know who likes more commercials and why

these commercials are liked. The question which commercial do you like most helps to conclude their liking and disliking.

Psychological effects

This involves the primary purpose of the research that what psychological effects do advertisements have on illiterate and literates and who are influenced more. Who agree that an advertisement is the best way to know about product comparatively?

Behavioral effects

Behavioral effects show the behavior of the respondent about a product after watching its advertisement. Who buys more after watching a product's television commercial? Either illiterate have a response that is more positive or a literate.

Findings and Conclusion

This study reports a clear comparison of advertisement effect between illiterate and literate television viewers. It circulates around the psychological and behavioral effects of advertisement on illiterate and literate audience and concludes in a mutual difference among them. This study moves along different research question resolving them one by one, reaches at conclusive findings through approving and disapproving hypothesis. It starts with exposure of the audience toward television and television commercials and passes through a measurement segment of psychological and behavioral effects over literate and illiterate audience through a comparative analysis. The important findings of the study are following.

Study results tells that illiterate television viewers watch more hours of a day watching television that 32% of illiterates watch television for more than four hours per day also 32% of illiterates watch television near two hours a day (Table 1). On the other hand, majority of literate, that is 38% watch television for less than two hours a day and 20% of literates watch television for less than one hour (Table 2). The findings tell that majority of illiterate watches more hours of television while literate majority watch less hours of television.

A majority of illiterate and literate liked these channels because of their contents. It is resulted that 70% of the literate and 66% of illiterate says that the content of a television is the reason for their preference

Literates watch TV			
Less than an hour	Less than two hours	Less than three hours	More than three hours
26%	38%	16%	20%

Table 1: Literates watch TV.

Illiterates watch TV			
Less than an hour	Less than two hours	Less than three hours	More than three hours
20%	30%	18%	32%

Table 2: Illiterates watch TV.

Why do Literate Like TV Channels			
Good Contents	Program Schedule	Gives more commercials	Gives less Commercials
70	28	2	0

Table 3: Why do literate like TV channels.

Why do Illiterate Like TV Channels			
Good Contents	Program Schedule	Gives more commercials	Gives less Commercials
66	22	10	2

Table 4: Why do illiterate like TV channels.

over other channels (Tables 3 and 4). Only 22% of illiterate people liked television channels due to their program schedule (Table 4). In literate, this percentage is 28 (Table 3).

The study results illustrate that 55% of illiterate do not search for other channels while a commercial break (Table 5). In literates, this trend changes that highest percentage, 48% of literates surf for other channels while commercial break (Table 6). Only 30% of literate say that they search for other channels sometimes in commercial break and 14% are those who always search for another channel during a commercial break. Only 20% of illiterates changes their previous channel while commercial break that comparatively very low percentage. In opposite to illiterate only 6% of literates are those who do not search for new channel during commercial breaks.

A clear majority of literate says that their way of getting informed about market products are TV commercials. In literates 36% are those who agree that sometime commercial are the way to know about product and 30% are those who says commercials are most of the time their way of getting updated (Table 7). In comparison to this, 50% of illiterates agreed that their way of getting informed was sometimes television commercial while 28% says most of the time they know through commercial breaks (Table 8).

A majority of both literate and illiterate says that their way of knowing about any new product that comes in the market are television commercials. Literate majority, 86% of respondents says believes television commercials as their only way of knowing about new product (Table 9). A clear majority of illiterate subjects also understood television commercials as a way of knowing about new products, only 24% and 18% of them considered family and friends respectively, their way to get informed (Table 10).

Findings show that trend of liking and disliking commercial between literate and illiterate is different at first two categories.

Illiterate Surf Channel During Commercial Break			
No	Yes(Sometimes)	Yes(Most of the time)	Yes(All the time)
58	18	20	4

Table 5: Illiterate surf channel during commercial break.

Literate Surf Channel During Commercial Break			
No	Yes(Sometimes)	Yes(Most of the time)	Yes(All the time)
8	30	48	14

Table 6: Literate surf channel during commercial break.

Literates way to get informed			
No	Yes(Sometimes)	Yes(Most of the time)	Yes(All the time)
24	36	30	10

Table 7: Literates way to get informed.

Illiterates way to get informed			
No	Yes(Sometimes)	Yes(Most of the time)	Yes(All the time)
18	50	28	4

Table 8: Illiterates way to get informed.

Literates Know About New Products Through			
Friends	Family	T.V Commercials	Opinion leaders
10%	2%	86%	2%

Table 9: Literates know about new products through.

Illiterates Know About New Products Through			
Friends	Family	T.V Commercials	Opinion leaders
18%	24%	52%	6%

Table 10: Illiterates know about new products through.

Literates Like Commercials			
No	Yes(some of them)	Yes(most of them)	Yes(all of them)
20%	70%	8%	2%

Table 11: Literates like commercials.

Literate Like Commercials			
No	Yes(some of them)	Yes(most of them)	Yes(all of them)
48%	46%	6%	0%

Table 12: Literate like commercials.

According to results, 70% of literates like some of the television commercials and only 20% dislike commercials. Only 2% of literate respondents like all commercials and 8% literate people like all of them (Table 11). In contrast to this 48% of illiterates dislike and 46% of them like some of them, they seem equal in ratio (Table 12).

From the present study we conclude Television plays as a role model in social learning so it is considered that commercial work as a model (as Bandura said) in order to come to know about a product and changes attitude towards it. A viewer of television commercial will learn about a product through television commercials. This can alter his behavior about the product.

The study shows that literates are less psychologically influenced than the illiterates. They believe that it is not all true in commercials but it requires less ignition and stimuli to purchase the product or try the product and show that they are more behaviorally influenced than illiterates. On the other hand illiterates are more psychologically whereas less behaviorally influenced by the television advertisements. They believe more advertisements as true message but it does not urge them instantly. There might be some external factors that influence them not to try those products. This might include their loyalty towards the products.

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