The Difference of the Male and Female’s Buying Attitudes in Response to Fear used Advertisements

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Abstract

Advertisements are the most popular concept used by marketers to promote their products. These advertisements have the ability to increase the buying attitudes of consumers. This quantitative research study was conducted to identify the difference of the male and female’s buying attitudes in response to fear used advertisements. 50 men and 50 women who were employed selected as the sample. The sample was selected by using the simple random sampling method. Data were collected by a well-developed questionnaire. Collected data sets were analyzed by using the IBM SPSS software. According to the SPSS, the mean score of men is (M = 11.60 SD = 3.24) and mean score of women is (M = 12.30 SD = 3.67). And also it is shown t (98) = -1.0 and p = 0.31. This results show that there is no difference of male and female’s buying attitudes in response to fear used advertisement.

Keywords: Buying Attitudes, Consumers, Fear Used Advertisements.

Introduction

Advertising is the most common and popular in the field of marketing. The people who engage in marketing context use advertising to promote their products, services to the consumers.

"Advertising is the non-personal communication of information usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature about products, services or ideas by identified sponsors through the various media.” Bovee, (1992)

Advertising is always present, but people may not be aware of it. In today's world, advertising uses every possible media to get its message through. It does this via television, newspapers, magazines, journals, radio, press, internet, direct selling, hoardings, mailers, contests, sponsorships, posters, clothes, events, colours, sounds, visuals and even people. Modern advertising originated with the techniques introduced with tobacco advertising in the 1920s, most significantly with the campaigns of Edward Bernays, considered the founder of modern, "Madison Avenue” advertising.

When concern about the psychology of advertising, Psychology study the human nature, the psyche, and why people behave the way they do. Advertising explores the art of influencing human behaviour to make certain purchase decisions. It’s no surprise that these two areas converge.

Through the advertisements marketers can increase the buying attitudes of the people. Buying attitudes are a composite of a consumer’s beliefs, feelings and behavioural intentions toward some object within the context of marketing, usually a brand or retail store. These components are highly interdependent.

The first component is beliefs. A consumer may hold both positive beliefs toward an object as well as negative beliefs. In addition, some beliefs may be neutral, and some may be differ in valance depending on the person or the situation.

Consumers also hold certain feelings toward brands or other objects. Sometimes these feelings are based on the beliefs, but there may also be feelings which are relatively independent of beliefs.

The behavioral intention is what the consumer plans to do with respect to the object. As with affect, this is sometimes a logical consequence of beliefs (or affect), but may sometimes reflect
other circumstances. The individual with a positive attitude is more likely to buy a product while for the others it is a rare phenomenon.

To increase the buying attitudes, advertisements are used emotions as a tactic. These emotions are highly demanded as tactics used in commercials. Emotion is a mental state associated with thoughts, feelings, behavioural responses and pleasure or displeasure. “Emotions can be defined as a positive or negative experience that is associated with a particular pattern of physiological activity. Emotions produce different physiological, behavioral and cognitive changes. Studies show that people rely on emotions, rather than information to make brand decisions. There are some emotions most commonly used by brands to increase the buying attitudes. Some of them are happiness, surprised, fear, disgust, anger, and sadness.

Fear is one of the strongest emotion someone can use in advertising to promote a product while increase consumer’s attitudes. And also Fear is a natural instinct which helps us to survive from a threat. Fear tactics can be used to scare the audience by describing the serious threat to them. This motivates the people to buy a product based upon a fear experience. Fear appeals have grown in popularity because advertisers have found them to increase ad interest and persuasiveness (LaTour, Snipes, and Bliss, 1996). According to Harjot Singh, the senior vice president, director of planning at marketing communications firm Grey Canada, advertising is so persuasive that it can change how people think and behave. Fear is effective in advertising because it is a familiar sensation that causes people to respond quickly, Singh says.

But there are ethical considerations when appealing to people’s fear. However using fear tactics in a commercial has the ability to get viewers to take action like visit a website, dial a phone number, visit a store, make a purchase and etc. fear also stimulates a high level of brand attachment. According to a recent study people have better recall for ads that evoke fear than for ads that evoke joy and happiness. Fear is often used in marketing campaigns of beauty, health products and insurance.

### The Role of Gender in Response to Fear

When using fear tactics to increase the buying attitudes, the role of gender is important. Men and women approach shopping with different motives, perspectives, rationales and considerations. The attitudes of men and women are different from each other. Their beliefs, feelings and behavioural intentions towards a product or a service are also differing. In many situations women response to ads mostly while men response to it less.

If a company wants to promote their product with the use of fear they have to consider about the gender. In some situations men are more likely to be afraid than women. Especially about their own self, family, occupation and etc. but in the case of women they easily get feared about simple things. So as marketers they have to consider about those things before publishing an advertisement to promote their products. Gender difference is important for any business that sells to people, and wants to do so more effectively.

### Background of the Study

Advertisements are the most common technique used in marketing context to increase the buying attitudes of the individual. In commercials, different types of tactics are used to attract the people to buy a product. Fear appeal in advertising is more effective and motivate the people to buy a product or a service. The old sayings that fear response is stronger than sexual response may be true, but fear is actually better at it. In his book Buyology Truth Lies About Why We Buy, Mike Lindstrom discusses how fear taps into our primal concerns for survival, making us more apt to take action, whereas sex-based ads often just distract us from the focus of the ad, decreasing our desire to take action, and our attachment to the brand.

As Todd Van Slyke, an advertising instructor at The Illinois Institute of Art-Schaumburg, states: “Fear appeals strike a nerve with people who have doubts about things...They play on our inherent fears of the unknown or that something is going to kill us. That is why scare tactics are stunningly effective.”
Fear in advertising has its roots in the 1920’s when Listerine created mouthwash as way to combat halitosis (bad breath). There was a young woman who struggled to get married because of her bad breath. This advertisement became more popular among the people and the income skyrocketed from $115,000 to $8 million within seven years. Marketers have been using fear to connect to consumers ever since. In modern days marketers know appealing fear in the advertising is more affective to promote their products.

Since 1950’s many theories have been proposed to explain the processing and effects of fear appeal. Among them Extended Parallel Process Model (EPPM) is one of the latest development in this area. It takes the best of some of the other theories which explain the effectiveness of an appealing fear. EPPM is concerned with how perceived threats and perceived efficacy can cause behavioural change based upon fear. This theory was developed by Kim Witte, 1992. EPPM is based on Leventhal’s danger control/fear control framework and on Roger’s protection motivation theory. Extended Parallel Process Model describes how rational considerations (efficacy beliefs) and emotional reactions combine to determine behavioural decisions.

The EPPM model defines 04 key variables to predict the likely outcome of communications which a fear appeals.

01. Perceived severity
02. Perceived susceptibility
03. Response efficacy
04. Self-efficacy

When appeal fear in to the advertising it is important to concern about the gender. Because men and women’s perception, cognition, characteristics are different from each other. Until recently it was assumed that when faced with fearful situations both men and women react the same way. The common reaction to fear is called the fight or flight response. Although both men and women experience similar psychological responses to fear and a similar fight or flight reaction. Shelley Taylor and colleagues at UCLA have proposed that behaviourally only females display another response called tend and befriend. Tend and befriend is a behaviour that aims to protect the female and her children. However, according to study done by Fredrikson and colleagues in 1996, they have shown gender differences are reflected in both how each gender responds to fear and in the particular objects or situations that each gender fears. The fight-or-flight physiological response is common to both men and women while the tend-and-befriend behaviour is more likely to occur in women. Women are also more likely than men to experience more fears regardless of the situation.

To increase the buying attitudes of the people marketers have to study these things. Women easily get feared about little things than men. In marketing context when promote a product through the advertising by using fear tactics gender is important. Marketers have to identify which group will buy their products in response to advertisement.

**Significance of the Study**

The study of the difference of the male and female’s buying attitudes in response to fear used advertisements are important in different ways. The knowledge of this study is useful both psychology and marketing context and etc. in the case of psychology it is important to identify the attitudes of men and women separately when they response to fear. Their beliefs, feelings and many more attitudes can recognise through this study based on fear. Behaviour is the main concept in psychology. Psychologists are always willing to study how people behave in different situations. And also this study helps to recognise the human behaviours in marketing places, especially their buying behaviours. Each and every persons are not equal they are different from each other with their beliefs, emotions and etc. in marketing places their behaviours are also different. They motivate by various things to buy a product. Marketers use advertisements to motivate the customers while promote their products. This study will help to identify how people motivate by the advertising to buy something. As we know people have to fulfill their needs. According to the Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, to reach the self- actualization people have to fulfill the basic needs. Among them to fulfill the physiological needs people have to engage with the marketers and they have to buy the products or get the services from them. In here this study
help to identify how the fear tactics useful to motivate the people to buy a product.

Marketers always try to sell their products to the customers. They use advertisements to promote their products among the consumers. This study may important to identify how people response to fear used in advertisements. With the knowledge of this study marketers can use the fear to promote their products. Beliefs and feelings of men and women are not equal. If marketers can identify this difference they can sell their products more effectively. There are some factors women are more likely to concern about than men. But in the case of family, children, health both of them give their attention. With the identification of above factors marketers can easily sell their products or services. In marketing context advertisements are commonly used to promote the products. When create an advertisement most suitable tactics should have to use to get the consumer’s attention. For that we have to identify the men and women’s attitudes. This study will help to identify how fear useful for that.

**Objectives**

The ultimate purpose of this study is to identify the difference of the male and female’s buying attitudes in response to fear used advertisements. Marketers use different types of tactics to motivate the people to buy their products. This study will help them to identify how fear useful to increase the buyer’s attitudes based on gender. They can sell their products more effectively through the knowledge of this study.

**Research Problem**

Based on the above discussed theoretical and practical considerations in the context the researcher identified the research problem of the present study as follows,

“Do gender differences exist in the increase of buying attitudes in response to fear tactics used in advertising”.

**Literature Review**

V Joseph Paul RajIn conducted a research to identify the role of gender in consumers’ Response to Fear Appeal Advertisements. Today’s world, the dynamic nature of consumers, their needs and wants are showed in their response to marketing stimuli like advertising. There is a marked difference in the influence of males and females in decision making for buying goods and services. It is importance for the marketers to understand each and every customer’s needs to achieve effectiveness of marketing activities. Each individual may have unique responses to different types of advertisements according to their characteristics. When the advertisements are match with their personality they may react most positively. Fear appeal ads, as a tactic of persuasion, influence that attitude and behaviour of customers. The purpose of this study is to investigate whether gender influences the responses to fear appeal advertisements. The results of the study show that fear appeal advertisements are effective in changing the perception of respondents towards bad oral care. It was found that there was a significant difference in the perception of male and female respondents towards health and social consequences of bad oral care before and after watching the advertisements. Identifying the gender difference in increase of buying attitudes in response to fear used advertisement is done by the current study.

Vilasini De Silva conducted a research to do an empirical investigation on the impact of ethical advertising on building positive brand image for food and beverages. Survey method was used to gather primary data and well developed and tested questionnaire was the main instrument to collect data from respondents. Purposive sampling was the sample framework of the study. 150 general public excluding children age 9 years and below were targeted group. Colombo, Galle, Kandy were selected districts for the collection of data. The findings suggest that there are positive relationships between ethical advertising and positive brand image. To build up a positive brand image for food and beverages fear used advertisements are useful. Buying attitudes increase based on these advertising. The current study tries to identify the gender difference of this.

**Methodology**

This study is a pure quantitative research. In psychology to count the behaviour and phenomenon across different settings/contexts numbers are used. Quantitative research gathers
data in a numerical form. Those data can be put into categories, or in rank order, or measured in units of measurement. This type of data can be used to construct graphs and tables of raw data. The main target of conducting a quantitative research method is to test pre-determined hypothesis and produce generalizable results (ACAPS, 2012). The present study also testing the pre-determined hypothesis, for that quantitative method is more suitable. This is the most suitable approach for the current study.

Survey is the research strategy used for the present study. Surveys have the advantage, that researchers can ask questions about precisely the topics that are of policy or research interest, covering the full range of issues and variables that may be relevant to a particular research question (Lynn, Erens & Sturgis, 2012). Survey strategy is mostly used to answer who, what, where, how much and how many questions. The current study also collected data by using the survey method to identify difference of the male and female’s buying attitudes in response to fear used advertisements. With the use of all these factors the current study has selected survey as the most suitable strategy.

**Apparatus/ Material**

Primary data of this research was collected by using the structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was given to the representative sample randomly selected from the population. Questionnaire is the mostly used data collection method in survey strategy. When collected a data from the large sample it is important to use the questionnaire. With the use of questionnaire time wasting can be reduce and it is easy to collect the data. Privacy of the respondents can protect when using the questionnaire as the data collection method. Based on these factors the researcher of the present study has selected the questionnaire as the most suitable data collection method.

Questionnaire was created by including closed-ended questions to collect the data from the selected sample. Close-ended ended questions are used for this study because it is rating scale to measure the strength of attitudes or emotions.

The Questionnaire used in this study consisted 20 questions. The respondents have to provide the yes, no answers. If the answer is yes the score level is 1 and the answer is no the score level is 0. Each questionnaire has the total score of 20. The questionnaire built up to measure the buying attitudes of both male and female in response to fear used advertising. Their ideas, feelings and behavioural intentions toward a product can measure by using the questionnaire. The first question asked to identify the participant’s awareness of the tactics used in advertisements. 4-6 questions tried to investigate how increase both males and females buying attitudes. The questions placed in 11-14 are included to determine their attitudes towards the fear used advertisements and also how they buy products based on those advertisements. Other questions also developed to identify the increase of buying attitudes in response to fear appeal. Beside all these things the main aim of this study is to identify the gender difference of buying attitudes in response to fear appeal.

**Sample Techniques/ Sample**

To do the research the researcher has used the probability sampling techniques named simple random sampling in selected sample for the study. Simple random sampling is the easy and the most straightforward probability sampling strategy. It is also the most popular method for choosing a sample among population for a wide range of purposes. In simple random sampling each member of population is equally likely to be chosen as part of the sample. This sampling method is easy to select the sample when the population is high. The present study is used males and females in age between 25-55. The sample selected from Makula area. It is a huge population. Simple random sampling method is more suitable to selected the sample in current study.

The sample of the population covers the male and females who are living in a Makula area. Those respondents belong to the age between 25-55, and also all of them are doing a job. There married and unmarried men and women in the sample. And also they are doing a job in private sector and government sector. The respondents who belong to the age 36-45 and 46-55 deeply think about the safety of the family members and children. Based on that their buying attitudes are increased but there is no gender difference.
Procedure

The researcher found the research topic with the help of supervisor. This topic was selected among the several topics. Organizational psychology is the interesting area of the researcher so this topic was selected from the field of consumer psychology. Then the research problem, objectives are developed by the researcher. The research proposal was created with the help of supervisor to accept the research study. After the acceptance of the research proposal the researcher developed the questionnaire. The developed questionnaire was given to the selected sample to collect the data. Questionnaire was given to the sample by hand. Each respondent took different times to fill the questionnaire. Some of them fill it within hour while some of them take one day. When filling the questionnaire there were problems with the understanding. So, some of them ask about the meaning of the questions. Incomplete questions were not included in the questionnaire. After the data collection, analysis was done by the SPSS software with the help of supervisor. Two days were spent to analyse the data. Microsoft Excel and Microsoft word were used to create the graphs, pie charts. Later, analysed data were discussed and conclude by the researcher. Finally the research methodology was created.

Discussion

The result of the current study shows that there is no difference of the male and female’s buying attitudes in response to fear used advertisements. According to the scores obtained by SPSS software there is no gender difference in increase of buying attitudes in response to fear used advertisements. 50% of males and 50% of females agreed based on situations their attitudes may differ, in that case gender is not important. They respond to fear in same way. Fear used advertisements have the ability to change their attitudes such as feelings, beliefs and behavioural intentions. These changes are not differing from men to women.

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<th>Table 1. The Results of the Group Statistics</th>
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<td>Increase of buying attitudes in response to fear used advertising</td>
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32% of males and 32% of females have said fear used advertisements change their beliefs, but there is no gender difference.

Their consumer behaviours also changed because of fear used advertisements. In here, the gender didn’t play the significant role. 26% of males and 28% of females have said fear used advertisements change the products or services what they bought earlier. It is a behavioural change. When it comes to the family, the fear used advertisements can increase the buying attitudes but there is no gender difference. Both of them deeply think about their family members before buy a product or a service. 20% of men and 23% of women said they allure to buy products or services because if they didn’t buy it their family members maybe in danger, especially insurances and food products.

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<th>Table 2. The Results of Independent Sample T- Test</th>
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<td>Increase of buying attitudes in response to fear used advertising</td>
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<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
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20% of men and women think fear tactics used in advertisements are profitable for the insurance companies. Insurance companies can appeal fear more beneficially. Because insurance companies always deal with the human life. Advertisements are used different types of factors to promote their products such as its visuals, sounds and concepts. When respond to the fear used advertisements 45% of males and 43% of females said those factors are helpful to them. Their attitudes towards the fear appeal advertisements are not significantly different by gender. Both males and females think it is okay to use fear used advertisements in marketing context to promote their products.

Conclusion

The researcher conducted a research to study the gender difference in increase of buying attitudes in response to the fear tactics used in advertising. The results investigated that there is no gender difference in increase of buying attitudes in response to fear used advertisements. Both males and females reacted to the advertisements in a same way. If they have a favourable towards a product they buy it. Fear used advertisements are included different contents. Both men and women have the well knowledge about the tactics used in advertisements and those advertisements help them to buy products. The buying attitudes like feelings, beliefs and behavioural intentions didn’t change based on fear used advertisements. Both males and females buy products based on fear used advertisements for the safety of family members. Here, there is no gender difference to see. Both males and females deeply think about their children and family.

References


