A Study on the Difference in Customer Attitude towards Mobile Advertising Across Gender

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Abstract

Ever since the advent of technology revolution coupled with the spurge in economic collaboration among various countries, the world has become a global market. The avenues for companies to sell their products has increased along with the surge in the magnitude of sales. The number of products available in the market grew exponentially. Another major change happened is in the consumer behaviour. The consumer of today is educated, choosy, techno savvy and most importantly are not brand loyal. The traditional promotional mix were sometimes clueless with regard to communicating and retaining the customers. The veteran element in the promotion mix; advertising took more forms like internet advertising, digital advertising, mobile advertising, social media advertising etc. In a country like India, where the penetration of mobile phones is more than the number of toilets in the country, mobile advertising may be a handy tool for promotion. This paper try to discuss about the difference in customer attitude towards mobile advertising across gender.

Keywords----
Customer attitude, Credibility, Entertainment, Gender, Informativeness, Mobile advertising

I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays it is very difficult to find a person without a mobile phone. It is now a necessity and has become an integral part of one’s life. Besides the convenience of usage in anywhere or at any time, the user can also listen to music, play games or surf the internet. Another increasingly popular function is the message services in forms of short message service (SMS) and multi-media service (MMS) (Nattharika Rittipant et.al, 2009). A 2013 report from Telecom Authority of India (TRAI) shows that the total subscriber base in India amounts to 867.80 million as on 31st March 2013. Globally as per Portio Research the SMS traffic has passed 8.5 trillion messages in one year. This throws immense opportunity for marketers to reach the customer even to the rural parts of the company.

The surge in mobile phone has made technology human convergence easy. This enabled the advertisers to divide markets and target customers’ needs more accurately and increase brand equity, improving the interactions of customer-company (Wua et al. 2008). According to Sultan (2005), fast growth of mobile phones enabled the marketers to receive direct response from the customers about their goods and services and also helped in developing relationships with the customers. Mobile communications and its most successful application, short message service (SMS), now allows for the direct and two-way communication between an organisation and consumers (Dickinger, Haghirian, Murphy and Scharl, 2004). As in the case of traditional advertisements entertainment, informativeness and credibility of advertisement message are also found to be the most significant factors affecting respondents’ attitudes toward mobile advertising (Tsang et al. 2004). Gender is obviously a basis for segmentation in marketing (Kotler 2013). This portrays that there is differences in the preferences of male and females in their preferences. This makes it interesting to test whether there is any difference in customer attitude towards mobile advertising across gender. This study is done in 50 college students in Ernakulam district. The survey was a mall intercept done in Oberon Mall, Kochi.

Mobile Advertising

Mobile advertising is an alternate channel to communicate with the customers. Chambers et al., (2008) define mobile advertising as “the actual process of describing or presenting a product, idea, or organization through mobile communication channels in order to induce mobile subscribers to buy, interact, or support it. Mobile
advertising form ranges from the traditional SMS and MMS to the most modern Apps. The reach of mobile advertising is unimaginable as people seldom goes out without mobile handsets with them. This also results in commanding immediate attention to the message sent even though sometimes it may be obstructive.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Attitude is a learned predisposition. So the attitude always depends upon the relationship between the person and the object (Schiffman, 2012). There has long history about definition and study of attitude. A lot of persuasion theories have focussed on attitudes because social scientists believe that attitudes guide and direct human behavior. Factors affecting customer satisfaction also has attracted a lot attention among researcher.

Oylum Korkut Altuna, Faruk Anıl Konuk (2009) has produced four factors through factor analysis viz. informative dimension of mobile advertisements, enjoyment dimension of mobile advertisements, credibility of mobile advertisements and irritation dimension of mobile advertisements. Previous literatures have identified that informativeness, entertainment and credibility has a positive relation on customer attitude towards mobile advertising. A study by Melody M Tsang, Shu – Chun Ho and Ting – Peng Liang (2002), justified this argument as they have found that entertainment, informativeness and credibility are positively correlated to the overall attitude of customers towards mobile advertising. According to their study entertainment is the most significant attribute affecting consumer attitude towards mobile advertising. Theory of Reasoned Action (proposed by Fishbein and Ajzen in the early 1970s) was used in the above study. The three constructs used include Attitude, Intention and behavior.

Harigiran, Parissa and Madlberger, Maria (2003) viewed that the perceived value of advertising via mobile devices positively influences consumers’ attitudes toward advertising via mobile devices. They also added that entertainment, informativeness and credibility are positively associated with the advertising value when addressing consumers via mobile devices. Thus entertainment, informativeness and credibility of message has got an effect in the customer attitude towards mobile advertising. Another study consumers’ attitude towards mobile advertising among mobile phone users by Wong Man Ting Mandy (2009) revealed that there exists a positive effect on the attitude towards receiving and reading mobile advertising due to variables such as informativeness and entertainment.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The variables used in this paper are entertainment, informativeness and credibility of advertising messages.

Entertainment: McQuail (in Ducoffe, 1996:23) defines entertainment as “…the ability to fulfil an audience’s needs for escapism, diversion, aesthetic enjoyment, or emotional enjoyment.” According to Shukla et al (2010), Entertainment refers to the properties of being enjoyable, exciting, imaginative, and flashy. Entertainment services can also increase customer loyalty and add value for the customer. As most people have a natural playfulness, providing games and prizes via text messaging (SMS) yields high participation (Harigiran, Parissa and Madlberger, Maria, 2003). Therefore it may be inferred that entertainment factor in advertising message has a positive effect in attitude.

H0: There is no significant difference between male and female in their opinion about entertainment
H1: There is significant difference between male and female in their opinion about entertainment

Informativeness: The quality of information placed on a company’s web site shows a direct influence on the customers’ perceptions of the company and the company’s products (Harigiran, Parissa and Madlberger, Maria, 2003). Accordingly, information delivered to them via mobile devices also needs to show qualitative features like accuracy, timeliness, and usefulness for the consumer (Siau and Shen, 2003). Apart from this, the user needs quick access to the information (s) he is looking for his/her current content of use. There is even the possibility that information may be delivered automatically to the consumer (Kaasinen, 2003). Blanco and et al. (2010) findings show that the perceived informativeness of mobile advertising has positive impact on consumers’ attitude toward mobile advertising. Consumers want the content of mobile services to be tailored to their interest (Robins, 2003). On top of this, they are interested in getting messages that are relevant for them (Milne and Gordon, 1993). Information is thus considered a very valuable incentive in mobile marketing because recipients react very positively to advertisements that transfer incentives (Varshney, 2003). Thus informativeness becomes a natural selection as a variable affecting customer attitude.

H0: There is no significant difference between male and female in their opinion about informativeness
H1: There is significant difference between male and female in their opinion about informativeness

Credibility: According to Haghirian, Parissa and Madlberger, Maria (2003) high credibility of the advertising message is positively associated with attitude.
towards mobile advertising. MacKenzie and Lutz (1989; p. 51) define advertising credibility as “consumers’ perception of the truthfulness and believability of advertising in general”, whereas Pavlou and Stewart (2000) refer to it as “predictability and fulfillment of implicit and explicit requirements of an agreement” (online document). Considering the above findings it is assumed that the credibility of a mobile advertising message may have a positive influence on consumers’ attitude toward advertising via mobile devices.

\( H_0 \): There is no significant difference between male and female in their opinion about credibility

\( H_1 \): There is significant difference between male and female in their opinion about credibility

Another set of hypotheses framed were based on differences across gender on customer attitude and behaviour.

\( H_0 \): There is no significant difference between male and female with regard to customer attitude

\( H_1 \): There is a significant difference between male and female with regard to customer attitude

\( H_0 \): There is no significant difference between male and female with regard to customer behaviour

\( H_1 \): There is a significant difference between male and female with regard to customer behaviour

Figure 1: Theoretical Frame work

IV. METHODOLOGY

Data for this study was collected through a questionnaire survey from 50 college students taken through Mall intercept at Oberon Mall, Kochi, Kerala. The questionnaire designed consisted of three parts. The first part consisted of questions related to demographic characteristics. The second part consisted of 14 questions pertaining to entertainment, credibility and informativeness. The third part consisted of one question which indicates what a customer will do once they receive a mobile advertisement message (Behaviour). The statements used in the questionnaire were adopted from previous studies. The reliability of the questionnaire was tested using Cronbach’s alpha. The results are shown in Table 1. Results of the reliability test confirm that the data collected are reliable and suitable for further analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>No. of Questions</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informativeness</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credibility</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.789</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Demographic Profile

Almost 80% of the respondents taken for the survey belong to the age group 18 – 35 and the rest belong to the age group 36 – 50. About 56% of the respondents surveyed were using mobile phone for more than 5 years, while 30% of them are using it for 3 – 5 years. The service providers used by the respondents were as follows, 8% Airtel, 46% BSNL, 14% Vodafone, 30% Idea, and 1% Reliance. The gender wise categorization shows that 62% are males while 38% are females.
Results of Independent t – test
The independent samples t-test compares the difference in the means from the two groups to a given value (usually 0). In other words, it tests whether the difference in the means is 0. The t-test is designed to compare means of same variable between two groups. Here the researcher compares the mean scores of all major variables between the group of female and male respondents. The test assumes that variances for the two populations are the same.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>p -value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>14.9677</td>
<td>5.85653</td>
<td>.05186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18.1579</td>
<td>2.50029</td>
<td>.57361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informativeness</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17.5484</td>
<td>3.98195</td>
<td>.71518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16.9474</td>
<td>3.58196</td>
<td>.82176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credibility</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>12.2903</td>
<td>3.32860</td>
<td>.59783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11.8421</td>
<td>2.38661</td>
<td>.54753</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Entertainment: If we consider the entertainment score across the gender, we can observe that female respondents have a score which is greater than the entertainment score of male. The significance of this difference is tested by using an independent sample t test and found that the test was significant (p<0.05). From this we have to infer that men and female differ in the way they see the entertainment factor in mobile advertising (H1 accepted).

Informativeness: The informativeness mean score of male is slightly higher than that of females. By conducting the test by using the same independent t test it was found that there is no significant difference among the groups (p>0.05). Thus H0 is accepted.

Credibility: The credibility also shows that mean score of male is slightly higher than that of females. By conducting the test by using the same independent t test it was found that there is no significant difference among the groups (p>0.05). Thus H0 is accepted.

Table 3: Group Statistics – Independent Sample t test across gender for customer attitude and customer behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>p -value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer attitude</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>9.2581</td>
<td>2.80437</td>
<td>.50368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9.9474</td>
<td>2.01311</td>
<td>.46184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Behaviour</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8.7097</td>
<td>3.14318</td>
<td>.56453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8.7368</td>
<td>3.24623</td>
<td>.74474</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customer Attitude: If we consider the customer attitude score across the gender, we can observe that female respondents have a score which is slightly higher than the customer attitude score of male. The significance of this difference is tested by using an independent sample t test and found that the test was insignificant (p>0.05). From this we have to infer that customer attitude is the same across gender (H0 accepted).

Customer Behaviour: The customer behaviour mean score of female respondents have is higher than the entertainment score of male. The significance of this difference is tested by using an independent sample t test and found that the test was insignificant (p>0.05). From this we have to infer that customer behaviour is the same across gender (H0 accepted).

VI. CONCLUSION
As in marketing gender differences are normally treated as crucial, the researcher had an interest in knowing how it impacted customer attitude towards mobile advertising. The study concentrated only on the promotional SMSs sent by companies to their prospective
consumers. A attempt was also done to know the
difference among opinion among males and females with
regard to entertainment, informativeness and credibility of
messages which are considered crucial in influencing
customer attitude. The study found that there exists no
difference in customer attitude and customer behaviour
towards mobile advertising across gender.

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