

Effect of Advertisements on Awareness and Knowledge of Urban Homemakers

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ABSTRACT Homemakers are the main decision-makers in the process of buying of the household goods with the objective of satisfaction of family's needs and wants. With the urbanization and advancement in technologies, there is a much wider availability of varieties of goods and with the change in diffusion of purchasing power, the wants, needs and attitudes for the household goods are ever changing and getting more diversified. Present study entitled, "Effect of advertisements on awareness and knowledge of urban homemakers" was taken up on randomly selected 160 respondents from four localities of Ludhiana City. Data were collected through specially structured interview schedule. It was observed that pamphlets and leaflets give more awareness about all the household goods and services than the brochures for the majority of the selected respondents. The reason could be that most of the newspapers were daily carrying the pamphlets and leaflets whereas most of the brochures come monthly. Among audio visual and other media, TV was found to be an effective medium for giving awareness about different items to be purchased. It was further found that gaining knowledge on food items, vehicles, soaps & detergents and furniture; the advertisements on TV, newspapers, magazines and window displays were found to be the most effective whereas radio was found to be the least effective medium. In case of building materials, services, clothing and consumer durables; advertisements in pamphlets & leaflets, TV, and window displays were found to be the most effective and radio remains to be the least effective medium. The reason for this could be that radio is out dated and at the same time it is the oldest medium and number of commercials was also very small.

INTRODUCTION

Homemakers are the purchasing agents for the family's biggest institution- The Home. They are the main decision-makers in the process of buying of the household goods with the objective of satisfaction of family's needs and wants. For this purpose a large number of household goods, both durable and non-durable, are required. Today, a wide variety of products is available in the market and the homemakers face difficulty in making the right decision about the product. Due to ignorance, a homemaker may not even be aware of the existence of a product or may purchase an inferior product or pay higher price for a product. With the urbanization and advancement in technology, there is a much wider availability of variety of goods and with the change in diffusion of purchasing power, the wants, needs and attitudes for the household goods are ever changing and getting more diversified. There are certain social, cultural and psychological and fashion based motivations, which have a direct influence on the purchase made by the homemakers. Normally, a homemaker never goes through the buying process alone, other persons such as relatives, friends and neighbours mostly influence her for her buying

process. These persons have a strong influence on the lifestyle and the buying pattern of the homemaker as well as her family members. Homemakers are likely to accept the brand judgements of family and friends, particularly those with specific knowledge of the product category. In addition, a modern homemaker demands more information about the products she intends to purchase. It is in this context that the role of advertisements assumes significance.

Advertising means the creative communication with the consumer. As a form of communication, advertising serves the purpose of a guide to buying in which the intended message is delivered to masses through various media. Advertising can be used to change the behaviour of the reader/ viewer toward the product or service, to influence public opinion, to gain political support, to advance a particular idea or to bring about some other effect as desired by the advertisers. It is the quickest, least expensive and most effective medium to communicate in terms of its reach and coverage. The explicit function of advertising is to make the potential audience aware of the existence of the product, service or idea, which would help fulfil their needs and spell out the differential benefits in a competitive situation. Advertising can have wide-

ranging repercussions on a society. Some critics suggest that advertising promotes a materialistic way of life by leading people to believe that happiness is achieved by purchasing products. They argue that advertising creates a consumer culture in which buying exciting new products becomes the foundation of the society's values, pleasures, and goals. Through this tool the advertiser makes an attempt to change or reinforce the attitude of the consumer, reader and viewer towards the advertised products.

Considering the importance of advertising in general and their role in the household purchase behaviour in particular, the present study was planned with the following specific objectives:

1. To investigate the effect of different advertising media on product awareness.
2. To examine the effect of different advertisement media on knowledge of the homemakers.

METHODOLOGY

To achieve the above-mentioned objectives, the present study was conducted in four localities of Ludhiana City namely, Punjab Agricultural University Campus, Aggar Nagar, Haibowal and New Rajguru Nagar and the families were selected on the basis of their monthly income. A total of 160 respondents were selected randomly using stratified random sampling technique having income more than Rs. 12,000/- per month. The personal interview method using specially designed interview schedule for the selected household goods was used for the collection of data. The interview schedule dealt with specific information about the effect of advertisements on products awareness, knowledge and purchase behaviour of respondents. The data were collected in 2002. The percentages and mean scores were used to analyse the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data have been discussed under print media and audio visual media as well as for other media to see the effect of advertisement on product awareness and knowledge gained by the urban homemakers.

Socio-personal Characteristics of the Respondents and Their Families: Table 1 gives the general profile of the respondents as obtained from the data collected through survey. In all 160 respondents were selected for the purpose of the study.

The age of respondents varied from 20 to 50 years and above. As many as 23.75% respondents belonged to age group of 20-30 years, 31.87% respondents had age between 31-40 years, 28.75% had age between 41-50 years and rest of the 15.62% were more than 50 years old. It was found that 20.62% of the respondents were undergraduate, 58.12% were graduates and 21.25% were post-graduates. As regards the occupation, it is evident from the Table 1 that majority of respondents i.e. 71.87 per cent were non-working and only 28.12 per cent were working. The table further reveals that 91.87 per cent of the respondents belonged to nuclear type of family and rest of the families were from joint families. The size of the families ranged from 2-9 members per household. A maximum of 91.88 per cent respondents belonged to family size of 2-5 members.

Table 1: Socio-personal characteristics of the respondents and their families

Characteristics	Total n=160
<i>Age (years)</i>	
20-30	38 (23.75)
31-40	51 (31.87)
41-50	46 (28.75)
51 and above	25 (15.62)
<i>Education</i>	
Under-graduate	33 (20.62)
Graduate	93 (58.12)
Post-graduate	34 (21.25)
<i>Occupation</i>	
Working	45 (28.12)
Non-working	115 (71.87)
<i>Family Type</i>	
Nuclear	147 (91.87)
Joint	13 (8.12)
<i>Size of the Family</i>	
2-5	147 (91.88)
6-9	13 (8.12)

Effect of Advertisements in Different Media on Product Awareness: This part deals with the respondents' awareness of the different household products as created by advertisements in different advertising media.

It is evident from the Table 2 that 71.87 per cent respondents considered newspapers as effective advertising medium for creating "product awareness" for consumer durables followed by services. These findings substantiate with the findings of Kang (1982) who also found that newspapers influence greater percentage of respondents followed by TV and

radio. Magazines were found to be an important medium among the respondents for awareness of consumer durables (70.00 per cent) and services (66.87 per cent) in comparison to other media. Direct mails were found to be least effective medium for awareness of all household goods. The reason for this could be that even today direct mails are not very common advertising medium in our country. It may be further observed that newspapers created awareness regarding clothing and soaps & detergents for maximum number of respondents.

It is further shown in the Table 2 that pamphlets and leaflets give more awareness about all the household goods and services than the brochures. The reason could be that most of the newspapers were daily carrying the pamphlets and leaflets whereas most of the brochures come monthly. A thorough perusal of Table 2 shows that among audio visual and other media, TV was found to be an effective medium for giving awareness about food items which obtained 66.25 per cent responses followed by services and vehicles, both of which accounted for 61.25 per cent each. These findings are similar to the findings given by the Sidhu (2000) who found that TV and newspapers were the most important source of information for the purchase of processed foods by the respondents of all income groups. In a study conducted by Bearden and Ethel (1982) it was also found out that the purchase of socially expressive products may be influenced by TV advertising rather than newspaper or magazine advertising.

In case of consumer durables and building materials, cinema was considered to be the most important medium for giving product awareness for the respondents. This may be because these products are generally locally made and cinema gives information about local products and local markets. The reason could be that new and local brands of household goods are displayed in exhibitions and fairs and window display.

The least effective medium in audio-visual and other medium is cyber malls. Cyber Malls attract none of the respondents for food items, building materials, furniture and soaps and detergents category. The reason could be that respondents were not too much aware of this medium. Actually, this medium is popular among new generation only. According to Hespos (2000) online advertising will become a lot more valuable as a result of technological advancements.

Respondents of both the income groups get maximum awareness about furniture items through exhibitions and fairs. The reason could be that one can actually see the furniture and evaluate or compare the quality of different furniture in the exhibitions and fairs.

It can be concluded from the Table 2 that respondents found TV, magazines, newspapers, outdoor displays and exhibitions and fairs to be an effective media in giving awareness about all the household goods and services.

Effect of Advertisements in Different Media on Knowledge: As shown in the Table 3, 58.75 per cent and 55.00 per cent of respondents get knowledge about the food items and vehicles respectively from the newspaper advertisements. This may be because local editions of newspapers contain advertisements of local restaurants, grocery stores and local agencies or dealers. In case of soaps and detergents, 54.37 per cent respondents get knowledge through magazines. But knowledge about building materials (55.00 per cent), consumer durables (46.25 per cent) and services (49.37 per cent) was obtained by the respondents through pamphlets and leaflets. It has been found that brochures give least amount of knowledge about all the household goods in case of print media. This may be because brochures are not very common in our country.

Audiovisual media includes TV, radio, cinema and cyber malls. Among the audiovisual media, TV was found to be the most informative medium for all the products by respondents. The knowledge creation through TV was mentioned by 59.37, 50.00, 49.37 and 49.37 per cent of respondents for building material, food items, vehicles, and soaps and detergents respectively. The reason could be that TV gives information of all the products and at the same time advertisements on TV are more attractive and convincing than any other media. Jhanji (2000) also found out that TV was the most preferred medium and that the advertisements in TV were most remembered than advertisements in other media. Maximum respondents (60.00 per cent) found that window displays give more knowledge about consumer durables whereas 33.12 per cent respondents observed that in exhibitions and fairs, they get more knowledge about building materials.

It may be concluded from the Tables 2, 3 that for gaining knowledge on food items, vehicles, soaps and detergents and furniture; the advertise-

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to the effect of advertisements in print media on product awareness. (N=160)

Products	Print Media						Audio-visual Media					
	News-papers	Maga-zines	Pamphlets / leaflet	Direct mails	Outdoor displays	Brochures	TV	Radio	Cinema	Cyber malls	Window display	Exhibition & fairs
Consumer Durables	115	112	98	62	86	73	97	72	91	49	89	101
Services	71.87	70	61.25	38.75	53.75	45.62	60.62	45	56.87	30.62	35.62	63.12
Vehicles	107	106	88	54	90	0	98	54	82	42	69	94
	66.87	66.25	55	33.75	56.25	0	61.25	33.75	51.25	26.25	43.12	58.75
	114	104	95	50	96	59	98	66	80	41	67	91
	71.25	65	59.37	31.25	60	36.87	61.25	41.25	50	25.62	41.87	56.87
Clothing	102	75	67	0	81	48	76	49	72	32	71	79
	63.75	46.87	41.87	0	50.62	30	47.5	30.62	45	30	44.37	49.37
Building Materials	97	102	77	0	92	49	72	55	88	0	49	88
	60.62	63.75	48.12	0	57.5	30.62	45	34.37	55	0	30.62	55
Furniture	89	98	69	0	92	0	86	52	81	0	72	102
	55.62	61.25	43.12	0	57.5	0	53.75	32.5	50.62	0	45	63.75
Food Items	83	81	53	32	69	0	106	59	74	0	69	89
	51.87	50.62	33.12	20	43.12	0	66.25	36.87	46.25	0	43.12	55.62
Soaps & Detergents	79	78	0	0	73	50	91	63	71	0	72	92
	49.37	48.75	0	0	45.62	31.25	56.87	39.37	44.37	0	45	57.5

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to the effect of advertisements in print media on knowledge.

Products	Print Media						Audio-visual Media					
	News-papers	Maga-zines	Pamphlets / leaflet	Direct mails	Outdoor displays	Brochures	TV	Radio	Cinema	Cyber malls	Window display	Exhibition & fairs
Food Items	94	80	82	47	75	0	80	18	56	0	94	37
	58.75	50	51.25	29.37	46.87	0	50	11.25	35	0	58.75	23.12
Vehicles	88	73	77	44	69	44	79	8	42	35	86	43
	55	45.62	48.12	27.5	43.12	27.5	49.37	5	26.25	21.87	53.75	26.87
Soaps & Detergents	78	87	0	0	64	45	79	18	49	0	89	32
	48.75	54.37	0	0	40	28.12	49.37	11.25	30.62	0	55.62	20
Furniture	82	82	82	0	65	0	75	16	46	0	90	40
	51.25	51.25	51.25	0	40.62	0	46.87	10	28.75	0	56.25	25
Building Materials	73	63	88	0	53	41	95	17	33	0	91	53
	45.62	39.37	55	0	33.12	25.6	59.37	10.62	20.62	0	56.87	33.12
Services	72	66	79	44	57	0	72	20	44	38	86	32
	45	41.25	49.37	27.5	35.62	0	45	12.5	27.5	23.75	53.75	20
Clothing	74	92	96	0	80	45	75	25	54	31	96	45
	46.25	57.5	60	0	50	28.12	46.87	15.62	33.75	19.37	60	28.12
Consumer Durables	64	69	74	19	77	36	70	16	39	17	95	30
	40	43.12	46.25	11.87	48.12	22.54	43.75	10	24.37	10.62	59.37	18.75

ments on TV, newspapers, magazines and window displays were found to be the most effective whereas radio was found to be the least effective medium. In case of building materials, services, clothing and consumer durables; advertisements in pamphlets and leaflets, TV, and window displays were found to be the most effective and radio remains to be the least effective medium. The reason for this could be that radio is out dated and at the same time it is the oldest medium and number of commercials was also very small.

CONCLUSION

Majority of respondents stated that advertisements inform them about the new products in the market. The further found TV, magazines, newspapers and exhibitions and fairs to be effective media in giving product awareness about all the household goods and services. For gaining knowledge on food items, vehicles, furniture, and soaps and detergents; advertisements in TV, newspapers, magazines and window displays were found to be effective. In case of building materials, services, clothing and consumer durables, pamphlets and leaflets, window displays and TV advertisements were found to be effective for gaining

knowledge. Radio was found to be the least effective medium in giving product knowledge about all the household goods and services. Advertisements through Exhibitions and fairs affected the purchase behaviour of all the household goods and services, followed by TV advertisements. Under the influence of TV advertisements, majority of respondents from both the income group purchased household goods.

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