



UNETHICAL ADVERTISING APPEALS THAT AFFECT THE PURCHASE DECISION

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Abstract

The scenario today is where the marketer adopts different types of advertising appeals to persuade the customers and their purchase decision. These appeals have been further classified under two categories that is rational or emotional appeals. The marketer tries to influence the customer through these depending upon the type of customer. It has been noticed that there is no significant way of advertising whether it is rational or emotional advertising. The aim is to study the ethical and unethical advertising appeals and its effect on purchase decision. The study is based on theoretical framework and various literature reviews. The research results indicate that there is a positive effect of ethical but negative effect of unethical advertising on purchase decision of customers. There are various types of emotional appeals being framed by the marketer these days like fear appeals, sensitivity appeals to persuade the customers. The ethical advertising excludes all the unethical aspects in advertising from it. Various ethical and unethical appeals of advertising are discussed in the paper. This paper will help to study the ethical and unethical advertising appeals and their effect on purchase decision of customers.

Keywords: Advertising, Appeals, rational, emotional, purchase decision, ethical and unethical.

Introduction

Due to the increased competition in the market, there has been an increased need of marketing communication for marketer to rise the enterprise whether corporate, PSUs, non-profit organizations. These days an integrated marketing is being followed which means to combine all the messages which are direct or indirect to the promotional tools to influence the potential customers. This concept has already been used by the different marketer these days.

The aim of advertising is to communicate, inform the target audience regarding the product and its marketer, and create awareness about the goods and services, to compare the goods and services being sold in the market. Advertising is used to enhance the sales of the goods and services. For this purpose the marketer is using different marketing strategies which are further categorized into ethical and unethical advertising. Ethical advertising includes the fairness about the goods and services, accurate information, equity in messages and consumer experience. The aim of ethical advertising is to promote human dignity. Unethical advertising includes the false claims, celebrity endorsement, portrayal of women in sexual advertising, using children, using emotional appeals to attract the customers.

Objectives of the study

1. To know the factors of unethical advertising being followed by the marketer.
2. To know the effect of unethical advertising on the purchase decision of customers.
3. To study the few real examples of unethical advertising based on the factors.

Review of literature

Singh, in the study summed up with that various ethical prospects in advertising exist, principles, code of conduct that marketer uses in advertising. They generally provide the message which is ethical. They disclose all the information related to the product so as to build the confidence of the audience and to follow the legal rules and regulations being framed by the government.

Motwani & et.al,(2014) suggested in the study that fear appeals help the advertiser and consumer to a purchase decision. These advertisements are considered to be innovative and creative. These have a substantial interest on the consumers and are considered to be effective.

Jaggi,(2013) stated in her study that the scenario has changed and now the focus lies in the women that are the target audience. It has been noticed that in all the advertisements the lead role is done generally



by the women. In India they are generally rejected because of their skin tone. Their capabilities, skill, confidence are totally ignored. Thus it can be said that fair skin is above the confidence, capabilities, skills a woman possesses.

Tamizhjothi & Rajakumar,(2011), concluded in the study that respondents have a positive effect of celebrity endorsement on them. They watch the advertisement based on celebrity and make a purchase decision by getting influenced by them.

Celebrity endorsement

A celebrity is a person, who has command and has the ability to influence the individuals. He/she is the person having great image in the eyes of the individuals, easily recognizable by the public. These are not just the actors and actresses, but the sports person, any musician, artist, painters and singers. The celebrity endorsement is where the marketer uses the person having name and fame, public image to promote their goods and services. This is done to promote the sales of the goods and services. This technique is used to influence the customers to make a purchase decision. This can be ethical in eyes of some individuals but unethical in others. The celebrities some time are not aware about the product they are promoting. They are not informed about the ingredients being used in the product which may lead to deception. These celebrities performing in advertisements are paid huge amount. Due to the amount paid to the celebrity the prices of the product are raised.

Various examples of celebrity endorsement are as follows:-

1. A In the advertisement of product naming Bikaji the celebrity Amitabh Bachchan is the performer. The celebrity is known about the quality and ingredients being used in the formation of the product but he is promoting the product. Neither he provides the full information about the prices being charged, ingredients used, quality, whether marked from egg mark or FSSAI or FPO.
2. Amir Khan: The celebrity is performing in various advertisements like Samsung, Phone pe. In the advertisement of Phone pe the celebrity is not known about the rules and regulations to be followed by the user. They make false statements to attract the potential customers of which the celebrity themselves are also not known off.
3. Ashwarya Rai Bachchan: the celebrity is been showcased in different advertisements of different products like coke, L'oreal, Lux and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. The celebrity is selected in the advertisements based on the personality traits, looks etc.

Portrayal of Women

The advertisements without women has not been spotted in recent years. The portrayal of women in advertisement has become the most important part in advertising. The products that do not need or meant for women also portray women in the advertisement to influence the customers to make a purchase decision. It is just not about advertisements but also in various events like sports, marriages show women as dancers, cheer leaders etc. the cheer leaders are generally brought or hired to gather the crowd not to support the teams. Few of the examples are:

1. Razers: The women are portrayed in the advertisement of Razers. The product is meant for just men but they portray women in it to seduce the men and influence the mind of women to make a choice of same brand for his man as in today's world women is the choice maker.
2. Men's Inner wear: In the advertisement of lux inner wear of men the women are portrayed to make a mindset of man that if they will wear this product the women will get attracted to them.
3. Axe Deodrant: in the advertisement of Axe deodorant the marketer made a claim that if the man uses the Axe deodorant the women gets automatically attracted to them.

Unfair Prices

These days the advertisers are using unfair pricing strategy to influence the customers to make a purchase decision. In this the marketer provides different type of price and no price discounts, use drip pricing, charm pricing as a strategy. The tendency of advertiser is to attract the customer through



discounts. They target the minds of customers who are price conscious. They also use limited time discount based offers where the customers assume the time period is limited and make a purchase decision. The few of the examples are as follows:

1. **Big bazaar Wednesday sale:** In this the marketer creates curiosity in the minds to buy the goods on Wednesday due to heavy discounts to be offered on the day as it is just the limited time offer.
2. **Amazon sale on festivals:** Under this the Amazon also showcase the limited time offer based on festival season sale. This brings curiosity amongst the customer to make the purchase decision as soon as possible.
3. **Super 99:** The offers made by supper 99 suggests the prices will be charm pricing. In which they target the price conscious customers to position the product as 99 not 100.

Emotional appeals

In this approach the marketer targets the emotions of the customers. The human nature is to protect their loved ones from any kind of harm and this is used as a strategy by the marketer to promote the product. In this the children are used to ask for donations by portraying them in bad physical conditions. In the advertisements of soaps the marketer uses the germs killing aspect to attract the customers. Few of the examples are as follows.

1. **Pampers:** In the advertisement of pampers the marketer targets the mother of infants emotionally by targeting the comfort, leakage proof, softness to skin. These are the tactics used by the marketer in advertisements to attract and the potential customers emotionally.
2. **Baby soap:** In the advertisement of baby soaps the marketer focuses on the eyes and skin of the infants. All the soaps are harmful for the eyes as they are made of chemicals but they make false claims and attract the customers.
3. **Nihaar Shanti Awla oil:** The marketer has targeted the customers by focusing on to donation for the education of children. This is a tactic which is used by following the recent trends where the government is also focusing the education. This is an emotional approach being followed to target the audience.

Fear appeals

This type of approach is being used by the marketer to promote different goods and services indirectly. Mostly parents are targeted under this approach by the marketer. It is based on the products we use for ourselves or for our near and dear ones. A sense of fear id developed amongst the target audience that is they will not buy the product there life will be affected. Some advertisement focus the health of people. Few of the examples are:

1. **Horlicks:** The advertiser promotes the health of kids in this advertisement where the key focus lies in the tallness, strength, motivation, brightness in it. The product does not guarantee the claims being made by them which is an unethical practice.
2. **Toothpastes:** Some of the toothpastes claim the freshness of mouth with the product they may ruin their relationships which is actually not true. They may end up with bad breath if they will not use the product this fear is created in the minds of the audience due to which they make a purchase decision.
3. **Health Insurance:** Under this the advertisers create fear in the minds of audience that if they will not buy the insurance and any bad situation prevails they may suffer and end up with begging. This fear forces them to make a purchase decision.

Purchase decision

All these appeals affect the purchase decision of customers directly or indirectly. To face the competition in the market the advertisers are using unethical practices. These practices are mostly followed by the marketer based on the type of target audiences. Due to the offers and discounts the people purchase more items they already possess. Sometime the company make exchange offers where



they try to convince that the new updated technology has been developed and to dump the previous product to have more comfortable life. This technique is used to sustain in the market by the companies.

The companies sustain in the market by unethical and by cheating the customers. These days the marketer collaborates with finance companies who provide funds in the form of short term loans.

Conclusion

Thus from the above discussion it can be said that the advertisers are using various unethical practices which affects the purchase decision of customers. These must be traced by government and different rules and provisions must be framed to protect the interest of customers. ASCI is already working and looking after these practices but still to fight against the competition and to promote sales marketer are still using these practices without thinking from the perspective of the customers. The marketer must look into the matter that the customer today is a rational man who is aware about the ethical and unethical practices being followed by the marketer these days. The customer will initially buy the product but after using it they will not again make a purchase decision as they will come to know the unethical practice like false claims, forceful appeals, and emotional appeals being followed by the marketer. More strict rules and provisions must be framed by the authorities to protect the customer's interest.

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